

**For immediate release  
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**REGIONAL DISTRICT PARTNERS WITH WILDSAFEBC TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

***WildSafeBC – SLRD Coordinator to bring wildlife awareness to communities***

**Pemberton, B.C.** – The bears are back in town, and, this year, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is increasing wildlife awareness in communities throughout the region with the WildSafeBC program.

The SLRD has partnered, for the first time, with WildSafeBC to bring a Community Coordinator position to the region for delivering outreach and education programs with the aim of preventing human-wildlife conflict, and providing residents with the information they need to keep themselves, and wildlife, safe.

“We are very excited to be bringing this program to the regional district,” said SLRD Board Chair, Tony Rainbow. “We are confident that this program will make a difference for our residents,” he said. “We know that there have already been several bear sightings in a number of communities and as we move into the season, we want to do whatever we can to prevent human-wildlife conflict and to keep our residents and wildlife safe. This is an important initiative that will help us achieve those goals.”

WildSafeBC is the provincial leader in preventing conflict with wildlife through collaboration, education and community solutions and the program is delivered in communities across BC by the British Columbia Conservation Foundation.

Devin Pawluk is the SLRD’s new WildSafeBC Community Coordinator. While the program has been altered to adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pawluk will be working hard to reach out to community members in new and innovative ways that maintain physical distancing and safety for the community.

“I’m excited to be taking on this role, within the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District,” said Pawluk. “The program itself will look a little bit different this year, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, but residents can still expect to hear from me throughout the season,” he said. “Ultimately, our goal is to make sure residents have the information they need to help keep wildlife safe in the region, and I look forward to getting out there and connecting with people.”

Through to November, Pawluk will be involved in a number of modified WildSafeBC program initiatives including door-to-door information delivery campaigns and webinar delivery of the highly requested WildSafeBC Ranger Program for school-aged children as well as Wildlife Awareness and Safety Education sessions.

The SLRD has a Wildlife Attractant Bylaw and is able, under the Bylaw, to issue fines for each infraction, but Rainbow explains that education is the first priority.

“We certainly hope to not have to issue tickets,” he said. “But we also need all residents to do their part to make sure they are not doing things that attract wildlife and that result in human-wildlife conflict,” he said. “We hope that, with additional efforts being made to ensure that residents are aware of the issues, and of what they need to do to help keep wildlife safe, we can prevent this conflict that, ultimately, ends up being the worst-case scenario for animals, like bears.”

WildSafeBC and the SLRD will continue to provide wildlife activity news and tips through social media channels, as the season progresses.

Please report wildlife in conflict to the Conservation Officer Service at 1-877-952-7277.

Residents can also report sightings of bear, cougar, coyote or wolf in an urban area. These reports are uploaded daily to WildSafeBC’s Wildlife Alert Reporting Program (WARP), available at: <https://warp.wildsafebc.com/warp/>

This program allows the public to see what wildlife has been reported in their neighbourhood and be alerted of new sightings.

Residents wanting more information about WildSafeBC, the WildSafeBC Ranger Program and Wildlife Awareness and Safety Education sessions, can contact:

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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 42,665 residents (2016 Census).

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