

## **Management Principles for the Salmon-Brewster Horse Trail and Campsites**

The development and legal establishment of equestrian campsites will result in the first, formally designated horse-friendly Recreation Sites on Vancouver Island. The system of campsites and trails will provide opportunities for both seasoned riders and beginners to experience riding in a natural (forest) setting.

The legal establishment of the 35-km trail corridor will allow for more effective management of the trail and recreation experience. The Vancouver Island Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen Society of BC (“the club”) is willing to enter into a long-term partnership agreement with Recreation Sites and Trails BC to operate and maintain the campsites and the trail. Although designed specifically for equestrians, the campsites will remain open to the public. Other recreationists will undoubtedly discover and use sections of the trail as well.

Portions of the trail system, and the proposed Memekay Horse Camp Recreation Site, are located within an active grazing licence area. The primary objective is to avoid creating a situation that might negatively impact the operation of the grazing licence or the health and safety of the cattle. Trail users must stick to approved trail corridors and respect all gates. No use of motorcycles or ATVs within the licence area. No public vehicles beyond the recreation site. The club has developed use protocols that members must follow in order to maintain positive relations with the grazing permit holder.

### **Salmon-Brewster Horse Trail**

#### **Management Intent**

The Salmon-Brewster Horse Trail will be managed for a road-accessible, non-motorized recreation experience in a largely natural setting. Portions of the trail corridor may be modified from time to time. (The trail currently exists as an unmanaged route and is already being used by riders. There is an opportunity to relocate contentious portions of the route before the corridor is legally established.)

Stopovers and rest areas will be managed to minimize potential impacts on regenerating forests by horses and mules. The potential spread of non-native, invasive plant species will be managed by regular trail assessments and monitoring. Anticipated impacts to ungulate winter ranges will be negligible, as most recreation use will occur from May through September. The low level of development should be compatible with any overlap of old growth management areas.

In the future, any significant changes proposed to the trail location and/or level of development will be referred to licencees and First Nations for review.

#### **Our Aim is to:**

- Legally establish (under Section 56 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*) a 20-metre wide corridor along the entire length of the trail system – save and excepting Forest Service Roads and road permit roads, and acknowledging prior rights of other resource users;
- Maintain non-motorized recreation opportunities of horseback riding and hiking in an open and forested setting (forested setting could include stands of all ages);

- Maintain road access (2WD high clearance) to the parking areas and trailheads (outside the winter season);
- Limit initial structure development to directional, safety and trailhead signage;
- Monitor stream crossings and install permanent structures if and when required;
- Design and maintain the trail and associated structures in a manner that makes the best effort to prevent motorized vehicles from accessing the trail;
- Minimize the overlap/length of trail following active forestry roads (divert trail users through the Camp 5 Recreation Site and re-route portions of the trail if necessary); and
- Ensure safe crossings of forestry roads (post signs).

### **Expectations of Forest Licences**

- Leave as much of the old railgrade in its current state as operationally practicable;
- Provide advanced notification of road development or harvesting activities that might impact the trail corridor;
- Post warning signs and/or temporary closure signs on the trail if deemed necessary to address public safety;
- Re-establish any portion of the trail impacted by harvesting operations (clear debris from the travelled portion of the trail corridor, or provide resources to the club so that club members can re-establish the trail); and
- Where practicable, keep haul road widths to a minimum and design road/trail crossings to minimize visual impact.

### **Memekay Horse Camp Recreation Site**

#### **Management Intent**

The Memekay Horse Camp Recreation Site, located at the west end of the trail, will be managed for a road-accessible, day use and overnight recreation experience in a natural setting. (Technically, may be closer to “modified”, although to many the setting and experience will seem to be more of a natural one.)

#### **Our Aim is to:**

- Fence off a 5-hectare section (actually 4.271 hectares) at the south end of the grazing licence area and adjust the licence boundary to exclude this section;
- Legally establish as a recreation site under Section 56 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*;
- Maintain road access (2WD high clearance) to the recreation site (outside the winter season);
- Develop and maintain facilities for overnight use, including horse containment areas;
- Design the recreation site to accommodate trucks and horse trailers by developing a combination of pull-through sites and back-in sites;
- Design and maintain the trail leading from the campsite into the grazing licence in a manner that makes the best effort to prevent motorized vehicles from accessing the trail; and
- Consider signing the trail as non-motorized under Section 20(3) of the *Forest Recreation Regulation* if necessary.

#### **Expectations of Forest Licences:**

- Not applicable; area adjacent to grazing licence.

## **Brewster Horse Camp Recreation Site**

### **Management Intent**

The Brewster Horse Camp, located at the east end of the trail, will be managed for a road-accessible, day use and overnight recreation experience in a modified setting. The Horse Camp falls within the already legally established boundary of the Brewster Camp Recreation Site, REC3054. The portion west of the Gray Lake FSR was previously developed for overnight camping. At the same time, the portion east of the FSR was partially developed, but no overnight facilities were installed. The large, open area was previously used as a camp site in conjunction with the neighbouring Camp 5 development during the railroad logging era.

### **Our Aim is to:**

- Maintain road access (2WD high clearance) to the recreation site (outside the winter season);
- Develop and maintain facilities for overnight use, including horse containment areas;
- Design the recreation site to accommodate trucks and horse trailers by developing a combination of pull-through sites and back-in sites;
- Install facilities at the southern end (away from the “horse campsite”) to accommodate overflow campers from the already-developed portion of the recreation site west of the Gray Lake FSR; and
- Develop a short, access trail for watering the horses.

### **Expectations of Forest Licencees**

- Do not harvest timber within the established recreation site boundary\* (save and excepting trees within the FSR right-of-way that should be felled for public safety reasons); and
- Provide advanced notification of road development or harvesting activities adjacent to the recreation site (operational restrictions, such as timing, may be recommended).

*\*Note: there is very little merchantable timber within the recreation site. We'll field check the existing site boundary and modify if need be to accommodate the “no harvesting” expectation.*

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Recreation Sites and Trails BC (FLNRO)