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October 17, 2005

All Forest Licensees, Timber Licensees and Woodlot Licensees

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Continuation of existing Visual Quality Classes as Visual Quality Objectives under the *Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA)*.

The purpose of this letter is to clarify visual management in the Chilliwack Forest District under FRPA. Some important changes have occurred and to assist with your planning activities, I will specify the relevant sections of FRPA and its regulations that apply to scenic areas and visual quality objectives.

Scenic areas were previously made known and established under the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia (FPC)*. The scenic areas were described in a letter signed by the District Manager on October 1, 1999 and are continued under FRPA section 180. Copies of the letter are available on the web at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/dck/lim/dck_fsp.html. Scroll down to Visual Landscape Inventory.

Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) can be established or carried forward in various ways under FRPA. I have reviewed the scenarios available and have concluded that the applicable circumstance for the Chilliwack Forest District is to continue the existing recommended Visual Quality Classes (rVQC) into VQOs under the *Government Actions Regulation (GAR)*, section 17.

In GAR section 17, a visual quality class (VQC) is continued as a visual quality objective if the VQC has been set out before October 24, 2002 in a letter from the district manager to forest licensees and the VQC were in existence when the regulation came into force.



Page 1 of 2

Ministry of
Forests

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Sir/Madam

I have concluded that the above conditions were met based on the following reasons:

- The District Manager's letter of October 1, 1999 states the requirements for managing scenic areas under the FPC. The rVQC categories were developed and used to determine the acceptable level of activity to manage and conserve the visual values in known scenic areas.
- Since the October 1, 1999 letter, the rVQCs have been used by licensees in their operational plan development by following the district's *Standard Operating Procedures for Visual Resource Management*. It is clear that the statutory decision maker considered the rVQCs in his decisions for visual management of the Forest Development Plans.

Given the above reasons, I have concluded that it is appropriate to manage the visual resource in the Chilliwack Forest District under the *Government Actions Regulation, section 17*.

When developing your Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), you are required to identify the scenic areas and to specify results or strategies for the visual objective set under GAR, section 17. Results or strategies for visual objectives can be certified by a qualified professional.

Visual management has changed under FRPA with an emphasis on approved results or strategies in FSPs. We will monitor the implementation of these changes on your operations and on the visual resource. When necessary, scenic area boundaries and established VQOs can be amended under the Government Actions Regulation (GAR).

For your use, I have attached the recently released FRPA Bulletin "Managing Visual Resources". It addresses the recent changes in visual management. If you would like to discuss any of the above items, please contact Lucy Stad or Jack Sweeten, Stewardship Foresters.

Yours truly,



Kerry Grozier,
District Manager

Attachment: FRPA General Bulletin #9 "Managing Visual Resources"