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October 14, 2011

Herb Shaede, President
British Columbia Snowmobile Federation
77 Garibaldi Drive
Whistler British Columbia
V0N 1B1

Dear Mr. Shaede:

Thank you for letter of July 21, 2011, to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia, regarding snowmobile closures in the Revelstoke area. Premier Clark has asked me to respond on her behalf, and I apologize for the delay.

It is unfortunate that the British Columbia Snowmobile Federation (BCSF) is choosing not to support the snowmobile closures that have recently been established in the Revelstoke area.

In 2008, the provincial government made a decision that mountain caribou recovery across the province needed to be coordinated. The Mountain Caribou Science Team's 2006 report outlined the actions required to maximize the probability for mountain caribou recovery and made several recommendations, including the Revelstoke snowmobile closures and even more extensive closures across the recovery area. The closure recommendations specific to Revelstoke were deferred due to time constraints and in recognition of an ongoing local planning process.

As a part of this coordinated effort, regular reviews occur to determine what actions are successful and where further work is needed. During an initial review in the summer of 2009, it became clear that recreational activities in the Revelstoke area needed additional management under the Mountain Caribou Recovery Implementation Plan (MCRIP). At that time, senior government officials instructed ministry staff to implement the recommendations outlined by the Science Team's report.

Three meetings took place between ministry staff and local snowmobile groups in the Revelstoke area regarding recreational activities and the Mountain Caribou Science Team's recommendations. Through those meetings it was hoped that the local groups would work with ministry staff to find solutions which were neutral or positive to caribou recovery. In

Page 1 of 2

Herb Shaede

fact, several opportunities for continued access to closed or new areas have not been pursued by local groups' executive membership, including access through permits or assistance to the club in gaining access to difficult areas. Ministry staff presented the results and recommendations of the engagement with the clubs to me for a decision.

I appreciate the social and economic value of winter recreation in rural British Columbia. The reason ministry staff met with local users several times and made presentations to the city was out of recognition that snowmobiling is a significant economic driver in the community. Revelstoke is also an important area for caribou conservation as shown by the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club's extensive history of involvement in caribou conservation. The efforts made by private citizens and local groups have been important in the past and their support in the future will be very helpful in the province's efforts to conserve the remaining mountain caribou and reach our goal of a healthy population of 2,500 animals.

It is disappointing that your group has not been able to find a way to support these important closures; however, there continues to be opportunities to work with ministry staff to find innovative solutions to your concerns.

I appreciate the BCFS efforts on mountain caribou recovery and understand that on such a wide ranging, complex project there may be decisions that are not supported by all groups.

Sincerely,



Steve Thomson
Minister

pc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia

Honourable Terry Lake, Minister of Environment

Honourable Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation