

Dec. 29, 2020
Councillor Korolek
City of Grand Forks, Box 220, Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0

Councillor Korolek,

Thank you for serving on our City Council. I consider it an onerous civic duty for any citizen to take on. Thank you also for taking on the City's representative on the Kootenay Boundary Regional District Board.

This letter is about your representation on my behalf to the RDKB Board and an agenda item that is scheduled to come to the Board soon. I am talking about Powder Renegade Lodge Inc's three- part land use application in the north west portion of the Kettle River Watershed adjacent to Granby Park. I am not sure what environmental science education, knowledge or experience you or your Councillor colleagues have. I would like to share some concerns that I have accumulated over almost six decades, living, learning, working, and recreating in the forest. This includes three and half decades in the Boundary including fourteen years as a Forest Resource Manager in the Boundary Forest District.

The first thing we need to understand is that our forests are so much more than, dimensional lumber, fiber, jobs and the economy. Forest are the lungs of the earth taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Forests are the protectors of our water, absorbing, filtering, storing, cooling, and releasing gradually. Forests are the home and food of our wildlife. Animals need shelter and safe passage corridors as they forage. As we can easily see from aerial photography, satellite images or an overview flight, the forests of the Boundary are already fragmented by large clear cuts and forest roads. Any further development will only damage the ecological state of the watershed even more.

The Kettle River Watershed is in trouble. These troubles emanate from current over harvesting of timber volumes at the expense of available timber and forestry jobs in the medium and longer term. Clearcutting and plantation forest management are no longer a suitable forest management strategy for the Boundary forests. This is especially problematic in steep slope higher elevation areas where annual snow-packs are high, and runoff is accelerated and destructive. Forest roads are a source of hydrologic impacts for their sediment production, diversion of water and stream destabilisation. Any further development of new roads, especially in steep terrain, will exacerbate the existing water impacts the Boundary has endured with higher- than- normal freshets in three of the last four springs.

The lobbying and political pressure will be intense, especially in the pandemic recovery economics, moving forward with this application. With a reported nineteen Cat Ski Operations in the Province, it would seem hard to believe one more would be critical to this high-end commercial tourism activity.

I urge you to reject this application on the grounds that it will have a negative impact on an already stressed watershed. The very least that could be acceptable would be an independent environment review carried out over the next year before any further prospects of the success of the applications are given. I will leave some of the more technical and intricate problems for others to elaborate on. If you have any questions on my advice or would like to discuss further, I would be glad to meet with you following appropriate pandemic protocols.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ray Hanson

1841 78th Ave. Grand Forks BC

cc. Mayor and Council