March 8, 2019

Alan E. Burger, President  
BC Nature (Federation of BC Naturalists)  
c/o Betty Davison, Office Manager  
Email: manager@bcnature.ca

Dear Mr. Burger:

Thank you for your letter of February 4, 2019, regarding rodenticides and the effects on owls.

Rodenticides are one of the available options to manage problem rat populations, which can pose a risk to human health and the environment. All rodenticides registered for use in Canada have undergone rigorous safety reviews by Health Canada to ensure that they will not cause unacceptable risk to people and the environment. As a result of a recent re-evaluation of rodenticide active ingredients, Health Canada added new label use restrictions and risk mitigation measures to help protect non-target wildlife species from formulations that pose the highest risk.

Further to federal pesticide label restrictions, my ministry administers the Integrated Pest Management Act and Regulation, which have additional requirements for the use and sale of pesticides in British Columbia. The Regulation has specific provisions for the use of rodenticides on public land: applications must be done by a licenced operator with certified staff; baits may only be deployed in secure, labelled bait stations; and integrated pest management (IPM) principles must be used when making pest management decisions. IPM requires steps to prevent rat infestations, establish treatment thresholds, and to consider non-chemical alternatives to pesticide use before rodenticides may be used. We currently offer guidance on prevention and options to control rodent pests on our website.

Ministry staff will continue to monitor the potential impacts of rodenticide use on owls and other non-target wildlife. If further protective measures are needed, we may modify applicator training materials and best practices, or increase our outreach and public education efforts for rodenticide use.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and for sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

George Heyman  
Minister

cc: Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture