

# Bulkley Valley Recreation Access Management Plan

**To:** Dennis MacKay, MLA, Bulkley Valley-Stikine

**Re:** Completion of the Bulkley Valley Recreation Access Management Plan (RAMP)

**Presented by:** Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB)

**Date:** March 15, 2008

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## History of the RAMP

- The 1995 Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) recommended that a Recreation Access Management Plan (RAMP) be prepared:

*“Develop a strategic Recreational Access Management Plan (RAMP) for the Bulkley Plan area. This RAMP should meet the objective of managing recreational access to provide a variety of experiences and to minimize the impact of human disturbance on fish, wildlife and other environmental resources.”* (From the Bulkley LRMP Implementation Plan and Progress Report, November 2006)
- The primary benefit of a RAMP is reduced conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreation users. However, a completed RAMP would also facilitate the promotion of local tourism opportunities.
- A RAMP was prepared in 1997 for much of the LRMP area, but left some areas unresolved. Subsequent local agreements have addressed some of these areas. Unresolved areas have seen conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users over the past decade.
- In May 2006, the Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) commissioned the report *Current Recreational Access Agreements: Bulkley TSA*, which identified side agreements between user groups and areas that remain unresolved.
- The Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) has advocated for several years that the RAMP be completed.
- ILMB’s 2006 LRMP implementation report cites the RAMP as a “very high” priority.

## The Vold Report

- In November 2007, ILMB commissioned Terje Vold & Associates Consulting Ltd to compile a report entitled *Proposed Process for Completing the Bulkley Recreation Access Management Plan*. Vold tested public support for RAMP completion and proposed a process. He interviewed 33 people from a wide variety of user groups and found strong support for RAMP completion, with over 20 organizations likely to engage in the process in some capacity.
- Vold’s report lists seven summer recreation areas and 17 winter recreation areas in the Bulkley Valley that are either unresolved or non-designated.
- The 17 recommendations made in Vold’s report describe a process for completing the RAMP. The proposed process involves a multi-sector, facilitated planning process

toward a consensus plan, with mediation/arbitration options in the case that consensus is not reached. The plan should address summer and winter designations for both motorized and non-motorized recreation. The CRB supports this approach.

- Vold's report highlights the need for government commitment to RAMP completion:

*It is proposed that: government agencies that 'champion' (see below) the RAMP completion process obtain clear support from their respective ministers that the process will lead to a resolution of M [motorized] and NM [non-motorized] access issues in the TSA, and that the ministers support the process (i.e. will make it clear that a political 'end run' is not an option, that those with an interest in RAMP completion need to participate in the process). And further that the respective ministry's signal clear support for reasonable staff and financial resources needed to effectively implement that plan including communication (education and awareness including maps), signage, monitoring, and compliance and enforcement. (p. 12)*

### **Current Status, Future Steps**

- Elsewhere, the BC government has completed Recreation Management Strategy Plans for Cranbrook, Golden, and Southern Rocky Mountain areas. These plans are implemented through stakeholder advisory committees. ([www.recplans.gov.bc.ca](http://www.recplans.gov.bc.ca)).
- The Skeena Regional Managers Committee has acknowledged the need to complete the RAMP, but local managers indicated that it is not currently one of ILMB's funding priorities, set by Victoria. ILMB and the CRB recently explored potential for the CRB spearheading RAMP completion and this option was abandoned for budget and capacity reasons.
- Most user groups have already chosen representatives to participate in the RAMP.
- The CRB favours completing the summer RAMP process first and using it as a model for completing the winter process.
- The CRB wishes to bring the RAMP issue to the attention of MLA Dennis MacKay and Agriculture and Lands Minister Pat Bell, with the goal of having the province dedicate sufficient funding to complete the RAMP at the earliest possible date.
- For an investment of \$50,000 to \$75,000, the completion of the RAMP will provide lasting benefits to a population of approximately 28,000 people. It will also facilitate the promotion of local tourism, with commensurate economic benefits.

### **About the CRB**

- The CRB's purpose is to (a) guide land-use decisions by representing the range of community values, with the aid of government information; (b) provide advice and comment on crown-land resource issues related to environmental, social and economic well being; and (c) monitor the development, implementation, and effectiveness of resource plans on crown lands.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Attn: Adrian de Groot, Chair, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board  
(250) 877-7737 | [adriandegroot@bulkley.net](mailto:adriandegroot@bulkley.net) | [www.bvcrb.ca](http://www.bvcrb.ca)