



Prince Albert National Park  
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John Stevenson, President  
The Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association  
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March 29, 2011

Dear Mr. Stevenson:

In response to your letter of February 3, 2011, to Prince Albert National Park, concerning spruce budworm in Waskesiu, I'm pleased to update you and the Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association members on the actions that have followed. In that letter you advised us of the results of the BioForest Technologies report on spruce budworm that was commissioned by the Association, and asked that Parks Canada consider aerial spraying to reduce the impact of spruce budworm in the spring of 2011.

In our February 15, 2011 response, we communicated your request via email copy, to the Waskesiu Community Council for their information and consideration. As you know, Council voted during their meeting on November 26, 2010, to support a long-term option for forest management in Waskesiu that does not involve spraying. Consequently, we spoke to Bryan Matheson, Chair, about convening a special meeting to provide the opportunity for Council members to discuss and, if desired, reconsider their November position.

Parks Canada staff and I participated in a special meeting of the Council on March 2, 2011 to discuss and answer questions regarding the 2010 Spruce Health Annual Monitoring and the BioForest Technologies reports. The former report was presented to Council in October 2010 and led to their November endorsement of the long-term plant and fence option. During the special meeting, Council reaffirmed its support for this; therefore, for 2011, Parks Canada will continue with the tree planting and fencing and will not spray for spruce budworm.

I wish to explain the rationale behind our decision. To begin with, Council plays a key role in managing Waskesiu. As a councillor, you are aware of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Council and Parks Canada that outlines the responsibilities each organization has with respect to the other. The Council, as an elected advisory body, is Parks Canada's primary link to Waskesiu's stakeholder groups, and our primary source of guidance and advice on issues of concern to the community.

In this particular case, Council deliberated on the matter twice and on both occasions supported the long-term strategy. Rejecting this advice would undermine the Council as an effective and valued advisory body, harm the credibility of the individual councillors, and be contrary to the spirit of the MOU.

I understand very clearly the desire for the Association to keep Waskesiu aesthetically pleasing, in particular through the presence of large white spruce trees. Parks Canada has committed to this goal through the Waskesiu Community Plan, Waskesiu Vegetation Management Strategy, and Waskesiu Urban Reforestation Plan, and continues to invest in the implementation of these plans. Council, which includes members of the Association, has been involved in the development of these documents and I think it is fair to say that the presence of signature spruce trees in the town site is a goal shared by all. As some of your members may not be aware of the fall 2010



planting activities, I would like to share that approximately 30 large (3 m to 4 m tall) spruce trees were planted in the Community Hall/baseball diamond area, and across from the Visitor Centre an area was planted with mixed species enclosed by an attractive rail fence.

Maintaining the health of the white spruce forest in Waskesiu fits within the larger goal of maintaining and enhancing the "sense of place" in the community. Parks Canada and Council have been investing time and resources not only into the health of the forest, but into other initiatives that showcase the community's heritage and enhance its aesthetic appeal. I am very pleased with the accomplishments of Council and Parks Canada to date, and I would like to share some of them with you.

1. Restored the Community Hall, Superintendent's House and South Gate,
2. Restoration of the Assembly Hall is in progress,
3. Installed interpretive signage for heritage buildings,
4. Installed street banners,
5. Replaced information kiosks,
6. Constructed bandstand viewpoint,
7. Installed Waskesiu arrival sign (light to be installed),
8. Paving of Waskesiu roads, reconstruction of sidewalks, and upgrades to the lakefront trail is in progress,
9. Restored three viewsapes, including Height of Land in fall 2010,
10. Upgraded Visitor Centre area (e.g. teepee, displays), and
11. Conversion of former Cabin Area Washrooms to green spaces is in progress.

We should all be proud of this list of accomplishments, and, I hope through other initiatives such as the creation of a lakefront development plan and the continued implementation of the Waskesiu Vegetation Management Strategy, that the community can continue to enhance the character and heritage of both Waskesiu and Prince Albert National Park. We look forward to doing this together with you and your organization, Council and the public.

In summary, actions from the Waskesiu Urban Reforestation Plan will continue (for example, tree planting and fencing) focusing on the long-term health of the forest. If the Association is interested in receiving a presentation on spruce health monitoring or on any of the many other initiatives intended to enhance Waskesiu's character and the visitor experience in Prince Albert National Park, we could discuss this when I meet with the Association executive in May. Thank you for your continued interest in Waskesiu.

Yours truly,



Alan Fehr  
Superintendent

Cc Bryan Matheson, Chair, Waskesiu Community Council  
Terry Schneider, Townsite Manager, Prince Albert National Park  
Pat Dunn, External Relations Manager, Prince Albert National Park