



May 8, 2025

BY EMAIL

Heidi Kurht: info@heidikuhrt.com

Brad Fossen: brad@thinkapg.com

Re: *Land Act* Licence Application for Nature-Based Erosion Protection Project, Crown Land File No. 1415573

Dear Heidi Kurht, Patricia and Bruce Sanders, David Demner, and Ethan Wilding,

Thank you for your application for a nature-based shoreline erosion protection project on Baker Beach, Salt Spring Island. The application package has been referred to internal and external agencies, relevant stakeholders, the public, and First Nations for review. Given the feedback that has been received thus far, I, the Statutory Decision Maker, have several concerns with the proposed project. At this time, I invite you to submit any additional information that may address the considerations below.

- I understand that the proposed measures are meant to mitigate against a high risk of slope failure, and that toe erosion is contributing to slope instability. The claim that toe erosion is creating instability of the slope on site does not seem to be fully supported by the Coastal Reports. Notably:
 - The backshore of Baker Beach is mainly bedrock, which is known to erode at slow rates.
 - There is significant vegetation on the shoreline, indicating longer term slope stability.
 - No major historic failures of the coastal slope were identified.
- The project proposal does not align with the [Nature-based Shoreline Project Checklist](#) Section 5.0, specifically with regards to demonstrating a need to protect existing permanent structures and/or to enhance degraded habitat.
 - The Coastal Reports do not adequately demonstrate that beach nourishment and wave deflection boulders are necessary to protect existing permanent structures in the near or long term. Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) brought this requirement to the applicant's attention on December 20, 2025 (Information Request Q1.1). The response that WLRS received from the

QEPs on March 7, 2025 does not clarify whether the project on the foreshore is necessary. It remains unknown whether water management, bioengineering, or other mitigation measures on the upland properties would sufficiently address the erosion concerns, without the use of foreshore mitigation.

- The QEP mentions that the foreshore mitigation measures will restore the disrupted sediment supply within the tenure area, enhancing degraded habitat. However, the application of beach nourishment and wave deflection boulders is not expected to significantly enhance marine and intertidal habitat, as per the point below.
- The project proposal does not align with the [Nature-based Shoreline Project Checklist](#) Section 5.0. Specifically, the report does not adequately demonstrate that the design allows for the continuation of natural processes along the beach, especially with regards to plain fin midshipman spawning habitat and eelgrass beds. I acknowledge that beach nourishment is proposed to be upsized and placed above the wrack line to minimize the potential for smothering intertidal organisms. However, the current presence of cobble and boulders along the intertidal zone indicates that there is enough energy within the intertidal and upper swash zone to move both the beach nourishment and the boulder materials around relatively quickly during winter storms. While the migration of beach nourishment may create forage fish habitat, sediments may travel into the lower intertidal areas, potentially damaging spawning habitat and eelgrass beds. The application of beach nourishment and placement of wave deflection boulders is not ecologically justified in the Coastal Reports nor the Environmental Assessment and the risk to existing marine habitats seems to outweigh the benefits of potential habitat creation.

We anticipate making a decision soon and would appreciate any further information that might address the concerns above. Please submit your response to Authorizations Specialist, Celine Coschizza at celine.coschizza@gov.bc.ca, by Friday, May 23, 2025.

Respectfully,



Mike Freer
Senior Authorizations Officer
West Coast Land Authorizations
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship