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NEWS RELEASE

June 10, 2019

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District and Village of Pemberton secure significant funds for Lillooet River Floodplain Flood Mitigation Planning

Community Emergency Preparedness Funding will support next phase of Lillooet River flood mitigation planning

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) and Village of Pemberton (VOP) have secured \$300,000 through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) for flood mitigation planning.

The Lillooet River Floodplain Mitigation Planning project stems from the 2018 *Lillooet River Floodplain Mapping Report* ('Report'), commissioned by the Pemberton Valley Dyking District, funded by the Province of BC through Emergency Management BC (EMBC), and conducted by Northwest Hydraulic Consultants Ltd. The updated flood modelling revealed the flood risk to be higher than previously understood. Flood mitigation planning was identified as a priority in the Report.

With funds secured through the CEPF, the Lillooet River Floodplain Mitigation Planning project is the next step in understanding the full picture of flood mitigation options in the Pemberton Valley, identifying critical dike upgrades (including scope and cost) for flood protection required to mitigate the most significant risks.

This project will provide valuable insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the existing flood protection infrastructure that relates to flooding potential and areas of greatest risk, increasing the knowledge of specific areas of the community most at risk in terms of vulnerable populations, infrastructure and businesses, and to help prioritize flood protection upgrades to where they will best mitigate identified social and economic impacts.

Following the completion of this project, the communities/organizations (Lil'wat Nation, Pemberton Valley Dyking District, Village of Pemberton, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District) will continue to work together to source further funding options to deliver the necessary flood protection and infrastructure improvements.

In addition to the grant funds secured, the SLRD, VOP and Lil'wat Nation will provide in-kind contributions to the project in the form of staff time and organizational resources including, but not limited to, emergency management expertise, GIS services and local knowledge.

The Pemberton Valley Dyking District will manage this project, with mitigation planning and dike assessments taking approximately six to eight months to complete.

Quotes:

“The Pemebrton Valley Dyking District is very grateful to the Province of BC for the funding required to complete this next very important step in the Pemberton Valley flood protection improvement process. We look forward to working with our community partners to complete this project that will provide the guiding strategy for flood protection in the Pemberton Valley in a way that respects the needs of all our local government partners.” – **John Beks, Chair, Pemberton Valley Dyking District Board of Directors**

“We do live in a very natural active place between two rivers and surrounded by mountains, where we put our values at risk to live here. To realize the dangers and know what the extent predictions of hazard levels are, and to have some time to prepare is imminent. A major catastrophe warning system needs to be priority. The Lil'wat Nation is fully committed to working with all cooperating agencies that are dealing with predictions and preparedness.” – **Skalúlmecw Kúkwpi7 (Political Chief, Dean Nelson) Li'lwat Nation**

“Flood planning and emergency management within the Pemberton Valley is a regional priority. Now that we know of the increased risks, and the inefficiencies in our current dike system, we need to move forward -- together, and quickly -- with an integrated approach. A significant flood event would have impacts beyond our individual community borders, and an integrated approach is key to moving forward with the best possible plans in place, and to achieve the most desirable outcomes. The work that has been done to date, in collaboration amongst the Pemberton Valley Dyking District, the SLRD, the Village and the Li'l'wat Nation shows a remarkable commitment to collaboration.” – **Russell Mack, Electoral Area C Director, SLRD**

“This important planning exercise will be a key piece to determining our next steps in flood mitigation. I look forward to continuing to work with our local partners, and Provincial and Federal agencies on improving community safety within our Valley. We are also pleased to see further investment in UBCM's Community Emergency Preparedness Fund. Continued funding of this Program will be critical to improving our community's climate change resiliency and overall safety.” – **Mike Richman, Mayor, Village of Pemberton**

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