



October 30, 2012

Aina Cernenoks, Recreation Officer  
Recreation Sites and Trails,  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations,  
By email: [aina.cernenoks@gov.bc.ca](mailto:aina.cernenoks@gov.bc.ca).

Re. Catamount/Northstar Glacier Proposed Amendment for Motorized Access.

Dear Ms Cernenoks,

Our organization, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC), is a province-wide umbrella organization of 25 outdoor recreation clubs with over 3500 individual members. For 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 public. We also strongly support maintaining the ecological integrity of wilderness which is commonly compromised by motorized recreation.

Our Federation is very concerned about the proposal to reduce snowmobile restrictions from the Catamount and Olive Huts areas of the central Purcells, which are areas that have been used by the non-motorized recreation community for many years to enjoy quiet wilderness experiences. In spite of these areas being zoned for non-motorized use, there are many instances of snowmobiles violating these zoning restrictions thus detracting from the experiences of the non-motorized users and causing conflict between the two user groups, as well as increasing risks of accidents. At present there are few if any resources for government to enforce the Section 58 closures, and it seems that that this proposal is meant to reduce conflicts between the two user groups by changing the rules to extend the period for legal operation of snowmobiles in these areas. This proposal effectively rewards the illegal behaviour of the snowmobilers by removing the present restrictions, and is clearly counter to the purpose of the original Section 58 Order and the interests of the non-motorized community. It is added that snowmobilers have many other areas to use without using these relatively small areas, which are some of the last remaining traditional quiet areas outside parks which are free of motorized recreation. If the proposed recently approved and very controversial Jumbo Glacier Resort goes ahead, this will further reduce the amount of quiet areas for non-motorized recreationists.

Many of our member clubs in other areas of the Province report similar non-enforcement problems with snowmobilers and other motorized recreationists trespassing into areas that have been zoned for non-motorized recreation. In addition, these problems appear to be increasing in many areas, presumably as there is little or no funding to enforce non-motorized zoning regulations. Some members feel that local communities believe that motorized recreationists contribute more revenue to the community than non-motorized recreationists, and thus they wish to encourage motorized recreation at the expense of non-motorized recreation. This belief does not justify blatant disregard of existing regulations that were put in place for good reasons, that not only protect the interests of non-motorized recreationists but also wildlife and the environment. Clearly, our members would



## Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Accessing the backcountry one step at a time

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like to see zoning changes which result in an increase of non-motorized areas, rather than a reduction as in this proposal.

We request that decisions on any proposed changes to reduce restrictions on Section 58 areas be subject to a thorough public input process where the views of all interested parties can be considered before any decision is taken. We thank you for this opportunity to make our views known, and look forward to your comments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Webster', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Webster,  
President  
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC