



Fisheries and  
Oceans Canada

Pêches et Océans  
Canada

32873 London Avenue  
Mission, British Columbia  
V2V 6M7

July 31, 2007

District of Mission  
Community Planning Department  
8645 Stave Lake Street  
PO Box 20, Mission B.C.  
V2V 4L9

Dear Mr. Younie:

**Re: Review of the Environmental Base Map for Southwest Mission Urban Reserve Area**

This letter refers to the Environmental Base Map (EBM) that was prepared by Genstar Development Company and their agents for the Southwest Mission Urban Reserve Area pursuant to the District of Mission's LAN. 48 policy. The area of lands covered under LAN. 48 are traversed by many streams classified as fish habitat. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is mandated by federal legislation (*Fisheries Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and Species at Risk Act*) to protect fish and fish habitat.

DFO has reviewed the EBM in accordance with the LAN.48 Neighbourhood Planning Terms of Reference. Based on the most recent EBM draft (May 2007), including the peer review report, it is DFO's opinion that the EBM has not been completed in accordance with terms set forth in LAN. 48. Specifically, the following items require additional detail and corrections in order to satisfy the intent of LAN. 48: locating and delineating all headwater streams; applying the correct classification to all watercourses; providing a proper systematic stream identification system to the map; providing background field data and observations enabling quality assurance checks to be undertaken; and removal of the inappropriate management prescriptions for non-fish bearing, non-permanent watercourses, as listed in Table 1.

Based on previous experience, DFO strongly believes that the earlier that information is gathered and made available to decision makers, the more likely planning processes will successfully achieve environmental goals and objectives, such as protecting fish habitat. Development plans prepared in the absence of watershed-level baseline environmental information often result in unavoidable conflicts between environmental protection and previously approved land use proposals. For example, due to piecemeal planning which did not adequately consider all of the potential environmental effects, the Cedar Connector Project resulted in a conflict between an important transportation corridor and the protection of an important, ecologically-sensitive wetland. Ultimately, a portion of the wetland was destroyed to facilitate construction. DFO

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Fax: 1-604-814-1891

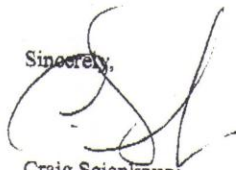
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hopes that we will learn from earlier mistakes to avoid causing similar, unnecessary impacts to environmentally sensitive areas in the Southwest Mission Area.

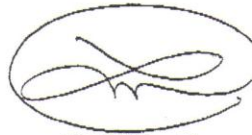
Based on information provided in the July 23, 2007 letter from the District of Mission (Younie) and during previous meetings between DFO and the District, DFO understands that the District is requesting DFO's support for initiating the Neighbourhood Planning Process (NPP), recognizing that the EBM has not yet been completed as per the District's LAN 48 policy. Should the District of Mission decide to move forward to the NPP in the absence of the completed EBM, DFO will not object under the condition that the District will not approve nor consider establishing any neighbourhood boundaries, utility corridors, land use designations, stormwater plans, development permits or any other agreements prior to completion of the area-wide EBM. Issuing such approvals in the absence of a completed EBM has the potential to lead to conflicts between fish habitat and future development activities, and may affect the District's ability to exercise options necessary for the protection of fish and fish habitat in other future neighbourhoods.

DFO sincerely appreciates the opportunity to work with the District of Mission on this valuable planning initiative and continues to support and commend the District's commitment towards achieving sustainable development in the Southwest Mission Area. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 604.814.1079 or 604.814.1070, respectively.

Sincerely,



Craig Sciankowy  
Section Head  
Habitat & Enhancement Branch  
Lower Fraser Area - East



Lisa McDonald  
Habitat Biologist  
Habitat & Enhancement Branch  
Lower Fraser Area - East

Cc: Sylvia Letay, BC Ministry of Environment