



**SQUAMISH - LILLOOET
REGIONAL DISTRICT**

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June 6th, 2025

BY EMAIL ONLY

Honourable Kelly Greene Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness PO Box 9010 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9E2 EMCR.Minister@gov.bc.ca	Honourable Randene Neill Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship PO Box 9012 Stn Prov. Govt. Victoria, BC V8M 9L6 WLRS.Minister@gov.bc.ca
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Dear Minister Greene and Minister Neill,

RE: URGENT – Place Glacier Outburst Flood Hazard

I write to you with great urgency concerning an immediate need for Provincial action and support in response to a recently identified outburst flood hazard at Place Glacier. As described in the attached poster, this outburst flood hazard will continue for several years. Based on conversations with subject matter experts, the SLRD understands that the downslope debris flood hazard (the “Debris Flood Hazard”) has real potential to threaten public safety, critical infrastructure and ecological values in the coming weeks.

The Debris Flood Hazard is located on Provincial land above the residential community of Gates Lake in the SLRD’s Electoral Area C. Specifically, the SLRD understands that water contained in a high mountain subglacial lake (located approximately 1200 metres directly above the Gates Lake residential community) is at risk of sudden discharging down the mountainside and into the community below. This is caused by the melting of Place Glacier, which is currently accumulating water in its subglacial mountain lake. In the image below, the high mountain subglacial lake is indicated with a red arrow and the Gates Lake community is indicated with a yellow arrow. The Place Creek watershed catchment area is indicated by the red polygon.



As communicated by researchers from National Resources Canada (NRCAN) at a May 7, 2025 meeting hosted by Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and attended by staff from the SLRD, EMCR and the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), NRCAN has observed that the subglacial lake of Place Glacier that previously outburst in July 2024 will continue to pose an outburst flood hazard for several years to come. The SLRD has been advised that the ensuing debris flood is expected to be of comparable magnitude to that of the July, 2024 event. The poster related to the NRCAN research project is attached for your reference.

The current urgency of the Debris Flood Risk heightened by forecasted daytime temperatures over the next ten days rising to 32° Celsius.

To the SLRD's knowledge, the Province has not taken any action to communicate the Debris Flood Hazard to the public nor to assess the risk that the Debris Flood Hazard poses to community residents and the public.

At the above-noted meeting, SLRD staff communicated the SLRD's position regarding the Debris Flood Hazard, summarized as follows:

1. In accordance with [Section 25\(1\) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), the Province has a statutory duty to disclose to the public, without delay, the information shared by NRCAN and any other further information the Province has obtained related to the Debris Flood Hazard pertaining to "a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public", including the members of the Gates Lake residential community.
2. Given the Debris Flood Hazard originates on Crown land administered by the Province under [Section 4 of the Land Act](#), [WLRS is the public body responsible](#) for the risk assessment and emergency management planning for this Hazard. This responsibility is assigned under [Section 44 of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act](#) (EDMA) and [Sections 9 and 10 of the Emergency and Disaster Management Regulation](#). This responsibility is operationally implemented via the WLRS *Landslide Risk Management Procedure*, which was last updated in May, 2024.
3. The Province is obliged to take immediate action to disclose information and address the risk that the Debris Flood Hazard poses to the community of Gates Lake.

The SLRD respectfully requests the Province to (1) disclose without delay to the public the information shared by NRCAN and any other further information it has obtained related to the Debris Flood Hazard; (2) take immediate responsibility of the management of the Debris Flood Hazard by engaging with Provincial or third party experts to better understand the risk to public safety of the Debris Flood Hazard; and (3) determine what mitigative works may be identified, designed and implemented to address the Debris Flood Hazard.

Under Provincial legislation, the authority and action by the SLRD as it relates to the Debris Flood Hazard is only engaged once the risk of the Debris Flood Hazard materializes into an emergency (i.e., an incident causing imminent threat to public safety). At this stage, there is a significant pre-emergency risk to public safety which needs to be assessed and managed by the appropriate Provincial authority. As described above, the SLRD understands that responsibility lies with WLRS.

The SLRD asks the Province to take immediate action to communicate and address the risk that the Debris Flood Hazard poses to the community of Gates Lake and to the public. The SLRD Board would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this critical matter of public safety. Please reach out to SLRD Chief Administrative Officer Heather Paul at 604-894-6371 ext. 231.

I have directed SLRD staff to make this letter available to the community of Gates Lake and Poole Creek and to post it on the SLRD website.

The SLRD looks forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jen Ford
Chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Attachment:

1. NRCAN Study Poster – *Changing glacier surface profiles and their effect of glacier outburst flooding.*