



FRIENDS OF ECOLOGICAL RESERVES
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CANADA

From: Mike Fenger, President, Friends of Ecological Reserves
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To Allan Lidstone, Director, Resource Management Objectives.
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
Allan.lidstone@gov.bc.ca
P.O. Box 9352 Stn Provincial Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9M1

Re Meeting between FER representatives and Allan Lidstone, FLNRO, December 19, 2014

Dear Allan,
This letter is to follow-up from our December 19th meeting.

We understood that you would send a letter and the table of seven ER candidates to key legislative areas to brief those responsible for (Forestry – Ian Miller; Lands – Duncan Williams; Oil and Gas – Howard Madill; and a representative for fossil protection), briefly outlining our discussion and asking for their input and ideas. At that time we stated that FER would appreciate this feedback and further discussion by March 2015, as we hope to see these candidate areas serve to pilot an assessment process and possible ER designation in the near future.

Here is our summary of the December 19, 2014 meeting.

Present: Allan Lidstone (FLNRO), Steve Gordon (FLNRO), Mike Fenger (FER), Garry Fletcher (FER), Liz Williams (FER).

Purpose of the Meeting:

To discuss the need for a clear process to assess candidate ecological reserves and bring them forward for a designation decision.

- Mike summarized the need for such a process by referring to the Dakota Bowl area (Sunshine Coast), brought forward by the Ancient Forest Alliance and covered by a recent media story. The process for the Dakota Bowl area is reactionary in that ecological values have been found during the development process. A more proactive approach is being taken for Pink Mountain (north east BC) where plant studies have been done over 5-6 years.
- Allan acknowledged the processes for designating OGMAs and WHAs under FRPA and OGAA, and the difficulties of instigating a change in *land use* versus a change in *land management*. A review of IWMS is underway, and government is looking at 'integrated land use planning' rather than one-off processes, not least because large areas are likely to be designated critical habitat under SARA in 2015.
- Garry noted that there needs to be a public face to a process for reviewing candidate ERs.

- Steve noted that there needs to be a degree of rigour regarding assessment of candidate ERs, and that establishment of WHAs and OGMA's does provide opportunities for public input. Communications policy for these processes falls under Allan's group.

Options discussed:

1. In the absence of a clear process for designating candidate ERs, *Land Act* tools (e.g. map notifications) for candidate ER areas could be useful if made available to Forest District Managers and forest licensees; also, map notifications or another tool could be made available on Front Counter BC.
2. BC Parks (responsible for the Ecological Reserves Act) should be included in developing a coarse filter screen for candidate ERs, e.g. Brian Bawtinheimer and Tory Stevens.
3. Landscape Unit Plans could be amended (by the District Manager or Regional Director?) to address newly discovered ecological values.
4. Some scoping out is needed, regarding 'who needs to know' about candidate ERs. For ecological and cultural areas this could include regional ecologists, FESs, district managers, etc.
5. A letter would be useful to the three legislative groups – FRPA, OGAA, Land Act (also include responsibility for fossils - MTA), asking for their input.

Thank you both, Allan and Steve, for your time taken to understand the need to address high value ecosystems that have been made known to Friends of Ecological Reserves, and our desire to have these receive interim protection, assessment, and some form of conservation designation where appropriate. Friends of Ecological Reserves would prefer that candidate areas that truly meet the tests for an Ecological Reserve, consistent with the ER Act, be put forward for ER designation. We also recognize that ERs are a stringent conservation designation and require political support. We note that the last ER designation was in 2004.

FER will communicate to the regional advocacy groups the results of our meeting with FLNRO, and hope to hear from you regarding next steps and time frame.

Sincerely,



Mike Fenger
 President, Friends of Ecological Reserves <http://ecoreserves.bc.ca/>),

Attachment: Candidate Ecological Reserves 2014.

cc. Jim Standen, ADM BC Parks Jim.Standen@gov.bc.ca
 Steve Gordon, FLNRO Steve.Gordon@gov.bc.ca
 Brian Bawtinheimer, BC Parks Brian.Bawtinheimer@gov.bc.ca
 Tory Stevens, BC Parks Tory.Stevens@gov.bc.ca
 Garry Fletcher, FER garryf@gmail.com
 Liz Williams, FER seahorse@pacificcoast.net
 Brenda Larkin, Executive Assistant Brenda.Larkin@gov.bc.ca

Acronyms:

FER	Friends of Ecological Reserves
FLNRO	Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
OGMAs	Old Growth Management Areas
WHAs	Wildlife Habitat Areas
FRPA	Forest and Range Practices Act
OGAA	Oil and Gas Activities Act
IWMS	Identified Wildlife Management Strategy
SARA	Species at Risk Act (federal)
ER Act	Ecological Reserves Act
ERs	Ecological Reserves
FESs	Forest Ecosystem Specialists
MTA	Mineral Tenure Act