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March 2, 2023

Justin Dexter
District Recreation Officer (Kootenay-Boundary Regional District)
Recreation Sites and Trails BC

Justin:

The Friends of the Rossland Range (FORR), as RS&T's community partner managing the Rossland Range Recreation Site, would like to bring to your attention an on-going problem with an old exploratory shaft in a mining claim near the main parking lot at Strawberry Pass and readily accessible beside a heavily-used trail.

We have discussed this matter in the past, with little apparent action taken by the claim-holder.

Logs were placed over the hole, apparently a long time ago, but they have rotted and collapsed. More recently, FORR placed a warning sign and Caution flagging, but it is clear from inspecting the site that what has been done is insufficient to ensure public safety. A person exploring off-trail could easily fall into the hole, which is 2-3 meters in diameter, and about 7 meters deep, with vertical sides. Someone who fell in would not be able to get out.

There is serious risk here, to Rec Site users, but also to FORRS as the entity the public looks to for their safety, and to RS&T as the agency responsible for providing the Rec Site's public liability insurance.

The Ministry of Mines has exposure as well, and the claim-holder, as the occupier, is clearly at risk.

Times have changed dramatically since the area around this claim was explored in the 1960s, when Highway 3B did not exist, and recreational use was virtually non-existent.

Especially since the Recreation Site was developed over the last few years, public usage of the area has risen many-fold, with noticeable positive effects on the local economy. Thousands of visitors now ski, snowshoe, mountain bike and walk the area in all seasons. Many of these users are from other places, and are often new to activities like this. They have no knowledge or expectation of lurking hazards such as mine shafts. The owner/occupiers of such hazards now need to fully live up their responsibilities to the community and the public.

The GPS coordinates of this shaft are: Latitude 49.20694 Longitude 117.89611 (taken from a cell phone, may be approximate)

We would appreciate it if you could pass our concerns on to the Ministry of Mines, with a request that the shaft in question be remediated in a secure and permanent way.

Thanks!

Les Carter
Director, Friends of the Rossland Range