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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

April 11, 2006

The Editor  
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Times

Re: Province simplifies resort development in parks, April 11.

I would like to correct an error in your recent article about resort developments in provincial parks.

The proposed Resort Timber Administration Act has nothing to do with B.C.'s parks. This legislation is being developed by the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to guide possible resort developments on Crown land outside of parks.

The Ministry of Environment is working on its own lodge strategy to guide the development of any new fixed-roof accommodations within provincial parks. We are developing this strategy because under previous governments, decisions about new lodges were made in the absence of clear and consistent policy.

There are about 160 existing fixed-roof accommodation facilities in our parks, ranging from small, minimally equipped shelters, to more comfortable accommodations like Manning Park Lodge.

We are now proceeding cautiously to develop a policy that works for all British Columbians. There are 604 parks in B.C. Of that number, only up to 12 (less than two per cent) are being considered at this time for some type of new roofed accommodation. That's because we will only permit facilities where it is appropriate to do so.

When our parks lodge strategy becomes policy, I can assure your readers that any new facility will be a model of sustainability. For example, this will be an opportunity to showcase green technology in our province.

Any new parks lodge policy will be designed to enhance recreational experiences for all British Columbians while protecting the ecological values of our parks system.

Barry Penner  
Minister of Environment