

(on letterhead)

The Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia
And Members of the Executive Council
Box 9041
Station PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

February 25, 2009

Dear Premier Campbell and members of the Executive Council:

Re: Role of the Province in community-based planning process for recreational use in the Rossland Range

This is further to our letters to the Honourable George Abbott, Minister of Sustainable Resource Management, dated March 22, 1995 and April 1, 2005.

As noted in those letters, we are seeking to create a comprehensive plan for recreational use in the Rossland Range. While certain recreation values in the Rossland Range are included in various current designations (a Forest Service Recreation Site and two Recreation Trails), there is no overarching vision for the area, jurisdiction is fragmented and often unclear, and the many users and interests in the Rossland Range do not have the needed level of assurance that their needs will be respected as the area comes under more pressure from both recreation and resource use. In addition, there is presently no clarity among recreational users about the proper balance between the level of recreational use and the need to protect environmental values. A plan setting out the "big picture," created through an inclusive process, and given sufficient official status to be meaningful in government decisions at all levels, is required.

It is important that the plan be developed soon because recreational use of the Rossland Range is increasing rapidly, the potential for conflicts has recently been observed, and there is an opportunity at this time to build on a history of cooperation while the landscape still has sufficient room for trade-offs and agreement. In other areas of the province where planning at our proposed scale has been undertaken, the

processes have too often been hindered by previous over-commitment of the landscape and by an acrimonious history.

In fact, one of the most attractive aspects of the Rossland Range is the way the various user groups have been able to share the landscape, and to accommodate recreational use within an active forestry tenure. A plan undertaken now would build on a positive history and a pool of participants who have an expectation of reasonableness.

The Rossland Range is the immediate recreational "backyard" for the communities of Rossland, Trail and Castlegar (and the surrounding rural areas), and is increasingly attracting users from more distant centres as people discover its accessibility and the variety of experiences it offers.

It is also an important part of the local working forest, and historically has seen considerable mineral exploration and mining. (The town of Rossland itself was the site of a number of gold mines.) Recreation in the Rossland Range has significant economic value to its surrounding communities. As mentioned above, more and more people from other places are accessing the Recreational opportunities here. Tourism Rossland has noted how much more marketable recreation in the Rossland Range would become if the core values supporting it were secured by a high-status plan.

As you will see by the attached letters of support, there is a high level of community interest in creating a plan, and we are aware of a matching interest in seeing the community come together and agree on their own home-grown plan. Our expectation is that the role of the Province could be the provision of facilitation and technical support, so that the interested parties can create a plan in a fair, open, and informed way.

We have been encouraging the Province to help create this plan for some time. Staff in the Ministries responsible have been unfailingly supportive and, as noted in Deputy Minister Chris Trumpy's letter to us of May 5, 2005, have done some preliminary work towards a plan. We hope that, given the support of the key stakeholders and surrounding communities as evidenced in their attached letters, you will see the value of taking positive action at this time, and give directions that a full-scale plan be undertaken as soon as possible.

A number of members of the Friends of the Rossland Range have a particular concern to see the environmentally-sensitive area known as the Old Glory Alpine (similar to the previously designated Nancy Greene Recreation Area, and including the current rather small Recreation Site) set aside for non-motorized use only. However, our membership also includes those with interests in various forms of motorized recreation. We realize that we cannot meet the needs of all by focussing on just one small area of the Rossland Range. We propose that the boundaries of our proposed plan be created during the planning process as the participants look for the particular sites that will best meet the

interests that need to be met, within the general boundaries of the Rossland Range, i.e. east of Christina Lake, west of Castlegar and Trail, south of the Arrow Lakes, north of the Canada-US border. As a matter of practicality, we hope to confine the plan to as small an area as possible while meeting everyone's needs.

We look forward to receiving your reply, and ask that you pass this request on to the Ministries best able to set the planning process in motion.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact either myself (Les Carter, Box 824, Rossland, BC, V0G 1Y0; (250) 362-5677) or our President, Kim Deane (Friends of the Rossland Range Society, Box 701, Rossland, BC V0G 1Y0; (250) 362-5648).

Thank you for your attention.

Yours truly,

Les Carter, Director, Friends of the Rossland Range
for the President and Board of Directors

Enclosures:

Letters of support from:

City of Rossland

Village of Warfield

City of Grand Forks

Big Red Cats - Cat Skiing Adventures

Red Mountain Resort

Beaumont Timber Co.

Atco Wood Products

Black Jack Cross Country Ski Club

Redstone Resort

Whistle Tours – Backcountry Ski Touring

Betsy and Chris Jasinski

Smith and Bean Guesthouse

Clansey's Cappucino

Mainstage Antiques and Art Gallery

Revolution Cycles and Service

Nowell 2 Land Design

Red Barn Lodge

Bob Bechaud
Louise Drescher
Gwen Johnson
Dr. M. Jill Peacock
Egbert Plug
Dr. Jonas Sandstrom

Photos: Scenic and recreational values in the Rossland Range