



## The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association

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### Open Letter to our Members

Many of you have been asking about the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association's role in the development of the Spray Lakes Sawmill's (SLS) proposed timber harvest plan and the Rocky View County Greater Bragg Creek Wildfire (FireSmart) Mitigation Strategy. Many of the questions have come about because of the information presented to the community at the SLS Open House Jan 26, 2012, and in letters that have been sent by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) to Albertans.

For example, a letter for the Minister of SRD on Jan 17, 2012, stated:

*"In order to minimize the impacts of harvest operations on other users in the area, Spray Lake Sawmills has had meetings with the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association, grazing operators and several other stakeholders since June 2011. The company used input from these meetings to plan harvest site designs and road locations."*

Other letters from SRD over the past month have used similar statements. At the SLS Open House in January, many of you were also told that the GBCTA helped design the the SLS Final Harvest Plan, and that we endorsed and signed off on this plans. Other comments were made that SLS had an agreement with the GBCTA and now we want to re-open that agreement.

#### **To set the facts straight:**

- 1) The GBCTA did not help design and did not sign off on the SLS Final Harvest Plan. The GBCTA does have an agreement with SLS, the West Bragg Creek Land Users Agreement. *"This document has been drafted to assist in completing the process of the implementation of the approved West Bragg Creek All Season Trail Plan (WBCASTP) dated September 12, 2010, led by the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA)."*
- 2) The GBCTA was shown the SLS Final Harvest Plan during the fall 2011, in order for the Association to develop recommended actions to protect the trail and watershed. We presented our list of mitigations to SLS on Jan 10, 2012, and SLS declined to meet to discuss our proposed mitigations prior to the Open House. They have since called a meeting for late Feb 2012 to start these negotiations.
- 3) The GBCTA provided input to the Rocky View County Greater Bragg Creek Wildfire (FireSmart) Mitigation Strategy in 2009. At that time, a conceptual plan for a FireSmart containment line in K-Country was included in this mitigation strategy. However, since this time, the containment line is not included in the current strategy, and the GBCTA is unaware of, and has not signed off on any SRD FireSmart plan for K-Country.
- 4) The GBCTA has been in contact with SRD and the Minister's office to request clarifications on these statements coming from their offices. They have declined to meet and have not provided a response to our concerns. We have resubmitted our request to the SRD Ministry to further discuss the information coming out of their offices.



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It should be clearly noted that the GBCTA has not had input into the design of the Final Harvest Plan, and that we are simply in negotiations to minimize the impact the logging will have on the trails and trail users. We are not opposed to the logging, but believe these mitigation measures should protect the trails through various methods such as cutblock design, location, visual modeling, rehabilitation, and the use of buffers to minimize negative impacts on trails and maintain the aesthetics of the trails for users.

I hope this letter helps clarify the role and actions of the GBCTA. We understand this has been a frustrating process as many of you have been presented with conflicting information. We believe a fully transparent, independently facilitated, two-way public consultation must be done prior to logging so you can make a fully informed decision on the SLS Final Harvest Plan.

Links to the GBCTA Position Paper, All Season Trail Plan, the West Bragg Creek Land User's Agreement, and the SLS Final Harvest Plan can be found at the GBCTA ski website: [www.braggcreekski.org](http://www.braggcreekski.org)

Sincerely,

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