

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board
Box 577
Smithers, BC, V0J 2N2

April 16, 2008

District Manager
Ministry of Forests
Skeena-Stikine Forest District
Bag 6000
Smithers, B.C.
V0J 2N0

Attn: Barry Smith, R.P.F., District Manager

Re: Ski and Ride Smithers Master Plan – Amendment

Dear Sir:

Over the last few months the Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) has been reviewing and providing comment on the Ski and Ride Smithers (SRS) Master Plan. The comments provided by the BVCRB center around maintaining public access to certain features on Hudson's Bay Mountain and making sure the Visual Quality Objectives (VQO's) are recognized in the planning process.

As you are the statutory decision maker with regard to any changes that are made to the VQO's, the BVCRB offers the following:

The original SRS Master Plan had very little reference to the VQO's on the face of Hudson's Bay Mountain. Since the original plan was put out for public comment, SRS has produced additional visual quality analysis from various viewpoints in and around Smithers. As the original Master Plan was not adequate in addressing the VQO's, further public review was necessary based on the new analysis. The BVCRB gave input with regard to the review and comment period of the new analysis within the realm of the existing Retention Visual Quality Objective.

Both the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan and the Bulkley Valley Sustainable Resource Management Plan make the following commitment:

"Encourage commercial tourism and public recreation development subject to visual quality constraints."

Given this, the BVCRB believes that the SRS development should strive to work within the existing Retention Visual Quality Objective. If this is not attainable then an amendment to the visual quality objective for this area should be pursued and due process followed.

Another concern that has been expressed by the board is the lack of visual analysis of the development from a nighttime perspective.

As the visual quality of this area is addressed in both the Bulkley LRMP and SRMP, the BVCRB would like to review comments received during the review period as part of our role in upholding the LRMP.

As the Retention VQO was chosen for the area to protect the scenic beauty of the Bulkley Valley, the BVCRB believes the public should be adequately consulted regarding an amendment prior to its approval.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

Adrian de Groot
Chair, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board