

Subject: WILDFIRE & FOREST TRAILS: COMMON SENSE REQUIRED

Date: Fri, 22 Aug 2003 01:52:23 +0100 (BST)

From: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

To: fonvca@fonvca.org

CC: council@dnv.org

From: Elizabeth James [mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com]

Sent: August 21, 2003 16:42

Subject: LETTER TO THE VANCOUVER SUN: WILDFIRES AND FOREST TRAILS: COMMON SENSE REQUIRED

21 August 2003

RE: WILDFIRES AND FOREST TRAILS: COMMON SENSE REQUIRED

Dear Editor:

Paul Kubik claims that "Closing Hiking Trails won't stop wildfires," Sun 21 August. Well, to quote one fire chief in the GVRD, "Isn't it strange how everyone has suddenly become a fire expert?" So, Mr. Kubik, here's my little bit of expertise; and I'll say what firemen likely would not.

The trouble with leaving trails open occurs on several levels:

Safety - your own and that of whatever family man it is who wouldn't think of kissing you off if you got trapped.

Irresponsibility: those hikers and mountain-bikers [yes, there are many of them] who say, "I'm not a smoker, and then toss a glass bottle away. Most elementary-age kids could tell you how fast that can start a fire.

Liability: I'm no apologist for politicians and bureaucrats, but truth is the truth. Earlier this week, GVRD officials met with senior fire personnel and made a unanimous decision to follow the tried and true protocols that have served us well for decades: *When temperature, humidity levels and seven-day weather forecasts intersect and predict trouble, we issue the appropriate advisory.* And they did; but they're damned if they do and damned if they don't.

So I ask you, Mr. Kubik, what would be your reaction if GVRD did **not** issue the warnings and advisories and, being not quite clever enough, you became trapped by a sudden forest fire?

I'll wager you'd be one of the first to call your lawyer - if you were still able that is.

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