

## Jas Chonk

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**From:** Rick Taylor [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2026 4:32 PM  
**To:** vicphsub  
**Subject:** Raptor policy Bylaw Public Hearing on Pender

I would add that regardless of the recommendations based on academic perspectives, everyday people's observed reality of Bald Eagle (as a sample raptor) behaviour demonstrates there is no concern with noise disturbance. These raptors nest in Hydro main power towers, BC Ferries infrastructure, nest and rest on trees adjacent to busy highways (Brackendale), adapt to land development as witnessed by the growth of nesting sites from two to seven in Magic Lake Estates since last survey. If anything the birds have adjusted to human habitation; their numbers have grown, not diminished, over time throughout BC and elsewhere. The raptors are like humans who hang around their refrigerator, in being close to food sources without disruptions. Acreage owners raising chickens, rabbits, et al, are witness to the loss of their food source to bald eagles and other species of prey.

As far as land development, on the gulf islands, including the Penders, I have seen little loss of nesting habitat in some 30+ years. The loss of habitat in BC is not materially from land development, but from wildfires, the huge majority of which is caused by lightning strikes. Millions of square hectares have been destroyed over many years. 2025 provides a good example. Birds move as do mammals, reptiles. The cycle repeats.

Finally, there is NO need for professionals to be part, at owners expense, in reviewing development plans. Restricting costs associated with housing is a Federal and Provincial goal to house people in affordable homes. There should be much less regulation than more.

Rick Taylor

[REDACTED] Pender Island  
[REDACTED]



Magic Lake Property Owners' Society  
P.O. Box 65, Pender Island, BC V0N 2M0  
[www.magiclake.ca](http://www.magiclake.ca)  
[notifymlpos@gmail.com](mailto:notifymlpos@gmail.com)

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The MLPOS Board is opposed to the proposed amendment to the Pender Island OCP regarding the increase to the Designated Permit Zones around raptor nests, the addition of this new, increased DPA to past and potential nesting trees, and the 100 metre radius quiet zone during nesting season. Recent research points out that Bald Eagles in particular have adapted very well to living with human activity. Trying to turn back the clock fifty years will disrupt their reproductive cycle, damaging their numbers, and interfering with successful reproduction. It is a heavy handed, unnecessary impediment to private property owners' in Magic Lake.

The specifics of our objections are:

1. The "study" that the Trust is stating they commissioned to justify their OCP amendment is not a study at all. It is a report.
2. The report uses two provincial documents to justify their proposal. Both of these documents: *"Best Management Practices for Raptor Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia"* and *"Guidelines for Raptor Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia."*, are, as their title suggests, primarily for use by developers planning suburban developments on rural land. Using them to justify imposing these counterproductive measures on Magic Lake property owners is unjustified.
3. The Island Trust Planner for North Pender described the work of the Trust on this amendment as using "Best Practices". The original 2005 document, *"Best Management Practices for Raptor Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia"* describes in detail what those best practices would look like. Section 8 of the document, on page 37, outlines the importance of educating the public and states any changes to the OCP would require "community support". We maintain that there is little support and widespread opposition to this amendment to the OCP in Magic Lake.

4. Two contemporary studies illustrate the how Bald Eagles have habituated themselves to human activities:

1. The most recent: "[Nest Success of Bald Eagles Exposed to Anthropogenic Activities in the United States \(2024\)](#)" a study undertaken by the US Federal Department of Fish and Wildlife, describes how Bald Eagles have habituated to human activities to the extent that: *"We provide further evidence that the growing contingent of bald eagles nesting in human-developed environments tolerate anthropogenic activities to a degree that they can nest successfully at rates comparable to those of the general U.S. population."*

2. The second study, "[Aspects of the Ecology of Urban-Nesting Bald Eagles \(\*Haliaeetus leucocephalus\*\) in South-Coastal British Columbia \(2021\)](#)" goes even further: "Our study area demonstrated that Bald Eagles coexist in close proximity to humans, and reproduce well in urban/suburban habitats.

5. One earlier study (2013) that clearly points out the ability of Bald Eagles to habituate to human activity, and should have been incorporated into any raptor management plan is: "[Generational habituation and current bald eagle populations](#)" explains clearly how Bald Eagles are successfully habituating to humans and foretells the results of Goulet, Bird, and Hancock's in 2021. *"future management of species, including bald eagle populations, near areas of human activity would benefit from incorporating the generational habituation hypothesis. For example, areas that traditionally have been described as suboptimal habitat for nesting bald eagles are now being used regularly and successfully (Baker and Monstad 2005, Johnson 2011). Isaacs and Anthony (2011) found low productivity of eagles during any new breeding area's first year, but a higher than usual productivity after 3 to 5 years of use."*

In conclusion: The MLPOS believes that the proposed attempt by the North Pender LTC to turn back the clock 50 years on a well established, productive, and growing Bald Eagle population in Magic Lake will, at its best, have no resulting improvements in Bald Eagle population in Magic Lake and could, in fact, be detrimental to their population. The draconian restrictions on the property owners and other residents in Magic Lake will not result in any improvement in Bald Eagle populations and could, in fact, be damaging to their success.

Should the North Pender LTC push these restrictions through, the MLPOS Board

will be petitioning the Minister of Municipal Affairs to not approve the OCP amendment as desired by the Islands Trust. We will point out the widespread community opposition to seeing this amendment to their Official Community Plan and the contemporary science contradicting the stated reasons for it.

Bob Coulson  
President