



NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release
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DRAFT SQUAMISH-LILLOOET REGIONAL DISTRICT AREA B, DISTRICT OF LILLOOET & ST'AT'IMC AGRICULTURAL PLAN COMPLETED:

Public invited to provide feedback at Open House in Lillooet on June 3

Lillooet, BC – The Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) has released a draft Agricultural Plan for SLRD Electoral Area B, with in-kind support from the District of Lillooet and St'at'imc Northern Communities. The draft plan is the culmination of a year-long public dialogue concerning the future of agriculture in the Lillooet area, which included an open house, survey, technical workshop, and face-to-face interviews.

The draft plan will be presented for public review and comment at an Open House which will be held on Tuesday June 3rd from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at the Lillooet REC Centre gym. The event will be a drop-in format and light refreshments will be served. Those who would like to provide feedback but are unable to attend the Open House can contact Ione Smith at ione@uplandconsulting.ca with any comments before June 20th. Following public input, the plan will be finalized and presented to the SLRD Board for adoption.

"The Agricultural Plan process has been a great opportunity to connect across communities and dream big for the future of food production in Area B," said SLRD Area B Director Mickey Macri. "The plan has been developed with input from farmers, ranchers, and consumers and our Working Group was formed to help steer the Plan in conjunction with St'at'imc representatives."

"This is an exciting step in securing a more sustainable future for local agriculture," said Jacquie Rasmussen, Chair of the Agricultural Plan Working Group. "We encourage all residents to come and learn about the key recommendations and implementation opportunities to ensure the momentum is translated into action on the ground."

The SLRD Area B Agricultural Plan process began in the summer of 2013. It quickly became apparent that representatives from St'at'imc Northern Communities and the District of Lillooet were interested in participating in the Plan's development, and so the Working Group was formed. The Working Group has been meeting regularly with SLRD staff and a team of consultants, led by Upland Consulting, to help craft a plan that is locally meaningful and contains relevant recommended actions.

The Agricultural Plan is funded in part by the SLRD and by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C., through programs it delivers on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture. Additional funding to enhance the engagement process was provided by the Northern Development Initiative Trust, through the Northern Economic Development and Initiatives (NEDI) Committee of the SLRD Board.

For more information about the planning process or to download a copy of the draft Agricultural Plan visit <http://www.slrd.bc.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=211>.

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