

PROPOSED HELICOPTER STAGING AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN IN THE  
VICINITY SOUTH AND EAST OF BURTON BC.

For

ICE CREEK LODGE updated Aug 5<sup>th</sup> 2008

MAOUNTAIN HIGH RECREATION (Valhalla Lodge) updated Aug 5<sup>th</sup> 2008

As per recommendations and proposals brought forth through the joint efforts of the BHWG including Doug MacPherson and Phil McMechan, Mark Homis of Highland Helicopters, Brian Cross of Valhalla Lodge and Russell Hulbert of Ice Creek Lodge.

This initial proposal was presented by the operators and reviewed by both the BHWG and the residents at an open house meeting prepared by the BHWG in the community hall on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008. The operators were commended for their efforts and at this time feel the proposal is ready for review by ILMB. It is the hopes of all involved to this point that the operators are able to operate from the upper proposed staging area by fall of 2008.

#### **SITE MANAGEMENT**

All protocol will be created, followed and managed by Brian Cross of Valhalla Lodge and Russell Hulbert of Ice Creek Lodge jointly however it is the hopes of these two operators that there tenures will be amended individually.

Summer use, at this time no summer use is permitted, this may change in the future depending on market demand.

You will find in more detail below, the application for two sites with in the area South and East of Burton with in the woodlot of Mr. Mel Matchet. These two sites are located with in 1 km of each other on the Snow Creek Forest Service Road (FSR) about +/-8km from the village centre.

Please view attached maps for more specific detail on location and improvements required.

As discussed with the BHWG representatives and residents of Burton, both proposed sites on the Snow Creek FSR need to be managed together in order to guarantee client and worker safety, convenience of plowing and parking and economic options for the operator(s). There may be times where it is simply impossible to gain clearance to the upper location in which case the lower site will have to be used. The lower site may also have to be used until there is clearance from the applicable government agencies and ministries as well as budgets in place to start necessary improvements to the site and physical changes to operational procedures. Perhaps the most important issue revolving around the maintenance of both sites may be in case of bad weather to the point that both operations must stage on Saturday. Having the two operations separated in this situation

greatly reduces clutter around the helicopter and parking area thus increasing safety as well as limiting luggage and gear confusions.

Any flights approaching or leaving the proposed staging areas will avoid flying over private property and residences in the Burton area. Helicopter and public safety is the top priority so exceptions to this may include any emergency flights or variations due to adverse weather conditions and any emergency landings that may be required. The helicopter pilots will meet or exceed the Ministry of Transportation regulations of 500' horizontal and 1000' vertical from any residence whenever possible to gain a minimum elevation of 1,000'.

All flights would take place over 2-3 days. Only one Lodge is transferred per day unless limited by weather. Sometimes a client or injured skier may fly out early or schedule a special mid week flight. The helicopter is required to fly one trip around or over Burton on its way into the proposed staging area and one on its way out creating a potential for 6-8 flights per week. Once the helicopter arrives at staging, transfer of guests from the Staging area to the Lodge and back begins. This amounts to 12-16 round trip flights or 24-32 individual flights per week total. Each group exchange takes 2-8 hrs depending on visibility and weather. Cycle time for each flight is 15 – 30 minutes.

When both lodges are forced to fly on Saturday both sites may need to be implemented. Ice Creek lodges guests will arrive at staging at 0800 and do its best in cooperation with the pilot to complete transfer of its guests prior to the scheduled departure of Valhalla lodges guests at 1000 hrs. Once the scheduled departures are under way the two operators will work together to take advantage of weather opportunities. I.E. When there is a whole in the weather for Valhalla to fly they must use it. When Valhalla is plugged Ice can often still be completed. All communications with individual lodges their representatives and decisions on weather will be at the discretion of the helicopter pilot. Both operators understand that this an involving and new experience, when things get complicated with weather, the simplest and safest options will always be implemented through courteous and appropriate means and communication.

## SAFETY

Site safety is always the top priority in any situation.

-Flight plans must allow for safe flights in extreme and difficult to forecast mountain weather. The two main flight plans east of the town of Burton shown on the map attached, labeled "Incoming flight plans to Burton from Nakusp" will be used the majority of time however in times of extreme weather the flight directly down the creek may have to be executed. With regards to emergency flight lines of preference two flight options were put forth to the people of Burton to communicate and hopefully resolve the issue through better understanding. The first being the line that Valhalla flew last year over the lake and then high up on the shoulder south of town. The other option tabled

being the flight down Snow creek to it's confluence with Arrow Lake. The recommendation from the people of Burton seemed to be in the direction to use the line down the creek draw. This option coincides with all other parties as the line of choice thus it will be used when ever possible. The Burton residents at the time of the meeting seemed to understand the need for this option and recognized that it was, in the grand scheme of things, something that happened once or twice a season. Other unforeseen problems may arise forcing the helicopter to use this line of flight down the creek due to the preliminary and limited use of the area, in short the local people of Burton have committed to continue good communication with the operators and seem to understand and appreciate our efforts on this issue.

#### Some Basic safety rules.

- Safety must be the top priority of anyone using any of the staging areas.
- An appropriate 1<sup>st</sup> Aid kit must be on hand by those using the site.
- All approaches to the helicopter must be within the pilots view.
- There will be absolutely no activity behind the helicopter other than that of the pilot.
- Until such time as a windsock is installed there will be communication with the pilot by radio or accepted hand signals to indicate wind direction.
- A buffer zone of approx. 20 m around the helipad will be observed as a "no go area" while the helicopter is landing and taking off, unless under the direction of the pilot when it necessary to attach the sling.

Incident reports must be filled out and shared where there is a safety related or first aid incident.

#### WEATHER

Mountain weather is constantly changes, hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and yearly. Our helicopter pilot will use the safest line of flight for the given day. Most days this path will avoid flying over the town site of Burton altogether. When proposed site #1 on the Snow road was used last season weather restricted flights around town only one day resulting in one pass over town as the helicopter was able to fly back around town at the end of transfer. This may not be the case for all seasons and the operator was quite lucky with weather. As stated above the safest flight must always be taken for the weather on that given day.

#### HELICOPTER USE

All proposed improvements to the site to date have been review by our pilot to provide the safest possible service.

The helicopter will land on the raised mound provided for this purpose at both proposed locations. This will enable people to safely approach when loading and unloading.

Helicopter flight approach and exit corridors are to be used as designated. No structures, vehicles or people will be allowed in this approach corridor.

The area NW of the entrance to site 1 will be used for pick-up and drop off of the cargo nets. This will be an active helicopter zone and only authorized personnel will be in this zone while the helicopter is picking up or dropping off slings. There is no site designated for this in site #2 as it will be an ongoing assessment and development takes place.

Sling hook-up will be done by those experienced in the process. Radio communication must always be present between the helicopter pilot and those coordinating operations on the ground.

Helicopter safety orientation will be conducted with the pilot prior to flying unless the pilot has previously oriented those concerned.

There will be a trained employee representing the operation using the staging areas whenever there is staging of guests to and from the lodges in progress.

The residents of Burton have voiced some concern over the use of larger "noisier" helicopters such as a Bell 212. It was agreed upon at the meeting on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 08 that the operators would host a community meeting if they were to entertain the idea of employing such a machine despite the very low potential of this coming to fruition.

A sign will be posted 100m west of the site being used to notify other road users that staging is in progress and to proceed with caution on foot to find the area supervisor in the event that they need to pass.

See attached maps for designated flight plans.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

Any development of the site must have joint approval and direction from both operations and meet all protocols and guidelines set forth by the operators and the helicopter pilot, more detail below.

-for individual proposed site improvement details please see attached maps.

Site #1, please see attached map

-majority of required improvements should focus around the idea that as proposed this site is for back up use. As it sits now for site safety it is a 3/10 when compared to the lake side staging which is a 10/10. This is remedied by utilizing lighter loads which is costly to the operators. A minor amount of work is required to get this area to a 4 or 5/10 which would be satisfactory to the operators if the proposal is granted for site #2.

-It has been estimated by the operators, locals and helicopter pilot that the development of proposed site #2 is far more economical and should be promoted.

Site #2, please see attached map

- Some machine work required to level existing elevated ground above and south of road allowance.
- tree cutting as labeled on the map to create greater clearance for the machine to maneuver

## PARKING

Winter parking requires twice the space of summer parking in order to have room for the snowplow to clear parking spaces for the following weeks clients.

- At this point the area available for parking at site # 1 is inadequate for efficient snow removal and must be leveled better.
- Site #2 will need minor immediate work to be implemented for the 09 season

As this site is not always monitored a sign will be posted stating "Park at your own risk". Each lodge will instruct their guests where to park by way of signage.

## SANITATION

Outhouse. After a great deal of consensus the operators would like to apply for a permit to have a composting style outhouse on site. This would be maintained by the operators and locked up during times when not being used in order to limit wild life disruption.

All users will observe a zero tolerance on littering and will remove all trash from site after every use. Overnight storage of trash is permitted only in a lockable/covered unit such as a truck box topper or the like.

## SNOW REMOVAL

A 2km section of road must be plowed beyond that which is the responsibility of the road maintenance contractor in order to reach site# 2. Please see attached map.

Highways contractor YRB is no longer available to plow the road.

Other local contractors will be used as needed to fine tune snow removal. The Burton folks have been quite forth coming with resources and are seemingly eager to help.

## FUEL STORAGE

An ABS plastic fuel barrel container will be on site to prevent theft, spills and contaminants.

In the unlikely event that a spill should occur a spill kit will be on site to absorb and contain all spills.

- MOE and other appropriate agencies will be notified immediately of any major spills.

## FIRE SUPPRESSION

There will be a fire extinguisher unit in the helicopter and on site at all times during use.

In summer, if ever required, pump trucks will be used from local logging contractors. Fire fighting equipment, piss cans and fire tools, will be stored on site when applicable.

## LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS

A small parks style or temporary type warming shelter will prove essential due to the remoteness and the location in relation to the nearest warm shelter. This may take some time to get into place.

Road improvements may be necessary depending on how things go the first season.

## WAIVERS

Waivers must be signed and duly witnessed by all those using all or any of the helicopter staging areas, prior to embarking on the helicopter.

Further we require that the users have a signed indemnity agreement, assumption of risk, and waiver of all claims against the Crown, and all interested parties.

The operators will not be held responsible for theft or damage done to parked vehicles

## SUMMER USE

The topic of summer use was discussed with the Burton residents at the July 2<sup>nd</sup> 08 meeting. They understood that limited to no summer use was occurring to date but that no commitment could be made either way due to business needs to allow for potential growth.

## PUBLIC USE

Operators will be given priority on scheduled transfer days.

Signage will be posted

There will be no restriction of public access, unless there is a helicopter arriving or departing

Recreational benefits may include a sled loading ramp, parking area for x country skiing warming shelter for putting on ski boots and an outhouse.

Benefits/Job opportunities to the community

Plowing, General store, machine work, trail work, Custodial work, youth work experience, laundry, cooking/requirements. Spin off tourism \$, accommodation.

## BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT

On acceptance of the tenure and or tenures for the proposed "Burton heli-staging sites" by Harry Mitchell and the ILMB ministry; Valhalla lodge would be more than glad to offer to help contribute to all the previous work and monetary outlay that Ice Creek has contributed to this project to date.

To date, Ice creek has contributed, Good working relationships with numerous local contacts ,including Woodlot owner Mel Matchet.

Initial scouting of site 1 and \$1500 on Initial site development of Site 1;

I would also like it to be recognized that Ice Creek has contributed a great deal of time, footwork and effort on compiling /preparing and presenting the tenure application and Management plan to ILMB; and the lion's share of the "Heli-Staging Presentation" to the Burton community.

In an attempt to contribute equally and be involved equally in the "Burton Heli-staging sites"

Valhalla lodge is willing to be financially/logistically responsible for 2008-2009 site #2 development of up to a maximum outlay of \$2000 (estimated budget \$1500-\$2000)

Valhalla lodge is willing to be financially/logistically responsible for the plowing of access road and parking at Site 2 ; For the duration of the 2008-2009 ski season .up to a maximum outlay of \$5000.(estimated budget \$3000-\$5000)

Also to be noted Ice Creek has offered to do "light plowing duties" with a truck mounted snow blade ; supply the staging with a weigh scale, and roof covering for scale all at no cost. In exchange for use of roof and scale; Valhalla lodge will construct a simple and appropriate outhouse on site #2.

If either or both projects require more money/work than has been agreed upon in the budget for these projects Ice Creek and Valhalla lodge will each contribute 50% to any/all costs required to complete either or both of the 2 projects.

After the 2008-2009 ski season has expired both Valhalla Lodge and Ice Creek lodge will commit to an annual budget for the maintenance and improvements of these projects; Both lodges will be required to contribute 50% of any funds and work towards the future improvements of "Site 1 and Site 2". Improvements undertaken will be unanimously agreed upon by both operations in order to be implemented.

Looking forward to a good/and prosperous arrangement for both lodges

## OTHER PROTOCOLS

Suggested protocols include the following (this list will evolve as the two operators learn to work together):

- Safety first
- Work on site will be conducted in a friendly and co-operative manner
- No long term storage of vehicles on site
- There will be a zero tolerance for litter
- Vehicles will be parked in designated areas or as conditions dictate
- All safety related and near miss incidents are to be reported to the other operator
- Both operators must be kept informed and up to date as regards the staging area and it's condition or regarding problems that need attention
- Operators using the site must have fire extinguishers, first aid supplies and a comprehensive knowledge of working with helicopters
- Operators on site will be required to have radio contact with the pilot.

This Management plan has been approved by both "operations" and their representatives.

Signed the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2008

\_\_\_\_\_x. Brian Cross, representing Valhalla Lodge

\_\_\_\_\_x Russell Hulbert, representing Ice Creek Lodge.