

Environment and Climate Change Canada
Canadian Wildlife Service
5421 Robertson Road, Delta, BC, V4K 3N2



21 April 2023

Re: Bank Swallow research in Blackfoot Regional Park, British Columbia

To the BOARD OF THE PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT,

On behalf of Environment and Climate Change Canada, I am writing to request permission to access Blackfoot Regional Park to conduct work for a scientific research project monitoring Bank Swallows along the Peace River.

The goal of this project is to monitor the location and size of swallow colonies along the river between Canyon Dam and the BC-AB border, and to determine how swallow diet is influenced by the habitat in this area. In particular, we are interested in determining whether swallows primarily forage on insects that develop in terrestrial or aquatic ecosystems, and whether their diets contain high levels of mercury (a toxic metal for many species). For this work, a team of three people will capture swallows at various sites along the river and collect feather and blood samples to understand their diet and mercury load.

I am writing to request permission to access a swallow colony along the river edge in Blackfoot Regional Park. We anticipate that work in the park would take place on two days in July 2023, and on each day we would be in the park for up to three hours. I do not anticipate that our work will impact other park users as we are a small team working along the bank edge for a short period.

We catch swallows using 6m long mesh nets. Captured swallows are removed from nets immediately and brought a short distance away where we will process them (apply a numbered bird band from the Canadian Bird Banding Office and collect a feather and blood sample). Swallows are released immediately after processing.

We hold all the federal and provincial permits necessary to conduct this work (BC Wildlife Permit, Environment and Climate Change Canada Scientific Permit to Capture and Band Migratory Birds, and Animal Care Authorization).

If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact me at 236-335-8546 or sydney.bliss@ec.gc.ca.

Sincerely,

Sydney Bliss
Landbird Biologist
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Canadian Wildlife Service





Figure 1. Approximate location of Bank Swallow colony in Blackfoot Regional Park.



Figure 2. Bank Swallow.



Figure 3. Nets in front of a Bank Swallow colony.