



27 June 2014

**Jennie Aikman**

By email to: [jennie.aikman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:jennie.aikman@gov.bc.ca)  
Regional Director, South Coast Region,  
Ministry of Environment - BC Parks.

Intentions Paper relating to BC Parks Ski Resort Policy

Dear Ms. Aikman,

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) is a province-wide umbrella organization of 32 outdoor recreation clubs with approximately 4900 individual members, many of whom live in Metro Vancouver. For over four decades we have represented the interests of non-motorized or self-propelled backcountry recreationists by maintaining or improving backcountry and wilderness experiences for our members and the public. We strongly support maintaining the ecological integrity and boundaries of our provincial parks while maintaining and improving public access for non-motorized backcountry recreation.

The FMCBC welcomes this opportunity to supply input into the Ski Resort Policy as we have many concerns regarding the north shore mountains ski resorts of Metro Vancouver. In addition, as the management plans of the parks are decades old, in order to reduce costs of public consultation and to ensure internal consistency, we feel that the Park Management Plans, the Park use permits and the ski resort development plans should be thoroughly reviewed and drafted in the same concurrent public processes, thereby saving duplication and extra expense for a series of Open Houses on much the same issues. Thus, we do not want to see the revisions done in a piecemeal manner, particularly as there is a sixty year term proposed for Park Use Permits in this draft policy. We feel sixty years is too long and would strongly suggest that a thirty year permit (e.g. 2014 to 2044) would be sufficient to allow the ski operations to feel that they have control over the facilities that they have invested in over the last five years in order to recoup their investment.

We particularly support the five objectives outlined in Intentions Paper, but many of our concerns relate more to operational problems particularly in the North Shore ski areas. Our main problem relates to safe and free access to the backcountry of the Provincial Parks, not just during the ski season but year round. One access safety problem relates to those visitors who do not use the lifts during the ski season and are “funneled” into poorly located and maintained backcountry access trails. These trails are used for both for ascent and descent

and this dual use commonly leads to dangerous situations. People descending these trails on skis, snowboards, plastic bags, etc. often have poor or no control of their speed and direction due to the steep, narrow, icy and winding trail and this is very hazardous to all trail users. We are concerned that any measures that would restrict backcountry visitors using trails due to safety issues or fees should be carefully reviewed and subject to a full public process.

Perhaps this long-standing problem and other problems can be addressed during your review of ski resort operations in the parks. We would be pleased to add more comments at the appropriate time during this planning process as we have many other concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Wood,

Co- Chair, FMCBC Recreation and Conservation Committee

cc. John Trehitt      [john.trehitt@gov.bc.ca](mailto:john.trehitt@gov.bc.ca)