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NEWS RELEASE

**Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Board announces appointment of Chief
Administrative Officer (CAO)**

Heather Paul will join the team in January 2024

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Heather Paul has been named as the organization’s new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Paul, who most recently served as the Executive Director of the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre (SLCC) in Whistler, B.C., will begin her new position with the SLRD on January 15, 2024.

“We are pleased to welcome Heather Paul to the SLRD, and look forward to working with her in this important role,” said SLRD Board Chair, Jen Ford. “Heather brings tremendous leadership, strong relationships and a wealth of local knowledge to this role, and to the organization.”

Paul has been a local resident for 27 years and has built excellent relationships with both the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation and Lil’wat Nation, as well as various local, regional and provincial government partners, in her capacity as the Executive Director at the SLCC. She was also previously employed by the Resort Municipality of Whistler. Paul holds a MBA Essentials Certificate from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a Certificate in Advanced Strategy from the UBC Sauder School of Business. She has served as Board Chair for Arts Whistler, and has been actively involved in the Whistler community.

“I am excited to join the team at the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District,” said Paul. “The regional district is an important level of government, and a strong and powerful advocate and ally for the region,” she said. “I look forward to working with the dedicated professionals at the SLRD in advancing the work of the organization in support of the communities in the region.”

Paul was named to the position after an extensive search process, and following the resignation of Craig Dalton, earlier in the year. Nikki Gilmore has served the SLRD as interim CAO, since July, when Dalton officially left the organization.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors, and the entire team at the SLRD, I’d like to thank both Craig and Nikki for their work in leading the organization through some challenging times,” Ford said.

“Craig joined us as we were coming out of the pandemic, and he did a great deal of work on building organizational culture, and in implementing processes and systems that will be instrumental in our success for years to come,” she said.

“Following Craig’s departure, we were very fortunate to have Nikki Gilmore join the team. Nikki, who was previously the CAO of the Village of Pemberton, has been the steady hand that was

needed to provide continuity to the organization during the search for a full-time CAO. She is an experienced leader with tremendous vision and she has provided exceptional leadership to the Board and the team, guiding us through the most recent wildfire season, and the SLRD's longest ever Emergency Operations Centre activation. We are grateful to both Craig and Nikki for their contributions to the organization and the communities we serve."

Gilmore will continue in the interim CAO role until Paul takes over as CAO in January.

"It has been a pleasure to work with the team at the SLRD," said Gilmore. "Through my previous role at the Village of Pemberton, I had some familiarity with the organization, and existing working relationships with many of the staff members," she said. "I have enjoyed working more closely with the team and getting to know everyone a little bit better. I value these relationships and am proud to have been a member of the SLRD team."

Gilmore will also assist with the CAO transition and onboarding process, as needed, in the New Year.

"The Board understands that leadership transitions can be challenging and disruptive, and we are pleased to have been able to move forward quickly on this process," said Ford. "We are grateful to our team and we have tremendous confidence in everyone who works for the organization," she said. "We are inspired every single day by the level of commitment, professionalism and care that each member of the team gives to their position and their work at the SLRD."

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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 Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), St'át'imc and Lil'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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