

## Notes from Clinton Visit August 8th

By way of introduction, the main purpose of my visit was to express our appreciation to all of those there helping to protect our homes, so rest assured anyone I met I took every opportunity to do so – as far as what was happening re the fire – I rely on the daily updates the same as the rest of you.

I was allowed back in to Clinton today, when driving up there I noted that it was smoky from Kamloops all the way up to almost 6 mile lake, cleared for a while and then as I drew closer to Clinton it got smoky again.

1<sup>st</sup> check point in place at corner of 99 & 97, manned by both RCMP and the army. Last check point was at corner of 97 and Transfer station road, manned by both RCMP and Army – a lot of these people are wearing air filtration masks – I guess I would too if I had to stand out there all day.

When I got to Clinton I went to the Wildfire Camp in Elliot Park – lots and lots of tents and trailer/buildings, went into the ICC Office and spoke with the crew there – they are about to be rotated out and a new crew take over tomorrow – this is a 2 day process so the new crew can get up to speed with the fire circumstances. The new crew will be BC people again with the group from Australia coming back to help out.

I went to the Shell to see Chin ( they were unloading a delivery of goods) – he is ok says it can get overwhelming at times but he now has help from his cousin and dad (Andy). While I was there standing talking to Karl at the gas pumps, I was challenged by one of the out of town RCMP officers patrolling the village – they are definitely on the job!

Went to the RCMP detachment and spoke with the officer in charge – he was a municipal police officer from the coast (not RCMP, they are drawing resources from everywhere) – our RCMP guys are starting to get some well deserved time off, so I met the other officers ( from Surrey and Kelowna). Also parked out front of the detachment was an army mobile treatment truck, manned with 3 medics, and there were 7 Conservation Officers mustering for their daily patrol of the back country – the police are using them (CO's) in the back country as they (RCMP) are not familiar with the area.

I was then met by Heather Rice the communications officer for the ICC, she escorted me to the Chasm mill where I was able to meet with the structure guys, and then the fire commissioner, who were making sure the mill was as ready as it could be. Also took the opportunity to speak to Mike the mill manager and he was quite optimistic that the mill was safe, due to the actions taken by West Fraser and the Wildfire/Structure teams.

Went back to Clinton and visited the fire hall, our guys are in good spirits and maybe a little tired. The other teams there were all in good spirits as well. I was so impressed as I approached

the various groups of fire fighters and said who I was and how much we appreciated their help, the common answer was “We’re happy to be here” – in fact I got that from every group, the Wildfire guys, the RCMP, and the army. So, I would ask all the residents of Clinton to put on your thinking caps – we need to come up with a way to thank these people when the dust settles on this situation.

The back burn that they did on heart ridge went very well – they did not lose any structures and yes there will be some unsightly scenery there, however there are still a lot of green trees on that mountain. Does this mean we can go home ? – No not yet, when the wildfire team feels they have the fire “contained” in our area and the structure guys can leave we can get our village back – right now if we went back there would be huge traffic jams as there are still a lot of fire trucks, water tenders, service vehicles, army vehicles, and police cruisers roaming the streets.

In closing the other people of BC/Canada have really stepped up with help for us – I have seen fire trucks from all over BC including the island, RCMP officers from all over the western provinces, army from Edmonton and Calgary, as Paul the owner of the Roundup Motel – put it “I’m glad I live in Canada – a country where we help each other out.”