



JAN 23 2018

Mr. Bob Peart
Chair
Board of Directors
Nature Canada
bobpeart@shaw.ca

Mr. Alan Burger, Ph.D.
President
BC Nature
aburger@uvic.ca

Dear Mr. Peart and Dr. Burger:

Thank you for your letter of July 31, 2017, also addressed to the Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy for British Columbia, regarding a proposal to establish a national park reserve in the South Okanagan and Lower Similkameen region of British Columbia.

I wish to express my appreciation to both Nature Canada and BC Nature for your long-standing support and public advocacy for this important initiative aimed at protecting a representative landscape of Canada's biodiversity, a cultural landscape of importance to Indigenous Peoples and home to many species at risk. It is due to your support, as well as the tireless efforts of many conservation groups and representatives of the business and tourism community, that the prospects for a national park reserve remain viable and active.

On October 27, 2017, in Osoyoos, British Columbia, the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia, along with representatives of the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation, announced a renewed commitment to work together to establish a new national park reserve in the South Okanagan. Parks Canada officials will continue to work with the Province and the Okanagan Nation to examine how to advance this proposal in a timely manner.

I would also like to express my sympathy regarding the recent loss of Ms. Chloe O'Loughlin, who I understand was a tireless advocate for the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve and someone that you have worked closely with over the years.

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Thank you for attending the announcement and for your ongoing support to protect and present Canada's natural and cultural heritage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C McKenna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable George Heyman, M.L.A.