



March 14, 2007

Graeme Schimf
Integrated ProAction Corp
1425 Hugh Allan Drive
Kamloops, BC, V1S 1J3

Dear Graeme,

Re: Cayoosh Creek Watershed Access Management Plan

We are writing in response to the proposed Access Management Plan for the Cayoosh Watershed. The Federation of Mountain Clubs (FMC) represents 24 clubs and some 3500 members from around the province. A majority of the members reside in the lower mainland and use the Cayoosh Watershed/Duffy Lake corridor extensively. The prominent mountain ranges, which surround the watershed, including the Cayoosh Ranges and the Joffre Group and very important recreation areas for our members and we are very concerned about the potential impacts this plan will have on traditional access in this area.

We understand that the window for public comment on this plan has now passed. The FMC has been experiencing major communication problems and the information regarding this plan and the open house that was held in Lillooet was not distributed to our staff and committees until very recently. On this basis we would ask that you still receive our comments and incorporate them into the Access Management Plan for Ainsworth. We would also ask that in the future you consider hosting a public meeting or open house in the Sea to Sky corridor or even Vancouver as this is where the majority of recreational users reside.

Dependable access to wilderness and recreation areas is a major issue with our membership particularly with respect to accessing "key areas" such as those covered in this plan. The public depends on resource roads to access favored areas for recreation (e.g. parks, backcountry access and circle routes for hiking, skiing, mountain climbing etc.) particularly where there is a history of use and enjoyment.

The Duffey Lake corridor, at the heart of the management plan, is one of the most popular areas for backcountry skiing in Southwest BC. Several parties will access many of the drainages on any given weekend. Most of the skiers come from Vancouver, Squamish and Whistler. This is due to a number of things such as the excellent terrain, drier, colder snow, and the ease of access from the Duffey Lake road. The most heavily used areas are those from Cayoosh Pass east to Blowdown Creek. The network of logging roads that run up the various drainages are crucial for skier access. Particularly the main roads that run up Cayoosh Creek (to Cayoosh Mountain and Marriott Basin areas), Caspar Creek, Van Horlick Creek, Steep Creek, Blowdown Creek and Channel Creek are essential and would severely restrict skier access if they were deactivated or gated. This area is equally important for summer hiking and mountain climbing.

The Access Management Plan, as we understand it will evaluate the various access roads and related issues throughout the Cayoosh Watershed, and has the potential to curtail and in some cases close completely important access points and routes. Therefore we propose to make several and specific recommendations and requests in response to this plan through a follow up process.

Generally speaking the FMC would like to have an official line of communication with Ainsworth regarding access issues. Often we don't hear about decisions to deactivate a road, decommission a bridge, or close a road to recreational use often until after it happens. However if we had opportunity to hear about these intended decisions we might be able to develop creative solutions. For example, deactivation or decommissioning could be done in a manner that still allows recreational access. At the very least communication informs us so our members can make other trip plans. Also communication is important to convey why a road is being deactivated (e.g. there will be some understanding that industrial users shouldn't have to pay for, or bear liability for, roads they no longer need, or there may be a wildlife issue to address).

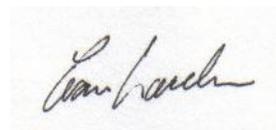
Our members feel that forest roads are public roads since they were paid for with stumpage allowances and that forest licensees should maintain roads important for recreation and, if not, it should be a government responsibility to do so. Having said this, road and area closures for environmental reasons will normally be supported by our members provided that: (a) the reasons are sound, (b) all options are explored, and (c) they apply to all recreation users (e.g. motorized and commercial recreation).

Deactivation standards seem to vary considerably for different districts and licensees. For example, some provide several water bars that make recreational access difficult while others do not. With this Access Management Plan a consistent standard that allows for appropriate recreation access while still achieving environmental objectives would be much appreciated by our members. We would request that any de-activation methods such as water bars be minimal so as to permit 2-wheel drive vehicle access.

There are some excellent examples of forest licensees working well with the FMC and the public on access issues. We wish to have a similar relationship with Ainsworth. While we have provided some access information in this submission we would further like to meet with Ainsworth representatives where we could develop a map showing favored traditional road use to key areas so that these interests can be taken into account in road maintenance and deactivation decisions.

Thank you for providing this opportunity for input. We look forward to further discussion on this important planning process.

Sincerely,



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