

As many of you know, Tolko is in the early stages of a harvesting plan along Mallory Ridge above and south of Gardom Lake. Thank you to those of you who wrote to Tolko Industries. The local advocacy group made up of concerned residents is initiating a letter writing campaign to the CSRD to encourage them to reprioritize this area as a Conservation Park.

Mallory Ridge was identified by CSRD in the 2008 Electoral Area D Parks Plan as High Priority to be made a Conservation Park with implementation in 1-2 years. (See attached maps.) Included in their document is a description of Mallory Ridge as follows: "Mallory Ridge is an upland area with high conservation values located to the SE of Gardom Lake." "The area is particularly rich in tree and plant species because the dry southern bioregion meets the wetter interior bioregion and this transition encourages a great variety of vegetation to flourish. The area also includes a variety of rich habitats which allows many species of birds to successfully nest and raise their young. Mallory Ridge provides year round opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and cross country skiing or snowshoeing."

Unfortunately other regional projects were subsequently prioritized ahead of this one and the area failed to receive park status. Ryan Nitchie has indicated that the CSRD will be reviewing the Parks Master Plan in the future and this area may be considered again.

There is no record of the CSRD having applied for a Crown grant for this parcel of land. The proposed Conservation Park along Mallory Ridge is still within the provincial timber harvesting land base and remains Crown Land. Tolko is in the early planning stages for 4 harvesting blocks on Mallory Ridge. The Conservation Park prioritization and proposed logging plans are two separate issues yet they have become irretrievably linked. A Conservation Park on Mallory Ridge is more valid and worthy today than ever and a very hard working committee of residents are asking for your support.

We are asking all of you to send an email to Ryan Nitchie CSRD Team Leader Community Services (RNitchie@csrd.bc.ca) with copies to Rene Talbot Director of Area D (rtalbot@csrd.bc.ca) and Jan Crerar Chair of CSRD Area "D" Parks Advisory Committee (JanGrangeRd@shaw.ca) requesting they reprioritize Mallory Ridge to be made a Conservation Park as per the 2008 Electoral Area 'D' Parks Plan Final Report of October 15, 2008. We have a short window of opportunity.

It is vital that residents on both sides of Mallory Ridge respond. Please forward this email to people from other areas who have had the good fortune to enjoy this outstanding area and might respond. We need tons of letters of support.

Here are ideas for possible inclusion in a letter supporting a Conservation Park on Mallory Ridge. A park offers:

- Protection of the watershed that supplies water for residential and agricultural users on both sides of the ridge and protection of the groundwater flows that help stabilize the water level in Gardom Lake which is a popular stocked fishing lake.
- Maintenance of a forest ecosystem that provides increased water retention and reduces the risk of downslope flooding.
- Opportunities for recreational use – have you gone there for hiking, horseback riding, biking, bird watching, snowshoeing, cross country skiing or looking at the spring flowers? How frequently do you use the area for recreation? How long have you been using the area? How many generations of your families have enjoyed the area? Comment about the beautiful trails within the variety of forest types, marshes and seasonal watercourses.

- Protection of several unique sensitive ecosystems and an important wildlife corridor and refuge. What have you seen up there that is special or unusual? Example: animals, animal signs, birds, amphibians, flowers.
- Enjoyment of the viewscape from Gardom Lake, the top of the bluffs and across the valley.

You could include a personal story about:

- Water issues and adjacent area logging.
- How you have been accessing this land responsibly and perhaps maintaining trails in the spirit of good stewardship.

Please do not cut and paste parts of this letter. We are hoping for individual letters describing how you use the area, how long you have enjoyed it, how important it is to you etc. Make these letters your own and personal for best impact. Letters do not have to be long. Even if you are unfamiliar with the area, any indication of support is valuable.

The CSRD definition of a Conservation Park is: “A large natural area that provides for low impact outdoor recreation opportunities such as nature appreciation and wilderness hiking. Focus is more on conservation and protection of natural values of the area”. (Page 16 CSRD Electoral Area ‘D’ parks Plan Final Report October 15, 2008).

If you want more information contact Eleanor at toelmarshall@gmail.com .

Let’s make this a reality and flood the CSRD with letters!

Sincerely,
The local advocacy group