



April 17, 2018

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

Dear Mr Burger

Thank you for your letter of December 8, 2017 to Minister McKenna in which you expressed your support for the proposal to establish a national park reserve in the South Okanagan and Lower Similkameen region of British Columbia.

I want to express Parks Canada's gratitude for your organization's support for this important initiative that is aimed at protecting a representative landscape of Canada's biodiversity, a cultural landscape of importance to Indigenous people, and home to many endangered species.

Please be assured that the Government of Canada is committed to working collaboratively with the new provincial government, which pledged to pursue a national park reserve in the South Okanagan, and the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation, which remains interested in this initiative. Parks Canada has begun work with the province and First Nations to examine how to advance this proposal and I encourage you and your members to visit our website for additional information and updates at <http://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/cnnp-cnnp/okanagan>.

In February 2017, federal, provincial, and territorial ministers responsible for protected areas and the conservation of biodiversity launched the Pathway to Canada Target 1, a national collaborative initiative to ensure that at least 17 percent of terrestrial areas and inland waters are conserved through networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures by 2020.

The Pathway initiative recognizes that many organizations across Canada have a significant interest and/or stake in the outputs from this initiative and that the solutions associated with achieving Canada Target 1 will be found through collaboration and collective action. This work is also being informed by the important work on protected areas by the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development which resulted in the report *Taking Action: Establishing Protected Areas for Canada's Future*. I invite you to follow the Pathway work at <http://www.conservation2020canada.ca/home>.

I appreciate your members support for this important conservation initiative.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin McNamee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and 'M'.

Kevin McNamee
Director Protected Areas Establishment
Parks Canada