

December 15, 2023

Hon. Nathan Cullen
Minister of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship
WLRs.minister@gov.bc.ca

Ms. Lori Halls
Deputy Minister
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
WLRs.DMO@gov.bc.ca

Subject: Skeena Region Cancellation of Conservation Lands

Dear Hon. Minister Cullen and Ms. Lori Halls,

On May 19, 2023, some of us below received a response letter from Ms. Lori Halls with regard to the cancelling of several Land Resource Management Plan valued conservation lands. We are appreciative of such a response letter from the Deputy Minister Level.

In that May 19 letter, Ms. Lori Halls states:

“the Skeena Region of WLRs is currently undertaking strategic overview of its Conservation Lands program, and a priority element of this is seeking to reinstate temporary Land Act designations over areas of conservation interest. Applications for reinstatement will be submitted to a statutory decision maker under the Land Act in the Ministry of Forests, requesting 5 year terms for Section 16s or 17s, or permanent Notations of Interest, depending on the land parcel. This is an interim measure that will allow Skeena WLRs staff the time to undertake applications for designations such as Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), Government Action Regulations (GAR) or other legislative tools to best match the management intent for a particular area.”

The undersigned request an update from the Skeena Region regarding interim reinstatement of the conservation lands and current, if any, process that is underway to establish long term conservation land designation. We are now well into the year of 2023 and the bulk of conservation land cancellations took place in 2019/2020 and resource development is now taking place on some of these cancelled parcels at this time, creating anxiety among conservation communities across the Bulkley and Skeena Regions.

Additionally, we request assurance that no further resource development or Land Act tenure issuance on the cancelled Land Act Conservation Lands occurs as this re-designation process is underway.

We sincerely thank-you for your consideration,

Greg Knox, Executive Director, Skeena Wild Conservation Trust

Jay Gilden, Director, Bulkley Valley Stewardship Coalition

Ron Vanderstar and Directors of the Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board

Cheryl Brown, Chair, Kalum Plan Implementation Committee

Dave Hooper, Chair, Wildlife for Tomorrow

cc: Hon. Bruce Ralston, Minister of Forests, For.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Jennifer Psyllakis, Executive Director, Wildlife, Habitat & Species at Risk Recovery jennifer.Psullakis@gov.bc.ca
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