



# Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

File:

February 25, 2015

Jeff Brown  
Chair, Apex Property Owners Association Forestry Advisory Committee

**Re: Concerns about forest harvesting planning and development (February 21, 2015 letter) and our meeting of February 23, 2015.**

Dear Jeff

I thank you, Denis O’Gorman (FAC member), Rick Leslie and Murray Farbridge (Nickle Plate Nordic Center) for meeting with Pam Shumka and myself on February 23, 2015.

In our meeting we discussed issues raised in your February 21, 2015 letter with respect to what you describe as growing local stakeholder concern over potential impacts of forest harvesting development in the vicinity of APEX and Nickel Plate recreation areas.

In our meeting we discussed your points raised in the letter, specifically:

- Concerns over the amount and rate of forest harvesting in the area,
- Issues with communication of forest harvesting and log hauling activities and
- Concerns related to specific planned harvesting (cutblocks) in the immediate vicinity of recreational features.

We reviewed updated licensee harvesting plans and discussed your concerns in the interest of reaching solutions.

We also discussed the July 22, 2013 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a consensus document signed by the APOA, forest companies and this ministry.

The MOU commits the parties to ongoing dialogue on current and future forest management plans as they pertain to the Intensive Recreation Area around Apex Mountain as defined within the Okanagan Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan (OSLRMP).

As I have been communicating with you and the other signatories over the past several months, I will be bringing all signatories (and Skul’qalt, the licensee new to the area) together to review ongoing and future licensee plans in the spirit of ensuring that the area is managed both for forest sustainability and compatibility with other values consistent with the OSLRMP.

I look forward to seeing you, licensee representatives, Denis, Rick and Murray at that meeting.

Also in attendance will be Ian McLellan, District Recreation Officer, Recreation Sites and Trails (FLNRO).

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the concerns raised in your letter in the interest of improving the compatibility of recreation and timber harvesting in the area, improving communication between the parties and exploring opportunities to protect recreational interests.

I would like to thank you for your February 21, 2015 invitation to attend your meeting with APOA members.

Unfortunately, due to the short notice, I will be unable to attend.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to address the APOA board at a later date so that I may provide what I am sure would be a valuable presentation pertaining to Government and Industry roles in forest development planning and activities, the statute law and regulations that govern these activities and how the OSLRMP provides direction and guidance to forest professionals and stakeholders like the APOA.

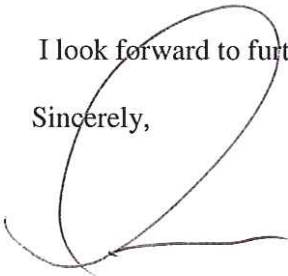
I have attached a copy of the 2013 MOU, along with an information brochure: *Forest Management in the Okanagan Shuswap District*, a document that I am sure will help to further inform your members.

I ask that you forward this letter and the two attachments to all of your members prior to your February 28 meeting.

Again, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to meet with us on February 23.

I look forward to further advancing our collective relationship of collaboration when we meet this spring.

Sincerely,



Ray Crampton  
District Manager  
Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

File: 19500-20/A86093

July 22, 2013

This memorandum of understanding is between the following Parties:

Snpinktn Forestry LP – represented by Warren Houde and Doug Campbell  
APEX Property Owners Association (APOA) – represented by Jeff Brown, Denis O’Gorman, and Mark Marton  
Weyerhaeuser Company Limited – represented by Brian Drobe  
Gorman Bros Lumber Ltd – represented by Jeff Hatch and Matthew Scott  
Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) – represented by Dave Hails, Ray Crampton, and Pam Shumka

Background: The above Parties have been and will continue to dialogue on current and future forest management plans as they pertain to the Intensive Recreation Area around the Apex Mountain Resort as defined within the Okanagan Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan (OSLRMP). There are many diverse interests and investments within this area. There is also an ever-changing and challenging situation associated with the Province wide mountain pine beetle epidemic affecting the area.

Be it resolved:

1. The Parties agree the OSLRMP shall be followed with respect to current and future timber harvesting practices in and around this area. The OSLRMP gives policy and legal direction to Forest Stewardship Plans proposed by forest licensees. The approvers of the plan recognized it and they could not predict the future and gave additional direction to all users of the OSLRMP by incorporating the following direction within the plan to the future users in this regard “the plan does not fetter the discretion of the statutory decision-maker”. This is particularly important when addressing catastrophic events like wildfire and mountain pine beetle epidemics.
2. The Parties agree Snpinktn Forestry LP has been planning modifications to the remaining 21 hectares within Cutting Permit 1 Block 4 because of the changing dynamics of managing the mountain pine beetle epidemic within the area including the reduction in beetle activity recognized in the Fall of 2012. The Parties understand this type of planning needs to occur within a snow free period that now exists and will occur over the next 2 to 4 months beyond July 31, 2013. Given Snpinktn’s commitment to review harvest options within the remaining 21 hectares and

because of the change in circumstances with the beetle activity, some opportunity to modify the remaining block for visual quality objectives (VQOs) exists. It was acknowledged that the VQOs for the original cutblock area were exceeded to address active beetle attack conditions at the time of the initial cutting permit approval. While the fieldwork associated with the plan review will present equitable, balanced, sustainable and economical options for the remaining 21 hectares, the Parties accept the outcome is not likely to propose zero or the full 21 hectares be harvested. The new plan will be shared with the Parties prior to being implemented. However, due to the cutting permit being a legally established right; the final decisions of these modifications will rest with Snpinktn Forestry LP and the District Manager of FLNRO.

3. The Parties agree Snpinktn Forestry LP is seeking review and comments on the proposed cutting blocks currently known as Cutting Permit 4. This permit has not been issued and harvest planning remains in the seeking review and comment stage. The Parties agree and understand there will be harvesting associated with CP 4 consistent with item number 1 above. A consultative process continues to unfold for each of these proposed blocks. As the APOA representatives have completed an initial review on these blocks by a Registered Professional Forester and will likely have additional comments to offer, APOA will share their data directly with Snpinktn Forestry LP in a timely manner. Snpinktn Forestry LP continues to engage with known interest groups in the area, working towards meeting as best as practicable acceptance of their harvesting proposals. Some of the options being discussed and arranged include minimizing crossing ski trails, minimizing or avoiding log landings adjacent to trails, minimizing or avoiding winter logging and maintaining mature timber to avoid snow drifting.
4. The Parties had an exploratory conversation regarding longer term planning, ongoing beetle management needs, and the risk of forest fires due to the current and building forest fire fuel loading. Potential approaches to mitigate such risks around the Apex community were discussed. After a short review of the Jasper Alberta example, the Parties agreed that wildfire and other subject experts will be invited to join with the Parties and meetings will be reconvened in the Fall of 2013. These meetings will further explore longer term opportunities and approaches for enhancing community wildfire safety at Apex.

Signed July 22, 2013

On behalf of all the Parties



Dave Hails RPF  
District Manager  
Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District  
Ministry of Forest Lands and Natural Resource Operations