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December 2, 2021

The Gating of BLC Forest Roads

Why in 1978 (43 years ago) Barrett Lumber Company (BLC) had to gate our forest limit extraction roads against the NS culture which even today is greatly influenced by 29.73% of Nova Scotians of Scottish decent. (My mother was of Scottish decent) in 1967 I moved BLC from winter roads to 10 months harvesting roads with only the spring mud season approximately March 1 to 30 each year off limit.

For a short time, everything went well because of the quality of our forest roads and the citizens of Beaver Bank and Beaver Bankers who had moved to Halifax etc. really enjoyed being able to drive back to their favorite Fishing and hunting grounds instead of walking 2 or 3 miles to get there and carry their boats by hand.

For over 220 years, 1750 to approximately 1970 there was a social contract (NS culture) between NS forest land owners and the general public (greatly influenced by Scott's from the highland clearances) as long as the general public respected forest land and its owners, forest land owners had no problem with the general public using their forest holding.

This NS Culture started to deteriorate when the NS Forest industry started to build 10 month harvesting roads like BLC did in 1967 and the development of ATV's. Because BLC is just outside of Halifax we started to get garbage, old cars including a stolen burnt car which started a small forest fire. I am pleased to say that for the next 10 years 1967-1977 when Mounties were hired for their ability not on a quota system, the Mounties not only found out who dumped the garbage etc. they insured the perpetrators cleaned up their garbage etc. Lately when a fellow Beaver Bank's who reported garbage on his forest land the Mounty said to the land owner "you have no signs I can't do anything".

The final straw for me was in 1978, a local teenage girl was sexually assaulted and when at trial it was asked where the offence took place the answer was on a BLC forest road. At that time, I had enough I gated all our forest roads and also offered to gate local forest land owner's forest roads for free.

After a while I calmed down and offered keys to my neighbours. I still had problems I finally came up with the BLC Forest Stewardship agreement whereas anyone wanting access to BLC Forest land if they were not responsible enough to support the IWK, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, local churches etc. they were not responsible enough to use BLC Forest roads. At a Rotary dinner while sitting beside a Psychologist I asked him "why"

when I gave keys away, I had problems but when I indirectly charged for them by insisting on a donation I had very little problems. The Phycologist stated that if someone makes a capital investment, they protect it if they get something for nothing, they feel it has no value. All I know for 20 years the system worked until HRM took over the Mounties. For the last 20 years our forest land is being destroyed by ATV users and others. For years now I have felt I had to do something or else sell our land and give the problems to them. I know new landowners will not tolerate what I have put up with.

To keep our Beaver Bank community safe, we as Beaver banker's have to step up to the plate. For 20 years ago ever since HRM has taken over our area the quality of our policing has deteriorated.

Example:

1.) Beaver Bank used to have a community policing officer

2.) Instead of having the same policing person who took the complaint follow through we now have the Halifax city model where no one is taking responsibly to follow through. In other words, you get the run around

3.) When a homeowner in Greenforest Subdivision called me at 12:50 pm on Aug 23, 2018 to inform me that a truck just went into our wood road with a load of garbage the homeowner was going to follow the truck. I called 911 and said "someone has just gone into our woods with a load of garbage. I am going back and will do whatever I have to in order to protect our land." This is what the 911 operator said to me "you can't do that, you could be charged, you have to wait for the MOUNTY" I told her from past experiences, it would be a waste of time and hung up. One hour and ten minutes later after the report, the homeowner not only took the licences number but also told the truck driver to take the garbage back out with him (which he did). In other words, the MOUNTY called after the situation was resolved by a local homeowner. (I am hearing from others that 911 is mostly useless).

4.) As most of you know for the last few years even after the Mounties have been informed that ATV's the motocross bikes have been racing up and down Lakeland Street a residential street. (Where there are two basketball hoops on the street) at all hours of the day and night. Trying to break the BLC gate at 2 am in the morning, going around the BLC gate etc. when I personally took the RCMP in Sackville Detachment to task for not doing their job stopping the racing up and down Lakeland Street I was told they couldn't catch them for when they set their siren, the ATVs took off. It isn't that the Mounties can't catch the law breakers, we as a society have so hamstrung our police force that they are not allowed to chase the law breakers. If the racing ATVs or dirt bikes hurt themselves by fleeing police, it is the police who get in trouble not the lawbreakers

5.) On Jan 1, 2018 our gate on Roy Nick's property just before the Beaver Bank Villa was torn down by a monster truck. The BBATV club reported the damage to me. I asked the ATV club to report the damage to the Mounties. The lady MOUNTY wouldn't take the report for she said the ATV club didn't own the gate. (She could have called me on my

cell) it was a week before I repaired the gate. In that time 3 loads of garbage were dumped in our woods. The BBATV Club found out who dumped the garbage and had them clean it up. When I reported about the lady RCMP officer not taking the report to the inspector in charge of the Sackville Detachment he was very upset.

The straw that broke the camel's back

The closing of BLC Forest Rd at the end of Lakeland Street in July 2020

There is a saying "it takes a community to raise a child" I say "it takes a community to keep a community safe"

On July 2, 2020 a mother with a 6 year and 10-year-old daughters were back at the horseshoe lake when 2 ATVs who don't have permission from BLC to be on our forest limit (because they didn't belong to the BBATV club who are the only ones that are under contract to BLC that can give ATV drivers permission to drive ATVs on BLC timber limit) made her so scared that she called 911 and three Mouny cars showed up (she is still scared to use our timber limit)

When this intimidation took place, I was so upset that someone didn't feel safe on our timberland I revoked immediately all permission to everyone including walkers, dog walkers, joggers, ATV's, boaters etc. to use our land at the end of Lakeland Street. I personally policed our Lakeland gate and told everyone that our land is closed until responsible users took control of only letting responsible people access to our land under the BLC Family Forest Stewardship agreement for under no circumstances will I tolerate any of my neighbours not feeling safe in our woods.

I am happy to inform you a number of very capable users of our timberland have formed the "Lakeland Gate Association" this has already made both Lakeland Street and our timberland much safer for every person so please follow their leadership.

I want to personally thank the Lakeland Gate Committee for setting the example that hopefully users of other parcels of our timber limit will follow so all of our Beaver Bank timber limit will be safe for everyone to use. For at 82 years old, I am no longer capable of doing it myself.



David F. Barrett