Pender Harbour & District Wildlife
Society
General Delivery
Egmont, B.C. VON 1NO

25 March 1989

Dr. Louise A. Goulet
Ecological Reserves Coordinator
Ministry of Environment and Parks
4000 Seymour Place
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X5

Dear Dr. Goulet,

With reference to our recent telephone conversation, what follows is a brief review of activities undertaken by the Pender Harbour & District Wildlife Society in Ecological Reserve No. 28 (Ambrose Lake).

Members and guests of the Society made six formal day trips into the reserve during the period May to October 1988. Altogether 33 individuals took part, of whom the majority were along to simply learn more about the natural world. Most such expeditions walked in along the access road and then followed game trails along the north side of Ambrose Lake and on the bog flanking the eastern basin. On a couple of occasions the reserve was accessed by canoe across Ruby Lake, walking up a trail to Ambrose Lake or following its outlet creek. A small rowboat was used on some of the trips to facillitate transport around the lake and to set and service live traps. Neither the western slope up from Agamemnon Channel, nor the large upland area south of Ambrose Lake, were visited.

Each of the larger expeditions was led by one or more individuals having expertise with a particular group of animals or plants. These "experts", some of whom were academics and others self-taught naturalists, provided a subject focus for each field trip, although other taxa were often observed or sampled incidentally as well. Included among the trip leaders were Dr. Kay Beamish of Vancouver (vascular plants), naturalists Vince Bracewell of Sechelt and John Hind-Smith of Gibsons (wildflowers and birds) and Warren Drinnan of Nanaimo (birds), retired trapper Doug Williams of Earls Cove (mammals), and John Field (fishes).

In addition to the more formal expeditions, ten other visits were made into the reserve at various times, to check live mammal traps and minnow traps, or to collect specimens. Dr. Beamish, Dr. Wilf Schofield (U.B.C.) and Dr. Syd Cannings (U.B.C.) have kindly volunteered to identify species in our collections of vascular plants, mosses and aquatic insects, respectively.

I am appending a simple list of (mostly) common names of the species so far identified from E.R. 28, organized into generalized taxonomic groups. The habitat in which each species was found is not given, although we do have such information and will include it when our data are more complete. Most of the mammals were identified only from tracks, scats or other sign; our live trapping program was largely unsuccessful, largely because we did not have enough traps. Particularly lacking is any information on the smaller species: rats, mice, shrews, and voles. Most species of birds were viewed with the aid of

binoculars, a few were identified only by their vocalizations. Plant species are not listed; however, we did confirm the presence of most of those recorded from the reserve previously, as well as a number of new species.

The Society would like to continue this project in 1989, and wishes to apply for a new permit on the same terms as the last one. However, we would like, if possible, to increase its span from five to seven months, extending from mid-April to mid-November. Our principal aims this year are to continue the herbarium collection of vascular plants, mosses and lichens, to survey the birds more thoroughly, especially early in the season, and to identify some of the mushrooms. We would also like to undertake a period of live trapping for small mammals in the fall, but this is contingent on finding a source of small traps. Meanwhile we will continue to look for mammal signs. Any incidental observations of reptiles and amphibians will also be recorded.

I trust this brief review of our efforts to date will bring you up to date. Either I (883-2807) or Iris Griffith (883-2434) would be pleased to provide further details.

Sincerely,

John Field
Chairman, Ambrose Lake Survey Committee

cc S. Riley
I. Griffith

ECOLOGICAL RESERVE NO. 28 (AMBROSE LAKE)

Birds (names per Audubon field guide):

pine siskin
downy woodpecker
Northern three-toed woodpecker
yellow-bellied sapsucker
common flicker
American robin
gray jay
common loon
goldeneye (sp?)
fox sparrow
turkey vulture
osprey
winter wren
common raven
olive-sided flycatcher
Western flycatcher (?)
orange-crowned warbler
ruffed grouse
common yellowthroat
hairy woodpecker
pileated woodpecker
red-breasted nuthatch
cedar waxwing
rufous hummingbird
Steller's jay
blue-winged teal
mallard
song sparrow
bald eagle
belted kingfisher
western wood pewee
Swainson's thrush
alder flycatcher (?)
chestnut-backed chickadee
kinglet (sp?)

Mammals:

beaver
black bear
river otter (?)
red squirrel (seen)
bobcat
dog
black-tailed deer
raccoon
water shrew (dead specimen preserved)
little spotted skunk (seen)
cougar
cottontail rabbit

Fish (per Freshwater Fishes of B.C.):

three-spine stickleback
cutthroat trout (outlet stream near Ruby Lake, but not in Ambrose Lake)
prickly sculpin

Reptiles and Amphibians (per respective museum handbooks):

Northwestern garter snake
red-legged frog
Western toad (?)
common garter snake
Northwestern salamander

Aquatic insects:

Preserved collections of dragonflies and aquatic insect larvae from Ambrose Lake and its surrounding sphagnum bog.

Plants:

Herbarium collection of over 100 vascular plant species; another dozen, mostly trees, identified but not yet collected. Collection includes three aquatic species from Ambrose Lake. Photo of a rare species, not sampled.
Unsorted collection of dried mosses/lichens from two habitats (bog and rock bluff).

Pender Harbour & District Wildlife Society 25 march 1989.