

**For immediate release
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**SLRD RALLIES THE REGION TO TELL WASTE REDUCTION TALES
FOR NATIONAL WASTE REDUCTION WEEK:
*Squamish-Lillooet Regional District launches “Love this place. Reduce your waste”
tagline with social media contest***

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) wants to initiate a region-wide discussion about what it means to love this place. During National Waste Reduction Week (October 19 – 25, 2015), the SLRD invites residents to share photos and stories that illustrate how they minimize garbage in their homes and workplaces, to demonstrate their passion for the beautiful region we call home. Participants are asked to post photos and stories, tagged #lovethisplace, to the ZERO in on WASTE SLRD Facebook page, for the chance to win a piece of upcycled ski art from www.skiheaven.ca.

The week long social media campaign launches the region’s new waste reduction tagline ***Love this place. Reduce your waste.*** The tagline and logo were developed by a team of local consultants in collaboration with the SLRD and member municipalities. The intent is to use the brand to engage community members in the practical challenge of meeting regional waste reduction targets.

In 2012, the region generated 47,100 tonnes of discarded waste, 43% of which was diverted as recyclables with the other 57% being sent to landfill. That’s equivalent to 26,966 tonnes of garbage sent to landfill – enough to fill the entire floor of BC Place to the top of a basketball net (10 feet)! The bulk of that waste goes to the Squamish Landfill (43%) or is shipped across the border to be buried in Washington State (48%), while the remainder goes to the Lillooet Landfill (9%).

The SLRD is in the final stages of updating the Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan (SWRMP), the blueprint for how the region will manage waste and resources for the next 10 years. Having incorporated community feedback from a summer-long “Let’s Talk Trash” consultation process, the draft SWRMP will come into play by the end of the year following approval and adoption by the SLRD Board.

“It’s great to continue to build on the momentum of the “Let’s Talk Trash” events and to get everyone thinking about the waste we generate in our busy lives,” says Jack Crompton, Squamish-Lillooet Regional Board Chair. “It’s easy to fall into the trap of thinking that we as individuals don’t make much of a difference, but the compounding effects of our actions add up, and that’s never so apparent as when we start looking at the garbage we’re shipping to landfills throughout the region. This is a prime example of being able to measure the impact of working together towards a common goal - less landfill, and a more circular economy.”

The Plan estimates that on average each person is responsible for generating 540 kg of waste each year – imagine 137 pairs of skis or one third of a Toyota Prius. The proposed goal is to move that down to 325 kg/person (imagine 91 pairs of skis) by 2020. How? By encouraging people to recognize the importance of waste reduction and the role they can individually play, and focusing on the low-hanging fruits of food scraps and organics recycling.

Organics currently comprise an estimated 40% of all waste produced in the region, so the Plan also aims to ensure that 75% of the SLRD population will have easy access to organics recycling by 2020.

“What does it mean to love this place? Passion plays out in so many different ways here, but for me, it boils down to not trashing it,” says Brooke Carere, Communications Coordinator for the SWRMP. “Throwing things away is a habit; a habit we do several times a day. So when you think about it, there are lots of opportunities for people to build new habits so we can really move the dial on the amount of resources that end up in landfill.”

Check out www.slrd.bc.ca/lovethisplace for more details.



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About the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Located in southwestern BC, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is a local government federation consisting of four member municipalities (the District of Lillooet, the District of Squamish, the Village of Pemberton and the Resort Municipality of Whistler) and four unincorporated, rural electoral areas (A, B, C, and D). Headquartered in Pemberton, which is the approximate geographic centre of the region, the SLRD delivers a wide range of local, regional and sub-regional services to approximately 38,000 residents.

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