



**For immediate release
July 5, 2016**

NEWS RELEASE

**ACCESS TO PEMBERTON'S GLACIAL RIVERS WILL BE TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED
REGARDING PEMBERTON MUSIC FESTIVAL JULY 13 – 18:**

**Local authorities partner with Stewardship Pemberton and BC Conservation Officer
Service to protect patrons and habitat**

Pemberton, BC – Collaboratively, the Pemberton Music Festival organizers (HUKA), local governments (Squamish-Lillooet Regional District - SLRD, Village of Pemberton – VoP), Lil'wat Nation (Lil'wat), the BC Conservation Officer Service and Stewardship Pemberton have developed a multi-agency plan to promote public safety and protect sensitive habitat during the Pemberton Music Festival.

In order to protect sensitive riparian areas and protect festivalgoers who are unfamiliar with local conditions (fast flowing rivers with dangerous currents and hidden hazards like logs and debris just below the surface), the Province has authorized local authorities to implement some temporary closures from July 13 – 18, 2016 (the Pemberton Music Festival is July 14 – 17, 2016).

The temporary closures will restrict access to the Lillooet River at the Highway 99 bridge, the Birkenhead River, and the Green River. These areas were identified as areas of concern based on the 2015 Festival usage, when thousands of Festivalgoers sought respite from the heatwave along the banks, and in, the fast-moving opaque glacial rivers that flow out of the mountains through the Pemberton Valley, putting themselves at risk and often leaving large amounts of human and litter waste behind. The restricted areas will be clearly marked and managed cooperatively by the SLRD, VoP and Lil'wat Nation.

Local access for residents travelling along trails and dykes or moving through the areas to access personal watercraft will not be impacted by these temporary access restrictions, which are aimed at preventing people from gathering in sensitive areas and impacting the local ecology.

With over 40,000 spectators expected to attend, the Pemberton Music Festival event is a major economic opportunity for the community, but it also has some impacts to the area. The SLRD, VoP, Lil'wat, BC Conservation Officer Service, Stewardship Pemberton and HUKA hope to minimize these impacts through the provision of additional shower facilities at the Festival site, clear signage articulating the dangers of swimming in glacial rivers, and temporary access restrictions to prevent mass congregations in sensitive areas.

Additionally, educational signage will be installed at both One Mile Lake and Mosquito Lake beaches, and Stewardship Pemberton volunteers will conduct outreach at both locations during

peak periods to educate festivalgoers seeking a place to cool down about good water stewardship practices (i.e. no shampoo!).

“We want Festivalgoers to feel welcome in Pemberton, but we also want to share that this is sensitive habitat for fisheries and wildlife that can be easily damaged, and that soap and shampoo can introduce harmful chemicals into that environment,” says Veronica Woodruff of Stewardship Pemberton. “Loofah sponges or sand scrubs can help someone refresh themselves, while leaving no trace on the waterways.”

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Media Contacts:

Lisa Richardson
Contract Communications Coordinator
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
Email: lrichardson@slrd.bc.ca
Telephone: (604) 894-6371 ext. 239

Jill Brooksbank
Communications and Grants Coordinator
Village of Pemberton
Email: jbrooksbank@pemberton.ca
Telephone: (604) 894-6135 ext. 230

Ernest Armann
Chief Administrative Officer
Lil'wat Nation
Email: Ernest.Armann@lilwat.ca
Telephone: (604) 894-6115 ext. 2247