



August 6, 2025

VIA EMAIL: joan@districtofmackenzie.ca

Joan Atkinson, Mayor of Mackenzie
The District of Mackenzie
1 Mackenzie BLVD
Mackenzie, British Columbia
V0J 2C0

Dear Mayor Joan Atkinson,

Thank you for your letter of July 14, 2025, requesting information on the regulations and procedures for road and bridge maintenance on Forest Service Roads (FSRs). FSR road management is guided by legislation, regulations, professional practice requirements under Engineers and Geoscientists BC (EGBC), Forest Professionals of British Columbia (FPBC) and Ministry policies

The primary regulatory framework is outlined in the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation within the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. Notable sections include:

Structural Defects – Section 75

A person who maintains a road must do one or more of the following if a structural defect or deficiency occurs on a bridge:

- correct the defect or deficiency to the extent necessary to protect:
 - industrial users of the bridge, and
 - downstream property, improvements or forest resources that could be affected if the bridge fails;
- close, remove or replace the bridge;
- restrict traffic loads to a safe level;
- place a sign, on each bridge approach, stating the maximum load capacity of the bridge.

Road Maintenance – Section 79(6)

Persons responsible for road maintenance must ensure:

- The structural integrity of the road prism and clearing width is preserved;
- Drainage systems are functional;

- The road remains safe for industrial users.

Wilderness Roads – Section 81

If a FSR is not actively used by industrial users, Section 79(6) only applies to the extent:

- Maintenance is required only to prevent material adverse effects on forest resources.

In addition to the regulations, several professional practice documents developed by the Ministry of Forests, EGBC, and FPBC to provide further guidance on what professionals and companies need to do on forest roads. These include:

- Ministry of Forests Engineering Branch Manual ([Engineering Manual](#))
- EGBC/FPBC Professional requirements for bridge construction ([Professional Services in the Forest Sector: Crossings](#))
- EGBC/FPBC Professional requirements for forest roads ([Professional Services in the Forest Sector - Forest Roads](#))

The Ministry of Forests also has a funding policy that outlines how road and bridge maintenance and improvement projects on FSRs are prioritized provincially. For public inquiries, we regularly distribute the following resources, which I have included with this letter:

- FAQ – Engineering Roads Funding Policy
- Engineering Roads Funding Policy Factsheet

Key highlights included in these documents:

Funding Prioritization:

The Ministry allocates funds for FSR maintenance and major improvement projects in the following order:

1. Roads accessing communities
2. Roads serving rural residents
3. Roads leading to high-value recreation sites

Road Maintenance:

- Industrial users are generally responsible for maintaining roads to a safe standard during active use.
- When roads are not in industrial use, they are typically maintained to wilderness standards to protect environmental values and road prism integrity.
- The Ministry of Forests maintains roads to wilderness standards by default when no other industrial users are present.
- The Ministry of Forests assumes maintenance responsibilities for roads serving communities, rural residences, and high-value recreation sites, subject to budget availability.

Road Deactivation

If no industrial user assumes maintenance responsibilities, roads may be deactivated to mitigate risks to the environment and public safety. Deactivation decisions and notifications are made with careful consideration of multiple priorities and impacts.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like to discuss these topics in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Olmsted', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Olmsted, RPF, P.Eng
Northern Engineering Group Lead
Engineering Branch
Ministry of Forests

cc Minister of Forests, Ravi Parmar
Ryan Bichon, District Manager, Mackenzie
Kiel Giddens, MLA, Prince George-Mackenzie
Peter Wyatt, Director, Engineering Branch