

Ministry of Transportation
Legislature Office
#320 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

July 26, 2010

Attention: **Honourable Luke Ouellette**
Minister of Transportation

Dear Minister Ouellette,

RE: Condition of Highway 529

Recently, Little Bow owners have approached the Little Bow Resort Management Board with concerns about the rapidly degrading condition of Highway # 529. The board has approached Vulcan County as well as our MLA, Barry McFarland, with repeated requests for assistance to encourage Alberta Transportation to provide pavement over this small section of road. Transportation's answer is always the same: Our car counts are not high enough to warrant pavement.

While our car counts may not be high during some days of the week, counts are very high in the summer months, weekends, and especially on long weekends. We have 252 residential lots at the Little Bow Resort. On a hot long weekend, we will have over 1,000 people in our Resort. This includes both property owners as well as guests. A large portion of our owners will drive out and they bring with them in separate vehicles, friends and family. Car counts routinely reach or exceed 300 vehicles on a Friday night and another 300 vehicles on a Sunday night. Our boat launch will only hold 140 vehicles and we are often turning away vehicles by 11:00AM on a Saturday morning.

At least 60% of our population travel from Calgary and drive the west part of the unpaved portion of Hwy 529. This includes Snake Valley, that constantly has potholes and where rain will often sit on the highway, bringing up the clay and turning this road into a greasy and unsafe stretch. (*See photos from the last rainfall included.*) This portion of the highway is particularly bad as it is windy, with the clay base coming up in light to moderate rains. It becomes very dangerous. Many of our owners have indicated that they can no longer navigate this road in a car and must travel in an SUV or truck.

Located adjacent to Little Bow Resort, and sharing the same access, is the Southern Alberta Bible Camp. The Bible Camp can accommodate 295 children and they currently offer 2 sessions per week in the summer. With 295 vehicles travelling in and out twice per week, that equals a combined total of 1,200 vehicles.

Added to a summer weekend for Little Bow Resort of another 600 vehicle trips, not

including local traffic and Lake McGregor owners (who have also indicated they travel this road to Carmangay, Champion, etc.) and our car counts are well over 2,000 vehicle trips per week.

A few years ago, in lieu of pavement, the Province provided Lignosulfate for dust control in an attempt to save money while improving safety. The attached pictures were taken after a very light rain of 12mm with Lignosulfate applied. While Lignosulfate is better than gravel on a dry day, it is by far worse on a rainy day or in winter months.

Our local residents (20% are full time) are puzzled why this small section of Hwy 529, which appears to be heavily used, including morning school bus into our resort, is not paved when other longer roads within Vulcan County and other areas of rural Alberta are travelled much *less* yet *are* paved. For more than 12 years, we have been promised consideration for pavement, yet it appears that these few miles have not yet been included on the departments Three Year Capital Plan.

I mentioned earlier that 60% of our property owners commute regularly from Calgary. At a time when some residents of larger centres, such as Calgary, another 20% from Lethbridge, may be overly critical of the Government of Alberta, saying that the government is not paying attention to *big-city* needs, I often hear some of these same people pointing to this section of Hwy 529 as an example where the Government of Alberta ignoring the repeated requests for safer *rural* roads as well.

As a strong believer in Alberta, I have great faith in this government. I encourage you to revisit this small section of road, personally, and drive it for yourself. After that, I am confident that you will understand our deep concerns for safety of the many families that drive this section of road and that you will direct action to ensure that this road be paved.

Kindest regards,

Jon Hodal
Little Bow Resort Board

cc: Honourable Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta
MLA Barry McFarland (Little Bow)
Reeve Derrick Annable, Vulcan County