

**For immediate release  
August 6, 2023**

**BENDOR RANGE COMPLEX: Lillooet Fire Zone**

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) continues to work closely with BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) and all other agencies involved in the response to the Bendor Range Complex wildfires.

There are currently Evacuation Orders and Alerts in place, within the SLRD, in response to the Downton Lake wildfire (K71649) and the Casper Creek wildfire (K71535).

- **Evacuation Order**: Gun Lake and Lajoie Lake – SLRD Electoral Area A (Downton Lake wildfire)
- **Evacuation Order**: Seton Portage – SLRD Electoral Area B (Casper Creek wildfire)
- **Evacuation Alert**: Gun Creek and Tyaughton Lake areas – SLRD Electoral Area A (Downton Lake wildfire)
- **Evacuation Alert**: Connel Creek to Pemberton Portage Road – SLRD Electoral Areas B and C (Casper Creek wildfire)

On the advice of BCWS, the SLRD issued the Evacuation Order for Gun Lake and Lajoie Lake at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, August 1. Residents were notified to leave the area immediately, and to register for Emergency Support Services. At 9 p.m., on August 1, also on the advice of BCWS, an additional Evacuation Alert was issued for properties northeast of Gun Lake.

On August 2, 2023, the SLRD reported that, based on information received from BCWS, there had been structure loss in the Gun Lake area, as a result of this fire.

**Despite the area continuing to be a dangerous, active wildfire zone, the SLRD, accompanied by BC Wildfire Service personnel, conducted Rapid Damage Assessments in the area of Gun Lake on August 3, 2023.**

The Rapid Damage Assessment information was compiled and verified on August 4, and the detailed structure loss and damage was communicated to affected residents on August 5 and 6, 2023.

**As of August 6, 2023:**

- The SLRD can confirm that there has been structure loss on nine parcels, in the community of Gun Lake, due to the Downton Lake wildfire, including:
  - Two single-family dwellings (seasonal recreational properties)
  - 12-14 outbuildings (boathouse, garage, pier, storage shed, etc.)
- The SLRD can confirm that there has been structure loss on one parcel, in the Highline Road area, due to the Casper Creek wildfire, including:
  - One single-family dwelling (seasonal recreational property)

The SLRD is now in the process of hiring a recovery manager to expedite the recovery process for those residents affected.

“We recognize that this continues to be a highly stressful situation for our residents in this community,” said SLRD Board Chair, Jen Ford. “We are heartbroken to know that some structures have been lost, and understand that all of this is taking a tremendous toll on the community,” she said.

“Our priority has been to conduct the rapid damage assessment work, verify the information and share it with the property owners who are directly impacted. We appreciate that many community members have been awaiting information on the extent of the damage. Our priority was to ensure that we were able to reach the property owners who suffered structure loss as a result of this fire, before releasing information to the public,” Ford explained.

“We appreciate the community’s patience as we work through this process, and understand that there continues to be a great deal of anxiety as the Evacuation Order remains in place. We encourage all residents within Evacuation Order zones, if you have not already done so, to register for Emergency Support Services. And residents where Evacuation Alerts are in place should prepare for the possibility of evacuation.”

The SLRD continues to work collaboratively with all partner agencies involved, and is actively monitoring and supporting response and readiness efforts to all fire risk across the region.

- **Areas where Evacuation Orders are in place are closed to the public.**
- **Areas included in Evacuation Alerts should prepare for potential evacuation.**

SLRD EOC Information, and links to additional wellness resources: [www.slrd.bc.ca/EOC](http://www.slrd.bc.ca/EOC)

- 30 -

### **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 Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), St’át’imc and Lil’wat. Small parts of the SLRD also overlap with the traditional territories of the Stó:lō, Tseil-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.

### **Media Contact:**

Patricia Westerholm  
Communications and Engagement Manager  
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District  
Telephone: (604) 894-6371 ext. 244  
Email: [pwesterholm@slrd.bc.ca](mailto:pwesterholm@slrd.bc.ca)