



December 9, 2020

Reference # 120112

Honourable Rob Fleming

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure

VIA Email only: Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Fleming

Re: Quesnel Hydraulic Road

In April 2020 a significant land slide occurred on the Quesnel Hydraulic Road, this road is integral to those who live in the region, in particular cattle ranchers, who use the road to move their livestock to range, back from range, to get feed into their livestock and then to get livestock to market.

The detour route is in place via the French Road, even with the improvements that have been made I am still receiving multiple phone calls about the condition of the road. Residents have gone off the road late at night and having to wait for someone to come along to help them, with no cell service is very stressful for the residents. The added cost of flat tires, cracked windshields and extra fuel has become a true burden for the residents.

In addition to the safety of residents on the detour route, On October 23, two cattle liners attempted to cross French Road, to haul calves to two different feed lots. One truck driver chained up empty and still spun out before the second cattle guard. The other driver refused to even attempt it. They had to do three reduced loads across with the aid of a pilot car. The cattle then had to be transferred onto the other two cattle liners in Kersley. The condition of French Road necessitated the hiring of a third truck and pilot car as well as adding stress of unloading and reloading the cattle, this was an extra ten hours for these animals. Who bears the cost of trucking, extra stress of double handling, shrink on the calves? Not to mention the stress on the owners of the cattle. Ranchers also need to get feed into their livestock, a truck hauling 22 round bales could not make it in past the second cattle guard.

On November 13, Bear Valley Ranch attempted to haul their colts to their ranch. The truck and 30-foot stock trailer spun out and slid backwards down hill and into the ditch above the second cattle guard. They had colts that were injured and to date one of the colts has died. I have included the correspondence from Bear Valley Ranch and pictures.

November 26, I received a copy of a letter addressed to yourself from the BC Livestock Producers, I have attached it here as well.

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I have attached the correspondence that has taken place on the Quesnel Hydraulic Road below to this letter, so you are up to date.

June 5, 2020, I wrote a letter to the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure in regard to Road conditions in Cariboo North. On June 23, 2020, Reference: 294437 I received a letter from the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

In that letter dated June 23, 2020, it was noted safety is the Ministry's highest priority and that safe driving conditions on area roads for residents, businesses, ranchers, commercial drivers and other travelers. How is this possible when there have been residents that have gone off the road and issues with livestock being hauled in and out on the detour route of French Road?

July 3, 2020 during estimates I raised the issue around first responders and the time it will now take them to attend any emergency as it used to take half an hour to reach the area on the Quesnel Hydraulic Road to over an hour on the detour route of French Road.

I presented a petition in the Legislature from the residents of the Quesnel Hydraulic Road on July 23, 2020 with 72 signatures, The Petition read: "We the undersigned demand that immediate steps be taken to re open the Quesnel Hydraulic Road at the Slide. The continued closure of this road is severely jeopardizing the safety and industry of the affected residents."

On August 14, 2020 the BC Cattlemen's wrote a letter to the Honourable John Horgan in regard to being able to move livestock and feed in and out of this area for the ranchers.

September 9, 2020, I wrote a letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure in regard to the Quesnel Hydraulic Road. I have not received a response to date from the September 9, letter so I will ask the questions again.

It is clear that work would be done to re-establish Quesnel Hydraulic Road (I recognize this may need to include a realignment). Would you kindly outline what the process will be on this project? What is the estimated timeline? Is the Ministry seeking Federal Disaster Financial Assistance to fund this project?

What steps is the Ministry taking to communicate with those impacted and ensure public safety of the detour route?

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Coralee Oakes, MLA
Cariboo North

I await your response.

Yours truly,

Coralee Oakes,
MLA Cariboo North

CC:

Premier John Horgan

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Lana Popham

MP Todd Doherty

Cariboo Regional District Director Mary Sjostrom

Cariboo Regional District Director John Massier

BC Cattlemen's Association Kevin Boon

BC Livestock Producers Cordy Cox

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Emailed June 5/20



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Coralee Oakes, MLA
Cariboo North

Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Province of British Columbia

Honourable Claire Trevena
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Province of British Columbia

June 5, 2020

Dear Ministers:

This is a follow up to my letter dated April 23, 2020 to Minister Farnworth, to which I have yet to receive a response.

As you are aware, the Cariboo Regional District is currently experiencing significant flooding due to previous wildfires, recent heavy rains and the spring freshet. This has caused substantial damage to our critical infrastructure, such as roads, culverts and bridges.

Recently, the Hydraulic Road south of Quesnel washed out. This road is integral to those who live in the region, in particular cattle ranchers, who use the road to move their livestock to range. With the road washed out, it causes many hardships like not being able to get livestock to range. If the ranchers cannot get their livestock to range then have to get feed in. Getting feed in is not possible with the grades and narrow one lane detour routes.

There are also growing concerns with the damage sustained to both Knickerbocker/Blackwater and Red Bluff Roads. The Blackwater Road, which is the main route to the approximate 3000 residences of Bouchie Lake, Nazko First Nation, Kluskus First Nation and surrounding areas.

A portion of this heavily used road in the Knickerbocker/Blackwater Road area has had a significant loss of land over the years and is now encroaching the edge of the road.

Road users include logging trucks and commercial vehicles that need to get supplies into these communities. During a normal school year, 6 buses with 277 students on board travel the Blackwater Road five days a week. If the Knickerbocker/Blackwater road area were to collapse, the only alternate route would be the Pinnacles Road, which was not built to sustain industrial and commercial traffic.

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Emergency response times for police, fire and ambulance are increased significantly. They now have to travel on Forest Service Roads to access some of these areas. The increase in time to response to an emergency is endangering lives in these communities.

A significant amount of these roads that are compromised lead into the City of Quesnel. This is where residents shop and work.

I would appreciate a detailed strategic plan of how your government plans to address the damage to our critical infrastructure in Cariboo North.

I am available, at your convenience, for a briefing.

Sincerely,

Coralee Oakes, MLA

Cariboo North



June 23, 2020

Coralee Oakes
MLA, Cariboo North
410 Kinchant Street, Suite 401
Quesnel BC V2J 7J5

Reference: 294437

Dear MLA Oakes,

Re: Road Conditions in the North Cariboo

Thank you for your letter of June 5, 2020, regarding flood-related damages to critical road infrastructure in the North Cariboo. I am also responding to the question that pertains to my ministry in your email of April 23, 2020, addressed to my colleague the Honourable Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

I am aware of the hardships people in the North Cariboo have faced as a result of flooding activity over the past couple of years. Safety is the ministry's highest priority, and I recognize the significance of ensuring safe driving conditions on area roads for residents, businesses, ranchers, commercial drivers and other travellers.

This year, the Cariboo experienced flooding impacts at over 200 sites in the region, with 20 to 30 per cent of these floods attributed to the impacts of wildfires. The ministry team, in partnership with our road and bridge maintenance contractors, worked hard to respond as quickly as possible to these events. Our team of over 100 staff set up traffic control at these sites, worked to improve detour routes and assessed the sites to ensure the safety of the travelling public. Over the past month, the team has also worked around the clock to restore access at many of these locations and to further assess those sites that were more significantly impacted, such as Quesnel-Hydraulic Road and Soda Creek/McAllister Road.

I am pleased to provide you with the following status updates on the roads you mentioned in your letter.

Quesnel-Hydraulic Road

It is important to note that Quesnel-Hydraulic Road has not washed out, but has been compromised by significant landslide activity causing blockages and structural deformation along the route. The massive, historic earthflow activated this spring was a result of significant groundwater internal to the slide mass and meltwater from the overlying snowpack. Altogether, it comprises more than 2,400,000 cubic metres of material, equivalent to over 300,000 dump truck loads.

.../2

The ministry's geotechnical engineers continue to monitor the slide complex on Quesnel-Hydraulic Road and are analysing data from a recent aerial survey to better understand its complexities. While the current detour provides a safe alternative for travellers, including commercial vehicle operators, we acknowledge that emergency services response times for residences on Quesnel-Hydraulic Road have increased as a result, and our staff are working to address this.

Blackwater Road

As you note, Blackwater Road has suffered an embankment failure due to the Knickerbocker slide. As this occurred away from the travelled portion of the road, the route remains open and passable, with some distortion to the road surface. Our engineers continue to monitor this route as well and are working on recommendations for improvements.

Red Bluff Area Roads

While there was evidence of some ground movement on Redstone Road and near Maple Drive last month at the location of a large historic slide, ground movement in the vicinity of these routes appears to have stabilized. The sites continue to be monitored.

With regards to our approach to protect our inventory and prevent impacts due to freshet and flooding, significant investments have been made across the province, including in the North Cariboo, to start upgrading our inventory to better withstand the impacts of climate change. The ministry is a national leader in its work to adapt to the impacts of climate change and weather extremes. Provincial design standards have also been upgraded to incorporate climate change.

Multi-agency hydrology and watershed studies are used to support the prioritization of work, in addition to considerations such as condition assessments, traffic volumes, community input, industrial use, land use impacts and economy of scale opportunities.

Since 2017, we have invested over \$85 million in the North Cariboo, including drainage maintenance and enhancements, road structure upgrades, erosion protection and scour mitigation. Our government has also increased investment in maintenance activities for the North Cariboo to help support people and families. While we still have significant work to do, when we are repairing sites impacted by floods or freshet, we continue to make every effort to upgrade them to address climate change as part of our recovery efforts.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) has also been investing in repairing culverts and improving their infrastructure on capital forest service roads in the area.

If you would like to learn more about the important investments we are making in the North Cariboo and our strategy to prevent impacts and make our infrastructure more resilient, Paula Cousins, Executive Director, Southern Interior Region, and Todd Hubner, District Manager, Cariboo District, would be pleased to meet with you. You can reach Ms. Cousins directly at 250 828-4843 or at Paula.Cousins@gov.bc.ca.

As Emergency Management BC and FLNRORD also have an integral role in the prevention, response and recovery of provincial infrastructure and assets, including forest service roads in your area, I have asked that Ms. Cousins extend them an invitation to your meeting as well, should you wish to have one.

I hope you find this information helpful. Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Trevena
Minister

Copy to: Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
MLA, Port Coquitlam

Paula Cousins, Executive Director
Southern Interior Region

Todd Hubner, District Manager Transportation
Cariboo District



BRITISH COLUMBIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Beef Cattle Industry of British Columbia

AGRI CENTRE - #4 - 10145 DALLAS DRIVE, KAMLOOPS, B.C. V2G 6T4 PHONE (250) 573-3811 FAX (250) 573-5155

August 14, 2020

Hon. John Horgan,
Premier of British Columbia
PO BOX 9041, STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Our File: 2020-028
SENT BY EMAIL: Premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Premier,

**RE: URGENT REQUEST to Declare an Emergency for
Ranches Impacted by the Quesnel Hydraulic Road Slides**

With the extreme precipitation and flooding that occurred this spring, ranches along the Quesnel Hydraulic Road have been seriously impacted by the slides that occurred.

These slides are having considerable effect on the day to day ranch operations. An alternate route is being established for regular vehicle traffic, however, it is unsafe for any large or heavy loads. In the coming months, these fifteen ranchers who are isolated by the slide will be unable to haul hay to their livestock nor are they able to haul cattle safely using the alternate route. The French Road has too many very long and steep sections for a cattle liner to safely haul animals. If attempted, the cattle will be piled up in the liner and have to be euthanized.

BCCA has initiated discussions with William Beale (TRAN), Georgina Hodson (AGRI) and Steve Sirett (TRAN). Along with MLA Coralee Oakes, we have called upon MOTI to improve communication with affected landowners, conduct necessary assessments and begin work to re-open the Hydraulic Road.

Today, I am deeply disappointed to learn that no effort has been made by the Province to declare an emergency and provide support to the families and businesses impacted by this natural disaster. It should not be up to our Association to make that request. These slides occurred over four months ago. The 15 families who are isolated by these slides need your immediate support. In our view, once it was determined that the slope instability was of great concern, making clean up and re-opening challenging, the Minister could have declared the emergency. Without that declaration, landowners are unable to receive support from Emergency Management BC.

Possible solutions are available. The livestock operations that are impacted will be gravely jeopardized by the fall and winter weather. We anticipate feed shortages or livestock deaths as a result of little to no action. **The BC Cattlemen's Association calls upon the province to:**

- 1) Declare a state of emergency for the families and businesses impacted by the Quesnel Hydraulic Road slides;**
- 2) Establish support and financial assistance for those livestock operations and businesses that are without viable alternatives;**
- 3) Complete slope stability assessments and urgently implement clean up measures to re-open the Hydraulic Road; and**

- 4) **Provide affected landowners and businesses with regular updates on the re-opening plan and status of actions.**

We are calling upon you to remove the layers of red-tape and get the available programs and services working for these families.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Renee Ardill', written in a cursive style.

Renee Ardill, BCCA President

Cc: Madeline Maley, ADM Response Operations - Emergency Management BC



September 9, 2020

Honourable Claire Trevena
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
VIA Email Only

Dear Minister Trevena,

RE: Quesnel Hydraulic Road

I want to thank the Ministry for taking time to meet virtually with residents impacted by the slide that has impacted Quesnel Hydraulic Road.

During the call it was clear that work would be done to re-establish Quesnel Hydraulic Road (I recognize this may need to include a realignment). Would you kindly outline what the process will be on this project? What is the estimated time line? Is the Ministry seeking Federal Disaster Financial Assistance arrangement to fund this project?

In regards to the detour route French Road, I wish to express the deep concerns residents have with the safety of this road. I would also like to raise my significant concerns having travelled on the road.

In a letter from you on June 23, 2020 (Reference Number 294437) in response to concerns I raised about road conditions in the North Cariboo, you noted that staff worked around the clock to restore access and improve detour routes such as the Quesnel Hydraulic.

Very little work has been done on the detour road French Road. My staff experienced two flat tires traveling to a community meeting on September 9, 2020. I was in attendance at a community on September 3, 2020 and one of the attendees also experienced a flat tire. This is a regular occurrence for anyone travelling on this road.

Further, there are many seniors that travel on this road. One resident is 83-years-old and has just been diagnosed with lung cancer. He is looking at possible next steps of chemotherapy/radiation. Another resident in her 70's just finished chemotherapy/radiation for brain cancer, but will be required to have follow-up medical visits. What happens if either of these individuals get a flat tire? There is no cell service on this road. What about ambulance service?

Also in your letter dated June 23, 2020, you noted safety is the Ministry's highest priority and that safe driving conditions on area roads for residents, businesses, ranchers, commercial



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Cariboo North

drivers and other travelers.

I wish to advise the Minister that cattle liners are still unable to travel on the detour road. The BC Cattlemen's Association has written a letter to the Honourable John Horgan, regarding their livestock operations which will be gravely impacted.

The residents are requesting a meeting with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for the fall/winter maintenance plan for French Road, as this is now in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's jurisdiction.

I look forward to a quick response to support our very concerned residents as fall is coming soon; livestock need to be moved and residents need to make health-related decisions. Finally the window to make the necessary improvements on French Road that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure committed to the residents is fast closing, as we have frost and fall weather.

Kind regards,

Coralee Oakes

MLA Cariboo North

Cc: MP Todd Doherty

Cariboo Regional District Representative Mary Sjostrom

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From: Mike Gilson <mike_gilson@bcsafaris.com>

Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2020 10:41 PM

To: Sirett, Steve TRAN:EX <Steve.Sirett@gov.bc.ca>; Hubner, Todd B TRAN:EX <Todd.Hubner@gov.bc.ca>; Moores, Brad A TRAN:EX <Brad.Moores@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Kevin CHURCH <kchurch@morellichertkow.com>; Kevin Boon <kevin@cattlemen.bc.ca>; Oakes.MLA, Coralee <Coralee.Oakes.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Minister, AGRI AGRI:EX <AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Fwd: Livestock Transportation on an unsuitable road

Subject: Livestock Transportation on an unsuitable road

Steve, Todd & Brad,

As has been stated before, French Road is not suited for livestock transportation even though we have been forced to use it as any other options are no better.

I brought to the attention of both Steve and Todd what went on when we moved our horses home from our horse ranch west of Quesnel.

On Friday, November 13th our 2019 Dodge dually pulling a 30' stock trailer (with 2 divider gates creating 3 compartments) loaded with colts, spun out and slid backwards, downhill and into the ditch above the 2nd cattle guard while travelling eastward on French Road.

This incident occurred in the same place where Curtis Farms, empty cattle liner came to a stop when it attempted to haul Cameron's calves out of the valley.

The driver of our truck & trailer, Paul Stafford is an experienced driver with a Class 1 licence.

He is not a rookie at hauling livestock.

When the truck slid to a stop, it was jackknifed on the hill therefore it was quicker & simpler for him to go to his ranch, approx. 2km away to unload the colts that lost their footing and were down in the trailer.

Otherwise it would have been 25 km over French Road to our place.

As I told Steve & Todd last week, there were some banged up colts in the load and the prognosis on a couple was debatable.

Since then, one of them has died from internal injuries caused by the other colts walking on him while down.

The picture isn't pretty, I sure don't like it but others might as well see what we've been saying is going to happen by using French Road.

Here's what a dead colt looks like.

A second filly in the load was injured on her left hip.

It's still up in the air if she'll be sound or not....it all depends on if her stifle is injured beyond repair.

If she needs put down, maybe whoever made the call that we use French Road will come and do the job.

I sure don't want to have to do it.

To someone in the business of raising livestock this is pretty disheartening....actually disgusting. Raising these colts and watching them become useful in our ranching and guide outfitting businesses is something our family looks forward to. Losing them due to senselessness is discouraging.

Whoever made the call to walk away from the Quesnel-Hydraulic slide and force the residents of Gravelle Ferry to use French Road or the 2700/500 road as our options to go to town, haul livestock or feed on.....that person should be damned well embarrassed due to the ramifications that call has made on people and animals.

Tomorrow, Sunday November 29th we are going to start the shit show of getting our cattle on their way to BC Livestocks auction market in Williams Lake.

What normally was a simple procedure of loading 5 cattle liners at our chute has basically turned into an ordeal since no commercial haulers will touch French Road with a loaded Tridem full of cattle.

Therefore it's going to take 25 to 30 truck and stock trailer loads to ferry the cattle over French Road to a

set of corrals to get reloaded onto a liner to complete the journey to Williams Lake.

This is going to be tough on people, tough on the cattle and tough on the pocket book.

When we're done, I'm going to compare past years transportation costs against 2020's....my bet is it will be double and then some without factoring the shrink (weight loss due to stress) on the cattle.

Someone should be accountable for extra costs incurred by our ranching business due to poor decision making.

I think you should be doing some serious reconsideration of decisions that have been made, one day it's going to be a human that gets injured or killed, just like these horses on your inadequate road.

You've been lucky so far.

Regards,

Mike Gilson

Bear Valley Ranch







BC LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

#1 - 10145 Dallas Drive, Kamloops, B.C. V2C 6T4
Phone 250-573-3939 Fax 250-573-3170 Email info@bclivestock.bc.ca

November 26, 2020

Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure
PO Box 9055 Stn Prov. Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Honorable Minister Rob Fleming,

BC Livestock Producer's Coop is the largest cattle marketing agency in British Columbia, with 4 locations in BC: Okanagan Falls, Kamloops, Williams Lake, and Vanderhoof. We market upwards of 120,000 head of beef cattle on an annual basis from producers throughout BC. Most cattle ranches are family owned/operated, and provide a safe supply of food for not only our own consumption in BC, but Nationally, and Globally through export as well. Through Covid-19, we have discovered just how important accessibility to safe and consistent protein is.

I am writing to you on behalf of our producers in the Quesnel area who were drastically impacted by the Quesnel-Hydraulic Road being obliterated by a slide due to a wetter than normal spring in 2020. The cattle rancher's livelihoods that live on the south side of the Quesnel-Hydraulic Road slide are being affected in an increasingly negative way, not to mention it is also causing major animal welfare issues. Coupled together, these two issues are leaving ranching families in this area in dire straits. Cattle ranches make 90% or more of their annual income from selling cattle in the fall, and without that income, ranches face bankruptcy, and cattle are at risk of going hungry if feed cannot be accessed sufficiently.

Cattle are not able to be hauled out of the area in cattle liners as neither of the detours, French Road or the 500/2700 Road, are able to allow for safe transport of livestock in cattle liners due to their steep grades and sharp corners. Last month, one ranch unsuccessfully attempted to haul cattle from their ranch to their local sale yard in Williams Lake. Cattle liners were unable to successfully navigate the detour due to the state of roads on the detour, putting the truck driver's and cattle's wellbeing at risk. A local rancher had to haul the calves in smaller loads of 15-20 at a time up and over the detour where they could meet up with the cattle liners and be transferred from one truck to another. This went on with the cattle liners waiting on one end, and the truck going back and forth all day until all 235 calves were moved and transferred. A task that would have taken the 2 cattle liners 2 ½ hours in regular road conditions, on the Quesnel Hydraulic Road, instead took over 12 hours. This caused the rancher to incur a huge additional expense, and more importantly it caused a huge amount of stress to the calves having to not only travel the steep and windy detour, but also to wait in the pens as well as on the liners all day until the cattle liners received all of the calves to fill their loads. This is unacceptable to both the welfare of the animals, as well as to the business owner.

Regarding animal welfare, this cattle transport disaster is just the tip of the iceberg. Ranchers that live south of the Quesnel-Hydraulic Road slide are also unable to transport much needed grain and hay for their livestock in an efficient manner. Currently they cannot get a large grain or hay truck through the detour and are hauling a few bales at a time. This is extremely costly, and not effective as the more inclement the weather becomes, the worse it gets. It only takes one bad storm and not enough hay on hand to have cattle going hungry. Not to mention the fact that if these ranches cannot get their cattle to market, they cannot even purchase hay, let alone transport it.

Honorable Minister, I implore you to have the Quesnel Hydraulic Road fixed so that these essential businesses who are feeding the masses can continue to operate and care for their livestock.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Cordy Cox
General Manager
BC Livestock Producer's Coop

Cc:
Grant Main
Paula Cousins
Steve Sirett
Todd Hubner
Honorable Lana Popham