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101 Martin Street
Penticton BC V2A 5J9

November 8, 2021

Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
101 Martin Street,
Penticton BC V2A 5J9

Attention: Area Directors

Re: **Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas update for RDOS Electoral Areas A, C, D, E, F, H and I.**

Dear Directors,

It has come to our attention that the board of Directors for the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (the Board) is considering exempting residential development from the Environmentally Sensitive Develop Permit Areas (ESDPA) process. As you are likely aware, the province along with other partners have invested considerably in the development of the current ESDPA process. The value of ESDPAs established by local governments in conserving biodiversity and managing communities for the enjoyment of citizens are recognized locally and globally. As such, we have significant concerns regarding the decision that is in front of you.

A decision to exempt residential development from this carefully developed process will likely have provincial impacts. Before the decision is made by the Board, the Province would like to offer support the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen to gather more information so that you are able to make an informed decision.

We are requesting a meeting with RDOS Directors, planning staff, staff with this Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, staff with the Canadian Wildlife Service (ECCC-CWS) and Members of the South Okanagan Stewardship Conservation Program (SOSCP) to discuss further. We believe that moving forward with these changes without proper dialogue with the province and other agencies who contributed to their formation (ECCC-CWS and SOSCP) is counter to our working relationships.

We will have staff contact your office to arrange for a meeting.

Sincerely,

Celine Davis, A/Executive Director
Ecosystems Branch
Environmental Sustainability Division,
Ministry of Environment

Eric Valdal, Director
Resource Management
Thompson Okanagan Region, South Area,
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource
Operations and Rural Development