



CLOSING LETTER

FPB/IRC/88

File: 97250-20/020441

November 27, 2002

Dear Participants:

Re: Resolution of Complaint File 020441 – Tangier River Road Deactivation

This is the Forest Practices Board's report on the resolution of a complaint about road deactivation in the Columbia Forest District.

The Complaint

On October 17, 2002, a complaint was submitted to the Board about planned road deactivation in the Tangier River and Woolsey Creek watersheds. Deactivation plans included imminent removal of a bridge over the Tangier River. The complainant is a trapper, and he said the deactivation would prevent him from safely accessing his registered trap line. The complainant believed that the Ministry of Forests had not given him enough time to move his trap line cabin across the bridge so that it would be accessible after the bridge was removed.

Overall, the complainant believed that the Ministry of Forests did not appropriately consider his interests when it approved the deactivation.

Background

The ministry had amended its Small Business Forest Enterprise Program forest development plan to include the deactivation plans, and it informed the complainant of those plans. Ministry staff met with the complainant to explain the plans and to solicit alternatives for deactivation that would accommodate the complainant's concerns. Throughout this process, the complainant maintained his opposition to road deactivation near his trap line. He had developed his trap-line in conjunction with timber harvesting and, even if there were no immediate plans to harvest in the area, he felt he had established a right to maintained access.

Resolution

The Board encourages parties to work together to resolve complaints wherever possible. The following steps led to resolution of this complaint. Board staff provided the complainant with an independent review of the Code requirements for road deactivation and maintenance.

In addition, the complainant and district manager met to discuss options to resolve the complainant's concerns. District staff and the complainant discussed alternative deactivation measures that would maintain safe access to the trap-line. As a result of these discussions, the district agreed to move the complainant's cabin across the bridge and to modify deactivation measures so the complainant could safely access his trap line in the future. Although the complainant would like better access than that proposed by the district, he accepted the need for road deactivation.

Conclusion

The complainant and district are now satisfied, so further Board involvement is not required. I would like to commend the complainant and the district for their efforts in resolving this complaint and thank all involved for their cooperation.

Sincerely,

W.N. (Bill) Cafferata R.P.F.
Chair