

**Management Plan**  
**for**  
**Floating Guest Facilities, Docks and Boat**  
**Launch**

Upper North Thompson, Mud River, near Blue River Townsite

**Russell Wade Critchlow dba RIVER SAFARI**

**Lands File : 3411427**

**Revised May 1, 2013**

## **SECTION A- FACILITIES OVERVIEW**

### General Overview:

River Safari has operated a tourism business in Blue River at this base location with these nearly identical facilities for 13 years. Services offered include but are not limited to jet boat and wildlife/nature viewing on Mud Lake. Jeep Safaris have just recently been offered as well on logging roads in the surrounding area. This dock and associated facilities has been in place since 1999. The business attached to this facility is a successful, and closely managed business that after 14 years and more than 100,000 happy customers, has never had an accident, incident or mishap with a customer and has an impeccable worker safety record. We participate with and have been specially featured in Hello BC and are currently waiting for the announcement that we will be included in the Canadian Tourism Commission's (CTC's) "CANADIAN SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES" collection.

The floating facilities associated with the River Safari business are situated on what was at one time a log dewatering site on the west bank of the Mud River just upstream of its confluence with the North Thompson River. The facilities now front private land that we now own - District Lot 3288 except Plan KAP78249.

We have recently been asked to obtain a Land Act tenure for the facilities and improvements on the Crown land fronting our private property. We wish to obtain this tenure as soon as possible and are doing everything in our power to cooperate with the application process. As a business with contracts to international tour operators, suppliers, employees and banks, we do not have the option to not open on time. As well, many other local businesses and the entire community of Blue River rely heavily on us for the increase in business that we bring and the positive effect that has on the local economy as a whole, especially in that difficult shoulder season when we first open.

Failure to open in early May could very well mean the failure of our business, which would be devastating not only to the families that directly rely on it but the entire community of Blue River, which is unacceptable and would of course make this entire process futile for us all.

The only work remaining to be done to the dock outside of some light finishing work is to remove the old unused portion of the dock during the appropriate fish habitat window Aug 7-15th 2013.

### Storage – Off Season:

The docks are locked up on the property and secured for the off-season ( October to April ), where they are monitored for snow accumulation and cleared appropriately. The steel holding tanks are removed from the water and all power, and water supplies are shut off and disconnected. Boats are stored out of the water in the off-season.

#### Dock construction:

The dock is floating on solid EPS foam blocking with a heavy rubberized marine coating. Construction materials below the waterline are 100% natural cedar and above water a mix of fir and cedar. There is wood/gas burning fireplace on the dock used during the cold seasons of May and Sept. No further development is planned at this time.

#### First Nations:

We have spoken with Dallas from the Simpcw First Nation recently regarding our application. Based on the ongoing cooperation between us and the visits both band members and elders have made to our facility almost every summer including the past two, she is trying to expedite a letter of support for our business and facilities.

### **SECTION B- DESCRIPTION**

- I. **BACKGROUND-** The dock facility itself takes up an area of about 470 square m - just big enough handle our largest groups used as a starting and ending point for all guests of the River Safari, a one hour water based wildlife viewing tour, that serves 20 to 200 international tourists daily from May to Oct. The facility is located on the water rather than land as a refuge from biting insects. The mosquito problem in the Blue River area is unbearable most summers and the biggest deterrent to tourist visits. This makes it impossible to have guests wait or congregate outdoors or on land near the river. The dock is used as a protection, preparation and orientation area and while guests are waiting, they are also welcome to have their own picnic or purchase food/snacks or drinks. We do not rent out moorage space nor sell boat fuel.

No known competition is located outside of the Vancouver Island area, except for two small operators in Quesnel Lake and Caribou / Fraser River areas.

- II. Location: Docks are located approximately 2 km North of Blue River on Hwy 5 and one km East on the Mud Lake FSR. (GPS location approx: BC Albers 1459293, 812920 ; UTM 11 344658, 5777998; Geographic 119 deg 16min, 10.4 sec W, 52 deg 7 min 50.3 sec N) See Application Maps - Map 1 – River Safari – Blue River – General Location, Map 2 – River Safari – Blue River – General Location – Orthophoto, Map 3 – River Safari – Blue River – Specific Location Map. It is important to note that approximately 4000 vehicles per day drive past us on the Highway and 10 to 100 vehicles stop at the facility daily May thru Oct. There are very few services on this 200km stretch of hwy between Valemount and Clearwater and no other activities. Blue River depends heavily on the economics of summer tourism and we are a major contributor to summer tourism business in the community.

- III. Dock and Facility Details: (See Site Plan A – River Safari – Blue River – Overall Site Plan, Site Plan B – River Safari – Blue River – Specific Facilities Development

*Site Plan – Plan View , Site Plan C – River Safari – Blue River – Specific Facilities Development Site Plan – Side View)*

- ☐ 2 – 20 foot (6 meter) long ramps approx 4 feet (1.2 meter) wide, with handrails down the side of the riverbank to the floating dock structures.
- ☐ Dock/Float 40 X 40 feet ( 12 meter by 12 meter) and is built with plastic log type flotation under a cedar timber structure with a solid 2 inch (nominal) thick wood deck. Has a gift shop/cashiers station/video viewing area. Safety equipment storage area.
- ☐ slips for the 5 jet boats used by the operator connect to this float on the downriver side.
- ☐ 29 feet X 125 feet (9 meter by 38 meter) floating structure - a wooden walled, metal roofed structure Guest facilities. washrooms, cafe, and additional guest seating.
- ☐ Approx total area of the structures, docks, ramps etc - about 30 by 38 meters = 1140 square meters – includes foreshore and river area between the structures and the shore.
- ☐ Structures protrude into the channel approx 20-25 metres in a channel that is 50 -70 metres wide depending on water levels.
- ☐ Effluent and sewage is pumped into a self contained double steel walled tank attached to the large floating building. When the tank is full, it is pulled to the boat ramp, attached to a truck, hauled to a local sewage disposal facility where it is emptied. It is then returned to the dock and re-attached for filling again.
- ☐ Kept in place by poles holding them out from the bank and cables holding them to anchors placed in the ground on our property.
- ☐ There is a floating log deflector anchored upstream of the lightly paved boat launch.

IV. Services - Not connected to public utilities. Power comes from our 60 kw generator. Water supply for the dock is from a well approximately 75m inland and sewage is held in double walled floating steel tanks which are dumped in an approved and existing upland septic system. No fuel is stored on the dock other than an occasional temporary 5 gal jerry can. Emergency marine spill kits of appropriate size are located at this location.

## **SECTION C- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **I. Environmental**

**a. Land impacts On the adjacent private upland**, there will be no land impacts.. All roads and parking already existed or were built opposite side of the existing road from the water on private land outside of the riparian zone. On the application area,

DFO and Environment have been in contact with us in the past, and we have cooperated. It is not anticipated that further impacts will need to be mitigated, but we would be prepared to work with the appropriate agencies during the application process, or in the future if new concerns were to arise. We currently have submitted a Section 9 Water Act application to remove the old dock structure – recently

**b. Atmospheric impacts** Most heating and drying is done with propane heat. The boats used from the docks for wildlife viewing are hybrid gas/electric and of the lowest emission standards available. They use a double muffler system to reduce noise significantly so as not to disturb wildlife.

**c. Aquatic impacts** There are little to no impacts on the water or riparian areas other than a few select plants where anchors have been places on land approximately 3 meters inland from hwm. The area floods annually but causes no damage to property or environment.

**d. Fish and Wildlife Habitat** No disturbance to fish or wildlife has been noticed. Docks are located away from any spawning habitat and over an old log dewatering sight that is shallow and strewn with logs and branches contributing to rearing habitat.

## II. **Socio-Community**

**a. Land use** The docks do not affect any other users or uses in the area. The upland is zoned residential business/other. Being experts on the waterways surrounding us we have been able to help public users stay safe and out of dangerous channels as well as rescue many stranded or capsized groups in boats and canoes.

**b. Socio-Community** No community services are available other than garbage pickup which we receive weekly. No changes are anticipated. As mentioned earlier, the business is a benefit to the community during the summer operation season, there are few improved tourist attractions between Clearwater and Valemount.

**c. No effects on public health services.** Self contained.

**d. First Nations** First Nations members groups and elders from the Simpcw First Nation have visited the docks annually and as recently as summer 2012. They have always spoke of their approval and enjoyment of our facility. The latest visit was to inspect Sacred Island, in Mud Lake, for any special artifacts or history. Nothing of interest was found and we are in the process of acquiring a letter explaining that as well as expressing the support we show for each other. The door remains open for employment opportunities for the Simpcw people and we are exploring the feasibility of incorporating some of their traditional foods at the dock.