

Mr. Vince Ewing
District Manager,
MNR, Bancroft District
PO Box 500
Bancroft, ON
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November 15, 2010

Mr. Ewing,

As you are aware, an issue that has been raised by the Jack's Lake Association (JLA) regarding planned forest operations in the draft forest management plan (FMP) remains unresolved. We are aware of the numerous letters that have been submitted as part of the public draft FMP review from members of the JLA.

Communication is ongoing between the JLA and BMFC, however, this letter is intended to inform you of our correspondence to date and notify you of the issue in writing. A Forest Operations Prescription is currently being prepared for Block 1100 by BMFC staff and the JLA is awaiting its completion to evaluate for specific outstanding concerns. To date, our communications have included:

- **December 22, 2009:** A letter was sent from Bancroft Minden Forest Company (BMFC) and the Bancroft District MNR to the 31 contacts of potential interest in the MNR mailing list database for Jack's Lake and surrounding area. It was later discovered that the contact information for the JLA was outdated. This letter was intended to supplement the public Stage 2 consultation, highlighting the preliminary allocations and proposed access at that time in the Jack's Lake area and inviting comment and participation.
- **January 2010:** A number of comments were received from the Jack's Lake Association during Stage 2 (Review of Long Term Management Direction) expressing concerns with preferred harvest area, access roads, species at risk, biodiversity, unassessed wetlands, streams and safety in the Jack's Lake area. The concerns were acknowledged and additional information was provided, with a formal response from MNR and BMFC.
- **March 2010:** Upon request, an article was provided for inclusion in the JLA Newsletter by the Planning Team, outlining the forest management planning process and consultation opportunities.
- **June 2010:** During the Stage 3 public consultation process, the JLA provided further comment, including a request for a 120 meter reserve on Jack Lake, Little Jack Lake and Jack Creek, an explanation of Annual Work Schedules in general, a request for forest operation prescriptions (FOP) including maps as they are available, notification following tree marking operations, protection for Species at Risk, protection of deer, request that operations not be visible from the lake, request that operations be restricted (no start-up) until the week following Thanksgiving, request to give high regard to public safety and request to protect the interests of the Jack Lake road associations. The president of the JLA (Ruth Pezzack) attended the open house on June 5, 2010 and spoke with a member of the Planning Team (Bruce Fleck).
- **July 11, 2010:** In response to these concerns, BMFC and MNR representatives attended the JLA Annual General Meeting and gave a presentation on the draft allocations and operating principles, followed by an extended question and answer period.
- **August 3, 2010:** Members of the JLA met with BMFC staff and later the same day with MNR staff to provide input, values information and discuss the concerns outlined in the Stage 3 submission.

- **August 30, 2010:** Two general members of the JLA were present as observers at a Local Citizen's Committee meeting which included a presentation of the draft FMP.
- **September 16, 2010:** A formal response was provided in writing following Planning Team discussion and endorsement, with support from the Local Citizen's Committee. This letter is attached as a reference. In this response, the concerns outlined in Stage 3 submission by the JLA were individually addressed including:
 - o **Proximity of Forest Operations to Lake's Edge:** it was described that the draft FMP for the Bancroft Minden Forest was prepared using the most recent, provincially endorsed scientific direction. As a result of public input earlier in the planning process, reduced harvest was prescribed around lakes and rivers (no provision for clearcutting up to shoreline). An additional viewscape protection Area of Concern (AOC) was added to the draft FMP to address the JLA's aesthetic concerns. This AOC direction maintains a reserve in the inner zone of the AOC and has additional constraints to prevent clearcutting being visible from the lake.
 - o **Ongoing Communication between JLA and BMFC:** a commitment was made to share and describe the Forest Operations Prescriptions for blocks of interest and relevant Annual Work Schedules when available.
 - o **Protection of Values:** The process for collecting, identifying and protecting forest values was described.
 - o **Aesthetic Considerations:** Reference again to the specific viewscape AOC prescription and its effectiveness in other areas of the management unit. Harvest operations will not commence until after Thanksgiving weekend and will end before April 30 to avoid noise and increased traffic during peak cottager season.
 - o **Safety Considerations:** Signage will be posted to alert regular traffic of hauling activity, hauling will be limited from Monday noon to Friday noon, widened areas will be created to allow vehicles to pull over when meet oncoming traffic, and documentation of the road condition will take place to ensure it is returned to the same or better condition.
- BMFC committed (in September, 2010) to having the forest operation prescription prepared for the harvest block east of Jack's Lake (1691), of most concern to the cottagers, prepared in spring-summer of 2011. This block is not scheduled for harvest until the 2016-2021 term however, it was thought that providing this information as soon as possible to the JLA would be beneficial to all involved. The prescription writer has made contact with the JLA and invited participation in the forest surveying exercise. Recently, work has begun in the preparation of the FOP for block 1101 and 1100 and this information will also be shared with and described to the JLA when complete.
- **October 18, 2010:** A meeting was held between two members of the JLA (Neill and Denise Lanz), the Plan Author and the Project Manager to discuss outstanding issues and next steps. The 120m reserve was still highlighted as the main issue, citing water quality, increased ATV access, aesthetics, impact on wetland, species at risk, Little Jack's Lake, creek and walking trails as concerns. Discussions included the rationale behind Area of Concern (AOC) prescriptions around water as described by the *Stand and Site Guide*, in addition to the provisions for aesthetic protection in the Skyline Use AOC that Jack's Lake was added to for the draft FMP. Members of the JLA brought forward the *Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook – Protecting Water Quality in Inland Lakes on the Precambrian Shield*, which they reference as scientific evidence in their request for a minimum 120m reserve from Jack's Lake. The Forest Operation Prescription process was discussed and all parties agreed that this information will be helpful in focusing on more specific concerns when available. Access to Block 1100 was discussed since there seemed to be a miscommunication in securing permission to cross private land for the preferred access route. It was agreed that this access route is in everyone's best interest to avoid increasing future access into the area and building unnecessary new roads to access the block

from Crown land. It was made clear that the Planning Team does not support a 120m reserve on Jack's Lake, since all water features are of equal importance in the Bancroft Minden Forest and are protected according to the provincially endorsed science. During this meeting, the issue resolution process was discussed in detail and members of the JLA were encouraged to bring their outstanding concerns to the District Manager stage of resolution.

- **October 26, 2010:** An invitation was provided for members of the JLA to join BMFC staff in a field tour of an active forestry operation near Jack's Lake as an opportunity for AOCs and visual impacts to be discussed and demonstrated, as well as a chance to gain a better understanding of silviculture systems that are used in the Bancroft Minden Forest.
- **November 9, 2010:** A reply was sent to an individual letter that was received by BMFC from members of the JLA (dated October 25, 2010). The letter sought to provide more information to the individual who voiced similar concerns about aesthetics and protection of forest values and water quality. The reply letter is also attached as a reference.
- **November 14, 2010:** In an email providing feedback and input into this letter, the JLA indicated that they are awaiting information from Victor Castro (MOE) on water quality and lake trout status. The Association has also expressed a concern with migratory birds in the area and request March 30 as the date for operations to stop in the area instead of the previously agreed to April 30. The Association highlighted Little Jack's walking trails, water falls and vista as a Social Heritage valued by all lake users. The JLA also indicated that they feel the September 16th response failed to address the JLA's concerns regarding unassessed wetlands and streams and the watershed as a whole.
- Numerous informal phone calls and emails have occurred throughout the process. Dialogue has been open, honest and transparent on all sides. Communication is expected to continue and as FOPs are prepared, the results will be discussed with the JLA. Board members of the JLA have reviewed this letter and provided input.

Discussions are ongoing. At this point, the outstanding issue appears to be the proximity of forest operations to lakes and wetlands in the Jack's Lake area, especially as they relate to water quality and aesthetics. The Bancroft Minden Planning Team and Local Citizen's Committee are aware of the concerns raised by the Jack's Lake Association and have been kept up to date and involved throughout the consultation process. If any additional information is required, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lacey Rose, RPF
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Copy: Lucien Lacombe, LCC Chair
Neill Lanz, JLA