

Debbie Schulz

From: Debbie Schulz
Sent: March 9, 2021 10:12 AM
To: Debbie Schulz
Subject: FW: URGENT: Purchase and protection of Sickle Point on Skaha Lake BC

From: Michelle Parry
Sent: March 8, 2021 8:52 AM
To: FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: Rob.Fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca; ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca; Info E-Box <info@rdos.bc.ca>; Roly.Russell.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Richard.cannings@parl.gc.ca; savesicklepoint@gmail.com
Subject: URGENT: Purchase and protection of Sickle Point on Skaha Lake BC

Dear Minister Conroy,
Please use your powers of office to grant an immediate stay on any development of Sickle Point under the Environment and Land Use Act.

Sickle Point is a really important piece of waterfront property, and its ownership needs to revert to the lake itself, to the wildlife that rely on it, to the water ecosystems that rely on shorelines that are intact to remain healthy. Sickle Point must be cared for by stewards for the good of us all.

I have lived in this area since 1982, I have spent much time on the water in canoe and kayak, circumnavigating the lake both by on the water and also on the land by bike and car.

I have observed the continual paving over and removal of our natural landscape. Docks and more docks, larger and larger houses, retaining walls, grass and pavement replacing riparian habitats, both along the waterfront and in our communities. Protection for natural habitats in non-existent, people just do whatever they want. You may not notice this from your office, but I assure you, it is all disappearing. Large housing developments are on trend which remove every single native tree and reduce habitats to gravel pits, then houses and pavement, losing all the natural landforms and mechanisms that would absorb snow melt and rainfall slowly, leading to flooding and decreased water quality, not to mention loss of habitat or even sharing of habitat.

Flooding is becoming more and more of an issue, then drought. We are destroying the very things we need to mitigate these issues, and the folks along the waterfronts will be the first to cry for government help. Ironic.

The beauty of the Sickle Point property is that it is small, making it affordable for the government to acquire, with massive benefit to the wildlife that depend on it, as well as helping to protect the lake that we all value so highly, and offers incredible educational opportunities for generations. We have to think beyond this generation. The beauty of Sickle Point is that it has only been somewhat damaged, it will not take a large investment to restore it. Wildlife and the habitat it depends on is disappearing at an alarming rate, again, this may not be hitting home to you where you live, but I have been watching it go for all the years I have lived here. As have many other good caring folks.

The downside of Sickle Point is that it is small, making it affordable for private development and all the things that brings. The private interests are circling like vultures, wanting to snatch up this prime property for their summer recreation. That would be fine if anyone had any sense of the value of waterfront property for other living systems, but sadly they don't know or don't care.

I was at the beach yesterday and approx 10 kitesurfers were out on the water, quietly catching the wind and waves without disturbing anyone. This would not be the case with motorized recreational pursuits. The ones who develop the waterfront bring their power boats, sea-dos, long, long docks that reach way out into the lake because the water is shallow there, so likely will construct a gazebo at the end of it, their wildlife chasing dogs, wildlife eating cats. Its utter nonsense. The shoreline is a public to the high water mark. Have you tried to walk along our public water lines along Skaha or Okanagan Lakes? Human powered watercraft cannot pull in to any of those beaches and sit at the low water mark if they need to rest or shelter from the weather, it is all totally developed. Some properties even have gone to great lengths to install ropes and reflective tapes (that end up in the water) to deter birds and wildlife. Humans are greedy and do not share well. Please, be aware of this issue. We do not own the land, we only get to use it.

Please be a good citizen and enact the powers you have to protect this jewel.

You will not regret it when you retire and wish there were some birds you could go watch with your grandchildren, some reptiles to observe, tadpoles to collect, hummingbird eggs to see, scarlet tanagers amazing nests to marvel at, fish to be caught or even watched, but they are all gone and the water is too murky to swim in unless you shower with your chemically treated water afterwards.

Many thanks
Michelle Parry