

**For immediate release
October 23, 2025**

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District adopts Truth & Reconciliation Guide
Guide sets the course for working in a good way

Pemberton, BC, Lílwat Nation Territory – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is furthering its commitment to truth and reconciliation with the endorsement of a formal Guide that articulates not only the organization's vision for and commitment to the work, but also sets the stage for practical implementation.

Since 2015, strengthening relationships with First Nations and Indigenous communities has been a strategic priority of the SLRD Board. In 2016, the Board resolved to become a Regional District of Reconciliation and endorsed several key Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Recognizing the need for a more coordinated and strategic approach, the SLRD Board, in 2024, directed the development of the Indigenous Relations, Truth & Reconciliation Guide. Led by the SLRD, working with Gwen Bridge Consulting, the [Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Indigenous Relations Truth & Reconciliation: In Practice - A Guide for Working in a Good Way](#) is informed through engagement with First Nations and Indigenous communities, on whose territories the SLRD operates. It was formally endorsed by the SLRD Board at the October 22, 2025 Board meeting and will be used by the Board and SLRD staff to direct their work moving forward.

"The SLRD has been a Regional District of Reconciliation since 2016, when the Board formally committed to a long-term process of rebuilding trust and strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities," explained SLRD Board Chair, Jen Ford. "Today marks an important step forward on the path of truth and reconciliation, which demands honesty, courage and a willingness to confront the hard truths of our history and our present," she said.

"This Guide is about doing that work together with respect, humility and a commitment to real change, reflecting the understanding that reconciliation requires awareness of the past, acknowledgment of harm, and sustained action by local governments to address the legacy of colonialism and how it affects governance within the SLRD."

The Guide outlines the vision, values, principles, and four overarching commitments to guide the SLRD in building meaningful, respectful, and enduring relationships with Indigenous communities. It serves as both a strategic and operational roadmap, grounded in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), the [Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#), and the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#).

Centered around the values of respect, reciprocity, responsibility and courage, the Guide includes the SLRD's territorial acknowledgement and statement of reconciliation, and a vision statement that reads: *"SLRD staff, members of the Board and our communities are knowledgeable, inspired and empowered to actively engage in relationship building, truth, and reconciliation efforts. We are committed to building meaningful, respectful and enduring relationships with Indigenous Peoples while upholding principles of reconciliation. Together, we strive towards a future rooted in mutual understanding, shared responsibility and lasting harmony."*

Listed in the Guide are 10 principles, offering clear direction on how to put the values and goals into action. The Guide speaks to roles and responsibilities for individual staff and Board members and for the organization as a whole, with five roles framing the behaviour that each staff and Board member is expected to embody to support the organization's goals:

- **Supporter**
 - Respect Indigenous protocols and honour Indigenous lands
- **Partner**
 - Inclusion in decision-making and collaborative projects
- **Listener**
 - Active listening and continuous learning
- **Aligner**
 - Champion Indigenous Rights and Perspectives and promote systemic change
- **Connector**
 - Build relationships and amplify Indigenous voices

As outlined in the Guide, the SLRD's commitments include:

- Enhancing organizational readiness and building relational capacity;
- Supporting ongoing cultural awareness, learning and education;
- Strengthening relationships through effective and meaningful communication, engagement and collaboration; and
- Committing to sustained efforts.

"The Guide affirms the SLRD's respect for Indigenous rights and recognition of traditional territories. We know these conversations are complex and at times uncomfortable, particularly around Indigenous title, and the role of legal pluralism within a system shaped by colonial laws," added Ford. "Recognizing and addressing these truths is not about taking anything away from anyone – it's about building a more just and respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation is not about division – it's about honesty, equity and shared responsibility. We are committed to this work and to ensuring that it's done thoughtfully, transparently and with care for all communities."

In addition to engagement with First Nations and Indigenous communities, the project involved engagement with the SLRD's member municipalities, Board of Directors and staff. The SLRD has also invested in providing Indigenous-led training to its elected officials and staff. Training will be provided to staff annually and is embedded into the onboarding process for new employees.

"The Guide is not a finish line – it's a foundation for renewed relationships based on respect, recognition and real partnership. It's a living commitment to action, and by endorsing it, we are pledging to embed the principles into every decision we make, every policy we shape, and every relationship we build," said Ford.

"It will direct our work in real, tangible ways – ensuring that reconciliation is not symbolic, but systemic, sustained and seen in the everyday lives of the people we serve. We are not claiming that this work will be simple or easy, but it is necessary. We are going to stumble along the way, but we will learn and adapt as we go," she said.

For more information, visit: [Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Indigenous Relations Truth & Reconciliation: *In Practice* - A Guide for Working in a Good Way](#).

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 Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh 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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