



March 19, 2018

Mayor Lois E. Jackson  
City of Delta  
4500 Clarence Taylor Crescent  
Delta, BC V4K 3E2  
Via Email: mayor@delta.ca

Dear Mayor Jackson:

I am writing to you on behalf of BC Nature. We are an organization of 6,300 members in 53 clubs from various locations of B.C. Our motto is "Know nature and keep it worth knowing."

It has been drawn to my attention that there is an active and thriving bat colony living in the old Burr Villa in Deas Island Park. The bats inhabit the attic of this house on a seasonal basis, usually from March to October. With close to 3000 bats estimated in residence, this is the largest known bat colony in the Lower Mainland. Two species reside there; one of which, *Myotis lucifugus*, is designated an Endangered Species under the federal Species at Risk Act. The provisions of this Act can be applicable to any property, whether federally owned or not.

As has been pointed out by Tom Bearss, President of the Delta Naturalists Society, bats in their nightly forages consume huge numbers of insects, including mosquitoes. A lactating female can eat up to 1000 insects per night. The benefits to the community are numerous. In fact you might say that bats perform a valuable public service.

Metro Vancouver staff clean the attic of guano (bat droppings) when the bats are not in residence. These staff are conscientious with regard to the condition of Burr Villa and state categorically that the droppings are not harming the villa.

The South Coast Bat Society is monitoring the health of these bats. You may have heard about the white nose syndrome which is afflicting bats in other parts of Canada and has also been reported in Washington state. There is great concern by biologists of the impacts of this disease on local bat populations. Dead bats equal more living insects equal more detrimental impacts to communities.

You may be interested to know that Peachland has almost 2000 Yuma bats living in the attic of the Peachland Historic Primary School building. In fact, Peachland has a Legends of the Lake Interpretive Centre in the Peachland Visitor Centre showing how humans and bats can successfully co-habit. Metro Vancouver Parks to a lesser extent celebrates the

Burr Villa bat population with its annual Starry Nights display which takes place in July. On this night, there is great excitement as children and adults alike surround the house at dusk to watch the bats fly out on their nightly forage.

In view of the importance of these bats to the local ecology, BC Nature strongly recommends that they be left to continue their peaceful existence in Burr Villa. It is very likely that these bats could not be successfully relocated. Further, their access to the attic of Burr Villa should not be constricted.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan Burger". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Yours truly," text.

Alan E. Burger, PhD  
President: BC Nature  
(Federation of BC Naturalists)

c.c. Greg Moore, Metro Vancouver Board of Directors - [chair@metrovancover.org](mailto:chair@metrovancover.org)  
c.c. Tanya Lusycz, Manager, Partners in Flight, Southern Interior - [tanya.luszcz@gov.bc.ca](mailto:tanya.luszcz@gov.bc.ca)  
c.c. Paula Rodriguez de la Vega, Okanagan Community Bat Program - [prrega@telus.net](mailto:prrega@telus.net)  
c.c. Felix Martinez, South Coast Bats Conservation Society - [flx.felixmn@gmail.com](mailto:flx.felixmn@gmail.com)  
c.c. Editor, South Delta Optimist - [editor@delta-optimist.com](mailto:editor@delta-optimist.com)