



Reference: 228643

May 12, 2017

Chair Rhona Martin
Columbia Shuswap Regional District
jthingsted@csrd.bc.ca

Dear Chair Martin:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning possible timber harvesting and road building operations to the east of Swansea Point in the Hummingbird Creek and Mara Creek watersheds. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations has received a number of letters from residents of the area expressing similar concerns. I am responding on behalf of the Ministry Executive and Ray Crampton, District Manager of the Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District.

In light of the damage caused by debris flows and flooding in 1997 and 2012, it is understandable that the community is looking for assurances that operations in the area do not represent increased risk to Swansea Point residents or their property. It is my understanding that Tolko Industries has shared their preliminary plans for harvesting and road building with many residents of the Swansea Point area. Although not required by their current Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), Tolko elected to advise all landowners with domestic water intakes within 1000 metres of possible operations in the area. The information provided by Tolko was intended to identify the concerns of residents at the earliest possible date. These concerns will inform and complement the detailed hydrologic, engineering and terrain assessments that have yet to be carried out by Tolko.

From the correspondence received, it is apparent that some residents believe amending the proposed roads and blocks into the approved FSP constitutes approval for Tolko to proceed - this is not the case. Through their letter, Tolko is affirming their obligation that activities carried out in the area will be consistent with the procedures and commitments contained in the FSP. Before any activities can proceed, Cutting Permits and/or Road Permits must be submitted to, and approved by, the District Manager of the Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District. These permit applications must clearly demonstrate that they are consistent with the commitments made in the FSP.

Some parties have called for a complete moratorium on all operations upstream of Swansea Point. Taking such a step, however, would be premature before the assessments are complete and an informed decision can be made. Tolko has assured me of their commitment to continued dialogue with the residents of Swansea Point as they proceed with assessing the area. I encourage you take advantage of these opportunities. Should you require clarification on any of the points in this letter, please contact me by phone at 250 260-4609 or by email at mark.hopkins@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

Mark Hopkins, RPF,
Tenures and First Nations Officer
Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District

pc: Office of the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
Ray Crampton, District Manager of the Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District
Paul Ross, Area Supervisor, Tolko Industries Ltd. (Lumby)