
FACTSHEET

March 10, 2009

Ministry of Forests and Range

ELK THURSTON TRAIL

The information below is in response to concerns about recent forestry operations near the Elk Thurston Trail. The Chilliwack Forest District hopes it will improve community understanding and outline its efforts to preserve this recreational resource.

- Only 25 per cent of the Chilliwack Forest District is available for timber harvesting. The remaining 75 per cent represents:
 - Parks, private or developed land, such as highways, towns and hydro lines;
 - Non-merchantable forest, rock, ice and water;
 - Sites of value to First Nations;
 - Visually sensitive areas; and
 - Protected areas, such as old-growth set-asides and riparian zones.
- The Elk Thurston Trail is entirely within the “working forest” where several companies hold harvest licences. It also runs through Ch-ihl-kway-uhk Tribes traditional territory.
- While the trail isn’t legally established, it’s always considered during forest management planning and decision-making.
- The lower section of trail falls within the boundaries of a woodlot licence held by eight First Nations under the corporate name Ch-ihl-kway-uhk Forest Ltd.
- The company recently constructed a road to access harvest blocks within its licence area. Every effort was made to keep the road away from the trail, but some stretches come close due to geographical constraints. In these cases, no reasonable alternative was available.
- To mitigate the effects of harvesting on the trail, Ch-ihl-kway-uhk Forest Ltd. has committed to partial cutting within 75 metres of the trail and ensuring hikers have continued access, except when it’s unsafe during active logging. The company continues to work with user groups in an effort to accommodate as many interests as possible.
- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts is responsible for trail management across B.C. and is currently considering the Elk Thurston Trail for legal establishment. If approved, the trail would continue to be managed in cooperation with ongoing forestry operations.
- Concerns about the new woodlot road providing access to the trail, and putting increased pressure on the alpine, are being reviewed by the woodlot licensee and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.
- The Chilliwack Forest District is committed to working with industry stakeholders and trail users to find compromises that support both forestry and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Contact: Chilliwack Forest District
604 702-5700