



Forest Practices Board

File: 97250-20/16037

February 19, 2021

VIA Email

David Muter
Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Stewardship Division
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
PO Box 9352, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9M1

Dear David Muter:

Re: Response to recommendations Complaint Investigation 16037
Timber Salvage Harvesting and Fisher Management in the Nazko Area

Thank you for your email of July 20, 2020, updating progress made to implement five initiatives for fisher habitat management. The Board acknowledges the coordinated and multi-faceted stewardship efforts taken by ministry staff along with licensees.

The update raises some concerns about the implementation of voluntary actions taken by licensees. In the section titled "Field trials of fisher habitat extension program", the ministry finds that *conservation measures are being implemented at levels below that needed to support sustainable populations*. This reinforces the importance of the Board's recommendation (#2) to apply FRPA's legal measures in concert with voluntary stewardship actions.

Recently, Board staff consulted with Quesnel natural resource district staff regarding fisher habitat content in recently approved forest stewardship plans (FSP). The Board has examined the results and strategies in one FSP and sees this as a positive step forward for protection of fisher habitat. The Board encourages government to ensure a system of monitoring is in place to assess the effectiveness of this approach. Monitoring should include an assessment of how well qualified professionals are identifying critical stand-level features, such as fisher denning sites, as referred to in the results and strategies.

Your update also refers to the ministry's forest landscape planning initiative. We understand that fisher habitat could conceptually be included in forest landscape planning and implemented through forest operations planning. Although these planning measures will take several years to develop after FRPA amendments are made, the Board views landscape-level

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planning as an effective means of protecting wildlife habitat, particularly for wide-ranging species such as fisher.

Once again, thank you for updating the Board on initiatives to protect fisher habitat. We will continue to monitor the ministry's progress but now consider the file closed.

Yours sincerely,



Bruce Larson
Vice-Chair

cc: Norah White, Resources Practice Branch
Karen Wylie, Sustainable Forest Management