

MEETING WITH TELUS REPRESENTATIVE

In response to the second of these two letters to Telus, BC Nature received an invitation to speak with a company representative on the subject of bird fatalities from telecommunications towers.

I arranged to have an online call today (Tuesday, Aug. 25) with Erick Wenzel, Senior Environmental Consultant for Telus, at his home office in Montreal.

Mr. Wenzel had given good consideration to the points raised in our letter.

He explained that bird collisions have not been identified by Telus as an issue.

Telus does not collect data on collisions, as their technicians generally only visit sites once a year. Dead birds would not likely still be present. He only knew of one case of a bird found at a site in Alberta and in that instance, it could not be concluded if the death was collision or some other reason.

He pointed out that of the approximately 740 towers in BC, most are not high. Typically they are in the range of 30 to 60 meters, or even lower. The single highest is 150 m. Only those above 60 m would be guyed. They are aware of a trick of using reflective tape hanging from guy wires, but have not used this.

5G works best with shorter towers [note from Harold: I believe 5G thus requires more towers].

Telus has transitioned away from constant-on lights, now using strobe LED lights. The lighting is regulated by Transport Canada.

There have been some issues with birds, Osprey and Raven, building nests on towers. They will put up an inverted-V device on a tower to prevent nests or erect adjacent poles to provide an alternative. They had one case of a successful Osprey active nest relocation, where they built a platform and moved the nest to it. The birds adapted to it immediately.

I told him that if future relocations are considered, perhaps our local members could play an important role advising on locations and placement.

Telus does not investigate migration routes or patterns for birds. He said that governments are pushing for better coverage, so that means more sites.

I doubt that we will hear anything further from Telus, but I told him that BC Nature and our clubs/members would be happy to assist if we can help.

Harold Sellers,
President