

Sent: September 12, 2022 2:01 PM  
To: Rory Hromadnik <planning@invermere.net>

Subject: bank swallow colony in Athalmer

Hello Rory,

I am a biologist working on the [Upper Columbia Swallow Habitat Enhancement Project](#) (UCSHEP) within the Columbia Valley (Canal Flats north to Donald). As part of this project we are working on conservation initiatives that work to conserve, enhance and restore habitat for at-risk bank and barn swallows - both [Threatened species under the Species at Risk Act](#).

We are hoping that the District of Invermere may be interested in contributing to swallow conservation in the Columbia Valley!

Also as part of the UCSHEP we have been identifying all bank swallow colonies in the Columbia Valley and monitoring many of the colonies identified. A new swallow colony was found at the end of the 2021 breeding season and was later confirmed as active with breeding bank swallows in 2022, with monitoring in place this year. The location is at the east end of the large dirt pile that appears to be within the Athalmer Neighbourhood Plan area (near Pete's Marina). We found that 7 of the 29 burrow entrances/holes were active with breeding bank swallows this year. (Photos of this colony taken in spring 2022 attached).

In order to help with the recovery of the bank swallow, would the DOI be interested in retaining the habitat for this species at the Athalmer location? Ideally we could also work on 'enhancing' additional areas of that dirt pile to make it more suitable for bank swallows to nest. Essentially this would mean that we would reslope (with an excavator) part of the bank to make it more vertical and thus more suitable for nesting. The UCSHEP could get funding to do this resloping work. BC Parks has been working with the UCSHEP on restoring and conserving a bank swallow colony at Windermere Lk Prov Park as well. This project is funded in part by RDEK's Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund as well as other funders listed at the bottom of our [webpage](#).

In 2020 Lake Windermere was identified as Critical Habitat in the proposed federal Recovery Strategy for bank swallows (see image below). There are about 25 active bank swallow colonies in the Lake Windermere area, however much of the habitat around the northern area of the lake has been lost, likely due to development. It would be great to retain (and create) additional habitat for bank swallows at the north end of the lake. Athalmer would also be excellent location for education material such as signage, which the UCSHEP can likely provide most (if not all) of the funding for.

I see on the DOI website that the Athalmer Neighbourhood Plan is well underway and am hoping that we can add swallow conservation to this plan. I am happy to meet or chat with you or someone else that may be the best person to speak with about the potential.

I look forward to hearing from you.

I respectfully acknowledge that I work and live in the traditional unceded territories of the Ktunaxa, Secwépemc and Sinixt; the current home of Indigenous peoples from these Nations along with the Métis Nation Columbia River Society.

**Figure E-17.** Critical habitat for Bank Swallow in Southern British Columbia is represented by the yellow shaded polygons, where the criteria and methodology set out in Section 7.1 are met. The 10 x 10 km Standardized UTM grid overlay (red outline) shown on this figure is a Standardized national grid system that indicates the general geographic area within which critical habitat is found. Detailed critical habitat maps are available upon request. Labels (1233\_XX\_YY) indicate the critical habitat units described in Appendix D.







