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VOCene EXTRA - Jan. 10, 2008

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This special VOCene newsletter is being sent to raise awareness of the ongoing issue regarding the non-motorized status of the Phelix Creek area and the Sea to Sky Backcountry Forum in general.

Starting in 2001, representatives from non-motorized (including the VOC), motorized, and commercial groups formed the Sea to Sky Backcountry Forum and started meeting to create a Winter Sharing Accord that would establish different zones in the Sea to Sky area for various recreational uses. More information on this process and maps of the agreed areas can be found at <http://www.backcountryforum.org>.

In particular, the Phelix Creek area surrounding the VOC's Brian Waddington Hut was designated as "non-motorized with air-access." This was agreed to by all forum participants, including various snowmobile clubs. The Winter Sharing Accord was and is intended to be incorporated in various government legislation, but the process is long and still underway.

Unfortunately, recently some snowmobilers have complained about the non-motorized designation in the Phelix area to the government. They want to be able to snowmobile unrestricted in the entire area, and reject the Backcountry Forum process and the Winter Sharing Accord.

The VOC and other non-motorized groups are strongly against non-motorized use (eg. snowmobiling) in the Phelix Creek area since it would directly impact our enjoyment of backcountry skiing in the region. Snowmobiles are extremely loud and it is impossible for non-motorized users to have a wilderness experience with noisy snowmobiles driving around. In addition, the VOC is concerned that the whole Backcountry Forum process is at risk. Any changes to the Sharing Accord should be made through consultation with all stakeholders, not just by complaining to the government.

The VOC urges members to write letters to government officials on this issue. Previous petitions (from both sides) have been rejected by the government and we have been told that only individual letters will be considered. The VOC has created a wiki page with more information on this issue that includes names and addresses to send letters to.

[http://www.ubc-voc.com/wiki/Sea\\_to\\_Sky\\_Backcountry\\_Forum](http://www.ubc-voc.com/wiki/Sea_to_Sky_Backcountry_Forum)

We are holding a letter writing night (including skiing picture slideshow from the Phelix area) next Tuesday night, Jan. 15 at 6pm in the clubroom. This would be a great time to come out and get more information and write a letter supporting our cause. We will cover postage and envelopes.

Please either write a letter yourself or come out to our slideshow next Tuesday. This is a critical time for maintaining our access to one of our cherished huts! We are meeting with the government on Jan. 21 so we need letters to arrive by then.

Letter Writing Night  
VOC Clubroom  
6pm Tuesday January 15

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CONTRIBUTIONS to the VOCene are welcome. Please send all inquires or additions to: [vocene@ubc-voc.com](mailto:vocene@ubc-voc.com). To unsubscribe from the VOCene mailing list, sign in at <http://www.ubc-voc.com/member/update.php> and uncheck the 'want VOCene' box

UBC Varsity Outdoor Club  
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**(This is no joke, no wimpy confirmation screens will appear, so don't mess around)**

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**Varsity Outdoor Club**