

Motorized Recreation Perspectives for TFL 38

CONS481

Background information for multistakeholder process labs

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Introduction

Our overall goal is to practice sustainable, responsible motorized sports that contribute to the local economy while maintaining a high standard of environmental and cultural awareness.

History and Assessment of the General Current Situation

The Elaho Valley was formed in geologic time when the Pacific, North American and Juan De Fuca Plates collided and formed the Coast Mountain Chain. The Fraser Glaciation smoothed out the landscape of British Columbia and receded approximately 10,000 years ago and was then settled by the First Nations. This area, also known as the Elaho Valley is located near Whistler, British Columbia. The Valley is comprised of temperate coniferous forests with Cedar trees that have been dated



back over 1,000 years. The forests ecosystems that are present within the area include; Alpine Tundra in the higher elevations, Interior Douglas Fir, Coastal Western Hemlock and Mountain Hemlock Biogeoclimatic Zones. In 1961, the province of British Columbia issued

Tree Farm License (TFL) number 38 to Empire Mills without the consultation of the First Nations that inhabited the area. Interfor assumed the role of forest operations in the area at this time. Under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, the Squamish First Nations signed the British Columbia Treaty Commission in 1993 and the Squamish Nations Statement of Intent was published. (<http://www.squamish.net/main.html>). In 1995, at the 36th Parliament, 2nd Session the Edited Hansard Number 27 the Contents of Bill C236 states that,

“A Stoltmann national park, therefore, would greatly strengthen opportunities for small business, ecotourism and tourism development in the Squamish-Whistler-Vancouver corridor, especially in conjunction with Whistler's 2010 Olympic bid.”

In 2005, The Squamish First nations aquired TFL 38 and received approximately 200,000m3 in its AAC. (http://www.squamish.net/PDF/community/announcement/SN_TFL_38_dec_19.pdf). This AAC was contracted out to companies including Elaho Logging Ltd. amongst others.

There are many groups of people who have a vested interest in The Elaho Valley. So much so that some refer to it as The Stoltmann National Park but according to the Parks Act it is not classified as such.

“The Park and Recreation Area Regulation, B.C. Reg. 180/90, under the *Park Act*, and section 28 of the *Park Act*, apply to the ecological reserves listed in the Ecological Reserve Schedule as if they were parks as defined in the *Park Act*.”

The Squamish First Nations, who now have title to the area, “...have indicated publicly that they do not want to see areas like the Elaho Valley in the Stoltmann wilderness logged. (36th Parliament, 2nd Session the Edited Hansard Number 27 the Contents of Bill C236)”

In order to maintain the economic stability of the community motorized sports should be one of the solutions to the resilience of the Elaho Valley.

Motorized Recreation Terrain Analysis for TFL 38

TFL 38 is approximately 218 hectares of land Northwest of Squamish and Northeast of Queens Reach of Howe Sound, and according to Chief Bill Williams of the Squamish Nation, “is one-third of their traditional territory”. The purchase of TFL 38 from International Forest Products (Interfor) at the price of \$6.5 Million dollars was a major celebration and reclamation for the first nation peoples. Both the Squamish Nation and Mount Currie Band have inhabited the land, now called TFL 38, for almost 10,000 years. This bought terrain is of interest for Motorized Recreation Groups because of its unique mountainous location and recreation opportunities.

The Elaho, Sims, Squamish, and Ashlu watersheds provide an exceptional land formation for all sort of outdoor recreation. TFL 38 has an abundance of land off limits to the general public, especially motorized recreation. Areas designated by BC parks, for instance Clendenning Provincial Park Northeast of Clendenning Creek, are protected. The complexity of the terrain and magnitude of stakeholders can be very restricting for motorized activities; therefore it is important that we dissect TFL 38 to recognize of our limitations.

Approximately 8 major mountainous peaks surround TFL 38, including Mount Elaho, Howitzer Peak, Pivotal Mountain, Mount Tinniswood, Mount Albert, Mount Pearkers, Exodus Peak and Overseer Mountain. The topography involves several glacier lakes and freshwater streams. At high elevations, glaciated peaks, amazing ice-cored moraine formations and ice fields stay snow-covered

throughout the summer months. Distinctive sandbars, swamps and marshes lay along the major streams and rivers. The surreal invitation of nature is not ignored by the Motor Recreation Community.

Randy Stoltmann, a mountaineer and expert of backcountry feels he is “qualified to rank the Clendenning/Elaho/Upper Lillooet Wilderness as the most important unprotected wilderness area in the Eastern Pacific Ranges in terms of variety of special features, backcountry recreation opportunities, remoteness and overall wilderness conservation values”. Access by helicopter is inevitable, and the Motor Recreation Community respects the rarity and special need for protection of this landscape.

Within TFL 38’s boundaries there are few roads, most of which are used for forestry practices, created by Interfor and previous companies during their ownerships. First Nations peoples have traveled this area for thousands of years by trails that still exist today. Racoon Pass is situated between the upper Clendenning Creek and Racoon Creek at the Northwest corner of TFL 38’s boundaries. Here you can find glaciated granite ridges unbelievably magnificent and are common heli-tour destinations. Hikers and climbers use small roads to access trails such as, Sims Creek Princess Louisa Route (access to a famous coastal fjord) and Elaho’s Meager Trail (home to Cedar Woman’s Look Out). Northerly, Upper Lillooet’s backcountry is famous for snowmobiling trails in winter and off-roading during the summer.

The landscape of TFL 38 is shared by three forest districts; the Upper Lillooet, Meager and most importantly, the entire Elaho district. Each area has its individual LRMP’s and management influences. Motorized Recreation groups must consider the significance of BC’s most Ancient Old Growth Forests that still lay virtually untouched in these districts. Areas like Clendenning Valley has been long since protected by the wilderness Committee founded in BC in the 1980’s.

Much of TFL 38 had been reserved for environmental and traditional motivations. The change of ownership to the Squamish Nation has allowed the first nations people more freedom for the designation of 5 Wild Spirit Places (WSP), where traditional territory is set aside for spiritual and environmental flourishing. Three WSP’s are situated in TFL 38 territory. The Squamish Nation Forest and Wilderness Land Use Plan (SLRMP) entails the TFL 38 adhere to high standards of ecosystem-based management.

Background Info about Motorized Recreation

It is important to note that the percentages of Canadians who participate in Motorized Recreation activities in British Columbia are increasing. Since 1995 the retail sale of recreational off-

highway vehicles has risen by an astonishing 350% and is continuing to grow. (Canadian All Terrain Vehicle Distributors Council.)

The Motorized Recreational community is comprised of individuals, clubs and associations. Motorized Recreationists are often under-represented when land management plans are created. When there is representation, of the Motorized Recreation users, in management plans it is usually through clubs, associations and from the tourism field. These clubs abide by certain 'code of ethics'; this code of ethics outlines environmental and safety concerns for its members.

Motorized Recreations Main Goal

Motorized Recreation users want to continue with motorized recreation in TFL 38. Many stakeholders respond negatively to our presence in TFL 38, and we intend to express our intentions of eco-friendly management of all our groups. This can be achieved by maintenance of established user areas, both winter and summer recreation as well as roads and trails. With the expectation that growth will occur in the terms of numbers of users, impact can be minimized by adhering to the objectives set out all the stakeholders. Motorized Recreational activities in TFL38 include, but are not limited to: ATV'ing, Heli-skiing, RV'ing, 4x4ing and Snowmobiling.

In the Elaho valley there is approximately five main forest service roads some of these are uneven, strictly appropriate for 4x4ing, while others are open and active. Forest Service roads that do not access communities but are used to access popular recreation areas, private property or commercial operations; will be transferred to another agency or organization corresponding with the level of use by the ministry on a user-pay basis. Deactivated roads are ideal for ATV's as they may be too narrow or hazardous for traditional off-road vehicles. Working in conjunction with other user groups like commercial recreation would ensure that access and maintenance to these roads stay open to ensure that everyone has access to trails, motorized and non-motorized recreation alike.

Few areas in the Elaho valley are classified as motorized recreation sites. There are no motorized recreation sites in Clendenning Provincial Park. Access to the park is along a Squamish forest service road, is undeveloped wilderness for backcountry recreation. Motorized recreation has no intention of entering this area unless it is by access to the park.

We propose to protect our access to these areas by preserving the integrity of the landscape, minimizing conflicts between users, ensuring future generations enjoy the same opportunities. We understand the need to be ethical when using this land. Our purpose will be to 'Tread Lightly'. We will

only use trails, campsites and mountains that are already in use by Motorized Recreation users and/or are not deemed to be environmentally or spiritually sensitive, i.e. Wild Spirit Places. As a user group, we understand that if the need arises to close trails because of environmental or spiritual concerns, we will support this action and can call upon our community for help. We want to continue to be conscientious users of TFL 38.

The motorized community recognizes that there may be areas of concern and conflict with the existing trail network that will need to be addressed in a management plan. We therefore propose these detail set of goals.

Goal 1 – Environmentally Sustainable Motorized Sports

An important part of our goal is to promote the practice of environmentally conscious motorized vehicle use in the Elaho Valley region. We are aware that motorized vehicles have damaging effects on the environment and we accept that it is our duty to minimize negative impacts our activities may have on wildlife, aesthetics, and ecosystems. Soil erosion, noise pollution, air and water pollution, damage to vegetation, litter, and fire hazards can all result from irresponsible motorized vehicle recreation in natural ecosystems (Sierra Club 2006). These impacts, however, are not entirely unavoidable and can be reduced and even eliminated with proper management.

Soil erosion can have devastating effects on aquatic ecosystems in the form of sedimentation. It can be a consequence of trail and road building and their use by motorized vehicles such as ATV's, dirtbikes, and 4x4's (Colorado Wild, 2006). The use of trails, however, may prevent harmful off-road practices that damage vegetation and fragile riparian areas. This type of damage is more apparent in summer motorized vehicle recreation, but has also become an issue for snowmobiles operating on shallow snow depths in the winter and early spring (Hammer 2002). We propose to develop some of the many logging roads already present in the Elaho Valley area to make them safer and more appealing to motor vehicle riders in order to minimize off-road recreation. Much of the forested area in the Elaho Valley is densely vegetated and thus naturally deters off-road motor vehicle recreation.

Noise pollution caused by the motors of helicopters, airplanes, snowmobiles, etc. can disrupt denning, nesting, dispersal, and mating behaviour of wildlife such as black bear, lynx, wolverine, and various bird species (Acoustic Ecology Inst. 2006). Loud motors also disturb non-motorized recreational users like hikers and wildlife viewers, as well as local residents. Noise pollution can be dulled with proper equipment, such as mufflers. We feel that it is up to environmental groups to inform

motorized vehicle users of areas housing sensitive wildlife habitat so that we can devise signs and regulations restricting recreation in such areas.

Exhaust from motorized vehicles can pollute air and water. Exhaust contains ammonium, nitrate, and sulfate ions that produce acids when mixed with water (Knight and Rissien 2006). This can have devastating effects on aquatic environments when leached into streams and lakes. Motorized vehicles will be required to undergo aircare inspections to ensure that their emissions meet environmental standards.

Motor vehicle recreational users pose no more of a fire hazard or litter threat than do any other humans entering the area. It is common sense to pick up litter and to build and dispose of campfires responsibly. Signage and brochures will help to enforce appropriate behaviour and promote no-trace camping.

Objectives

The goal of the sustainable practice of motorized vehicle recreation can be achieved by:

- Designating and maintaining existing trails for motorized sport use only
- Using existing forestry roads to prevent additional damage from road-building
- Informing motorized vehicle users of areas housing sensitive wildlife habitat
- Devising signs and regulations restricting recreation in such areas
- Posting signage and brochures to help enforce appropriate behaviour regarding camping and trail use

Goal 2 – Responsible Motorized Sports

Complementary to Sustainability, abiding by laws and using them for protection of the Elaho Valley is detrimental. Protecting both the rider and the environment are possible if of ATV-related injuries are preventable; by riding at or below the speed limit, riding within your experience level and wearing a helmet, the risk of injury or death decreases dramatically. Trail degradation is the most common threat to the environment and many ATV/Snowmobile clubs throughout the United States and Canada have taken this into consideration and stage community trail restoration projects at various times throughout the year in addition to regular trail maintenance. Unfortunately, many riders are uninformed of these associations and may fail to recognize the distinction between appropriate trails for ATV use and those designated for hiking/biking.

The district of Squamish, “recreational capital of the world” has a Bylaw in-place for regulation of the use of Off-Road vehicles. Created in 2002, Bylaw 1716, amended by Bylaws 1877 and 1906 defines off-road vehicles as “a vehicle propelled by a motor that is designed for off-road travel, and includes vehicles having two, three or four wheels, whether known as dirt bikes, quads, or by any other name.”

The body of the bylaw targets the biggest effect that off-road vehicles have on the environment, and that is trail degradation and soil compaction, and thus contains regulations on where off-road vehicles may be operated; these regulations restrict users from riding on highways, land held by the District for park purposes, trails and footpath designated by on a map of the area, limiting use to specific trails for “off-roading.” The bylaw is not restrictive of fire, police, maintenance and search and rescue vehicles. The regulations also apply to parking and storing vehicles in public, under penalty of impounding. The bylaw ends with a series of fines for violation of the various regulations, with a maximum penalty of \$10,000. The director of operations reserves the right to place signs and postings (or barriers) to inform riders of the restrictions and penalties for violations.

Objectives

Motorized Sports can be safe and sustainable, and it is in the best interest of the Elaho Valley community to ensure that off-road vehicles are used according to the current bylaws. Planning Principle 10, or “minimum tools and regulation” summarizes the significance that education and outreach have that extend beyond enforcement and regulations.

The goal of responsible motorized sports can be achieved by the following objectives;

- Involve the public via forums and mailings
- Offer Community-Education courses at the Squamish Recreation Center on regulatory by-laws and environmental concerns
- Promote certification for safe/responsible vehicle use
- Designating and marking specified off-road trails.

Goal 3 – Economical Motorized Sports

Sustainable and responsible motorized sports cannot be achieved if economic stability is not considered. Labor force statistics from the District of Squamish Community Profile—August 2004 showed that accommodation and food services employed 1310 people 16.6% of the Squamish population, and was the largest employment sector. Retail trade was second with 780 people, 9.9% of

the population. Arts entertainment and recreation was further down the list but still significant, employing 255 people, 3.2% of the population. Revenue from

ROOM REVENUE (000'S)		
	Squamish/Pemberton/Lillooet	
	\$	% of BC
1998	\$4,465	0.37%
1999	\$5,982	0.45%
2000	\$5,579	0.39%
2001	\$6,730	0.46%
2002	\$6,226	0.41%

Source: BC Stats

accommodations can be seen in the table to the left and shows an increasing trend in revenue.

Figures are combined with Pemberton and Lillooet because they are in the same Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. The majority of accommodation properties are in Squamish. Revenue to the government generated by licensed commercial recreation operators. Royalties are paid by individuals and companies licensed to use Crown land for commercial activities (heli-skiing operators, snowmobile tour operators and commercial hunting and fishing guides). The revenue is best demonstrated in the table below;

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2005/06 Actual	Variance
Commercial Recreation revenues to government	n/a	n/a	\$1.7 million	\$1.8 million	\$1.99 million	Target exceeded +11%
Selection Rationale						
This measure captures the amount of revenue to government from the development and expansion of commercial recreation activities. Access to Crown land, as measured by revenue generated from fees, royalties, and rents for use of Crown land, as well as sales of Crown land for commercial recreation, is a key driver for sustainable economic development of commercial and non-commercial nature-based recreation.						
The target was selected in consultation with Commercial Recreation staff based on expected fees and royalties paid by individuals and companies licensed to use Crown land for commercial activities (e.g., heli-ski operators, snowmobile tour operators and commercial hunting and fishing guides). Licensed commercial recreation operators pay a fee to the Crown based on their numbers of client days on the land base.						
Variance Explanation						
Commercial recreation activity was greater than expected due to good winter weather that resulted in a greater number of client days than anticipated.						

Reference: Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. 2005/06 Annual Service Plan Report.

Snowmobiling:

Although there is no exact number of snowmobilers present in the Elaho valley it is important to note the amount of revenue that snowmobiling actually generates throughout British Columbia.

Snowmobiling is a relatively expensive recreation and its economic impact is considered to have significant value according to The Economical Planning Group.

B.C. receives about one-fifth of all the snowmobile tourism in Canada. Revenue comes from a variety of categories including:

- Accommodation	\$7.4 million
- Food and Beverage	\$5.7
- Private/Rental Transportation	\$3.0
- Recreation and Entertainment	\$2.6
- Public/Local Transportation	\$1.7
- Retail	\$1.6
Total	\$24.7 million

Source: Prepared by The Economical Planning Group. Economic Impact Analysis of Outdoor Recreation on British Columbia's Central Coast, North Coast and Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii. December 2003.

- Overnight trip expenditures, capital and equipment expenditures	\$36.5 million
- Gross Domestic Product	\$31.9 million
- Wages	\$21.5 million
- Employment	928 person years
- Taxes (all levels of government)	\$15.1 million

The National Snowmobile Tourism Study indicated the following distribution on impacts in B.C. in 1999.

Source: Prepared by The Economical Planning Group. Economic Impact Analysis of Outdoor Recreation on British Columbia's Central Coast, North Coast and Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii. December 2003.

All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) use:

ATV use tends to be dominated by local residents, however; it is an expensive recreation and generates large revenues for small businesses. New machine costs average from \$7000 to \$12000. Other revenues are generated from repair costs, transport costs and fuelling costs.

Objectives

The importance of revenue generation from motorized sports cannot be minimized. Therefore, the following objectives are imperative;

- Promote motorized recreation through ads and websites
- Maintain the areas natural aesthetic so as to invite tourists to return
- Continue to encourage motorized sports for the economic resilience of the area

Conclusion

The Elaho Valley is a pristine wilderness that has a variety of characteristics including wildlife habitat, socio-economic value and cultural value. It is the goal of our motorized Vehicle Recreation group to “practice sustainable, responsible motorized sports that contribute to the local economy while maintaining a high standard of environmental and cultural awareness.”

This can be achieved by recognizing the importance of the Elaho Valley’s environmental value and by taking steps towards maintaining the landscape, appreciating that there are laws in place to protect the environment and ourselves, and maintaining the cash flow into the communities that depend on outdoor recreation as a source of income.

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