

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Falcon Trails
PROPOSAL NAME: Falcon Trails
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: Two
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Recreation
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4149.00

OVERVIEW:

The Proposal was received on March 8, 1996. It was dated February 27, 1996. The advertisement of the proposal was as follows:

“A Proposal has been filed by Falcon Trails to upgrade the Falcon Ski Area in Whiteshell Provincial Park. The existing operation would be leased from Manitoba Natural Resources and facilities would be added to allow year round use as an eco-tourism destination. The additional facilities would include re-developed downhill and cross country ski trails which could be used for mountain biking and hiking in the summer months, a renovated chalet for day use, a new Welcome Centre for meetings and overnight use, nine new rental cabins and two remote unserviced rental cabins. The development would start in 1996 with chalet renovations, trail renovations and the construction of five rental cabins. All portions of the development would be constructed by 1999.”

The Proposal was advertised in the Steinbach Carillon on Wednesday, April 3, 1996. It was placed in the Main, Centennial, Eco-Network and Steinbach Public Library public registries. It was also distributed to TAC members on March 26, 1996. The closing date for comments from members of the public and TAC members was April 25, 1996.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Comments were invited from the City of Winnipeg. Comments from the City's Water and Waste Department are included with TAC comments. No public responses were received.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Manitoba Environment - Eastern-Interlake Region Recommend that all sewage disposal systems be designed by a qualified engineer as indicated in the proposal. The

water supply and distribution system must conform to all applicable Public Health legislation and should be approved by this office. Any alterations or additions to the food preparation or serving areas must be identified on a registration form which must be submitted to this office prior to obtaining a Food Service Establishment Permit.

Disposition:

These recommendations can be included as licence conditions.

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Manitoba Environment - Environmental Quality Concerned about proposed developments in the Falcon Lake area. The proponent should confirm with data whether the proposed development is still under the threshold or maximum sustainable capacity of Falcon Lake. Falcon Lake is extensively developed and any additional development could surpass the maximum capacity of the lake and cause the water quality to progressively deteriorate. Falcon Lake drains into Snowshoe Bay of Shoal Lake. The approval of developments on Falcon Lake will be seen as threatening the quality of Shoal Lake too. It will weaken our position regarding developments in the Shoal Lake watershed to protect the source of Winnipeg's water supply. The approval of the development could weaken Manitoba's position with respect to a challenge of Manitoba's refusal to allow a private road connecting First Nation No. 40 land to the Trans Canada Highway near Falcon Lake. The Proposal should be circulated to Urban Affairs and the City of Winnipeg for review.

Disposition:

Copies of the Proposal were provided to Urban Affairs and the City of Winnipeg for review as suggested. Comments on the capacity of Shoal Lake were requested from the Parks Branch. The Regional Parks Manager noted that a campground at Falcon Lake has been closed, freeing up some capacity on the lake for further development. In addition, improvements in sewage collection and handling facilities have eased pressure on the lake. The Parks Branch is satisfied that the proposed development will not exceed the capacity of the lake.

Manitoba Environment - Water Quality Management *Carrying capacity:* the carrying / development capacity of Falcon Lake has not been investigated for some time, and may need to be revisited to determine the the level of development the lake can sustain without inducing degradation of water quality. As this cannot be carried out in a reasonable length of time, the precautionary principle would dictate that the proposed development would not add to the total level of development currently at Falcon Lake. Should the proposal result in a projected increase in development (i.e. increase in user days) information should be provided showing how use will be reduced in other areas of the lake to accomodate the proposal. Such information might best be obtained from the Parks Branch. *Developments in the Shoal Lake Watershed:* Manitoba has consistently and strenuously insisted that Ontario subject proposed developments in the Ontario portion of the watershed to rigorous environmental reviews. Fairness requires that this proposal be subjected to at least a similar level of scrutiny, perhaps including review and

comment by various Ontario interests. *Water and wastewater treatment and handling:* Detail is required to evaluate the probable effectiveness of the proposed systems.

Disposition:

The question of carrying capacity has been addressed above. Other use has been reduced by closing a campground. As the Parks Branch is satisfied that the proposed development does not exceed the present capacity of Falcon Lake, it is recommended that Ontario interests not be consulted with respect to the development unless High Lake is affected. (Remote unserviced cabins are proposed for High Lake, which crosses the Manitoba / Ontario boundary.) Water and wastewater facilities require approval prior to construction, and so can be addressed as a licence condition.

Historic Resources Branch No heritage resources have been reported along the eastern shore of Falcon Lake in the vicinity of the proposed development. There is the potential for such resources to be present, particularly along the shorelines of Manitoba,

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Boat and High Lake bays as well as the southeast shore of Falcon Lake. Resources could include pre-1700 aboriginal campsites and religious sites. Tree removal, utility excavations and building construction could disturb heritage resources. The proposal indicates that these activities will be limited. Falcon Trails was contacted by the Branch on April 15 and advised that there may be heritage concerns. The Branch's Impact Assessment Archaeologist will examine the project area by the end of June. Results of the investigation will be forwarded.

Disposition:

The requirement for a site assessment by Historic Resources can be included as a licence condition.

Highway Planning and Design Branch No concerns.

Community Economic Development Services No planning concerns.

Tourism Development No objection to the development of the proposed facilities.

Urban Affairs In 1989, the Province and the City of Winnipeg signed the Shoal Lake Agreement with Shoal Lake Band No. 40 in order to protect the water quality of Shoal Lake, the water supply for the City of Winnipeg. Any proposed development with the potential to impact water quality on Shoal Lake has to be reviewed carefully to ensure that water quality will not be affected. If the Falcon Trails proposal is approved, the proper sewage treatment facilities should be installed to ensure that the water quality in Shoal Lake is protected. Development on High Lake has the potential to impact Shoal Lake water quality. Urban Affairs shares the City's concern regarding development on High Lake. The impact of development on the water quality in High Lake needs to be

assessed before the construction of the two outpost cabins is permitted. In addition, under the terms of the agreement, the Province and the City are obligated “to provide their best efforts to make available employment, contracts, and training to Band members within commuting distance of the the Shoal Lake Band No. 40 community”. If possible, as a condition of approval, the proponent should be advised that Shoal Lake Band No. 40 be contacted in the event that any contracts are to be tendered or if there are any employment opportunities at the resort to which members can apply.

Disposition:

The concerns about sewage treatment facilities and High Lake can be addressed as licence conditions. The proponent can be notified of the interest of Band members in contracts or employment.

Natural Resources Suggest that proper sewage disposal methods which meet Manitoba Environment standards occur for this project given the development’s close proximity to both Falcon Lake and High Lake.

Disposition:

This suggestion can be incorporated as a licence condition.

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Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Fisheries and Oceans has made several recommendations to mitigate against potential adverse environmental effects. With the implementation of the recommended measures, the project would not require an environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

Fisheries and Oceans Fish spawning and rearing habitat may be disrupted or destroyed by the development of five small sand beaches and two canoe docks. DFO recommends that there be no alteration of shoreline, including removal of aquatic vegetation and rocks below the high waterline. Any sand that is brought in should not be deposited below the high watermark, within reach of wave action or ice scour, or on slopes where erosion into the waterbody could occur. Construction of docks, particularly crib docks, can damage fish habitat by disturbing the lake bed or restricting water movement along the shore. DFO prefers floating docks or docks supported by posts since they have the least impact on fish habitat. The regional fisheries biologist should be consulted on dock design, location and time of construction. If treated wood is used, it should be treated with inorganic compounds such as ACA or CCA. Wood treated with creosote or pentachlorophenol should not be used in water. These materials are organic, persist in the environment for years, and are known to be toxic to fish.

Disposition:

These recommendations can be incorporated as licence conditions.

City of Winnipeg The development contemplates construction of two outpost cabins complete with septic tanks and fields on High Lake. Development on High Lake has the potential to impact Shoal Lake water quality. The City of Winnipeg is opposed to any development on High Lake until a long term sustainable land use plan is developed for the area. We would be pleased to participate in a consultative process with the Province of Manitoba to establish such a plan.

Disposition:

Development of the High Lake portion of the project could be excluded by a licence condition until a land use plan is place. The remote cabins on High Lake are proposed for construction in a later stage of the development.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing is not recommended for this project as no public concerns have been identified.

RECOMMENDATION:

All concerns about the project have been addressed by the Parks Branch or can be addressed as licence conditions. Therefore, it is recommended that the Development be licensed under The Environment Act subject to the limits, terms and conditions as described on the attached Draft Environment Act Licence. It is further recommended that enforcement of the Licence be assigned to the Eastern-Interlake Region.

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PREPARED BY:

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May 2, 1996

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