
NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
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Over 80,000 seedlings to be planted in Downton Lake wildfire recovery efforts
No-cost tree replanting set for 2026 – residents encouraged to register by June 30

Pemberton, BC – Through a partnership between the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD), [Cariboo Carbon Solutions](#) (CCS), and Tree Canada, 80,000 seedlings have been sown and will be planted on private lands in Electoral Area A in 2026, at no cost to participating landowners. Site-specific planting plans tailored to each unique property will be finalized this summer. To ensure proper planning, interested residents should sign up no later than the end of June.

The reforestation program, launched in the aftermath of the 2023 Downton Lake wildfire, supports ecological restoration on fire-affected private properties. With 40 landowners already signed up, the project is a major step forward in recovery and climate resiliency in the Upper Bridge River Valley.

“The 2023 wildfires left a lasting impact on the Gun Lake area, and recovery has been a shared community effort,” said Jen Ford, SLRD Board Chair. “This tree replanting project is a powerful example of what we can achieve through collaboration across local government, industry partners, residents, non-profits and the Province. The SLRD is grateful for Cariboo Carbon Solutions and Tree Canada, who continue to drive this meaningful work forward.”

This replanting initiative is part of a broader recovery effort by the Land-Based Recovery Table, which brings together community leaders, Indigenous partners, the SLRD, provincial ministries, industry partners like CCS, and local organizations including the Gun Lake Ratepayers Association.

“Thanks to Tree Canada’s National Greening Program, we’re able to work with landowners and create customized plans that strive to support long-term forest health,” said MacKendrick Hallworth, Project Manager at Cariboo Carbon Solutions. “This initiative is about more than trees – it’s about helping people recover and reimagine what’s next for their land.”

The seedlings, a mix of Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, hybrid spruce, and western larch, are currently being cultivated at Arbutus Grove Nursery. Trembling aspen seeds are also being collected this spring to plant alongside the conifers.

Interested private landowners who were affected by the 2023 Downton Lake wildfire are encouraged to register no later than June 30, 2025, by submitting an intake form to CCS. To qualify, properties should have at least one hectare of plantable area, though exceptions may be made for smaller properties if they are near other eligible sites.

“The community response has been heartening, as we know the replanting of trees is vitally important in the recovery and long-term resilience of regions impacted by fire,” said Colin Little, National Greening Program Manager of Tree Canada. “At Tree Canada, our mission is to inspire, educate and enable

Canadians to plant and nurture trees in order to improve lives and address climate change. We're committed to helping communities across Canada recover from wildfires and restore their natural landscapes."

To register, send a completed [CCS Private Landowner Intake Form](#) to info@cariboocarbon.ca.

For more information:

- Visit the [SLRD Land-Based Recovery webpage](#);
- Read the [CCS Tree Replanting Program Info Sheet](#);
- Review frequently asked questions in the [Tree Replanting FAQ Document](#);
- Reach out to info@cariboocarbon.ca with questions or to learn more about this initiative;
- To learn more about Tree Canada's National Greening Program visit [National Greening Program - Tree Canada](#).

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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 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 Líl'wat. 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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