

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board
www.bvcrb.ca
Box 577
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

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Fred Oliemans, Acting Service Centre Manager, Skeena Region
ILMB Services Centre
3726 Alfred Ave.,
Smithers, BC
V0J 2N0

Pat Bell
Ministry of Forest and Range
Minister responsible for Integrated Land Management Bureau
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

Smithers Interior News

Residents of Bulkley Valley

Re: File No. 6405671; Application to build a road to access private property on Seymour Ridge

Dear Recipients,

The Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board is composed of local residents who represent the range of value perspectives of the community and help to guide local land use decisions. We are charged with monitoring the implementation of the Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and the Sustainable Resource Management Plan (SRMP) for crown lands within the Bulkley Timber Supply Area. Our purpose is to advise government regarding responsible management of all resources to guarantee long-term resource sustainability and enable communities to maintain their quality of life without compromising the needs of future generations. Implicit in this concept is the maintenance of natural biological diversity of ecosystems.

In 2008 we received for review, in our role as outlined above, an application to build a road across Seymour Ridge to access private property. On Aug 26, 2008 we submitted our comments to the Integrated Land Management Bureau. In these comments we opposed the application because, in our opinion, it was not compatible with the Bulkley Valley LRMP and SRMP, including the objectives set by government from these plans in September 2006.

The plans and objectives for this area put a high priority on recreation and encourage hiking opportunities and non-motorized access. These plans also indicate that the area in question is within a Core Ecosystem, which is set aside to protect a red-listed plant community and to maintain biodiversity on the landscape in a cross section of naturally-occurring ecosystems. As such, this designation does not allow for timber harvesting or permanent road construction.

On March 2, 2010 the statutory decision maker for Integrated Land Management Bureau approved the road application. Concessions were made to the proposed road by the applicant in order for the approval to take place. However, the approved application still allows for a permanent road to be built in a Core Ecosystem within the Community Forest. This area is not designated for road building under current land use plans and thus poses a risk of fragmenting the Core Ecosystem, potentially compromising its integrity and intended function.

The Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board does not support the approval of this application for the previously mentioned reasons. It is also concerned that the approval of this application undermines the Bulkley Valley LRMP and SRMP. These plans were developed after significant input from local residents and stakeholders, and are intended to guide land use while maintaining the diverse values of the community.

More information about this issue and the Community Resources Board can be found on our website (www.bvcrb.ca) or please contact us directly at info@bvcrb.ca. It is the responsibility of the board to provide information to and consult with the public while completing our role as monitors and advisor to the government in responsible management of the Bulkley Valleys resources.

Sincerely,

Greg Storie, Chair
Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board

Cc Doug Donaldson