

Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders Association
P.O. Box 20201
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 4J4

October 6, 2006

Attention: Dean Cockshutt, Land Advocacy Director

Dear Mr. Cockshutt:

Subject: McLean Creek Forest Land Use Zone

Thank you for your letter of September 5, 2006 regarding winter use by motorcycles within the McLean Creek Forest Land Use Zone (FLUZ). Since receiving the letter I have had an opportunity to research the history of this particular FLUZ and the Off Highway Vehicle use within the area.

In the early 1980's the McLean Creek FLUZ was managed for snowmobile use during the winter, including trail grooming. It was determined over the course of several years that conventional high-pressure tired vehicles such as 4-wheel drive trucks and motorcycles were incompatible with maintaining the snow trail base for use by snowmobiles, whether the trail was groomed or not.

As a result, the following management decision and operational direction was established for the McLean Creek FLUZ (circa 1980's):

- Low pressure tire vehicles such as quads (less than 1000 pounds) were permissible, and
- 4-wheel drive trucks and motorcycles were not permitted during the winter season.

The Kananaskis Country Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan (March 4, 1986) has established management guidelines within the McLean Creek FLUZ that identifies trails that enable snowmobile access on a series of roads that are subject to a seasonal closure from December 1 to April 30¹.

In response to your question regarding legislation and specific regulations relating to the prohibition of specified off-highway vehicles within the McLean Creek FLUZ; within the Forest Recreation Regulation (Alberta Regulation 196/2006) the McLean Creek FLUZ enables the following:

¹ page 59 of the Kananaskis Country Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan

Section 12(1): *“The operation of motor vehicles is permitted within the McLean Creek Off-Highway Vehicle Forest Land Use except as otherwise indicated by signs posted in the Zone...”*

With respect to your request for the rescinding of the winter season motorcycle restriction within the McLean Creek FLUZ, the McLean Creek Forest Land Use Zone has been in place for more than two decades. Should the off-highway vehicle users and other interested stakeholders be prepared to participate in a review of the management of the area along with the trail network, this could provide a means by which to evaluate a number of the concerns and proposals that you have brought forward.

As part of the Southern Rockies Area's annual Program Review (November, 2006), I will be bringing forward a proposal to Sustainable Resource Development's, Lands Division - Land Management Branch requesting support to initiate a project that would involve the review of the McLean Creek FLUZ for the purpose of assessing the current uses, current trail network, and overall management of this area. This proposal would involve the acquisition of the necessary resources (e.g., manpower and operational funding) to support such a project; involvement of local users and stakeholders would be integral part of a project such as this.

Sustainable Resource Development is committed to providing an integrated, balanced approach to land use through a land management policy, legislative and regulator framework that optimizes the benefits that Albertans receive from these resources. Any changes to the management and operations of the McLean Creek FLUZ would involve public and stakeholder input as an integral part of process.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at the either our Calgary, Bowness Office (403-297-8800) or the Blairmore Ranger Station (403-562-3210).

Thank you again for writing

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryl Johnson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darryl L. Johnson, RPFT
Manager
Land and Rangeland Management
Southern Rockies Area
Lands Division
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development