



January 21, 2015

Malissa Smith,
Ministry of Forest, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations
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Malissa.Smith@gov.bc.ca

Dear Malissa,

Re: Powder Mountain Catskiing Proposed Commercial Recreation Tenure Expansion near Brew Hut

Our organization, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC), is a province-wide umbrella organization of 33 outdoor recreation clubs with 5000 individual members. For over four decades we have represented the interests of non-motorized or self-propelled backcountry recreationists by maintaining or improving non-motorized backcountry experiences, including access, for our members and the general public. We also strongly support maintaining the ecological integrity of wilderness and wildlife which are commonly compromised by motorized recreation.

The recent proposal by Powder Mountain Catskiing (PMC) for a tenure expansion on the slopes of Mount Brew and the high ground north of Roe Creek is too close to the Varsity Outdoor Club (VOC) Brew Hut, which is located in an area that has been a non-motorized recreation area for decades. The FMCBC opposes this proposal for the reasons outlined below.

1. After many compromises by many different user groups, the Winter Backcountry Sharing Accord was finalized several years ago, and then adopted by the Sea-to-Sky LRMP. The zoning of this particular area was left unresolved as the First Nations, the motorized, non-motorized, and commercial tenure holders could not reach consensus. If the proposed tenure expansion is permitted, the proposed new roads will permit motorized access in the winter and summer so that the area will become essentially motorized. Such a change in land use without proper discussion by all relevant parties is inconsistent with proper land use planning. Because this area is near highways it should be preserved for non-motorized users using natural boundaries which will be lost due to the new roads. Clearly recreation areas that are easily accessed by foot within a day should be preserved for non-motorized use, and PMC can conduct operations in areas further away from the plowed roads.
2. Before the first VOC Brew hut was constructed in 1982, this area had traditionally been used by non-motorized recreationists and the terrain is such that motorized recreationists rarely went there. The PMC proposal will allow access to the alpine areas by snowmobiles as snowmobile use within the Roe and Brandywine creeks has become high. Motorized recreationists using the RV park



located near the Brandywine snowmobile parking will have easy access to the alpine which will exacerbate the problem.

3. A recent study by the FMCBC shows that non-motorized backcountry users contributed about \$3.6 billion in direct economic spending to the Province of BC in 2012. In addition to financial benefits, this study also described the physical exercise and mental benefits of non-motorized recreation pursued in peaceful natural surroundings.
4. Cat skiing during the winter is acceptable below about 1000 m elevation and within the extents of the 2014 clearcuts. We recommend that the tenure area be revised to include only the area below 1000 m and within the 2014 clearcuts.

Most of the Province's non-motorized recreationists reside in the lower mainland and the Brew hut is easily accessed as a weekend and day trip. The Sea-to-Sky Corridor is famous nationally and internationally because of its easy access to wilderness, and the enjoyment of non-motorized recreation. To maintain this area for those purposes, the FMCBC proposes that this area be designated non-motorized under Section 58 of the Forest Range and Practices Act. Based on informal discussions with First Nations and a lack of use by the motorized community we believe that this area would be excellent candidate for a designated non-motorized area. In addition, it is about six years since the LRMP was completed and once again we request that the zoning of unresolved areas such as this one be completed to avoid these sorts of situations.

In view of the reasons stated in the above discussion, we ask that you reject this proposal by PMC or at least that it be amended as discussed in point 4 above. We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Wood
Co- Chair, Recreation and Conservation Committee
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

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