

Recommendations for the Management of Winter Backcountry Recreation in the Lillooet River Drainage and the Sea-to-Sky LRMP Area



Report to the Ministries of:

**Agriculture and Lands, and
Tourism, Culture and the Arts**

**Gordon Erlandson
August 25, 2008**

Acknowledgement

The preparation of this report required the engagement of a large number of people with interests in the use and management of winter backcountry recreation resources. A sincere thank you to all those who contributed information and experience, and who patiently entertained enquiries and questions. Special thanks to Sea-to-Sky government personnel in MTCA and ILMB for their support, and to the representatives Lil'wat Nation for the courtesy extended.

The background research and analysis work carried out by Doug Herchmer, DH Recreation Services, was an essential precondition for this report.

Maps were produced by the Lower Mainland Service Center, Coast Region, Integrated Land Management Bureau.

The opinions and views outlined in this report are those of the author and are not necessarily the opinions and views of the Province of British Columbia.

August 25, 2008

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The Honourable Stan Hagen
The Honourable Bill Bennett

Attention: Heather MacKnight, Regional Executive Director, Coast Region, ILMB
Bill Marshall, Director, Recreation Sites and Trails Branch, MTCA

Dear Ministers;

I am pleased to provide this report "*Recommendations for the Management of Winter Backcountry Recreation in the Lillooet River Drainage and the Sea-to-Sky LRMP Area*", which contains my assessment with respect to managing public winter backcountry recreation use in the Lillooet River drainage in the Squamish Forest District. These recommendations complement the results of the Sea-to-Sky Land and Resource Management Plan and are intended to be integrated with those results.

In addition to zoning for public winter motorized and non-motorized recreation uses in the Lillooet River drainage, the report contains recommendations for implementation of a regime for managing winter backcountry recreation uses across the Sea-to-Sky area. This responds to the fact that user conflicts and resultant management issues apply over the whole of the area.

Management capacity for outdoor recreation is dispersed among several government agencies, with levels of resources similar to those in other parts of BC. While this report offers some solutions for managing winter recreation uses, the management capacity in the Sea-to-Sky corridor has been outpaced by the extraordinary use pressures the area receives. In this sense, the recommendations contained here can be considered a short-term response. It would seem prudent given the growing recreational demands for the Provincial Government to consider longer-term options for a more comprehensive recreation management response, including consolidating outdoor recreation management resources within the Sea-to-Sky corridor.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these recommendations.

Yours truly,



Gordon Erlandson

cc: Lucinda Phillips, Director of Lands and Resources, Lil'wat Nation
Lindsay Jones, Director of First Nations Engagement, ILMB
Peter Jones, Manager of First Nations Engagement, ILMB

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 1

1.1 Background Work to Support the Review 2

1.2 Implications for Government-to-Government Discussions 2

1.3 Historical Overview and Context..... 3

1.3.1 Early studies and organization 3

1.3.2 The Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum..... 3

1.3.3 On the WBRF outcomes 4

1.3.4 Some key considerations 6

2. Recommendations..... 9

2.1 Recommended Zoning for Winter Backcountry Recreation 9

2.1.1 Retain the value of the WBRF’s Winter Sharing Accord..... 9

2.2 Implementation Strategy 16

2.2.1 Create a S2S Winter Backcountry Recreation Management Strategy 16

2.2.2 Planning for recreation management in the Callaghan Valley following the 2010 Olympic Games 17

2.2.3 S2S winter use parking strategy..... 18

2.3 Specific Operational Responses..... 19

2.3.1 Complete the upgrade to the Brandywine Trail 19

2.3.2 Upgraded Torrent Creek route 19

2.3.3 Investigate an Upper Soo Valley route option 19

2.3.4 Enhance access to backcountry skiing opportunities 20

2.3.5 Improve backcountry skiing access to parklands..... 20

2.3.6 Specific suggestions for use management in the Callaghan Valley in 2008/09 .. 20

2.3.7 Compliance with policies and plans 21

3. Capacity to Implement..... 22

A Last Word on Business Case..... 23

Appendix A: Descriptions of Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Zones in the Lillooet River Drainage..... 25

Area # 1- Upper Meager- Manatee-Lillooet/Bridge Glaciers..... 25

Area # 2- Salal Creek..... 26

Area # 3- North Creek-Pebble Creek..... 27

Area # 4- Railroad Pass-Pebble Creek..... 28

Area # 5- Owl-Fowl-Lakes, Birkenhead River Valley 29

Area # 6- Sockeye-Phelix Creek Valleys..... 30

Area # 7- Haylmore Creek 31

Area # 8- Joffre Creek-Duffy Lake-Lillooet Lake Area..... 32

Area # 9- Mt. Currie Area..... 33

Area # 10- Miller Creek-Wasp Creek Area 34

Area # 11- Pemberton Ice Cap..... 35

Area # 12- Elaho Valley 36

Area # 13- Sims Creek Valley Area 37

Area # 14- Ashlu Valley 38

Area # 15- Squamish Valley 39

Area # 16 - Brandywine-Callaghan-Twentyone Mile Valleys 40

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 17- Soo Valley-Nineteen Mile Creek-Rainbow East Side 42
Area # 18- Mamquam Valley 43
Area # 19- Howe Sound Area..... 44

List of Tables

Table 1: Generic Description of Zone Labels for Winter Backcountry Recreation Use in
the Lillooet River Drainage 12
Table 2: Example of Implementation Costs..... 22

List of Maps

Map 1: Recommended Winter Recreation Zones in the Lillooet River Drainage..... 13
Map 2: Callaghan – Sproatt – Twentyone Mile Area 14
Map 3: Phelix Creek 15

1. Introduction

British Columbia's Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) has prepared a Land and Resource Management Plan for the Sea-to-Sky area, including the Sea-to-Sky corridor and the area covered by the Squamish Forest District (the S2S LRMP).

In April 2006, a draft of the S2S LRMP recommended winter backcountry recreation use zoning that incorporated results from the 2003 Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum (WBRF), discussed below. Government-to-government agreements between the Province of British Columbia (BC) and the Squamish Nation and In-SHUCK-ch Nation have confirmed or modified winter backcountry recreation zoning in that part of the S2S LRMP area covered by those agreements (generally the southern part of the Squamish Forest District). In addition, winter recreation use zoning was completed for the 2007-08 season for the Callaghan Valley, in conjunction with the development of the Whistler Nordic Centre 2010 Olympic Venue.

The S2S LRMP April 14, 2006 Consultation Draft was presented to the public at open houses in Squamish and Whistler in September of 2007. Significant comment was received relative to the LRMP's winter recreation zoning recommendations, all of which were critical of restrictions on use, particularly since little supporting background information or rationale were available at the time.

Further, winter backcountry recreation zoning in that area drained by the Lillooet River had not been fully considered during the S2S LRMP because government-to-government discussions between BC and the Lil'wat Nation were not yet complete. ILMB on behalf of BC felt at the time that a decision on winter recreation zoning in the area outside of the Callaghan Valley and in areas not covered by the In-SHUCK-ch and Squamish Nations agreements respectively, should be deferred in order to allow for more time to consult the Lil'wat Nation, and to further investigate the input to the LRMP received from the public.

Consequently, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands (the Minister) appointed the author of this report to independently assess the outstanding issues, examine the record, confer with responsible provincial agencies and the Lil'wat Nation, review issues and opportunities with stakeholders, and provide recommendations¹ for managing winter backcountry recreation use to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, and to the Lil'wat Nation.

The geographic area defined by the Minister for this review is that portion of the S2S LRMP area that is drained by the Lillooet River within the S2S LRMP area. Having said this, it is clear that decisions made in other parts of the LRMP area have implications for winter backcountry recreation use in the subject area. Similarly, issues related to compatibility of winter backcountry recreation activities and carrying capacity are prevalent throughout the S2S LRMP area, and not confined to the Lillooet River drainage. Winter recreation use management requires a comprehensive implementation strategy that applies throughout the S2S corridor.

¹ The recommendations contained in this report are confined to the management of public motorized and non-motorized backcountry recreation uses, primarily backcountry skiing and snowmobiling.

1.1 Background Work to Support the Review

Winter backcountry recreation in the Squamish Forest District has a significant history associated with public and commercial recreation (both non-motorized and motorized), escalating user conflicts, volunteer efforts to find solutions, and government management initiatives. To better understand the relevance of that history to this assessment and recommendations, significant work was undertaken to: a) collect the record of undertakings and events from the past eight years; and b) analyze the evolution of the issues and proposed management responses with that record in mind. This essential research and analysis was done by Doug Herchmer of *DH Recreation Services* and represents the most current and comprehensive review relative to winter backcountry recreation use in the S2S area. Examined were:

- the history of the work of the Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum, including documenting its outcomes (see 1.3.2 below);
- the nature of public reviews with respect to earlier proposals for addressing winter backcountry recreation issues, and the results of those public reviews;
- analysis of various mapping products generated by the WBRF, S2S LRMP and other initiatives, including a description of zoning rationales and comparative analysis of the evolution of recreation use zoning;
- options and opportunities for addressing current winter backcountry recreation use issues; and
- review of relevant policy and legislative tools that may be utilized for managing winter backcountry recreation resources and uses in BC.

Results of the supporting work have been filed as background information under separate cover with ILMB's Surrey office as of the date of this report. Refer to "*A Compendium of Background Information and Analyses of Winter Backcountry Recreation in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor*", prepared by DH Recreation Services; July 2008. ILMB's Surrey office also holds the original map files.

1.2 Implications for Government-to-Government Discussions

The Province of BC and First Nations have a continued requirement for dialogue and cooperation, as laid out in the S2S LRMP and other agreements between those parties. These recommendations are intended to be consistent with those requirements, and in particular with future planning initiatives that anticipate addressing public recreation management in more detail. Nothing in this report is intended to fetter existing government-to-government negotiations or planned future discussions. Further, these recommendations are without prejudice to the assertion of Aboriginal rights and title, including the exercise of Aboriginal rights on the land, and to the parallel assertion of sovereignty of the Province over Crown lands and resources.

More specifically, recommendations in this report apply over a geographic area that is largely coincident with the identified traditional territory of the Lil'wat Nation.

While discussions have occurred with representatives of the Lil'wat Nation, the Lil'wat have not had either the time or capacity to engage in a full assessment of the potential implications of proposed public recreation use zoning at the community level. The Lil'wat Nation has advised that further internal review of this report could trigger further comments on the recommendations.

Notwithstanding further Lil'wat Nation review, it is understood that the recommendations in this report are not intended to override or otherwise impede the existing agreements or ongoing negotiations between the Lil'wat Nation and BC. This includes consideration of the outcomes of in-progress Lil'wat studies of tourism and commercial recreation opportunities within the traditional territory, and the on-going discussions about future land use at Ure Creek.

With respect to conservancy management (as laid out in the S2S LRMP), the recommendations in this report should be relied upon as information that informs the development of management plans and related management agreements.

1.3 Historical Overview and Context

1.3.1 Early studies and organization

Public recreation in the Squamish Forest District was studied by the Outdoor Recreation Council for the BC Ministry of Forests in 2000. Prior to that, in the late 1990s, BC Assets and Land Corporation (BCAL, later to become Land and Water BC or LWBC) had undertaken a study of commercial recreation in the Sea-to-Sky corridor. Both studies included inventories of opportunities for public and commercial recreation, and motorized and non-motorized activities.

About this same time, many concerns were being raised by recreation users with respect to the growing number of commercial operators utilizing Crown land without proper authorization and the resulting conflicts being created with public recreation — primarily snowmobiling and backcountry skiing.

In response to concerns, BCAL organized a group of public and commercial recreation users to examine the issues, setting out terms of reference, guiding principles and a code of conduct for the group. Originally called the Snowmobile Forum Steering Committee, this core group was comprised of representatives from the BC Snowmobile Federation, Outdoor Recreation Council, Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC, BC Heli and Snowcat Association, S2S Commercial Backcountry Recreation Association and various representatives from provincial, regional and local governments. A series of preliminary organizational meetings were held in 2001.

1.3.2 The Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum

The Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum grew out of early deliberations of a Snowmobile Forum, and was formally constituted by BCAL in June 2001. The WBRF was to address problems in the backcountry between various winter recreation user groups, including public and commercial recreation interests. The primary goal was to create a winter backcountry recreation plan that would ensure that all users of the area would have reasonable access to an enjoyable

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

experience in the backcountry by minimizing incidences of conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreation uses.

Representatives from each recreation use sector (public and commercial non-motorized and motorized sectors, and local, regional and provincial government agencies) were invited to attend the initial WBRF workshop in September 2001. Close to fifty participants attended, including guests from the United States and other parts of BC who presented case studies of similar recreation conflicts in their respective jurisdictions. This represented the beginning of a long process to understand and resolve the existing winter backcountry recreation use conflicts in the Squamish Forest District.

The first working meeting of the WBRF was held in October 2001, in which discussion of the main issues from the September workshop resulted in the creation of three sub-committees to address: 1) regulation and enforcement; 2) winter backcountry recreation use management; and 3) education and communication. Over the next year and a half, a core group of participants met on a regular basis to study and plan for winter backcountry recreation use.

It is clear from an examination of the written record and discussions with participants that many compromises were needed to achieve a ‘balance’ among competing public and commercial, motorized and non-motorized, recreation interests. The task was made more challenging as participants struggled to shape a proposed recreation use plan around existing commercial tenures while proposals for new tenures or expansions to existing tenures were actively being considered by the Province.

WBRF efforts included meetings with constituent groups, stakeholder sessions with organized clubs and public open houses within the S2S corridor. A “Winter Sharing Accord” (the Accord) was approved by the WBRF on April 12, 2003, and subsequently submitted to the S2S LRMP table for input to comprehensive land use planning. The Winter Sharing Accord was described as a ‘package’ that attempted to balance the recreational interests of each type of user and minimize conflicts between different user groups.

Subsequent meetings of the WBRF focused on developing land use objectives and recommended management direction for winter recreation within the corridor. Initially twenty-two recreation use zones were identified and mapped in the Winter Sharing Accord, but subsequent revisions refined this total to nineteen as several areas were either geographically outside the planning area (e.g., McGillivray Pass), or outside WBRF terms (e.g., Garibaldi, Upper Lillooet and Clendenning Provincial Parks).

1.3.3 On the WBRF outcomes

Based on an examination of the written record, the process followed by the WBRF appears to have been fair, and participation representative of the range of winter backcountry recreation interests. The work undertaken required compromise, and trade-offs were made in order to balance the competing demands for winter use of the backcountry.

The result was the “Winter Sharing Accord” which was approved by WBRF participants prior to being presented for broader public and constituency review. An information package called

‘Community Report’ was produced by the WBRF and distributed at the public open houses in February 2003. It contained information on the WBRF and presented the content of the Accord, including a map detailing recreation use zones and explanatory notes. Few area-specific issues were identified during the public review, with the notable exception of concerns raised about a non-motorized designation for Phelix Creek. Later comments in response to the draft S2S LRMP also raised this concern as well as other concerns relative to changes to user opportunities in Brandywine-Callaghan-Twentyone Mile Creek area, resulting from establishment of the Whistler Nordic Centre in the Callaghan Valley.

There has been recent debate as well with respect to the basic principles behind the WBRF results, particularly in terms of the rationale for closure of any areas to motorized use in favour of non-motorized uses. This debate was central to WBRF deliberations. It is clear from the record of deliberations leading up to WBRF results (use zones and use management arrangements) that a pre-condition to a negotiated outcome would have been an understanding of the interests of the respective user groups, and an understanding of the impacts of one type of use on another relative to those interests. That is, to generate the WBRF results, there would have had to be substantive understanding of the following:

- a recognition that motorized use can have an impact on the ability of non-motorized users to fulfill their recreational experiences in areas where both types of uses take place concurrently — and that non-motorized uses do not have the same potential impact on motorized user experiences;
- a recognition that restrictions on motorized winter recreation use in some areas should be qualitatively balanced with assured motorized access in other areas;
- a recognition that a balanced approach was required in which a range of opportunities exist for both motorized and non-motorized experiences.

There have been changes to winter backcountry recreation opportunities and patterns of use since the completion of the Accord that place pressures on the WBRF’s proposed package, and the ability to implement it, including:

- a significant increase in geographic coverage of commercial recreation tenures;
- the creation of a winter non-motorized zone in the Upper Callaghan Valley in support of the 2010 Winter Olympics;
- a substantive increase in levels of motorized and non-motorized use;
- blurring of distinctions between uses by an emergence of the use of snow machines to access ski and snowboard opportunities;
- development of the S2S LRMP; and
- government-to-government agreements between BC and First Nations relative to land use and resource management.

While such changes are in keeping with the presumption of the WBRF that the Accord would be subject to change over time, these changes have not fully accounted for maintaining the intended balance within the Accord between motorized and non-motorized opportunities (primarily as a result of the 2007-08 Callaghan Valley management decisions that precluded established winter motorized use).

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

In fact, few changes have been made to the original Accord by the S2S LRMP, although revisions were undertaken to the nomenclature for zone categories for motorized and non-motorized recreation uses to reflect existing categories used in other approved recreation plans throughout BC. For example, the WBRF non-motorized category (NM designation) was revised by the S2S LRMP to be non-motorized with no aerial access or support, but with existing commercial motorized or non-motorized recreation use allowed to continue (RA-1 designation).

1.3.4 Some key considerations

A number of considerations are worth noting given their effect on this review and relevance to recommendations that follow in the next section of this report:

- The WBRF produced a package of draft recreation use recommendations for which there was substantial agreement by the WBRF members in early 2003, prior to broader public review. This package is a set of recommendations designed to balance user interests. It remains the only comprehensive attempt at reconciling competing interests among public and commercial winter backcountry recreation activities, and served as a basis for S2S LRMP deliberations.
- There is no apparent desire among WBRF members or government managers to reconvene the WBRF (or some like forum), or to try to reinvent the WBRF zoning package across the S2S area. It appears to be generally accepted that WBRF-type results cannot be duplicated in today's circumstances.
- The S2S LRMP process has concluded, and the Province has published an S2S LRMP. While the LRMP has some gaps in terms of management direction for winter backcountry recreation, it does set out land and resource use zones that frame terms for motorized and non-motorized access and commercial recreation use. Future planning is anticipated by the Province and First Nations that will address recreation management in more detail in specified areas. Recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the approved S2S LRMP and with intended future planning requirements.
- Although the Winter Sharing Accord effectively created winter backcountry recreation use zones and expectations that a certain management regime would result, the Accord has not been implemented other than through incorporation of recreation zoning in that part of the area where recreation zoning has been confirmed through government-to-government agreements. The inability of the S2S LRMP process to fully adopt the WBRF results has frustrated WBRF members and increased tensions between user sectors.
- It is generally true that there are disproportionate impacts on non-motorized experience as a result of concurrent/overlapping motorized use. But there is also a level of understanding that there must be tolerance, coordinated user days and areas of joint use, particularly on selected travel routes. For the WBRF to arrive at a negotiated outcome, there would have necessarily been an acknowledgement of respective interests in backcountry use and an agreement to work to a product that accommodated that range of recreation interests. This means that the impact of one type of use on another was understood to the extent that distinct areas for non-motorized and motorized use were identified. The 'shared use' areas were clearly an attempt to work together to resolve overlap issues.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

- Growth in winter backcountry recreation activities in the S2S area is an important current trend. Future focus on the corridor for recreation will continue given the proximity of the Lower Mainland and the attention brought to the Whistler area by the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Notwithstanding the work of the WBRF or the S2S LRMP, the situation remains that there is no winter backcountry recreation strategy or winter trail/route management plan for the S2S area and little up to date winter recreation use information to support management decisions.
- Growth in snowmobiling, in particular, has been expanding, and use of snowmobiles to access areas for backcountry skiing and snowboarding is an important component of that growth. Advancement in snowmobile technology is allowing new areas to be opened to motorized use.
- Recreation management authority is dispersed among several bodies (MTCA, BC Forest Service, BC Parks, ILMB, SLRD and municipalities), diluting management capacity and hampering coordinated efforts. Recreation management capacity for public lands lags behind the scale of recreation use in the S2S corridor, especially for MTCA and BC Parks. It should be noted that this report does not specifically address recreation use in provincial parks. However, the BC Parks Agency does have a substantive role in winter recreation management and that role is part of the context for the recommendations in this report.
- In recent years, there has been a substantial increase in the number of commercial outdoor recreation tenures in winter backcountry recreation areas. This has added to the number of conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users in some areas.
- Currently there is no coordinated or reliable means of disseminating information to winter backcountry recreation users to help inform and educate users, or to alleviate user conflicts.
- Voluntary compliance has been the main tool for managing public recreation. Levels of compliance are very difficult to achieve in the S2S corridor because of the number of users travelling to the area from outside the corridor, the relatively low numbers of users belonging to organized groups, and the absence of tools for enforcement of rules.
- The record of public comment on WBRF results since March 2003 focuses on two prominent areas relative to winter backcountry recreation use zoning, Phelix Creek and the Callaghan Valley. These issues are specifically addressed later in this report. The balance of ‘use issues’ can be categorized as implementation problems that relate to management capacity (staffing, funding), management of activities on the ground, and facilities development and management.
 - Callaghan Valley: The process of planning for the creation of the Whistler Nordic Centre 2010 Olympic venue in the Callaghan Valley, which resulted in a large non-motorized designation around the venue, has been criticized by both motorized and non-motorized users. The legal order to close the upper Callaghan Valley to motorized use has led to spin-off issues on surrounding lands that affect both user groups and upset the balance felt to have been achieved through the WBRF recommendations.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

- Phelix Creek: The historical record shows that there was public interest expressed in maintaining a motorized route through Phelix Creek as early as February 2003. The Phelix Creek area was proposed to be zoned for non-motorized use by the WBRF in recognition of the Varsity Outdoor Club (VOC) hut built in 1998 and popularity for non-motorized activity since the early 1970s. At the time the site was selected by the VOC, there was no documented historic snowmobile activity in the area. The Ministry of Forests requested that the site chosen for the cabin have a low potential for skier-snowmobile conflicts, and the cabin site was approved at Long Lake with this in mind.

The WBRF was hesitant to change its conclusions based on a few comments, and the proposed non-motorized zoning for Phelix Creek has continued to be a contentious issue. Non-motorized users resisted changes to the proposed zoning because of the potential effects on the integrity of the backcountry experience in the vicinity of the VOC hut. Local motorized users feel their desire to recognize motorized access through the area has not been adequately addressed. While options for a solution in the area have been explored, the issue remains outstanding.

2. Recommendations

An approach to managing winter backcountry recreation use is required that marries two elements:

- a. an approved plan that gives direction to the management of winter backcountry recreation use on identified lands, consistent with the agreements between BC and First Nations and the S2S LRMP; and
- b. an appropriately resourced implementation strategy that puts an accepted plan into action.

The recommendations that follow integrate zones for public winter backcountry recreation use with a proposed strategy for implementing the intent of that zoning, and take the following form:

- **Recommended winter backcountry recreation use zoning for that portion of the S2S LRMP area drained by the Lillooet River, with attendant rationale;**
- **Recommended use zoning for Phelix Creek to address the interests of motorized and non-motorized users in that area;**
- **Recommended improvements to operational management practices in the Brandywine-Callaghan-Twentyone Mile Creek area based on 2007-08 experience and the intended future management regime; and**
- **Recommended implementation strategy for the whole of the S2S LRMP area that recognizes the need to create a workable winter backcountry recreation management strategy, as well as the capacity for managing public recreation uses through a coordinated program and partnerships.**

While these recommendations will improve winter backcountry recreation use management, they will not address all of the specific issues brought forward by affected interests in the S2S corridor. Recommendations lay the foundation for a management regime that updates the management direction generated by the WBRF, and implements that direction in a manner that responds to use pressures and evolving circumstances as they are encountered at an operational scale.

2.1 Recommended Zoning for Winter Backcountry Recreation

2.1.1 Retain the value of the WBRF's Winter Sharing Accord

It is recommended that the WBRF zoning outcomes for the Lillooet River drainage be adopted, with adjustments as presented below, as a foundation for an implementation strategy to manage winter recreation use issues on the ground. Adopting the zoning configuration, as amended, provides a starting point for implementation planning, for addressing real conflicts between uses in priority locations, and for finding the resources necessary to support the management direction on the ground. Like any other land and resource use planning tool, zones represent a snapshot of the distribution of uses on the landscape, the management responses that make sense now and a point from which new management efforts can be built.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Map 1 illustrates the “Recommended Winter Backcountry Recreation Zones in the Lillooet River Drainage”.

Table 1 provides a generic description of the zone labels, consistent with recreation use references in the balance of the S2S LRMP area.

The following adjustments to the WBRF zoning are recommended.

- a. Updated recreation use zones must be consistent with the zone labels and expanded definitions within the S2S LRMP. *Appendix A* provides a written description of winter backcountry recreation use zones² for the whole of the S2S LRMP, including a rationale for each zone designation. Of these, zones 1-11 and 17 are within the area drained by the Lillooet River, as shown on *Map 1*. A map of all winter backcountry recreation use zones in the S2S area is also included in the Appendix.
- b. Formally establish the Twentyone Mile Creek watershed as a non-motorized area, consistent with the S2S LRMP and earlier local resource use planning by the Resort Municipality of Whistler.
- c. Confirm motorized use on Mt. Sproatt to the height of land with Twentyone Mile Creek, consistent with existing zoning and the presence of a commercial motorized tenure (see *Map 2* for Callaghan-Sproatt-Twentyone Mile Creek detail). More specific recommendations on Callaghan Valley that address current management issues are provided later in this report.
- d. Adjust zoning in Phelix Creek to identify the lower eastern portion of the watershed as a shared use area in which backcountry skiing and snowmobiling can originate from the same (or adjacent) staging area, recognizing that respective destinations are different once beyond a certain point (see *Map 3* for Phelix Creek detail). The preferred solution is to create a second trail from the staging area (or from an adjacent staging area) so that motorized and non-motorized use occurs on separate trails in the shared use area.

Identify upper Phelix Creek as a non-motorized winter use area (generally that area in the vicinity of a one-day skiing excursion from the Varsity Outdoor Club’s cabin at Long Lake).

Zoning Must Adapt to Changing Circumstances

The WBRF in its conclusions recognized that recreation use is dynamic, and that over time changing circumstances would lead to the need for adaptations to zones and/or management practices. Recent events in the S2S corridor prove out that requirement. Implementation procedures must be cognizant of, and responsive to, changing circumstances so that adjustment can be introduced when needed (consistent with the S2S LRMP’s notion of adaptive management). A mechanism for adaptive management is incorporated in the implementation strategy.

² Area Descriptions were researched and prepared by DH Recreation Services, Parksville, BC.

A Note About Mapping

Tracking the evolution of map products as they apply to winter backcountry recreation use as far back as 2001 has been a challenge. Government planning initiatives have generated numerous iterations of maps, all of which have varying degrees of adjustment as a result of on-going discussions and negotiated modifications. Changes may have little accompanying written explanation. The WBRF map series has some similar problems where subtle changes have occurred, but accompanying rationale is not clear or cannot be found. Map changes have also resulted from variations in interpretation during drawing of map layers. Overlaid on this is an increasingly more detailed set of First Nations' information.

The maps prepared for this analysis and contained in this report should be read with the following clarifications in mind:

- the geographic area of the S2S LRMP is the same as the geographic area of the Squamish Forest District;
- while the focus has been on the area drained by the Lillooet River, this is not the same area as the identified traditional territory of the Lil'wat Nation;
- *Map 1* shows backcountry winter recreation use zones within the area drained by the Lillooet River (as described in *Appendix A*);
- there is overlap between the Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation identified traditional areas in the Callaghan – Twentyone Mile Creek area, and this is important for purposes of future planning in that area, as noted in this report and the S2S LRMP;
- Phelix Creek is within the S2S LRMP area, but outside of the Lillooet River drainage;
- the S2S backcountry winter recreation use zones outside of the Lillooet River drainage are intended to be consistent with the approved zoning in the S2S LRMP; and
- the Squamish Nation and BC have agreed to winter backcountry recreation use zoning within the Squamish Nation's identified territory as it relates to commercial recreation.

Map files for the maps contained in this report are housed at the Surrey office of ILMB.

Some Exemptions to Motorized Closures

Winter motorized closures do not generally apply to use of motorized conveyance for government management activities, to specified motorized uses under a tenure or licence, or to emergency situations.

In addition, motorized closures are not intended to impact the continued use of motorized conveyance in the pursuit of traditional uses by Aboriginal people, where conservation is not an overriding concern. Where conservation is an overriding concern, it is assumed that affected First Nations would be fully consulted in advance by responsible provincial government authorities.

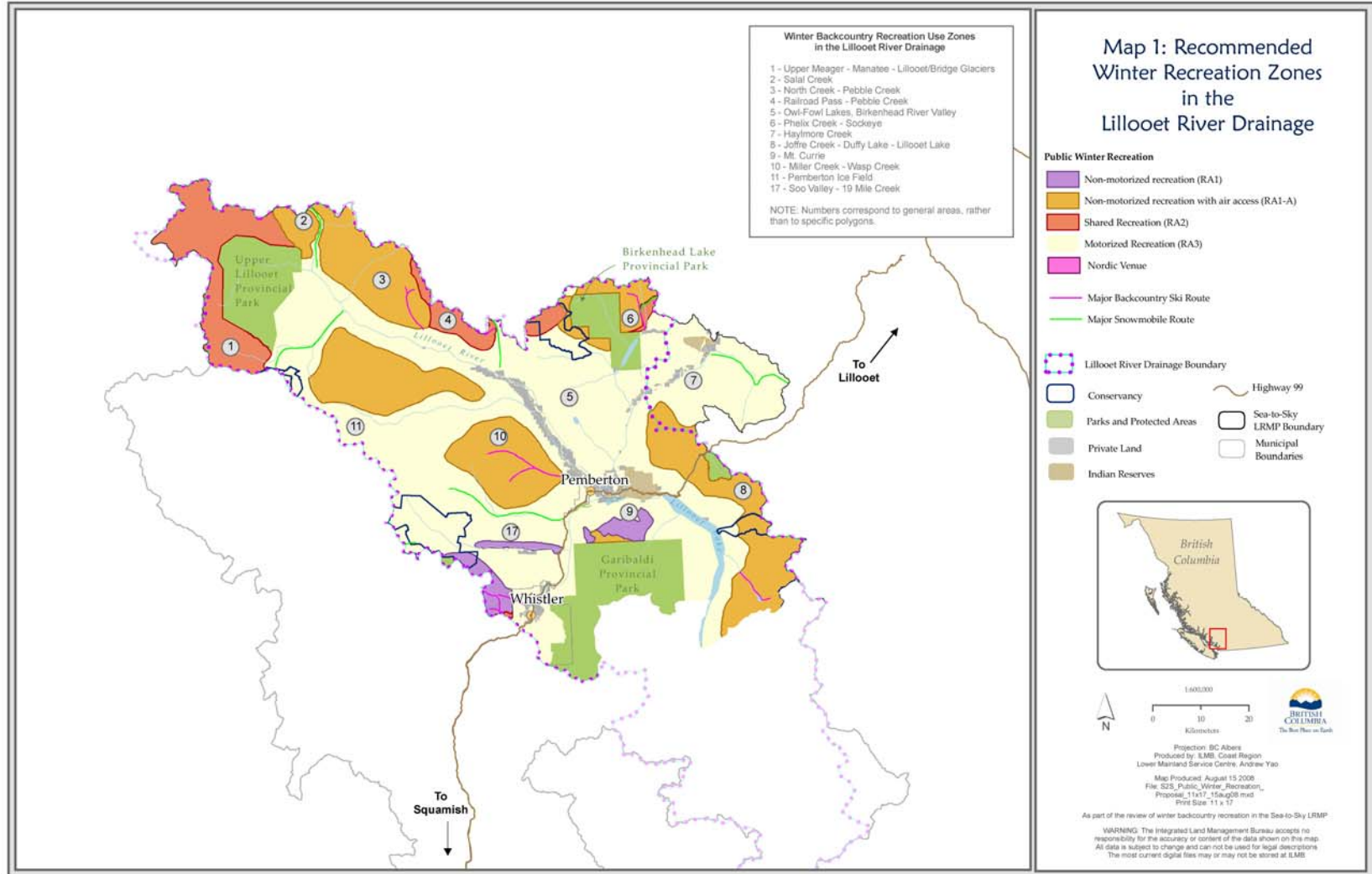
**Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage**

Table 1: Generic Description of Zone Labels for Winter Backcountry Recreation Use in the Lillooet River Drainage

Zone Code	Recreation Type	Description	Acceptable Uses/Activities
RA1	Non-motorized use	Self propelled activities that do not rely on a motorized vehicle for access or recreation use within a designated zone.	Existing motorized and/or non-motorized commercial recreation uses and activities are acceptable if present. Backcountry skiing, ski touring/mountaineering, cross-country/Nordic skiing, dog-sledding, snowshoeing. Non-motorized transport only. New non-motorized uses may be considered.
RA1-A	Non-motorized use with aerial transport	Self propelled activities that do not rely on a motorized vehicle for recreation use within a designated zone.	Same uses as RA1 above, but aerial transport is allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day recreation users. Existing motorized and/or non-motorized commercial recreation uses and activities are acceptable if present. New non-motorized uses may be considered.
RA2	Shared use	Shared use of an area based on temporal or seasonal arrangement between motorized and non-motorized users. May include sharing of a trail, route, area or combination of uses.	Transport as appropriate to the designations indicated in the management direction for each area. Existing motorized and/or non-motorized commercial recreation uses are acceptable if present. Additional recreation uses, including both public and commercial, must support maintenance of the balance between motorized and non-motorized use, respect existing use, and adhere to the sharing provisions as indicated in the management direction for each area.
RA3	Motorized use	Activities that rely on a motorized vehicle for access to and recreation use within a designated zone.	Motorized and non-motorized recreation uses, including use of motorized conveyance to transport skiers and snowboarders to play areas. Air and ground based transport. New motorized and non-motorized uses may be considered.

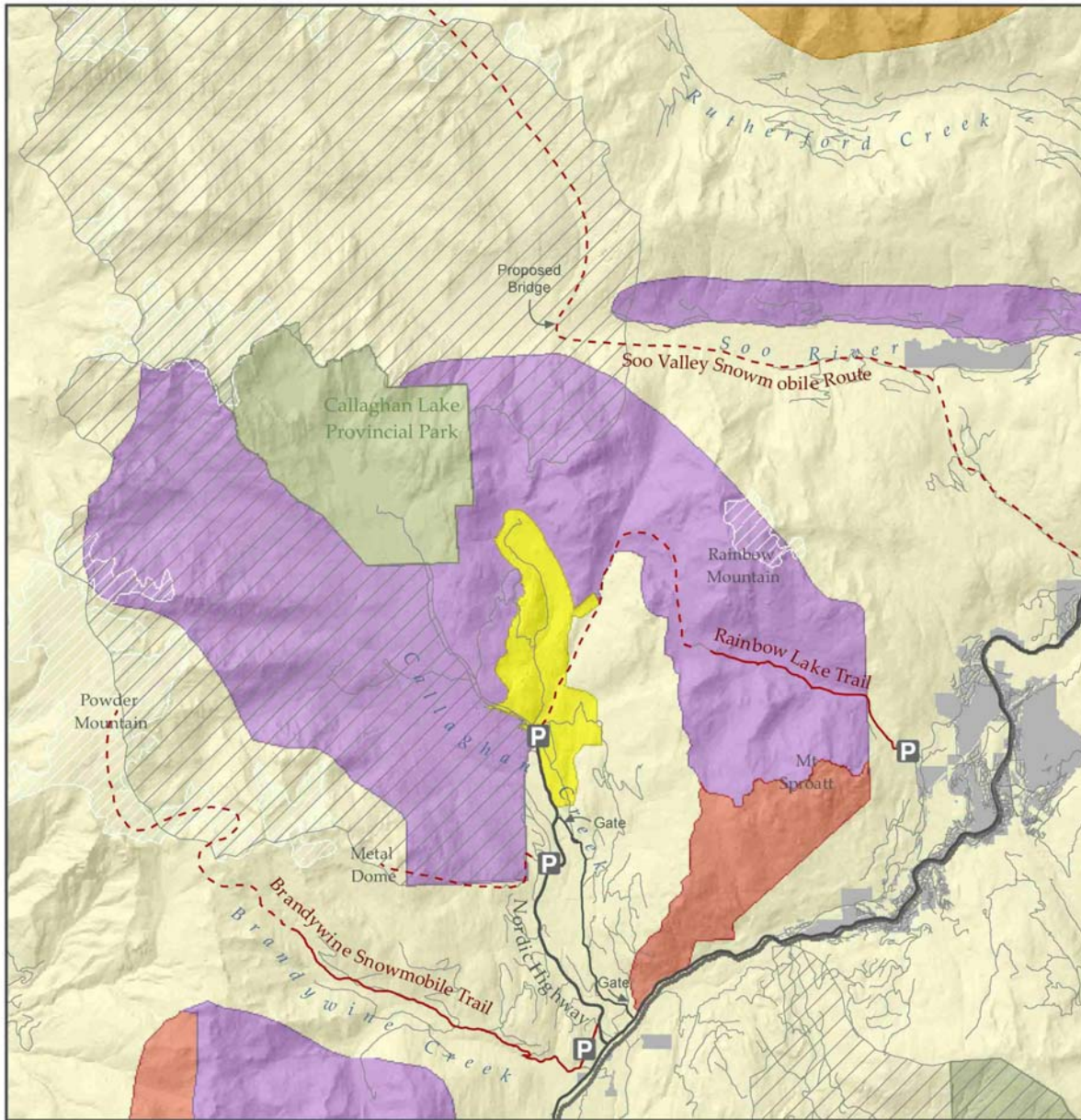
Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Map 1: Recommended Winter Recreation Zones in the Lillooet River Drainage














**Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage**

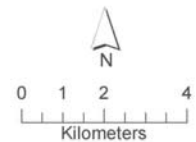
Map 2: Callaghan – Sproatt – Twentyone Mile Area



Map 2: Callaghan - Sproatt - 21 Mile Public Winter Recreation Zoning

Winter Recreation Zones

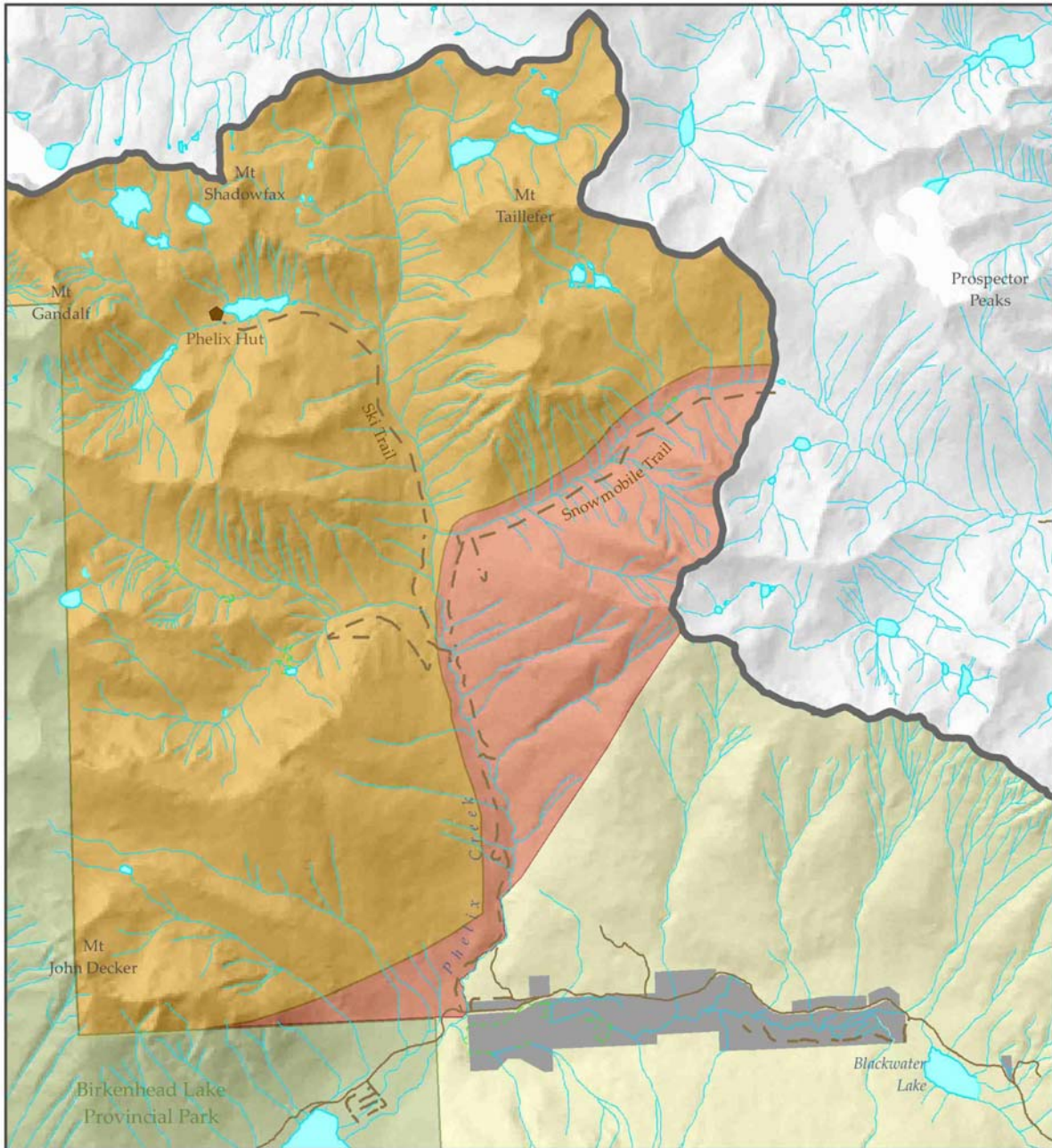
- | | |
|--|--|
|  Non-motorized recreation (RA1) |  Conservancies |
|  Non-motorized recreation with air access (RA1-A) |  Private Land |
|  Shared Recreation (RA2) |  Glacier |
|  Motorized Recreation (RA3) |  Route |
|  Whistler Nordic Venue |  Existing Trail |
|  Existing Parks and Protected Areas | |



Map Produced: August 11 2008
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Integrated Land Management Bureau
Coast Region, Lower Mainland Service Centre

**Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage**

Map 3: Phelix Creek

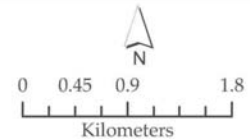


Map 3: Phelix Creek - Public Winter Recreation Zoning

Winter Recreation Zones

- Non-motorized recreation with air access (RA1-A)
- Shared Recreation (RA2)
- Motorized Recreation (RA3)

- Sea-to-Sky LRMP Boundary
- Existing Parks and Protected Areas
- Private Land



Map Produced: August 6 2008
 File: B:\proj\lb\lmd\ts2\bcwin\phelix_creek_recreation_zoning_detail_aug2008
 Produced by the
 Integrated Land Management Bureau
 Coast Region, Lower Mainland Service Centre

2.2 Implementation Strategy

Many of the issues cited by winter backcountry recreation users stem from use management practices (or lack thereof) in specific locations, or the lack of management capacity in relation to changing circumstances as they unfold. This is in contrast to broader considerations that warrant the application of a strategic management direction or designation of the type inherent in the S2S LRMP.

A comprehensive approach should be adopted for implementing winter backcountry recreation use zoning and managing use pressures over time. This implementation strategy must apply to the whole of the S2S LRMP (the Squamish Forest District) to be effective, and not be confined to use management only within the Lillooet River drainage. It should include:

- creating a winter recreation trail/route strategy;
- engagement of stakeholders in planning and management;
- partnerships between management agencies, volunteer organizations and commercial operators, for managing facilities and maintenance activities;
- a system for getting management information out to winter backcountry users;
- the use of winter access and parking as management tools that apply universally to motorized and non-motorized users;
- a means of ensuring compliance and enforcement; and
- an adequate level of management capacity to make successful implementation possible.

2.2.1 Create a S2S Winter Backcountry Recreation Management Strategy

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts has established a governance and funding partnership arrangement with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) to facilitate delivery of a summer recreation trails management program.³ This initiative has developed a summer trail strategy for the S2S corridor (designated trails, goals, objectives, management strategies), and a subsequent recreation trails management plan with associated secured funding. Management agreements have been developed with volunteer organizations and tenured operators to implement the plan, and a part-time trail coordinator position has been filled.

The current summer recreation management initiative provides an active framework upon which a similar and complementary strategy should be built for winter backcountry recreation trail/route management, including the following.

- Create a winter backcountry recreation strategy that identifies trails and routes and designates these in legal terms, where appropriate, and that formalizes management goals and strategies (in recreation objectives under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* or other legislation), and provides means of addressing issues such as risk management, use conflicts, funding and management capacity.

³ For a description of the Sea-to-Sky Corridor Recreation Trail Strategy refer to: www.tsa.gov.bc.ca/sites_trails/Initiatives/SeatoSky-Strategy/sea_to_sky_strategy.htm

- Create management agreements and partnerships for managing trailheads, parking lots, snow plowing and maintenance, collection of parking fees, and distribution of program information.
- Engage Stakeholders/Users in a winter recreation use forum for contributing to setting objectives and management strategies, and establishing a means of resolving user conflicts.
- Implement a comprehensive communications strategy that delivers annual information and advisories for users, using tools such as an annual “synopsis” of area closures and restrictions, web information and on-line bookings, system of signage and maps, and rules of use and etiquette.

Economies of scale exist that point to the opportunity for MTCA and SLRD to establish a functional year-round program, with full-time management capacity. In practical terms, the mandate of the Steering Committee currently responsible for governance of the summer S2S Recreation Trails Program could be expanded to include winter backcountry recreation. Membership on the current Steering Committee includes representatives from provincial government agencies, local and regional government agencies and First Nations.

A Corridor Trail Forum currently provides periodic review of the Steering Committee’s progress and updates the Committee on relevant issues. It is an umbrella group made up of land managers, representatives of organized clubs and members of the Steering Committee. A similar but separate “Winter Trails Forum” would be needed in support of winter backcountry recreation management.

A Trail Coordinator delivers the summer recreation trails program, as defined by the Steering Committee. That person undertakes the day-to-day operations of the program, and acts as a liaison between agencies, organized users and other stakeholders in relation to the trails program. This function could be logically expanded to a year-round program coordination position for managing both summer and winter recreation strategies.

2.2.2 Planning for recreation management in the Callaghan Valley following the 2010 Olympic Games

Draft agreement between the BC Government, the Lil’wat Nation and Squamish Nation contemplates a joint planning process for the Callaghan Valley following the 2010 Winter Olympics, related to recreation management and an ownership position in legacy facilities by the First Nations. The proposed agreement calls for a recreation management plan, presumably for summer and winter recreation uses.

Given pressures on surrounding lands for winter backcountry recreational access and the fact that winter motorized access through the Callaghan Valley to the Pemberton Ice Cap was discontinued with the creation of the non-motorized area surrounding the Whistler Nordic Centre, the interests of both motorized and non-motorized winter recreation users should be considered in post-2010 recreation planning for the Callaghan Valley area.

2.2.3 S2S winter use parking strategy

Parking for winter users in the S2S corridor is at a premium and is a source of ongoing user conflicts. While some paid parking has been created to accommodate public use (Brandywine Trailhead, Whistler Nordic Centre, Rutherford Creek Trailhead), other locations are free, setting up a competition for free parking opportunities.

Adding to parking problems is the inadequate availability of plowed parking areas. The 2007-08 season was also hampered by the extraordinary road construction along most of the length of the Sea-to-Sky highway. While construction may be largely complete by next season, a new three or four lane and/or divided highway may in fact make access to parking areas more difficult than in previous years.

Parking as a Management Tool

Management of parking for winter backcountry recreation use should be considered as an important tool for reducing use concentration and user conflicts in certain locations and for distributing use in the corridor.

The Province should create a series of parking areas at key trailheads in the corridor, consistent with a winter trails strategy, that are anchored in existing parking areas and roadways, and are sited specifically to provide for parking requirements of winter backcountry recreation users — ‘a S2S winter parking strategy’. Designate these areas for winter recreation users and advertise them as such.

In some locations, designated parking spaces should be used to help alleviate over-crowding and user conflicts on trails by limiting the number of vehicles parked at trailheads.

Managing Parking System Costs

Alleviating the pressures for parking in key locations is accompanied by the need to manage the associated costs for construction, plowing, maintenance and enforcement.

Parking Pass System: Create a parking pass system that requires any vehicle parked in designated winter use parking areas to display a parking pass. This pass system must be universally applied to anyone wishing to park in a designated area (that is, to both motorized and non-motorized users).

Partnerships: Maintaining winter parking areas requires regular effort associated with snow removal, fee collection and trail grooming. These requirements are handled currently in a very limited fashion by volunteer snowmobile clubs and some commercial recreation tenure holders.

To adequately manage the requirements of a functional paid parking system will require either a much improved management response by the Province and its partners (MTCA, Ministry of Transportation and Highways, BC Parks, BC Forest Service, SLRD), or an expanded program of formal management agreements with commercial recreation tenure holders and volunteer organizations. It is generally accepted, however, that volunteer management is not a stable long-term management solution.

BC Parks has been in the paid parking business for a number of years. There may be efficiencies in building on both the experience of BC Parks in managing paid parking and the infrastructure that BC Parks has in place to collect and enforce parking fees.

Re-invest Parking Fees: Fees collected for winter parking passes should be applied directly to the parking system management costs, and a financial management system established specifically for this purpose.

2.3 Specific Operational Responses

2.3.1 Complete the upgrade to the Brandywine Trail

Substantial investment has been made to upgrade the Brandywine Trail in the wake of the closing of the Callaghan Valley/Callaghan Park snowmobile route to the Pemberton Ice Cap. Concerns persist however over two sections of the trail where upgrading has not been completed to alleviate issues associated with avalanche, safety and maintenance. A further investment is needed to complete the upgrade of those sections of the Brandywine snowmobile trail.

It is worth noting that there is continued dissatisfaction over the Brandywine Trail as a “less desirable” route because of the added distance to and from the ice cap and because snowmobile activity is now concentrated on that single trail. This said, the Brandywine Trail is groomed and has ample parking, and the Canadian Avalanche Association rates it to be as safe as the Callaghan Valley route.

2.3.2 Upgraded Torrent Creek route

Install a winter bridge crossing of the Soo River upstream of the foot access area, so that snowmobiles can access the Pemberton Ice Cap by way of Torrent Creek. This was a recommendation of the WBRF that would add value in terms of enhanced snowmobile access to the ice cap, and increase safety by adding an avenue for egress from the ice cap.

This action has even more currency today in light of the non-motorized designation in the Callaghan Valley. A route through Torrent Creek that is usable throughout the winter season provides an alternative circle route to the Pemberton Ice Cap. A similar possibility exists in terms of a route in the Upper Soo Valley (2.3.3 below).

2.3.3 Investigate an Upper Soo Valley route option

Local snowmobilers have suggested that it may be possible to create a viable snowmobile route up the Soo Valley to the Pemberton Ice Cap. This possibility should be examined during winter trail strategy planning.

Any proposed development of a route through the Upper Soo would require collaboration between BC and the First Nations in relation to the conservancy in that area.

2.3.4 Enhance access to backcountry skiing opportunities

When considering a winter recreation trails strategy, there are some areas that fit the criterion of suitability for backcountry skiing where accessibility could be improved with reasonable effort (primarily road plowing and trail grooming). Areas for consideration in winter trail strategy planning should include Tricouni/Seagram Lake, Mount Brew/Brew Lake, Roe/Chance Creek and Cloudburst Mountain.

2.3.5 Improve backcountry skiing access to parklands

The Lower Mainland Protected Areas Strategy in the 1990s focused on the creation of provincial parks with a conservation emphasis. Some of the new provincial parks created in the area were identified for their important contribution to protecting wildlife values and ecosystem diversity. The ensuing management direction restricted motorized access to protect those conservation values. This has curtailed recreational access to some historically motorized-use areas, leading to increased pressure on areas outside parks, adding to user conflicts in backcountry areas and diminishing user satisfaction. A contributing factor has been the shortage of capacity to maintain winter access to other reasonable backcountry skiing opportunities.

Opportunities should be examined to improve access to backcountry skiing terrain in appropriate locations within provincial parks, as a viable step toward resolving user conflicts. Areas for consideration should include many of the existing approaches to the west side of Garibaldi Provincial Park, such as Black Tusk Road, Singing Pass, Wedgemount Lake, Conroy Creek and Culliton Creek.

Some of these options may be easily addressed through the provision of adequate resources for snowplowing of existing road access and parking areas, as well as some degree of trail grooming. To be viable, planning and management efforts must be integrated with the management of existing winter access and parking elsewhere in the S2S corridor, as a component of the recommended winter recreation trails strategy (see Section 3).

2.3.6 Specific suggestions for use management in the Callaghan Valley in 2008/09

Based on the experience with the newly-minted motorized closure in the Callaghan Valley, there appear to be a number of opportunities for improving recreation management in winter 2008/09. These include all of the following.

- Close the north end of the East Callaghan Forest Service Road (FSR) with a gate, and designate an appropriate number of parking stalls (e.g., 10 spaces) for users; charge a daily parking fee.
- Retain the existing gate and 'No Parking' signs at the south end of the East Callaghan FSR.
- Formalize proper parking arrangements at the Whistler Nordic Centre for both day use and overnight non-motorized use.
- Develop a separate non-motorized route for backcountry skiers linking the Whistler Nordic Centre with the Twentyone Mile Creek/Rainbow Lake area.

- Develop a new parking area for backcountry skiers on the west side of the road to the Whistler Nordic Centre approximately 1 km past Edna Creek. This will provide good access to the north slopes of Metal Dome; charge a daily parking fee.
- Place information signs explaining new winter parking regulations and daily fees.
- Post signs in the lower Callaghan Valley and on Mt. Sproatt explaining restricted non-motorized access for Twentyone Mile Creek/Rainbow Lake watershed, consistent with the S2S LRMP.

2.3.7 Compliance with policies and plans

Government managers have relied for years on the influence of recreation organizations (Outdoor Recreation Council, Federation of Mountain Clubs, snowmobile clubs) to engage in public processes on behalf of their members and non-aligned users, to assist in disseminating recreation use information, and to assist compliance with policies and plans through cooperation of members. This has served as an effective strategy in the past when use pressures were less.

In the S2S corridor, numbers of winter backcountry recreation users has grown steadily over the past several years⁴ and user conflicts are seeing the same trend. Organized clubs continue to be engaged to work with other users and keep members informed of latest management strategies. In the case of snowmobilers, however, a combination of large numbers, out-of-area users and demographics of riders has led to a situation wherein much of the current S2S snowmobile use is by people who do not belong to organized clubs (local estimates are that as few as 10% of snowmobilers belong to organized clubs). The same phenomenon occurs with respect to organized non-motorized users when considering the numbers of backcountry skiers that utilize the area. Awareness of and compliance with policies and plans has, as a result, become very difficult if not impossible to manage.

A compounding factor is the fact that snowmobiles do not require an annual licence in BC, impeding identification for enforcement purposes and making the distribution of annual user information difficult. Snowmobiles need now only be registered once at time of original purchase, and again when a machine is resold (by way of a Notice of Transfer).

To provide adequate enforcement of backcountry recreation management, a system of registration and annual licensing for snowmobiles should be adopted, as is common practice in most other jurisdictions in North America. A comprehensive proposal to this effect is currently being considered by the Provincial Government.

An added benefit to an annual licencing program is the regular opportunity to provide the winter recreation user with an annual ‘synopsis’ in written form (e.g., similar to fishing regulations) in which current user guidelines and restrictions for winter backcountry recreation can be found. This would be a substantial addition to public winter recreation use management in the S2S corridor (and other high-use locales in BC).

⁴ Statistics do not currently exist for numbers of winter recreation users. A study is currently underway through Simon Fraser University that should shed some light on user numbers for the 2007-08 season. Results are due in late 2008.

3. Capacity to Implement

The long history of debate over winter backcountry recreation and growing user demands, point to the need for a more active and sustainable approach to winter backcountry recreation use management in the S2S area.

Measured on a provincial scale, the levels of summer and winter recreation use in the S2S corridor are extraordinary, and they are growing. At the same time, government management responsibilities and budgets for recreation management are divided among several agencies, diluting the ability of any one agency to respond adequately to local needs. Resultant requirements for increased coordination are also a draw on available management capacity.

Recommendations in this report presume a desire on the part of the Provincial Government to address winter backcountry recreation in the S2S area, and that an incremental increase in resources will be needed to facilitate implementation. *Table 2* presents an estimate of the general funding requirements to implement these recommendations, without reference to individual agency responsibilities. This is a rough estimate of implementation needs and further analysis would be needed to construct an acceptable budget estimate.

Table 2: Example of Implementation Costs

Item	Type of Content	Estimate
Management capacity	Management oversight; inter-agency agreements; winter trails coordinator; parking pass system development; travel expenses; vehicle costs	\$75,000
Establish a winter trails strategy	Research, mapping, First Nations' consultation, public consultation, signage and educational brochures; website	\$75,000
Capital costs	Construction/upgrade to parking areas; road maintenance, trail brushing; upgrades to trail infrastructure; depreciation costs outside of budget	\$250,000
Maintenance schedules	Mapping; specific trail management plans; safety procedures; risk management system	\$25,000
Annual operating costs	Maintenance of infrastructure, signage, material and supplies; snow removal, road maintenance; fee collection; enforcement	\$200,000

Where partnerships can be made with regional government, this should be pursued. Certainly the members of the SLRD have a vested interest in the management of winter recreation, as they do with summer.

Volunteer resources have been used in the past for specific operational assistance (clearing parking lots, fee collection), but these resources are inadequate and inappropriate for delivering this type of program management on an ongoing basis. Where tenure arrangements can be made that facilitate the work, there is a place for tenure operators to contribute to day-to-day operational requirements.

Capacity On-the-Ground

Finding resources for monitoring and enforcement is always a challenge, particularly in light of growing demands on the Conservation Officer Service. However, a valuable and currently under-utilized resource does exist in the form of highly qualified Park Ranger staff who are seasonally employed, usually for five months of the year. Although the rationale may already exist to justify an enhanced Ranger presence in the Provincial Parks during winter months, resources for year-round Ranger staff remain a challenge for BC Parks. This could change if staff costs were shared among recreation program managers in the S2S corridor.

If seasonal BC Parks Ranger staff were available to assist with winter recreation management undertaken by MTCA or other agencies in a coordinated fashion, a substantive on-the-ground resource would become available. Maintaining the services of trained recreation personnel, available during the proper season, would add needed operational capability in a cost-shared environment.

A Last Word on Business Case

MTCA staff advise that a business case for implementing a Sea-to-Sky winter recreation strategy would need to be developed and tourism benefits analyzed. A similar requirement preceded establishment of the summer recreation trails strategy and management program.

Several considerations appear certain.

- A business case for a winter recreation strategy will be driven as much by the need to address conflicts between users groups (including public and commercial users), environmental impacts of recreation use, public safety, liability and enforcement, as driven by a tourism revenue-management cost assessment.
- The current recreation management system is over-taxed, and developing needed winter recreation management strategies, tools and management capacity will require incremental funding for responsible agencies.
- There will be initial capital costs associated with improvements to the infrastructure needed to address growing public winter recreation use pressures (e.g., construction of parking and trail facilities and associated infrastructure in specific locations).
- Annual operating costs can be offset by parking and trail use fees, reducing the need for subsidies.
- Improving benefits for users through improved winter recreation management practices has spin-off benefits that contribute to the Province's tourism growth objectives, particularly in the Sea-to-Sky corridor.

**Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage**

Appendix A: Descriptions of Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Zones in the Lillooet River Drainage

The following is a summary of area descriptions, and rationales for winter backcountry recreation use zones, summarized from the research and analyses conducted by Doug Herchmer, DH Recreation Services. Refer also to the Map of Winter Recreation Use Zones on page 45.

Area # 1- Upper Meager- Manatee-Lillooet/Bridge Glaciers

Setting

Location - A large and remote area located in the upper northwest corner of the Soo Timber Supply Area (TSA), the entire area is unroaded and borders the Upper Lillooet Protected Area. Much of this area is mid- high elevation above tree line as it shares the height of land boundary with the adjacent TSA. It includes Upper Meager Creek, Upper Manatee Creek, the entire Lillooet Glacier and the headwaters of the Bridge Glacier.

Key Values - Due to remoteness, size and relative inaccessibility, this area has high wilderness backcountry recreation and wildlife values, including key habitat for mountain goat and grizzly bear. The S2S LRMP has approved the entire area as a Wildland Zone with detailed management direction; Upper Meager Creek (a recreation emphasis), Manatee Glacier (a tourism emphasis), and the remainder of the area (a cultural emphasis). First Nations cultural activities and traditional renewable resource harvesting activities take place within this zone there are known First Nations cultural values located throughout this area.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are no developed facilities in this area and public use is low. Access is primarily by air or on foot, although snowmobilers use portions of the area in the winter/spring.

In the spring, this area is also popular with ski mountaineers and tourers who fly into the Upper Manatee, and set up tent camps and tour/ski the open bowls and ridges above tree line in the spring. Ski traverses of the Lillooet Glacier are often undertaken in the late spring.

The area is also used for heli-skiing in winter and a portion of the area has been tenured to Whistler Heli-skiing, a commercial heli-ski operator based in Whistler.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - the area has been zoned to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities **RA2, Shared Use**, with some restrictions. This reflects and accommodates existing snowmobile and backcountry ski touring use. The WBRF recommended that a non-motorized group book use of a portion of this area through a website (yet to be implemented). Motorized use of the booked portion is not to occur while the non-motorized group is in the area, as well as for a two-week period prior to the non-motorized use. It is unknown whether the sharing arrangement is workable as the plan has yet to be approved and implemented.

Aerial Recreation Access - Existing commercial heli-skiing use is recognized and acceptable with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use in most of the area, except for the 100 Lakes Plateau Wildland where no aerial access is permitted.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 2- Salal Creek

Setting

Location - This is a medium sized area located along the northern boundary of the Soo TSA on the north side of the Lillooet River. It includes the main stem and west fork of Salal Creek and extends east towards North Creek. The main drainage has been roaded with a branch leading up the west fork. Much of this area is mid-high elevation and the unit shares the height-of-land boundary with the adjacent TSA to the north.

Key Values - Due to the presence of existing logging roads, there is good access to high elevation/alpine areas above tree line, providing for good wilderness recreation opportunities. There are important wildlife and tourism values in this area. The upper northwest fork is located within a Wildland Zone, with a wildlife emphasis that recognizes important functional spring habitat for grizzly bear. The upper northeast portion of the area is part of an approved Wildland Zone that has been identified as having high value recreation attributes and is an important area for extended backcountry trips

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - The area has no developed recreation facilities with the exception of a small public hut located in Athelney Pass. The route up Salal Creek is quite popular with snowmobilers and ski mountaineers as the logging roads provide reasonably easy access to the Bridge Glacier/Lillooet Ice Cap. The corridor is primarily used by snowmobilers as an escape route off the Bridge Glacier in poor weather. The area experiences moderate use by snowmobilers and use is dispersed.

This area is also popular with ski mountaineers and tourers who ski into the hut at Athelney Pass in the spring. Ascents of Mt. Athelstan are often attempted from the hut. Ski traverses of the Bridge Glacier/Lillooet Ice Cap are undertaken in the late spring. The area is used for heli-skiing and a portion of the area has been tenured.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - A motorized travel corridor has been identified to accommodate motorized recreation activities between the Upper Lillooet and the Bridge River valleys, and has been zoned **RA3**. This reflects and accommodates existing snowmobile use. The motorized corridor extends up the western branch of Salal Creek and across the lower Bridge Glacier to allow for unrestricted snowmobile access to the lower Bridge Glacier and north as far as the glaciers dropping into the head of the Bridge River. The remainder of the area will be managed to accommodate non-motorized recreation activities and non-motorized transport. It has been zoned as non motorized **RA1-A**.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA1-A: Aerial transport is allowed for drop-off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users. Existing commercial heli-skiing use is recognized and acceptable with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use.

Area # 3- North Creek-Pebble Creek

Setting

Location - This is a relatively small area along the northern boundary of the Soo TSA on the north side of the Lillooet River, adjacent to Salal Creek. It includes the drainages of both Boulder (Pebble) Creek and North Creek, both of which have been roaded in the lower sections. Much of this area is mid-high elevation forest, open alpine, meadows and pocket glaciers. The unit shares the height-of-land boundary with the adjacent TSA to the north and extends east towards Railroad Creek and the Hurley River Pass.

Key Values - The area has been identified for recreation emphasis due to the existing high value backcountry recreation values. There is historical use of the area by ski tourers and mountaineers, with excellent opportunities for non-motorized recreation (numerous peaks, open bowls and small glaciers suitable for skiing). It is an important area for extended trips as there are backcountry cabins located in both Pebble and North Creeks. Due to the presence of existing logging roads, there is good access to high elevation/alpine areas above tree line and the associated wilderness recreation values and non-motorized activities.

Highly valued are public non-motorized use and the existing non-commercial backcountry hut in North Creek. The S2S LRMP identifies the area as a Wildland Zone with a recreation emphasis, and has approved detailed management direction that states that precludes construction of commercial recreation infrastructure within the Wildland portion of the Pebble and North Creek watersheds.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - The BC Mountaineering Club (BCMC) has constructed a cabin in the headwaters of North Creek that has been in use for over twenty years and is very popular for extended ski trips. It is normally locked and can be booked through the BCMC. There is also a small backcountry cabin located in Pebble Creek that is open to the general public. A route up North Creek is quite popular with ski tourers and ski mountaineers, as logging roads provide reasonably easy access into mid-drainage. There are some steep avalanche prone slopes along the west side of the creek that must be traversed to access the cabin. Use is generally low and dispersed throughout the area, with concentrations at the backcountry cabin. The area is used for heli-skiing and a portion of the area has been tenured.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area has been zoned **RA1-A** non-motorized recreation uses to protect the backcountry skiing opportunities from the BCMC cabin in North Creek and the backcountry ski cabin in Pebble Creek.

The non-motorized area extends several kilometres down McParlon Creek to protect backcountry skiing opportunities from the Pebble Creek cabin.

A motorized travel corridor from the Boomerang Glacier to the North Creek – Hurley River Pass, to the east side of the Pebble Glacier to the Upper McParlon Glacier is excluded from this area to allow for snowmobile access from Railroad Pass to Lone Goat Creek and the snowmobile cabin located there.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA1-A: Aerial transport is allowed for drop-off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users. No sensitive areas have been identified. Existing commercial heli-skiing is a recognized use, with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 4- Railroad Pass-Pebble Creek

Setting

Location - This is a relatively small area adjacent to Area # 3 and located along the northern boundary of the Soo TSA on the North side of the Lillooet River. It includes the upper drainages of Delilah, Sampson and Boomerang Creeks and the eastern portion of Pebble Creek. Much of this area is mid-high elevation forest, open alpine, meadows and pocket glaciers. The unit shares the height-of-land boundary with the adjacent TSA to the north and extends west from Railroad Creek and the Hurley River Pass to Pebble Creek.

Key Values - There has been traditional use of the area by snowmobilers for many years, and there are excellent opportunities for motorized recreation due to the presence of logging roads and ease of access from either direction through the Hurley River-Railroad Pass FSR.

Good backcountry ski touring/ski mountaineering opportunities also exist on the Train and Boomerang Glaciers, Mt. Samson, Face Mtn. and neighbouring peaks west of the pass.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is a key historic and current snowmobile area. There are no developed facilities in the area, however the road up Railroad Pass-Hurley River is quite popular with snowmobilers as it is not plowed and is accessible from either direction. Ski tourers/mountaineers utilize the area in the spring once the road is plowed, providing good access to suitable terrain for skiing and climbing of neighboring mountains. Use is mainly dispersed throughout the area with access concentrated on the logging roads.

There is a tenured commercial cat-ski operation in the Hurley River area of the adjacent Lillooet TSA that utilizes the northwestern slopes above Railroad Pass and operates out of a base in the pass. There is also a commercial heli-skiing tenure over a portion of the area.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area has been zoned **RA2, Shared Use**, based on temporal arrangements between motorized and non-motorized users (**RA1-A** in April and May of every second year). This accommodates the low-moderate levels of snowmobiling and backcountry skiing in the area. The Railroad Pass area is used for backcountry skiing primarily in the spring. A motorized snowmobile travel corridor from Railroad Pass to Lone Goat Creek is available every year and is only closed to snowmobiles in April/May of every second year.

Temporal arrangements have been tentatively proposed between the motorized and non-motorized recreation users to share this area, however it is unknown whether these arrangements are working, especially around the Face Mtn. area where conflicts are possible between motorized and non-motorized users in spring.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA2/RA1-A: Existing commercial heli-skiing use is a recognized and acceptable use with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use.

Area # 5- Owl-Fowl-Lakes, Birkenhead River Valley

Setting

Location - Located in the mountains to the east of Pemberton Meadows and set high above the Lillooet River, this is a medium-large area that includes the Owl-Fowl-Tenquille chain of lakes and the upper Birkenhead River valley drainage. Much of this area is high elevation forest, open alpine/sub-alpine meadows, small lakes and creeks. A portion of the unit has been roaded up the Birkenhead and Tenquille Creek drainages to access timber supplies and provide mineral exploration opportunities.

Key Values - The area has very high wilderness recreational values with a long history of public use for backcountry recreation due to the proliferation of small lakes, alpine meadows and hiking trails that have been established. It also has high wildlife values for mountain goat, wolverine, and grizzly bear, and has been identified by the S2S LRMP for wildlife emphasis. The area is included in a Wildland Zone wherein no timber harvesting or hydro power development is permitted. Mineral exploration and tourism activities are permitted.

The area is also part of the Lil'wat First Nation's territory and there is an approved conservancy in the upper Birkenhead River watershed to protect cultural and spiritual values. The S2S LRMP has identified a large Wildland Zone with a cultural emphasis in this area in recognition of the cultural and spiritual values of the Lil'wat Nation.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are very few developed facilities in the area. There is an old and deteriorating cabin at Tenquille Lake that was built many years ago and now serves as an emergency shelter for hikers, horseback riders, backcountry skiers and snowmobilers. The MTCAs has formally established a recreation site over the cabin and a portion of the lake to protect the recreation values of this site. The area is a popular destination for backcountry hikers/skiers, wilderness campers, mountain climbers, snowmobilers and equestrians, and can be accessed by good trails from Pemberton Meadows, Upper Tenquille Creek and off Branch 12 of the Railroad Creek FSR. Recreation use is mainly dispersed throughout the area but often concentrates at the Tenquille Lake campsite or along the Owl-Fowl Lakes trail.

The area is used for commercial heli-skiing by two tenured operators in the Upper Birkenhead valley and the Owl-Fowl Lakes area, respectively. There is also a long history of mineral exploration in this unit with old mining adits and trails scattered throughout the area.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area has been zoned **RA3** for motorized recreation uses except for the Upper Birkenhead River north of Tenquille Lake, which is Shared Use, **RA2**, based on temporal arrangements between motorized and non-motorized users (i.e., **RA3** one year and **RA1-A** the next). The year in which this area is **RA3** is the year in which the Railroad Pass-Pebble Creek area # 4 is **RA1-A** in the spring. This allows both motorized and non-motorized use somewhere in the mountains above the upper Hurley River every spring. This reflects and accommodates the low-moderate levels of motorized and non-motorized historical use of the area.

Aerial Recreation Access - Existing commercial heli-skiing use is a recognized and acceptable use in the **RA2** zone with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 6- Sockeye-Phelix Creek Valleys

Setting

Location - Located adjacent to Sockeye/Birkenhead Lake Provincial Park in the mountains along the northern boundary of the Soo TSA, this is a small area that includes the Phelix Creek drainage and the upper portion of the northwestern headwater stream of Sockeye Creek. Much of this area is mid-high elevation forest, open alpine/sub-alpine meadows, small tarns and medium-large sized mountains. The lower portion of the area has been roaded up the Phelix Creek valley to approximately 5 km, with a branch on the east fork to access timber supplies. The mid and upper sections remain unroaded and undeveloped.

Key Values - The area has very high wilderness recreation and backcountry tourism values. There is a history of public use for backcountry recreation dating back to the 1970s when much of the area was explored and some of the peaks were climbed by mountaineers from the Varsity Outdoor Club (VOC). This area also has high wildlife habitat values for mountain goat, wolverine and grizzly bear. The Sockeye Creek portion has been identified as a Wildland Zone with a wildlife emphasis, while a portion of the Phelix Creek drainage has been identified as a Wildland Zone with a recreation emphasis

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are very few developed facilities in the unit, however the VOC built a cabin at Long Lake in 1998 in memory of Brian Waddington – a former VOC member who was killed in a ski mountaineering accident in the Coast Range in the mid-1990s. The cabin serves as an overnight shelter for non-motorized users (primarily backcountry skiers), while the area is a popular destination for both backcountry skiers and hikers. The area is not heavily used but an examination of the log book indicates that average use is approximately 170 user days/year, with most use occurring December-April. The hut can be accessed from a trail off the end of the Phelix Creek FSR and is usually a 3-4 hour trip, depending on snow conditions and fitness level of the participants. Recreation use is mainly dispersed throughout the area as there are very good slopes for skiing and good ski mountaineering objectives based from the VOC cabin.

In recent years, snowmobile use of the valley has become more popular with the advances in snowmobile technology, including lighter chassis, more powerful engines and deeper paddles – allowing snowmobilers to go where they previously could not safely venture. Snowmobile use has been in the vicinity of the VOC cabin, but access is considered difficult in Upper Phelix Creek where the valley narrows and becomes canyon-like. Currently, snowmobilers are using the lower logging road up the valley mid elevation and taking off from a switchback on the east fork to gain the alpine area south of Prospector Peaks, before crossing over the height-of-land into a tributary of Cadwallader Creek.

A very small portion of the area off the northwest corner of Sockeye Protected Area is used for heli-skiing and a commercial tenure has been issued for that purpose. In addition, there is a commercial tenure that has been issued for a narrow non-motorized corridor up Phelix Creek valley including a portion of the east fork. Commercial use is estimated to be very low.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The upper Phelix Creek drainage is recommended to be zoned **RA1-A** for non-motorized recreation uses except for the upper portion of the most north-western headwater stream of Sockeye Creek, which has been recommended to be zoned motorized **RA3** to reflect existing motorized use and accommodate snowmobiles accessing the area from Noel Creek to the north. This is generally consistent with the management plan for Sockeye Park. The **RA1-A** non-motorized zone recognizes and acknowledges the existing backcountry cabin, the adjacent skiable terrain, historical use of the area, and the existing commercial heli-skiing use in Sockeye Creek. Aerial transport is acceptable for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users only.

The lower portion of Phelix Creek (including the road up Phelix Creek to approximately 5 km, the east fork of Phelix Creek, and the immediate area to the east) are recommended to be zones **RA2** to allow for shared use of the staging area and logging road to approximately 5 km. Refer to *Map 3* in this report for zone locations.

Area # 7- Haylmore Creek

Setting

Location - This is a large area located along the north eastern boundary of the Soo TSA where it borders the Lillooet TSA, west of Duffy Lake in the Cayoosh Range. It includes the entire watersheds of the Haylmore, Barkley and Spruce Creeks. The Haylmore drainage has been extensively roaded to access timber supplies via the Haylmore FSR, while the lower Spruce creek drainage has been partially roaded. Much of this area is mid-high elevation forest, open alpine/sub-alpine meadows, and peaks of the Cayoosh Range.

Key Values - There has been traditional use of the area by motorized users for many years as there are excellent opportunities for motorized recreation due to the presence of logging roads and ease of access from the Devine/D'Arcy/Birken area. The Upper Haylmore and Barkley Creek watershed north have been identified for a tourism emphasis, while the Upper Haylmore (Seven Mile Creek east) to Barkley Creek watershed have been identified for a wildlife emphasis in recognition of sensitive grizzly bear and mountain goat habitat.

The S2S LRMP identified a number of Wildland Zones in this unit including a wildlife emphasis zone in the Seven Mile Creek to Haylmore Creek area, a tourism emphasis zone in the Upper Haylmore Creek area and a recreation emphasis zone in the Cayoosh Range-Seven Mile Creek SW area.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is an important historic and existing motorized use area for both summer and winter recreation activities. There is a developed snowmobile cabin in the upper Barkley Creek area and a recognized snowmobile route through the Barkley Creek valley. Use is scattered throughout the area with access concentrated on the logging roads. Management direction in the S2S LRMP tourism zone allows for commercial backcountry lodge or hut-to-hut development.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - This area has been zoned **RA3** motorized for all types of motorized and non-motorized recreation uses. This acknowledges the existing levels of snowmobiling use in the area. A motorized travel corridor is recognized up the Barkley Creek valley for snowmobiles.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA3: All types of air based transport are recognized and acceptable, with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 8- Joffre Creek-Duffy Lake-Lillooet Lake Area

Setting

Location - This large area is located along the eastern boundary of the Soo TSA where it borders on the Lillooet TSA east of Lillooet Lake in the Lillooet Ranges. It encompasses an area to the north of the Duffy Lake road in the Upper Joffre Creek, Upper Spetch Creek, Place Glacier and Upper Cayoosh Creek/Mariott Basin watersheds. It also encompasses an area to the south of the Duffy Lake road and west of Joffre Lakes Park, including Twin One and Twin Two Creeks and the area from Lizzie Creek south to Rogers Creek. Most of these drainages have been partially or extensively roaded to access timber supplies via the In-Shuck-Ch/Lillooet Lake FSR. A majority of this area is mid-high elevation forest, open alpine/sub-alpine meadows, small lakes and peaks of the Lillooet Ranges.

Key Values - This area is known for its high backcountry recreation values and has a long history of non-motorized public use due to the ease of access from either the Duffy Lake road or the In- Shuck-Ch/Lillooet Lake FSR. The Upper Cayoosh/Seven Mile/Place Glacier/Spetch Creek area, the Twin One/Twin Two Creeks divide north to Joffre alpine above tree line, and the North Lizzie Creek to Rogers Creek watershed divide, including the Cloudraker “finger”, have all been identified for very high recreation values and recreation emphasis. The Upper Rogers Creek watershed has been identified for wildlife emphasis for sensitive grizzly bear habitat. The Twin One and Twin Two Creeks divide south to North Lizzie Creek has been identified for a tourism emphasis, however roads leading into this area are rough and some old logging roads have been deactivated and are no longer passable.

There are high cultural and spiritual values for both the Lil’wat and In-SHUCK-ch First Nations in this unit and conservancies have been recently approved for both Twin Two Creek and Upper Rogers Creek.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is an important historic and current non-motorized use area in summer and winter. The Joffre/Cayoosh Alpine is a superb area for non-motorized recreation activities and well-used for ski touring/ski mountaineering, and is accessible from both the Duffy Lake road and the Birkenhead highway. There are developed facilities throughout the unit including several maintained trails and backcountry cabins.

An established MTCA Recreation Site exists at Lizzie Lake and there is an old public cabin nearby that is used mainly in the summer. The area is adjacent to the Stein and Mehatl Provincial Parks, and at one time was the starting point for a popular extended hike from Lizzie Lake through the Stein watershed. In recent years, the road up Lizzie Creek has been washed out near the bottom end, thereby making the trek into the upper alpine areas quite long and arduous. Consequently public use has decreased.

Heli-skiing operations are tenured but infrequent in this unit, and the unit is of considerably less value for snowmobiling due to steepness and short distances that can be traveled by snowmobile.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area north of the Duffy Lake road, the upper Joffre Creek- upper Spetch Creek- Place Glacier- upper Cayoosh Creek- Mariott Basin and south of the Duffy Lake road, the area west of Joffre Lakes Park east to Cerise and Caspar Creek valleys then south along the Van Horlick Creek divide through upper Twin One and Twin Two Creeks, Lizzie Creek to Rogers Creek have been zoned **RA1-A** for non-motorized recreation uses, with aerial transport allowed. Existing motorized and/or non-motorized commercial recreation is permitted. This acknowledges the popularity of the area for non-motorized recreation use.

Aerial Recreation Access - Existing commercial heli-skiing use in the **RA1-A** zone is recognized. Drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users is acceptable.

Area # 9- Mt. Currie Area

Setting

Location - Located along the northern boundary of Garibaldi Provincial Park in the middle of the Soo TSA, this unit consists primarily of very steep slopes coming down from Mt. Currie and the alpine area between the park boundary and the Mt. Currie /Hibachi Ridge divide. It also includes the middle sections of Ure Creek on the eastern side, and has logging roads pushed up to the edge of the park boundary. A majority of the area is unroaded with only air or foot access available.

Key Values - The area has high recreation and tourism values. It is recognized and used mostly for steep snow/alpine climbing, extreme skiing and heli-skiing off the north face and northeast slopes of Mt. Currie. The north face, which is a significant alpine route, dominates the view from Pemberton and has very high scenic values. There are also wildlife values for winter goat habitat in this area.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are no developed recreation facilities within this unit with use considered very low and dispersed. Under the right snow and weather conditions, it is considered an important and challenging area for extreme skiing and alpine climbing and is located in close proximity to the Pemberton airport. There is some ski touring and backcountry skiing taking place on the south side of Mt. Currie and off the slope of Hibachi Ridge. The zone is of little value to snowmobilers due to its steepness and difficulty of access.

Heli-skiing operates on the terrain to the north of the Mt. Currie/Hibachi Ridge divide and the north slopes of Ure Creek.

The LRMP has approved a Wildland Zone with recreation emphasis in this area and management direction stated that “no permanent public or commercial recreation infrastructure development be allowed in this unit”.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area is to be managed for non-motorized recreation and has been zoned **RA1** and **RA1-A** to protect existing backcountry skiing and commercial heli-skiing use of the area.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA1/RA1-A: Initially this unit was zoned non-motorized with restricted motorized access (**NM-R**) by the WBRF in 2003 to protect the existing backcountry skiing use and non-motorized opportunities of the area. This meant that access may be by helicopter but the recreation activities are foot only, with no motorized transport. However, this conflicted with an existing heli-skiing operation in a portion of the area and after review by the Forum in June 2003, the zoning was subsequently amended to accommodate this activity.

Most of the area is now zoned **RA1** for non-motorized recreation uses.

Non-motorized transport and existing non-motorized commercial recreation use is also permitted. This acknowledges the existing backcountry recreation values for non-motorized recreation use (i.e., ski touring and ski mountaineering).

The terrain to the north of the ridge running east-southeast from Mt. Currie is available for heli-skiing and has been zoned for non-motorized recreation with commercial motorized tenure to acknowledge this existing activity.

In addition, a smaller area immediately adjacent to the park boundary between the ridge and the park is closed to heli-skiing to protect the area, as well as a larger area within Garibaldi Park to the south, which is used by backcountry skiers. This unit has been zoned **RA1-A** for non-motorized recreation uses with aerial transport allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users.

The Squamish Nation and BC have agreed to new management direction for winter recreation as it applies to commercial recreation which prohibits expansion to the existing motorized tenure or the issuance of any new motorized tenures in this area.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 10- Miller Creek-Wasp Creek Area

Setting

Location - Located in the north central portion of the Soo TSA west of Pemberton, this large and remote unit consists primarily of alpine and sub-alpine terrain situated between the Ryan River to the north and Rutherford Creek to the south. A majority of the area is unroaded with mainly air or foot access available.

Key Values - This unit has high-very high wilderness backcountry recreation values. The LRMP has approved a Wildland Zone (WL # 20) with a recreation emphasis in this area.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are no developed recreation facilities within this unit. Use is considered to be generally low and dispersed. Miller Creek meadows, Ipsoot Mtn. and the adjacent Ipsoot Glacier are popular destinations for weekend trips. There is a recognized ski route up Miller Creek, however there are private property access issues at the bottom end near Pemberton Meadows. Snowmobile skiers access Miller Ridge from the Lillooet Valley and snowmobile/ski the northeast slopes off the ridge into Wasp Creek.

A commercial heli-skiing operation uses the slopes of Ipsoot Mtn. and adjacent glacier on a regular basis and considers this area as one of its prime heli-ski locations under good weather conditions.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area is to be managed for non-motorized recreation and has been zoned **RA1-A** to recognize existing backcountry skiing and heli-skiing use of the area.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA1-A: Aerial transport is allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day recreation users for activities that are consistent with the area zoning. Existing non-motorized commercial recreation use is permitted. This acknowledges the significant skiing values, both backcountry and heli-skiing, of the area.

Area # 11- Pemberton Ice Cap

Setting

Location - Located in the western part of the Soo TSA west of Pemberton and the Lillooet River valley, this very large and remote unit consists primarily of the Pemberton Ice Cap and adjoining watersheds. It includes the headwaters of the Soo River, Rutherford Creek, Ryan River and South Creek. The entire area is unroaded, with mainly air and foot or winter motorized access available from the terminus of logging roads at the upper ends of the above drainages.

Key Values - The area has high backcountry recreation and wilderness values. It is regionally and internationally recognized and used extensively for snowmobiling, some commercial heli-skiing and extended backcountry ski trips. There are important wildlife values identified for grizzly bear habitat in both the Upper Ryan and Upper Soo watersheds. The Upper Soo River has been identified for wildlife emphasis due to sensitive grizzly bear habitat and is to be maintained in a roadless state. The Lil'wat Nation has identified cultural and spiritual values in this area and the S2S LRMP has identified a new conservancy in the upper Soo River watershed.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is a key historic and current snowmobile area — one of the most popular in the Soo TSA. There are few developed recreation facilities within this unit though a snowmobile cabin has been constructed at the head of Rutherford Creek and is used mainly as an emergency shelter. There is a recognized snowmobile route up Rutherford Creek with parking developed for vehicles just off the main Highway 99. This route and parking lot is managed by the Pemberton Snowmobile Club in conjunction with the MTCA. There is snowmobile access to and egress from the ice cap via Meager Creek valley, thus allowing for a circuit route and long distance snowmobile routes utilizing the ice cap via the Rutherford and Meager Creek valleys. Snowmobile use is considered moderate-heavy at times and can continue into late spring or early summer, depending on snow and weather conditions.

A commercial recreation tenure operation frequently uses the slopes from Sisqua Peak to Torrent Creek and the Overseer Mtn. area. The VOC have built a backcountry cabin (Harrison Hut) for public non-motorized use in the vicinity of Overseer Mtn.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The majority of the area is to be generally managed for motorized recreation and has been zoned **RA3** to recognize existing snowmobile use. The area around Overseer Mtn.-South Creek has been zoned **RA1-A** to recognize existing backcountry skiing values in the area accessible from the VOC Harrison Hut.

Snowmobiles should avoid climbing Sisqua Peak to access Torrent Creek southwest of Rutherford Creek snowmobile cabin, as the slopes from Sisqua Peak to Torrent Creek form a heli-skiing area and are frequently used for this activity.

Emergency winter motorized egress from the ice cap may occur through the Ryan River valley, though this route is considered expert, has some safety/avalanche concerns and is limited by private property access in the lower watershed at Pemberton Meadows.

Aerial Recreation Access - All types of motorized recreation uses and motorized transport are recognized and allowed in the **RA3** zone. This includes snowmobiling and heli-skiing throughout the area.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 12- Elaho Valley

Setting

Location - Located in the western portion of the Soo TSA adjacent to Clendenning Provincial Park, this large unit includes the middle and upper sections of the Elaho River valley and many of the side tributaries and slopes that drain into the watershed along its eastern side. The main valley has been extensively roaded to Cesna Creek (beyond the junction with Clendenning Creek) to access timber supplies within the former Tree Farm Licence 38. It also includes the 100 Lakes Plateau area in the upper Elaho which is currently unroaded and the Exodus Peak/Blanca Lakes area in the middle Elaho valley.

Key Values - The Elaho valley has high recreation and tourism values for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities. This area also features a diversity of environmental and recreational features, from valuable old growth ecosystems and eagle nesting/feeding grounds to unique waterfall viewing opportunities, extensive hiking trails and many camping possibilities along the main river.

This unit also includes very high cultural and spiritual values of the Squamish First Nation and the Lil'wat First Nation. A large area adjacent to Clendenning Provincial Park in the Upper Elaho has been approved as a conservancy including part of the 100 Lakes Plateau area- Elaho Wild Spirit Place and a Cultural Management Area has also been approved between Lava and Cesna Creeks in the Upper Elaho. "Wildlife Focus Areas" have been identified and mapped by the Squamish Nation as important wildlife habitat areas for deer, moose, elk, mountain goat and grizzly bear.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are few developed recreation facilities within this unit. Use is dispersed. A snowmobile route comes off the Pemberton Ice Cap through the Upper Elaho and connects with Meager Creek. The Exodus Peak- Blanca Lakes area has existing low levels of backcountry skiing and snowmobiling.

There is an established trail from the Meager Creek valley through the 100 Lakes Plateau area into the Upper Elaho valley known as the Stoltmann Wilderness Route which has low-moderate levels of use, primarily in summer.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - Generally the Elaho valley bottom, which is mostly roaded, has been zoned **RA3** motorized use to recognize existing snowmobile use and to support a motorized corridor through to Meager Creek.

Aerial Recreation Access - Most of the unit has been zoned **RA3** which allows for all types of motorized uses and motorized transport except as noted below.

Upper Elaho/Elaho Wild Spirit Place be zoned for **RA1** non-motorized use, but allow existing use (**RA1-A**) to continue. Expansion of existing or new motorized commercial recreation tenures are to be prohibited.

1. Elaho Alpine Headwaters be zoned for **RA1-A** non-motorized use and allow existing commercial use. Identify acceptable heli landing site locations for existing commercial recreation and prohibit expansion of tenures or new motorized tenures.
2. Blanca Lakes buffer- no changes to existing **RA2** Shared Use but no motorized commercial recreation. Maintain public use in the area. This buffer will be **RA3** motorized use one year and **RA1-A** non-motorized with aerial support the following year.
3. Blanca Lakes Core be zoned for **RA1** non-motorized use with no motorized commercial recreation tenures and no motorized public recreation in the area.
4. There is some overlap with the Lil'wat Nation in the Elaho/100 Lakes Wild Spirit Place and a portion of this area has been approved as a new conservancy to be jointly managed in collaboration with BC Parks.

Area # 13- Sims Creek Valley Area

Setting

Location - Located immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the Soo TSA and situated between Clendenning Provincial Park and the TSA boundary on the western tributary of the Elaho River, the Sims Creek valley is a large and remote area. Most of the unit has not been roaded and remains in a pristine wilderness state. The only road constructed extends approximately 6 km into the watershed. The area consists of valley bottom old growth forests, mid and upper elevation forests, and alpine/sub-alpine meadows, with many rugged mountains and pocket glaciers along the western height-of-land and the Sims/Clendenning divide.

Key Values - This area has high wilderness recreation, cultural and spiritual values. Due to its remoteness and difficulty of access, this area provides primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities and experiences in a wilderness setting. A large portion of this unit is located within the Upper Sims Wildland Zone, which has a wildlife emphasis. This zone has high value habitat for grizzly bears, wolverines and wintering mountain goats.

There are known cultural and spiritual values for the Squamish Nation located within this area. The Squamish First Nation has identified a Special Cultural Management Area within the Sims Wild Spirit Place near the mouth of Sims Creek along the north side of the valley.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are no developed recreation facilities within this unit. There is an established route from Sims Creek over the height-of-land into Loquits Creek and down into Princess Louisa Inlet, coming out near Chatterbox Falls. This is an extended ski or hiking trip and sees relatively low use at present. This area has not been used by snowmobilers due to access limitations and general lack of open places to pursue this activity.

Interfor has recognized and zoned for a Twin Firs Wilderness in the Bug Lake area and there is a trail into Bug Lake. There are no known commercial recreation operators tenured within this area.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The WBRF/LRMP have zoned this area as **RA1-A** non motorized use, with aerial transport allowed. This recognizes the Twin Firs Wilderness Area, and protects the wilderness backcountry skiing values of the Clendenning-Princess Louisa Inlet area. Non-motorized transport and pre-existing motorized and/or non-motorized commercial recreation use is permitted.

Aerial Recreation Access - RA1-A. Aerial access and transport is allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use commercial and public recreation users in this zone. Aerial access and transport is not allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use commercial recreation in the **RA1** zone.

The Squamish Nation and the Provincial Government have approved new direction for winter recreation in a number of locations as it affects commercial recreation. Specifically, they have agreed to the following management direction:

- North Sims Creek- **RA1-A.** Heli-access is acceptable for non-commercial purposes, but the issuance of licences for commercial recreation purposes should be discouraged, specifically for the development of staging areas for backcountry hiking near the park boundary. This includes Wildland Zone # 45 which has a wildlife emphasis.
- South Sims Creek- **RA1-A** has been revised to RA1, no aerial transport allowed for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use commercial recreation users. Any proposed hiking tenures are to exclude the Squamish Nation trail into Bug Lake.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 14- Ashlu Valley

Setting

Location - Located south of Sims Creek along the west central boundary of the Soo TSA and part of a major tributary of the Elaho River, this unit includes the watershed of the Ashlu and the tributaries and slopes that drain into the watershed on both sides of the valley. The main valley has been extensively roaded up the Ashlu Main beyond Shortcut Creek (approximately 70 km) to access timber supplies within the former Tree Farm Licence 38. It borders on Tantalus Provincial Park to the south, extends north over the Elaho-Ashlu divide, and includes a narrow strip along the west side of the Squamish River.

Key Values - This area has high recreation and tourism values for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities, with relatively good access into the upper Ashlu and close proximity to Tzoonie-Jimmy Jimmy and the Ashlu-Elaho/Squamish Divide. This area also features a diversity of recreational features including the Ashlu Canyon, numerous glaciers, mountains, extensive hiking trails and camping possibilities at the junction of the Ashlu and Squamish Rivers.

The area includes very high cultural and spiritual values for the Squamish Nation. An area along the west side of the Squamish River has been approved as a Special Cultural Management Area and a small area adjacent to Tantalus Park along the north boundary has been approved as a new conservancy. “Wildlife Focus Areas” have been identified and mapped by the Squamish Nation as important wildlife habitat areas for deer, elk, mountain goat and grizzly bear within this unit.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are very few developed recreation facilities within this unit. Use is dispersed, with some non-motorized trails and routes leading into the Mt. Jimmy Jimmy and Ice Cap Peak/Elaho/Squamish/Ashlu Divide area for ski touring and ski mountaineering. There is use of the road system for motorized activities including snowmobiling access into the Ashlu-Vancouver River area. The north and south sides of the Ashlu are not considered to be of high value to snowmobilers. Heli-skiing occurs infrequently within this unit, primarily in the Mt. Jimmy Jimmy and Ice Cap Peak areas.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The main Ashlu valley bottom has been zoned **RA3** motorized use to recognize current snowmobile use and to support snowmobile access to the area around the head of the Vancouver River.

The Tzoonie-Jimmy Jimmy-Tantalus Park area has been zoned **RA1** non-motorized use, recognizing the popular backcountry skiing routes to the mountains in this area. The Ashlu-Elaho/Squamish divide has been zoned **RA1-A** non-motorized use with air support to recognize the backcountry skiing opportunities within this area.

Aerial Recreation Access - The main Ashlu valley has been zoned **RA3** which allows for all types of motorized uses and motorized transport including aerial transport. Aerial access for drop-off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use is not allowed in the Tzoonie-Jimmy Jimmy-Tantalus Park area, but is permitted in the Ashlu-Elaho/Squamish divide.

In 2007, the Squamish Nation and BC approved new management direction for winter recreation in a number of locations as it affects commercial recreation, as follows.

1. Ashlu west zoning revised to **RA1-A** non-motorized commercial use, but allows existing public motorized use.
2. North Ashlu (Ashlu Mtn.) zoning to remain **RA1-A** non-motorized use, with aerial support.
3. South Ashlu (Jimmy Jimmy) zoning revised to **RA1-A** non-motorized recreation use, with aerial support.
4. Westside Squamish River Cultural Management Area zoning revised to **RA1-** non-motorized commercial recreation use, but allows for existing **RA1-A** use.
5. West side Squamish River Conservancy zoning revised to **RA1** non-motorized recreation use.

Area # 15- Squamish Valley

Setting

Location - Located in the lower southwest portion of the Soo TSA northwest of Squamish, this unit includes most of the lower watershed of the Squamish River valley up to where it meets the Elaho River and the Upper Squamish valley. It includes Cloudburst Mtn., Tricouni (Seagram Lakes), and the Squamish-Cheakamus divide route along the height-of-land between the two watersheds. The main valley has been extensively roaded along the east side of the Squamish River to the Squamish/Elaho junction, and logging roads extend into the Upper Squamish well beyond Leger Creek (approx.70 km) to access timber resources.

Key Values - Recreation and tourism values for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities are high to very high, with relatively good access from either side of the Squamish-Cheakamus divide. The area features a diversity of recreational features including many small creeks and lakes, numerous mountains and rolling hills, alpine/sub-alpine meadows, extensive hiking trails and old logging roads scattered throughout the unit. Located within the traditional territory of the Squamish Nation, the area includes cultural and spiritual values in several identified locations.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is a very popular and key historic area for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities and public/commercial use. There are few developed recreation facilities within this unit. Several well used trails and routes are established, including a snowmobile route on the west side and a backcountry ski route on the east side of the Squamish-Cheakamus divide that provide access to Powder Mtn.and the Powder Cap. There is motorized access up the High Falls Creek logging road primarily for snowmobiling, and this area currently has moderate levels of public use.

The Tricouni (Seagram Lakes) area is very popular for backcountry skiing as there is good access via either Roe Creek on the east side or High Falls Creek from the Squamish valley. There is conflicting winter use with public snowmobiling in this location.

There is a backcountry ski route up Branch 100 in the Squamish valley that is used to access the slopes on Cloudburst Mtn., but terrain is steep and forested most of the way. Heli-skiing operates infrequently within this unit, primarily on Cloudburst Mtn. and in the Cypress Peak area.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - Cloudburst Mtn. including Branch 100 in the Squamish valley has been zoned **RA1** non-motorized use, to recognize the high backcountry skiing values in this area.

The Tricouni (Seagram Lakes) area and Branch 200 have been zoned **RA2** Shared use: **RA3**, motorized except for April in one year and March/May the next year when they are **RA1**, non-motorized. Foot access to the area is via Branch 100 and a trail to be constructed between a Branch 100 side road and a Branch 200 side road. This recognizes the high value of the area to both motorized and non-motorized users and accommodates existing use by both parties.

In addition, snowmobiles travelling north along the Squamish-Cheakamus divide to the Powder Mtn. area should stay on the west side of the ridge to avoid impacting the Brew Mtn. foot access area and the tenured heli-skiing runs north of Cypress Peak. Backcountry skiers should stay on the east side of the ridge on their way to Powder Mtn. and the Powder Cap.

The Squamish Nation and BC have also agreed that no new motorized commercial recreation tenures should be issued around Tricouni Lakes. Public use should be maintained in this area.

Aerial Recreation Access - **RA1** Aerial access for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use is not allowed in the RA1 Cloudburst Mtn. area.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 16 - Brandywine-Callaghan-Twentyone Mile Valleys

Setting

Location - Located in the central portion of the Soo TSA directly west and southwest of the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), this moderately sized unit includes Roe and Chance Creeks, Brew Creek, Brandywine Creek, Callaghan Creek, Twentyone Mile Creek, Mt. Sproatt and the south/western slopes of Rainbow Mtn. Both the Brandywine and Callaghan Creek valleys have been roaded to the upper ends, except for high elevation areas, while the lower end of Twentyone Mile Creek has been partially roaded but de-activated for a number of years. The Callaghan Valley includes the Whistler Nordic Centre which is the official venue for the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Olympic Winter Games Nordic and biathlon ski events. Twentyone Mile Creek is the primary water source for the RMOW.

Key Values - This is the most popular and heavily used winter area in the Soo TSA due to ease of access, proximity to the Lower Mainland/Whistler/Squamish, and abundance of good snow. There are very high recreation and tourism values for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities, with excellent road access into the Callaghan valley via a paved 10 km all-weather road to the Whistler Nordic Centre.

This area was a traditional backcountry ski area for many years (1970s and 80s), but winter access was difficult for day trips as logging roads were not plowed from the main Sea-to-Sky highway, and it was a long distance to reach skiable slopes in either the Callaghan or Brandywine valleys.

With the increased popularity of Whistler/Blackcomb, the introduction of commercial recreation entrepreneurs and the advent of new snowmobile technology in more recent years, this area has become a mecca for snowmobiling and motorized winter sports. As a result, many backcountry skiers have been displaced to other areas where there is less motorized use.

First Nations have identified significant cultural and spiritual values in the watershed. There is an approved new conservancy in the west Callaghan Valley and a cultural management area in the lower Callaghan Valley. The Province and First Nations have agreed to develop a joint Recreation Management Plan for the Callaghan Valley, after 2010.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - Brandywine and Callaghan valleys are the most popular snowmobile use areas in the Soo TSA, with direct access to the Pemberton Ice Cap. Until 2007, there was a major snowmobile corridor through Callaghan Lake Provincial Park that allowed for a complete “Round-the-World” circuit through the Callaghan and Brandywine valleys. This route through the Park was permanently closed in the fall 2007 as a result of revised management direction to support the new winter non-motorized zone surrounding the Whistler Nordic Centre, including Callaghan Lake Provincial Park.

The recent closure of the snowmobile route through Callaghan Lake Provincial Park and the creation of a new non-motorized area surrounding the Whistler Nordic Centre has forced the re-location of an existing commercial snowmobile operator onto the lower and upper south/west slopes of Mt. Sproatt. It has also displaced public snowmobiling to adjacent areas. This is causing problems with parking between the commercial operator and public recreationists as there are few designated places identified for parking in the lower Callaghan valley. In addition, public snowmobiling now conflicts with existing non-motorized backcountry recreation use on the slopes leading to and above Mt. Sproatt. This has led to numerous snowmobile incursions into the Rainbow Lake and Twentyone Mile Creek area which has been zoned non-motorized by the S2S LRMP. This is a new conflict and emerging operational issue that needs to be addressed prior to the 2008/09 winter season.

A new 11 km snowmobile trail has been constructed in Brandywine Creek that provides snowmobile access to the Pemberton Ice Cap. New parking lots are located on the Brandywine FSR. The trail is managed by the Powder Mountain Snowmobile Club, which is responsible for grooming and maintaining the trail through the collection of user fees.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

There is a commercial recreation lodge and Nordic ski operation in the upper West Callaghan valley. Heli-skiing operations are prevalent throughout the area, with authorized runs on Rainbow Mtn., Powder Mtn. and Brandywine Mtn. Commercial snowmobiling also operates within this unit, primarily on the Brandywine Snowmobile trail and in the lower Callaghan/Mt. Sproatt area. There is a commercial cat skiing operation that operates in Chance and Roe Creeks. This unit is popular with snowboarders/skiers who use snowmobiles to access the backcountry and then snowboard/ski the bowls and ridges primarily in the Brandywine Meadows, Metal Dome and Mt. Sproatt area.

Several popular backcountry ski trails lead into Rainbow/Madley Lake, onto Rainbow, Sproatt and Brew Mtns., and the Brew Lake-Roe Creek-Cypress peak area. The RMOW has developed the Rainbow Madley Lake trail in conjunction with the MTCA. A route up Mt. Sproatt is considered one of the few high value one-day backcountry ski areas, and Twentyone Mile Creek/Rainbow Lake is one of the most popular backcountry ski and snowshoe areas in the Squamish Forest District.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The area was zoned to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized activities. The Twentyone Mile Creek watershed including Rainbow Lake and upper Madley Lake area has been zoned **RA1**, non-motorized recreation use. This helps protect much of Whistler's water supply and supports existing non-motorized backcountry use in this area. The area around Rainbow Mtn. including its glaciers as far as the eastern limit of the glaciers above Nineteen Mile Creek has been zoned **RA1**, non-motorized recreation use, reflecting existing backcountry skiing and heli-skiing.

The upper Callaghan valley, including the Whistler Nordic Centre, has been zoned **RA1**, non-motorized recreation use, and has been formally closed under a legal order November 1 – May 15.

The lower Callaghan valley, including access to the slopes above the old North Air mine site and the south slopes leading up to Mt. Sproatt, have been zoned **RA 2** Shared Use.

The areas around Powder Mtn., Metal Dome and Brandywine Mtn. have been zoned **RA3**, motorized recreation use, to reflect existing activities.

The area around Brew Mtn. has been zoned **RA1**, non-motorized recreation use, and the Roe Creek-Cypress Creek area has been zoned **RA1-A**, non-motorized recreation use with air support. This recognizes existing backcountry skiing centered on the VOC cabin near Brew Lake and ski runs used by the existing heli-skiing operator, and acknowledges existing high quality experiences for both backcountry skiing and heli-skiing in this area. Non-motorized access to the Brew area requires either a new trail parallel to the existing road up the lower Brandywine valley (on the south side), or a completely new trail from Highway 99.

Detailed management direction for S2S LRMP specifies non-motorized use of the Twentyone Mile watershed, with no permanent commercial recreation facilities to be constructed.

The Squamish Nation and BC have approved new management direction for commercial winter recreation:

- Callaghan-Rainbow Mtn.- **RA1**: Allow pre-existing commercial motorized use and prohibit expansion of commercial motorized tenures or new motorized tenures.
- Callaghan Wild Spirit Place (partial)- **RA1**: Allow existing heli-skiing and access trail to the commercial lodge.

Aerial Recreation Access - The lower Callaghan valley, Brandywine Creek and Metal Dome area has been zoned **RA3** which allows for all types of motorized uses and motorized transport, including aerial transport.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 17- Soo Valley-Nineteen Mile Creek-Rainbow East Side

Setting

Location - Located in the central portion of the Soo TSA northwest of Whistler, this unit includes the watersheds of the Soo River, Sixteen Mile and Nineteen Mile Creeks and the eastern slopes of Rainbow Mountain. The main Soo River valley has been roaded to the back end below Siska Peak and there is a logging road into Torrent Creek. In addition, there are old logging roads up Nineteen Mile Creek and the bottom of Twentyone Mile Creek/Rainbow, but most have been deactivated and are used mainly as hiking trails. There is an active logging road up Sixteen Mile Creek that crosses over into the Soo watershed and there is a road into Showh Lakes/Cougar Mtn. which is still active.

Key Values - There are very high recreation and tourism values for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities, with relatively good road access into the upper Soo River valley and Sixteen Mile Creek area. There is good foot access into Nineteen Mile Creek and Rainbow Mtn. via developed recreation trails. This unit is strategically located in very close proximity to the Resort Municipality of Whistler. Both Nineteen Mile and Twentyone Mile Creeks supply domestic water to the RMOW.

The Soo River watershed includes important cultural values for the Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation and includes an approved new conservancy in the upper valley. In addition, the Soo River wetlands have been identified for high wildlife values for moose winter habitat, with high-habitat value for mountain goats and critical grizzly bear habitat in the upper valley.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - This is a key historic and current non-motorized backcountry recreation use area, particularly Nineteen Mile and Twentyone Mile Creek drainages. There are several very popular hiking trails leading into Rainbow Lake, Rainbow Mtn. and Cougar Mtn/Showh Lakes area, which the RMOW has developed in conjunction with the MTCA and that are included in the Whistler Local Resource Use Plan.

The forested area between Nineteen Mile Creek and the Soo River, between 4500 and 6500 ft. elevation and immediately above the motorized commercial recreation tenured area on Cougar Mtn. is very popular for backcountry skiing. This area is also popular with snowboarders/skiers who use snowmobiles to access the backcountry and then snowboard/ski the bowls and ridges in the Nineteen Mile ridge area. Heli-skiing operations use this unit, primarily on the north side and northeast slopes of Rainbow Mtn.

There is moderate-heavy use of the Soo valley road system for snowmobiling and a commercial recreation operator runs snowmobile tours up Sixteen Mile Creek over the height-of-land into the road system on the south side of the Soo River. This drainage also provides occasional access onto the Pemberton Ice Cap.

There is a small shelter/cabin at Showh Lakes that is used by a commercial recreation operator who is authorized to run snowmobile tours up Sixteen Mile Creek/Cougar Mtn. into the Lower Soo area (south side) and dogsled tours on the north side.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - The south side of the Soo River valley and Sixteen Mile Creek area has been zoned **RA3**, motorized recreation use. Snowmobiles descending Torrent Creek on the north side of the Soo valley can only access the **RA3** area on the south side for part of the season, unless a bridge is built across the Soo River upstream of the non-motorized, foot access area. This reflects the moderately heavy snowmobiling use of this area, including existing commercial snowmobiling in the Sixteen Mile Creek-Cougar Mtn. area.

A narrow strip along the north side of the Soo valley has been zoned **RA1**, non-motorized recreation use, to recognize sensitive wildlife habitat that may be disturbed by motorized vehicles.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

The forested area between Nineteen Mile Creek and the Soo River, between 1370 and 1980 meters elevation, above the existing tenured use area on Cougar Mtn., has been zoned **RA1** non-motorized recreation use. This reflects existing high quality experiences for backcountry skiing in this area.

The Squamish Nation and BC have approved new management direction that includes a minor change to the winter backcountry recreation zones in one location as it affects commercial recreation. The lower Soo River is to remain **RA1** non-motorized use for public recreation, allowing for pre-existing commercial motorized use to continue, but prohibiting expansion of commercial motorized tenures or any new motorized tenures.

In addition, the Province and First Nations have agreed to the establishment of a new conservancy in the Upper Soo River valley that borders on Callaghan Lake Provincial Park. Winter recreation use planning will not be completed until after the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Aerial Recreation Access - The south side of the Soo River valley and Sixteen Mile Creek area have been zoned **RA3** which allows for all types of motorized uses and motorized transport, including aerial transport.

Area # 18- Mamquam Valley

Setting

Location - Located in the southeastern portion of the TSA east and southeast of Squamish, this is a large area that includes both the Mamquam and Indian River watersheds. Most of the unit has been extensively roaded and logged except for high elevation areas along the north and eastern boundaries where it borders on Garibaldi, Pincone/Burke and Indian Arm Provincial Parks.

Key Values - High motorized recreation values exist due to the extensive system of roads in both watersheds. Portions of the area also have high non-motorized values, especially near the borders of provincial parks. The area includes important wildlife habitat for deer and mountain goat.

The Squamish Nation has identified many cultural sites and values within this unit, and there are high water-related values included in the Stawamus River as a source of drinking water for the City of Squamish.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are some developed facilities in this area, including a number of informal and dispersed use campsites and many motorized/non-motorized trails. Public use in the winter is low-moderate, with snowmobile use mainly on the network of logging roads scattered throughout the area.

There is some backcountry skiing in the upper Skookum Creek approach to Mamquam Mtn. and the area south of Crawford Creek, where a deactivated logging road provides backcountry skiing access into the Pinecone Lake area.

The area is infrequently used for heli-skiing.

Recreation Management Direction

Ground Recreation Access - A majority of the area has been zoned **RA3** motorized recreation use. This reflects existing snowmobile use of the main Mamquam and Indian River valleys.

Two small areas have been zoned **RA1** non-motorized recreation use to recognize existing backcountry skiing opportunities and present use: 1) the east-southeast side of Skookum Creek where the logging road provides backcountry skiing access to the Mamquam Mtn. area of Garibaldi Park; and 2) the area south of Crawford Creek where a deactivated logging road provides backcountry skiing access into the Pinecone Lake area.

Aerial Recreation Access - Existing commercial heli-skiing use is recognized and acceptable throughout the **RA3** zone with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use. Aerial transport for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users is not allowed in the **RA1** zone.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage

Area # 19- Howe Sound Area

Setting

Location - Located in the southern portion of the TSA south and west of Squamish, this is a small unit that borders on the east and west shores of Howe Sound and includes the upland areas above the Village of Lions Bay, the communities of Britannia Beach/Furry Creek/Porteau Cove and a small area surrounding the old mill town of Woodfibre on the west side of Howe Sound. Most of the unit has been extensively roaded for mining and logging purposes except for high elevation areas along the eastern boundary where it borders on the Greater Vancouver Watershed and Cypress Provincial Park.

Key Values - Moderate - high motorized recreation values exist due to the extensive system of old mining and logging roads, but public access is restricted due to private property around Britannia Beach and behind Furry Creek.

The area includes wildlife habitat for deer and mountain goat. Portions of the area have moderate-high non-motorized backcountry recreation values, particularly in the Sky Pilot-Ben Lomond area where there is a series of small lakes and easily accessible meadows and rolling landscape.

There are identified cultural and spiritual values for the Squamish Nation.

Recreation Facilities and General Use Patterns - There are few developed recreation facilities in this unit. The B.C. Mountaineering Club maintains a small cabin at Mountain Lake that has been used as a base for ski touring and ski mountaineering over the past 30 years, mainly in spring. Public use in the winter is generally low. There is some snowmobile potential on a few of the old mining and logging roads depending on local snow conditions.

There is some snowshoeing and backcountry skiing along the Howe Sound Crest Trail which is part of Cypress Provincial Park. This trail traverses the height-of-land along the eastern boundary of the unit from the Cypress Mtn. Ski Area to Deeks Lake. The Sky Pilot area is used infrequently for heli-skiing in winter, although the operator did not use the area in 2007.

A small portion of this unit bordering Tantalus Provincial Park on the southern boundary including Echo Lake is located within the S2S LRMP Wildland Zone # 30, which has a tourism emphasis. Detailed management direction from the LRMP specifies “no commercial backcountry lodges”.

Recreation Management Direction

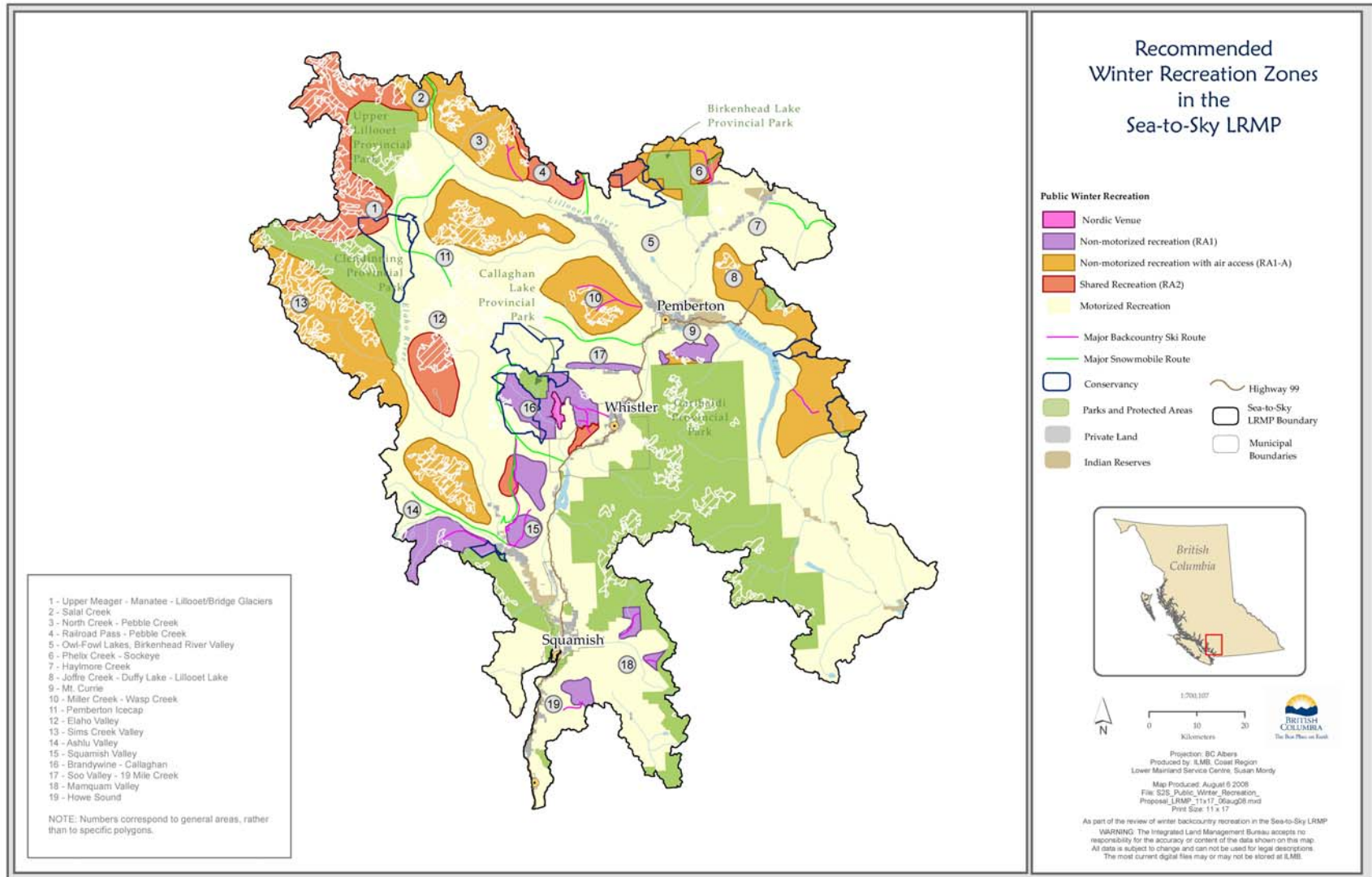
Ground Recreation Access - A majority of the area on the east side of Howe Sound has been zoned **RA3** motorized recreation use, as the area has been extensively roaded and reflects existing/potential snowmobile use of the main road systems.

An exception to this zone is the Sky Pilot- Ben Lomond area which has been zoned **RA1** non-motorized recreation use. This zone extends around Sky Pilot Mtn. down to 1300 meters in Furry Creek. This zone recognizes existing non-motorized use centered on the Mountain Lake Cabin, and includes most of the skiing play area accessible from the cabin in one day.

Aerial Recreation Access - Aerial access and transport is allowed throughout the **RA3** zone with no restrictions on landings or repetitive use. Aerial transport for drop off/pick-up of day use or multi-day use recreation users is not allowed in the **RA1** zone.

The Squamish Nation and BC have approved **RA1-A** zoning in the Sky Pilot Mtn. and around Echo Lake on the west side of Howe Sound to allow for existing commercial use. Commercial tenures are to be reassessed at time of renewal. Expansion of existing commercial tenures and issuance of new motorized tenures are not to occur within these areas.

Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage



**Winter Backcountry Recreation Use Recommendations
Sea-to-Sky – Lillooet Drainage**