



Frequently Asked Questions – Incomappleux Forest Service Road Deactivation

1) Why is the Incomappleux Forest Service Road (FSR) being deactivated?

The Incomappleux FSR has had many issues at the site of the crevice bridge. In 2006, there was a significant rockfall event of 150m³ that damaged the structural integrity of the bridge. There are other structures on the FSR and tributary roads that are damaged and/or unsafe. The road is in disrepair and there are no funds available to do maintenance on it.

Since 2005 the FSR has been closed off and on due to safety issues at the crevice bridge. It has been gated since 2017, with the road being slated for deactivation since 2021. The forest tenure holder has not been active in the valley for 20 years. In 2023, the upper part of the valley was turned into a Conservancy under the *Park Act*, and the lower part of the valley has been specified as a designated area under *Part 13* of the *Forest Act*. No harvesting or road construction is allowed in this area.

The FSR's and the tributary roads were planned for deactivation regardless of these recent developments, but the creation of the conservancy and the *Part 13* designation ensure that there will be no further forestry activities in the valley.

Under the responsibility of a resource district, FSRs are deactivated in a planned manner that considers future access needs, road user safety, cost efficiency and values at risk.

Once an FSR is no longer required for industrial use, it is deactivated. Deactivation is done to relieve the permit or tenure holder of their ongoing obligation to maintain roads and associated structures. Deactivation has benefits such as minimizing risks to environmental, social and economic resources within and adjacent to roads from hazards such as landslides, soil erosion and sediment transportation. It can improve fish and wildlife habitat, and in some instances, support the recovery of endangered species.

2) What authority does the Ministry of Forests have to close and discontinue the Incomappleux Forest Service Road?

Under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, Section 22.2 (2) and (3), the District Manager may close an FSR if they believe that use of the road would be a risk to public safety.

The Incomappleux FSR was closed under FRPA Section 22.2(3), with the intent to deactivate it as there is no funding to do repairs or maintenance, and there is no future industrial access need.

The District Manager is responsible for road deactivation, under Section 82 of the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation*.

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3) What is the Engineering Road Funding Policy?

The Ministry of Forests has developed a road funding policy to serve as a framework to allocate funds for the maintenance, improvement and closure of FSRs maintained by the Crown.

FSRs are not built or maintained to the same standards as public highways. Many resource roads are not maintained for vehicular traffic. Most resource roads have rough, loose gravel surfaces and are narrow (often one lane wide).

The ministry prioritizes how funds are allocated for FSR maintenance (operating) and major road and bridge improvement (capital) projects in the following order, roads accessing:

1. communities where the road provides primary access to a larger group of year-round residents within a specific location.
2. rural residences - primary access only to a significant number of year-round residences.
3. high value recreation sites that have been designated as such by the Ministry of Environment, Rec Sites and Trails BC representative.

4) Have BC Parks, Ministry of Water, Land Resource Stewardship, and the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals been consulted on the planned deactivation?

There have been ongoing discussions between all Ministries related to the Incomappleux Valley. The FSR's were excluded from the Conservancy as they fall under the Ministry of Forests jurisdiction to manage.

5) What is going to happen to the abandoned mine sites in the Valley?

The Ministry of Forests has been in discussions with the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals and the Ministry of Environment regarding abandoned mines in the valley. Please contact the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals with questions related to mine remediation.

6) What is going to happen to the Road Permit roads in the Valley?

In addition to the FSR's in the valley, there are still some roads that are under road permit to a forest licensee. The Ministry of Forests is coordinating with the road permit holder to ensure that any work they need to complete on their roads will be done in coordination with the FSR deactivation work.

7) What about access for private property owners, wildfire response, and emergency response?

The deactivation will not impact wildfire response or emergency response as this road has been gated since 2017 and no access has been allowed to landowners or the public. Any emergency response will need to be completed via helicopter including access for wildfire response.



8) Will there be a public consultation session? How are the public, stakeholders and miners being consulted with?

The Ministry of Forests understands that private landowners have an interest in keeping the FSR open for their access, however, the road does not meet the MOF Engineering Program funding policy and due to the failing infrastructure, needs to be deactivated.

There are no plans to have a public meeting in relation to the planned deactivation. This closure has been communicated to landowners in the valley through posted notices on the FSR, by letter via posted mail in 2021, 2023 and 2024 and by email. There has been information posted on the Selkirk Natural Resource District road safety information website since 2020, advising that the FSR was closed and that there was no planned repair date. Additionally, there has been signs posted at the start of the FSR indicating that the road is closed due to public safety concerns.

The draft deactivation plans were recently posted on the website, and advertised in the Valley Voice for public commenting and the public commenting period has recently ended.

All the comments that were received will be reviewed and considered by the decision maker prior to the deactivation project moving forward.

9) If Bridge N5-125, the crevice bridge, is going to be repaired to provide access for the deactivation, can the Ministry of Forests not sign the road as not maintained and relieve their liability?

The crevice bridge is not being repaired. The bridge work that is ongoing is to provide temporary access for the Ministry of Forests staff and contractors, to carry out deactivation activities. There are still major structural issues with the crevice bridge that are not being addressed.

For the Ministry of Forests to limit liability, it must deactivate the road, and it must meet the requirements set out in the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation 79 and 82*. Road deactivation includes removing bridges and stream culverts, stabilizing the road prism and barricading the road surface width in a manner that is clearly visible to prevent access by motor vehicles. The province cannot release liability through the use of a sign.

10) What is the timeline of the proposed work going forward?

The timing of the work is subject to change depending on weather delays and contractor availability. Currently, for the 2025 field season, the following work is planned:

- Rock fall hazard and danger tree assessments including a drone flight and office assessment
- Rock scaling
- Bridge redecking work and rock fall removal
- Bridge Engineer inspection of the crevice bridge.

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- Mobilize equipment and personnel for deactivation work on the west side of the Incomappleux River. This will include the installation of a temporary bridge on Menhenick Creek (N5-036) to get workers and equipment over safely. It is anticipated that deactivation work will be completed from the N5-035 bridge on the west side of the Incomappleux River, up to Waypoint 1-1, where a bridge has been previously removed on Branch 1. This will also include removal of bridges N5-037 and N5-036 in 2025. All the work on Branch 3 is planned for the 2025 field season as well.
- Mobilize equipment and personnel to brush out the FSR on the east side of the Incomappleux River so that data can be collected for the draft deactivation prescriptions.
- Fall/Winter of 2025/2026 the draft prescriptions for Branch 2 will be completed and the deactivation work on Branch 2 will be completed in the 2026 field season. This will include the removal of the N5-035 Bridge and the N5-125 bridge if the rest of the work has been completed.

11) If the road is removed, how will people access the Conservancy?

The Conservancy was created knowing that there would be no road access to it. The road has been closed and gated since 2017, and the roads in the valley are overgrown and not safe for travel. The deactivation work will not impact access, as the access was already nonexistent.

This Conservancy is not the only one in the Province that has little or no road access, there are other parks, ecological reserves and conservancies where some, or all of the area is not accessible by road.

12) When did the Incomappleux FSR get transferred from Highways to Forests?

The FSR was transferred from the Ministry of Highways to the Ministry of Forests in two parts. The first part was completed in 1989, when Public Road 70 was closed and the FSR was established. There was a notice published in the Gazette in 1989 closing the highway so that the FSR could be created

The remaining portion of the road was agreed to in principle in 1994 between the ministries of Highways and Forest and the transfer was completed in 1999/2000.

13) Is the Ministry of Forests required to provide access to private land from an FSR?

There is no requirement for the Ministry to provide access to private landowners. FSR's are designed and built for industrial use, not public access. When FSR's are open and safe, the public can use the roads for access. Once an FSR is no longer required for industrial use, they are deactivated.

If there are landowners that require road access, there are mechanisms under the *Land Act* to make an application for a licence of occupation for roadway purposes.

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14) What options are available for landowners/mineral tenure holders that want to keep access open?

If another entity wishes to assume the road, there is the opportunity to do so under the *Land Act*. Information about applying for a Licence of Occupation under the *Land Act* for roadway purposes can be found here: [Land use - roadways - Province of British Columbia](#). Further clarification about the process for an application should be directed to FrontCounter BC and Lands staff in the Ministry of Water Lands and Resource Stewardship (WLRS).

The Selkirk Natural Resource District is going to continue with our deactivation plans regardless of if an application is made under the *Land Act*, because it is obligated to relieve itself of liability. Once the Forest Service Road has been closed and discontinued and the road is returned to vacant crown land status, the land will be able to be applied for under the *Land Act*.

15) Why are you only proposing deactivation in the valley targeting only landowner areas and not all bridges and culverts in the valley?

The remaining approximately 25km of FSR in the valley are going to be deactivated. Branch 02 on the east side of the Incomappleux River still requires field work to be completed to write the draft deactivation prescriptions. The field work is scheduled to be completed in the 2025 field season and the work will be completed in 2026 tentatively on the east side of the valley.