

For immediate release
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**Squamish-Lillooet Regional District and partners receive grant to enhance monitoring of
Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager**

Project partners include Lílwat Nation, the Village of Pemberton, Pemberton Valley Dyking District, Innergex and Simon Fraser University

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) has been approved for funding from the Union of BC Municipalities' Community Emergency Preparedness Fund's (CEPF) 2024 Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation stream to install critical monitoring equipment on Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager, a dormant volcano and geologically active area prone to landslides, including the largest recorded in Canada in 2010. This grant will enable the SLRD and its partners to establish a broad monitoring and alerting system to enhance community resilience, mitigate disaster risk, and improve planning through baseline data on seismic and climatological activity.

Led by the SLRD and with support from Lílwat Nation, the Village of Pemberton, Pemberton Valley Dyking District (PVDD), Innergex and Simon Fraser University (SFU), the project will involve installing advanced technology such as seismometers, infrasound acoustic sensors, and day/night cameras across Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager. The integrated monitoring network will track seismic activity, slope instability and weather conditions, providing critical information that will support development of real-time data analysis and eventual early warning capabilities for communities downstream.

"This project moves us towards the creation of an early warning system and helps fulfill our goals of reducing disaster risk and advancing climate adaptation through collaboration and data-driven decision-making," said SLRD CAO, Heather Paul. "The volatility of Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager, combined with limited monitoring outside of academic research, presents a clear need for this initiative to support community safety and resilience, protect Provincial infrastructure, and guide future planning and emergency management."

Once the systems are commissioned and the data is vetted, a link to the PVDD and SFU systems will be established using Innergex's existing infrastructure for internet and power to facilitate real-time data transfer, helping local emergency managers make informed, timely decisions. The data will support long-term risk reduction strategies, enhance infrastructure planning, and contribute to regional resilience against landslides, floods, and volcanic events.

"This monitoring system will significantly improve our ability to detect landslide events and manage risks in the Pemberton Valley," said Glyn Williams-Jones, a Professor at SFU's Department of Earth Sciences and Co-Director of the Centre for Natural Hazards Research. "Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager's slopes have become increasingly unstable, partly due to climate change, underscoring the importance of this enhanced monitoring."

This data will also be hosted in the Canadian Natural Hazards Knowledge Portal, a "one-stop shop" for natural hazards information that SFU is currently developing as a comprehensive resource to support public, corporate, and government preparedness and response.

The challenging terrain around Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager will require careful planning and coordination, but with the CEPF funding, the collective expertise of project partners is expected to yield significant progress toward safety and resilience in Electoral Area C and Pemberton as they complete their objectives to eventually establish an early warning system to alert regional emergency staff of a landslide or other events on Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager's unstable slopes.

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Quotes

Quote from Chief Dean Nelson, Lílwat Nation

"On behalf of the Lílwat Nation, I am very much in support of an early warning system located in the area of Q̓welq̓welústen (Mount Meager). This early warning system is vital for the monitoring of ongoing natural actions that continue in the upper valley. We only have to remember the Capricorn slide to realize the extent and potential of similar occurrences. The early warning system is of vital importance to all our wellbeing. We look forward and support the collaboration with Innergex, Simon Fraser University, Village of Pemberton and Pemberton Valley Dyking District."

Quote from Jen Ford, Chair of the SLRD

"This is important work and we are proud of the collaborations that enable this project to move forward. The SLRD is grateful to the Province of BC for this funding and we look forward to seeing this project make meaningful progress towards the safety of Pemberton and the surrounding valley over the next few years."

Quote from Kevin Clark, Manager of the Pemberton Valley Dyking District

"The 'end state' that this project is aiming for is an early warning system that will alert Pemberton's emergency staff to a landslide or slope movement on Q̓welq̓welústen / Mount Meager's unstable slopes. It is important to understand that this is a very logistically difficult project, in extremely difficult to access terrain. This endeavour will not be easy or straightforward. However, we are confident in the team we have put together."

Quote from Mike Richman, Mayor of Pemberton

"We're grateful for the dedicated partnership and collaborative work that were key in securing this funding. Through this funding, we are taking a vital step forward in strengthening our emergency preparedness and management efforts, while building towards a safer and more resilient community. This project is key to protecting our residents and surrounding areas, and we're excited to collaborate with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Innergex, Simon Fraser University, Lílwat Nation, and the Pemberton Valley Dyking District to make this vision a reality"

Quote from Eric Aytte, Operations and Maintenance Manager Hydroelectric Energy at Innergex

"Innergex renewable energy is happy to support the SLRD in its Mt. Meager Monitoring Project, both financially and by supplying in-kind access to its power infrastructure. Innergex is active in

the region, operating various hydroelectric facilities totaling 991 MW of clean, renewable power for the British Columbia grid. A member of the community for over 15 years, we are committed to working with the group to reach the objective of delivering a reliable early warning system. Innergex believes in balancing the 3 Ps of People, our Planet and shared Prosperity, and this project embodies what we believe in, being first and foremost everyone's safety, especially in the face of a changing climate.

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 50,496 residents (2021 Census as certified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs).

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District is found within the traditional territories of several First Nations, including the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), St'át'imc and Lílwat. Small parts of the SLRD also overlap with the traditional territories of the Stó:lō, Tsleil-Waututh, Nlaka'pamux, Tsilhqot'in, and Secwepemc Nations. While the SLRD does not provide direct services to the residents of the First Nations communities located within the region, the organization is committed to enhancing relations with the Indigenous communities and First Nations within whose territories the SLRD operates.

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