April 30, 2019

The Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca
The Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
Strategy ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca
The Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Nat'l Resource  
Ops. & Rural Dev.  
FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
The Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture  
AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
The Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health  
HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca
The Honourable John Horgan, Premier of B. C.  
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Adam Olsen, MLA, Saanich North and the Islands  
adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Dear Ministers Robinson, Heyman, Donaldson, Popham, Dix, and Horgan, and MLA Olsen,

BC Nature (the Federation of BC Naturalists) represents more than 50 naturalists’ clubs and 6000 members province-wide. Our membership consists of dedicated naturalists and scientists who are connected to and have expertise in British Columbia’s landscapes and the diversity of organisms that inhabit them.

We are writing to you in support of the urgent 28 March appeal to you from a group of concerned Salt Spring Island residents. They seek your intervention to halt clear-cutting on private land on Salt Spring Island, and to secure necessary protection for rare and endangered Gulf Island ecotypes including older forests and wetlands. This alarm was sparked by a commercial logging operation that recently commenced the wholesale clear-cutting of a large steep-sloped property containing a treed wetland and dominated by an exemplary stand of older Douglas-fir and Western Redcedar. Residents have protested against the Local Trust Committees’ refusal to interfere in yet another seemingly blatant contravention of an existing bylaw while at the same time ignoring land use planning as dictated by the established Community Plan. We underscore their concern about the effects of forest disruption upon climate change, wildlife habitat, water integrity, invasive species, and the extreme difficulty of restoring local ecosystems on the edge of their distributions.

The Gulf Islands, administered by the Islands Trust, make a significant contribution to the privately held forest landscape of British Columbia. Much of these sensitive ecosystems, as described by the BC Conservation Data Centre, lie unprotected and threatened. British Columbia needs environmental regulations for privately held property to preserve and sustain these ecosystems, their habitats and species, and to preserve the region’s beauty and natural amenities. The provincial government holds the authority and responsibility
to recognize these concerns and suspend logging on parcels not zoned for forestry on Salt Spring, until the Local Trust Committee, as mandated by the Islands Trust Act, establishes a clear policy to preserve and protect its unique natural features for the benefit of all British Columbians.

Therefore we ask you to immediately suspend the current logging on Salt Spring Island, and to legislate meaningful environmental protections on private property as soon as possible.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

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

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cc: Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust Council - pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca
Laura Patrick SSI Trustee Laura@Lpatrick.com and Peter Grove SSI Trustee pgrove@islandstrust.bc.ca
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