



**For immediate release
February 7, 2020**

DRAFT SQUAMISH VALLEY AGRICULTURAL PLAN COMPLETE

Community Open House Planned for February

Squamish, BC – With the draft Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan shared with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) Board and the District of Squamish (DOS) Council, there will be an additional opportunity for community feedback before the plan is finalized.

The Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan, which encompasses parts of Electoral Area D of the regional district, as well as parts of the Squamish Valley within the District of Squamish and situated within the unceded traditional territory of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), has been in the works since 2018. The joint SLRD and DOS project received funding from the Governments of Canada and British Columbia and support from the Squamish Food Policy Council. Work on the plan began in December, 2018.

The plan builds on the recent Agricultural Land Use Inventory project for the Squamish Valley that was conducted by the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

Throughout the development of the plan, there have been a number of stakeholder engagement opportunities including a community kick-off event, survey, open houses, and several steering committee meetings. A team of consultants, led by Upland Agricultural Consulting and Whistler Centre for Sustainability, was retained to assist in crafting the plan. The plan is now ready to be brought back to the local community for feedback and input prior to finalization.

“We are pleased to see the draft plan, and to be able to share it with the community for feedback,” said Tony Rainbow, SLRD Chair, and Electoral Area D Director.

“This has been an extensive process and the agricultural plan represents months and months of work, with collaboration from various levels of government, industry and the community,” he said. “Community input has helped to shape this plan that will, in turn, set the course for the future of agriculture in the Squamish Valley,” Rainbow said.

“We’re very proud of the process and the results to date.”

The draft plan was presented to the District of Squamish Council on January 28, 2020, and to the SLRD Board on January 30, 2020.

Future implementation will be led by the Squamish Food Policy Council, with support from the SLRD and the DOS.

“The plan represents an important opportunity for cross-jurisdictional collaboration around the regional food system, food policy, bylaws, and support for agriculture. It contains recommendations and implementable actions that will shape the future of agriculture in the Squamish Valley,” said District of Squamish Mayor, Karen Elliott.

Before the plan is finalized, the community will have an additional opportunity to provide feedback. An open house will take place on Thursday, February 20, 2020 from 5:30-8 p.m. at the Squamish Adventure Centre. The event will provide an overview of the planning process, highlighting key aspects of the agricultural plan and offer an opportunity to gather public input and feedback on the draft document.

For more information, visit the SLRD website: www.slrd.bc.ca/SquamishValleyAgPlan

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- 30 -

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