3377 Mountain View Rd.,

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March 5, 2012

Chair

Community Resources Board

Bulkley TSA LRMP

Re: Support for RAMP process and comments on public meeting

I would like to thank the Community Resources Board, and the members of the Recreational Access Management Plan committee, for their work in bringing the community together to explore options for recreational access management. The CRB has an important role in keeping the public linked with land-use implementation.

I attended the public meeting February 22 and partially completed a comment form, however in the two weeks since I have thought a lot about the comments made, and the way they were made, and I would like to add some further thoughts.

As a member of the public, I would have very much liked to have looked at the maps and learned what ground work had been done. To criticize the process, without looking at what different options looked like on the ground, unnecessarily polarizes the community and discourages people with different visions from working together to find solutions. On the positive side: it did give opportunity to hear from people not already engaged, and there were some good questions raised which need to be addressed.

I am in disagreement with some of the points raised by speakers:

* That there is no conflict between motorized and non-motorized users.
* The definition of 'sharing'. Sharing should be a quality experience for range of users.
* The perception that motorized users are losing rights because they could historically could use all areas. *Historically* there were no motorized users. This is a relatively recent change. Forestry access roads and advances in the power and technology have made many areas accessible that weren't accessible even a few years ago. As a hiker, I used to be able to choose places to go beyond motorized access and this is not the case now, and will be less so in future without a plan or strategy.
* There is no magic number of years of residence before you can participate in community decisions.
* There is no argument that motorized vehicle sales are significant. Having a welcoming attitude and places for all users will not reduce this economic benefit, on the contrary it will attract more users and will be an economic benefit for the community.

A winter example: I used to drive to Valemont every winter to back-country ski, because there was an access agreement and I could ski without overlapping a motorized area. It was a 12 hour drive each way and I spent $2,000 on hotels, restaurants etc. The community had worked together with heli-ski, snowmobilers and back-country skiers to optimize each experience, with the majority of areas open to snowmobilers. They had identified both optimal areas and times, so that after the ski season this one valley system was open to snowmobilers and they had use of the cabin.

Another example: Many people are attracted to the area because of the service and the natural amenities and these people contribute significantly to the economic and cultural growth of the community through mortgages, volunteering and spending in all aspects of the community. These all add to the economic growth.

The benefit to the community working together on RAMP is in letting the community decide which of many possible futures we want to see for social, environmental and economic well being. What all users have to gain is a community where individuals have worked out differences and so greet each other with respect and a wave.

I would like to have another opportunity to see the maps and hear what the group has done so far; where the areas of wide support are, and were more work has to be done. I would like to hear more ideas, such as building on the time-share idea, and perhaps simplifying it by prioritizing different activities by odd or even years (simple to remember). We need to address the legitimate questions brought up from meetings and keep working with the information and ideas from all users and find the best possible options for a widely-supported plan.

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