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Kaleden, BC
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Hon. Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
Hon. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Hon. Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure

August 31, 2020

Dear Ministers:

The community of Kaleden and surrounding areas continues to be greatly concerned about the possible development of Sickle Point, a wetland area, on Skaha Lake adjacent to the Kettle Valley Railway (KVR) trail that runs between Penticton and Okanagan Falls. This trail, part of the Great Trail, is a significant recreational corridor used extensively by cyclists and walkers and is a major tourism destination in the South Okanagan.

Our concerns are urgent now because the property has gone through foreclosure, is up for sale and developers are expressing interest in this last remaining riparian property on Skaha Lake. As Kaleden is an unincorporated community within the RDOS, decisions affecting the community are frequently made without community involvement or consultation. We want our voices heard for options that would protect Sickle Point as a nature park and enhance the values of the trail.

We oppose development of Sickle Point for the following reasons. It is

- accessible only by use of the KVR trail. Development would mean vehicles would trespass and damage the integrity of this non-motorized trail
- one of the few remaining red-listed water birch/rose natural communities in BC, supporting endangered wildlife including Yellow Breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, Western Rattlesnake and Pallid Bat
- on the migratory path for both resident and migrant wildlife including American White Pelican and Sandhill Crane
- a valuable fish habitat

The South Okanagan Similkameen Biodiversity Conservation Strategy has ranked Sickle Point very high (Class 1) the highest biodiversity conservation ranking in the strategy.

An informal poll of community members by the RDOS Area I Director showed overwhelming support (more than 90%) for community acquisition of Sickle Point for a nature park including, if necessary, a property tax levy. The environmental importance of this property and the demonstrated community commitment (since launch has already raised more than \$77,000 in one week's time) has attracted the interest of a major BC foundation.

Therefore, we urgently request a review of access issues and habitat/conservation values that any development of Sickle Point would have on the KVR Trail and the environmental integrity of the land and waters and around it. We respectfully ask that development of this valuable and treasured property be denied and every effort be made to protect it.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to your assistance in helping the community in securing this property for the benefit of all.

On behalf of the Save Sickle Point Committee

Renee Martin

Doreen Olson

Tom Siddon

cc: Hon. John Horgan, Premier, Premier@gov.bc.ca
Hon. Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, TAC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Hon. Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Karla Kozakevich, Chair, RDOS, kkozakevich@rdos.bc.ca