



General Bulletin

Number 17

November 19, 1998

Forest Service Road Maintenance - Winter 1998/99

Statutory Requirements

Under section 63(6) of the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*, the district manager has a responsibility to maintain forest service roads (FSRs) in accordance with the requirements of any forest development plan and the regulations and standards until the road is deactivated. The exception is under section 63(7) which enables the district manager to require the holder of a road use permit to assume all or part of the responsibility. Sections 16, 17 and 18 of the Forest Road Regulation specify the extent of the responsibility under that Regulation.

Recommended Interim Practices

To maximize public safety and to minimize potential district manager liability for failure, due to funding shortfalls, to meet FSR maintenance obligations, the following practice options are recommended. These practices are meant to apply to the upcoming winter months of 1998/99 and where there exists significant public safety risks arising from FSRs that are not being adequately maintained or funded for maintenance by industrial users or others during this time period:

- carry out any remaining inspection work to determine whether risk to user safety on roads is high or low using staff resources where ever possible;
- for all roads, determine which ones will be safely snowed in for the winter, precluding vehicle use (other than snowmobiles);
- for high risk roads other than those that will be snowed in without further problems, close the roads (pursuant to section 57(2)(a) of the Code) by the most effective means with limited funds (choose from gates, berms, tank traps, signs, other barriers);
- for low risk roads that will not be snowed in, or that will be ploughed, monitor for significant changes during the next few months;
- local media campaign to advise users of potential closures
- Where the normal situation is that such forest service roads are snowed in, the above options may not apply.

Prior to spring thaw, the Ministry is expected to have an approved provincial strategy in the form of a ministry policy to deal with the management of FSRs with limited

maintenance funding. In addition, any required legislative amendments will be brought forward at that time.

Contacts

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