

May 1, 2013

Mr. Kevin Miller
k.a.miller@mts.net

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you for your email dated April 1, 2013, to the Honourable Gord Mackintosh, regarding your request to phase out snowmobiles in Birds Hill Provincial Park. I have been asked to respond to your letter on his behalf.

The conflict between snowmobile trails and cross-country ski trails in Birds Hill Provincial Park has been an issue for many years. It was, in fact, one of the major issues during the park management planning process over the past three years. I am pleased to inform you that the management plan has been finalized and is now available on our website at http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/parks/planning/manage_plan.html

Through the final consultation process for the management plan, arguments were made both for and against snowmobile trails in the park. The final plan directs that only a basic snowmobile trail through the northern portion of park connecting PTH 59 to PR 206 will be retained. Trails will be rerouted to achieve maximum separation between snowmobile and ski trails. This will include the phasing out of the snowmobile staging area at the riding stable in the park. This approach will effectively accomplish the same results in relation to the ski trails as phasing out snowmobiling entirely. The plan still retains a provision for closure of any trail, including snowmobile trails, if there continues to be a conflict with other trails.

The phasing out of the snowmobile staging area and rerouting of trails in the northern portion of the park will take place over the coming years. These actions should lead to a significant reduction in the number of occurrences of snowmobiles on the ski trails, and an improved skiing experience for those using Birds Hill.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to the Minister's attention.

Yours sincerely,

~ original signed by ~

Mike Gilbertson
Director

c: Honourable Gord Mackintosh