



Media Advisory

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RCMP News Release

Members of the RCMP along with Compliance and Enforcement Officers of the B.C. Ministry of Forest and Range, Chilliwack Forest District, conducted all terrain vehicle patrols on East Harrison Forest Service Road (FSR) on Saturday, September 15, 2007. In addition, one member of the Provincial Commercial Vehicle Inspection Unit accompanied the team to assist with safety inspections on motor vehicles travelling on the FSR.

While conducting patrols, all motor vehicles including motorcycles and all terrain vehicles were stopped and subsequently checked by the combined team. Special considerations were given towards safety issues such as seatbelts being used, vehicle mechanical safety and explaining to the occupants about safe utilization of the FSR. The team noted that approximately 50% of the vehicles checked had occupants who were not wearing seat belts. All the occupants (approximately 25 to 30 people received verbal warnings and were reminded to buckle up. The Criminal Code, Motor Vehicle Act, Wildlife Act and Firearms Act laws were enforced when required by the combined team. In addition, Provincial Parks and Recreational camping sites along the FSR were checked and occupants spoken to when required.

The general public needs to remember that just because the road turns from asphalt to dirt that the rules and laws of the road continue to apply. Speed limits on Forest Service Roads is 80 kilometers an hour unless otherwise posted and you must wear your seat belt. In addition, all terrain vehicles and motorcycles must adhere to the Forest Service Road Use Regulations as well as the Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act. All terrain vehicles and motorcycles are required to have third party liability insurance while operating on the Forest Service Roads. Failure to do so could result in a \$345 provincial fine as well as the vehicle being towed.

As the fall hunting season is now upon us there was numerous wildlife and firearms checks also conducted by the combined team.

Throughout the patrol the combined team received much feed back from the public who stated that it was nice to see Law enforcement / Forest Officials on the Forest Service Road, especially on a weekend.

The following statistics apply to the single day patrol;

- Total motor vehicles checked - 45
- Total motorcycles/ATV's checked - 03
- Total number of firearms/Wildlife Act (hunters) checked - 09

- Motor Vehicle Inspections resulting in "Out of service orders" - 01

- Other Provincial charges (Motor Vehicle Act) - 03

Two significant files resulted from the patrols;

#2007-32220 - Hunter found in moving motor vehicle (truck) with loaded long arm (Savage 7mm, bolt action rifle). Firearm and ammunition seized. Provincial Violation ticket issued to hunter as well.

#2007-32174 - Prohibited driver stopped after he pulled U-turn and attempted to evade road block. The vehicle was safely stopped 80 meters down the road using the all terrain vehicles. The driver was subsequently arrested for Prohibited driving and released on a Provincial Appearance notice. The driver is scheduled to appear in court on November 06, 2007. The motor vehicle was towed and subsequently impounded.

Additional periodic combined law enforcement agency and RCMP patrols are scheduled to continue on the Forest Service Roads in the Lower Mainland Region throughout the Fall and Winter of 2007.

Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) staff at the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range enforce forest management laws and combat forest crimes such as theft, arson and mischief. Officials conduct about 16,000 inspections a year to assess compliance with forest and range laws relating to environmental management and revenue protection.

The Forest Crime Investigation Unit is a three person provincial RMCP unit that works in conjunction and partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Yukon Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, community and regional RCMP detachments, First Nations, B.C. Conservation Officer Service, other provincial and federal units, the forest industry and the general public. The Unit combats forest crimes and conducts investigations into such matters as timber theft, stumpage fraud and serial wildland arson investigations on a Criminal Code and provincial statute level.

Any questions or concerns regarding the above noted information can be directed to contact Constable Kevin Hamilton from the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit at (604) 598-4648 or (604)992-3133.

Constable Kevin HAMILTON
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Forest Crime Investigation Unit