



Sunshine Coast  
Conservation  
Association

March 23, 2007

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Hon. Richard Coleman, Minister  
Ministry of Forests and Range

Re/Complaint to the BC Ombudsman

Dear Minister Coleman,

Please find enclosed a copy of our complaint which was sent to the Ombudsman on January 8, 2007. This complaint involves serious allegations of unfair decisions and practices relating to the establishment of the District of Sechelt's Probationary Community Forest Agreement (PCFA).

We have now received direction from the Ombudsman's office on how to properly proceed with this complaint. The general practice of the Ombudsman's Office is to ask a complainant to contact the named authority and request a direct response to the issues raised in a complaint. The purpose of this letter is to comply with the Ombudsman's suggestions in the hope that your Ministry will look into our concerns and perhaps resolve the matter. Currently, this complaint is not under investigation and may be discarded entirely if your Ministry does choose to resolve the raised issues appropriately.

We summarize the specific allegations of the complaint against the Minister and Ministry of Forests and Range as follows;

- The District of Sechelt's PCFA was approved contrary to the spirit and intent of the Community Forest program, the Community Tenures Regulation and the Forest Act.
- The Ministry failed to ensure that the District's application for a PCFA met all the legislated requirements of the Regulation and Act.
- MOFR officials wrongfully allowed and directed the District to evade disclosure and public consultation responsibilities during the application process.

- The outcome of the District's application for a PCFA was predetermined by Ministry officials who also improperly assisted the District in creating and promoting the application while retaining their roles as decision makers in the application process.
- The Minister and MOFR officials knowingly accepted false information from the District of Sechelt.

We ask you to refer to the complaint text and footnoted documentation to more fully understand these allegations. And finally, in making this complaint to the Ombudsman, the SCCA relied on the Principles of Administrative Justice (2003) and alleged that the MOFR and the Minister's conduct and decisions in regard to the above issues, was unfair in the extreme, regardless of whether or not actual mistakes in law were made.

We look forward to receiving your explanations and your suggestions as to how best to resolve these many outstanding issues.

Yours truly,

Daniel Bouman, Executive Director  
Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

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Office of the BC Ombudsman  
Sechelt Indian Government  
Sunshine Coast Regional District  
Town of Gibsons  
Nicholas Simons, Powell River Sunshine Coast MLA

Various