

For immediate release
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**SLRD SEEKS COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON
PEMBERTON VALLEY RECREATIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN UPDATE:**

Community Open House and launch of online survey planned for April 9

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is gathering community feedback as part of the Pemberton Valley Recreational Trails Master Plan (Master Plan) Update, currently underway. Updating the Master Plan is an opportunity to develop a long-term vision and strategy for recreational trail use and development in the Pemberton Valley. Preliminary recommendations are expected in early April 2018, following which the project team will meet with community stakeholder groups and residents to share the findings and invite feedback.

“The Pemberton Valley Trail system is a much-loved and important amenity for local residents and visitors, who use the trails for a range of activities like mountain biking, trail running, hiking, walking, and horseback riding to name just a few,” says Karen Ross, Chair of the SLRD Pemberton Valley Utilities and Services (PVUS) Committee. “We’ve seen big increases in trail use and development over the past few years, and this update to the Master Plan will help to ensure that the trail system is managed and developed collaboratively, responsibly and in a way that reflects the needs and priorities of our communities.”

A Community Open House is being planned to provide residents with an opportunity to learn more about the project, review preliminary findings, ask questions and share feedback with the project team. The meeting will take place on Monday, April 9 from 6 – 9 pm at the Pemberton & District Community Centre. For those unable to attend, the storyboards and presentation materials will be available on the SLRD website following the meetings, and from April 9 – 20, residents will also be able to provide input via an online survey.

Based on the feedback received during the community engagement, the project team will refine its recommendations and develop a draft of the updated Master Plan. The draft is expected in early May 2018 and will be available for review on the SLRD’s website at www.slrld.bc.ca/PVRTMPupdate. After this opportunity for public review, the Master Plan will be finalized and presented to project stakeholders and the Province for approval, with the project completion targeted for June 2018. The SLRD will continue to share project updates on its website and through various media channels throughout the process.

First adopted by the SLRD Board in 2009, the existing Master Plan focused on linkages of the trails system and its development, and provided an overview and action plan for trail implementation. The Master Plan is being updated to reflect the current levels and types of trail

use, and to identify and propose how to manage sites of user group conflict, overuse and neglect, or those posing a challenge to maintenance. The update will also address unauthorized trail building which has been on the rise in recent years. In addition, the project will be an opportunity to identify ways to improve communication and collaboration between the various organizations currently carrying out trail planning, construction and maintenance in the Pemberton Valley area.

The Pemberton Valley Recreational Trails Master Plan Update was initiated in the fall of 2017, with Whistler-based recreation planning firm, Brent Harley & Associates being selected to work with a project Steering Committee to update the Master Plan. The Steering Committee is composed of representatives from the SLRD, Village of Pemberton, Líl'wat Nation, Pemberton Valley Trails Association, and Recreation Sites and Trails BC, which is a division of the provincial Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

The budget to complete the update is \$42,000. Partial funding for the project is being provided by Recreation Sites and Trails BC (\$15,000) and the PVTA (\$5,000), with the balance being allocated from the Pemberton Valley Recreational Trails Service, which is one of several shared services of the Village of Pemberton and SLRD Electoral Area C overseen by PVUS.

For more information about the Pemberton Valley Trails Master Plan Update, please visit www.slrd.bc.ca/PVRTMPupdate.

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