



Media Release

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For immediate release

Slocan Lake and River Partnership invites proposals to map the Slocan River and Little Slocan River floodplains

Nelson, BC: The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), as a member of the Slocan Lake and River Partnership (SLRP), has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) inviting qualified consultants to inventory and map the historic floodplain and riparian ecosystems of the Slocan River and Little Slocan River.

The resulting maps and guidance will provide current information to help government, landowners and residents make better-informed decisions about land and water use along the river. The mapping will identify the location and condition of riparian ecosystems and provide a common information base to support future planning, decision-making and working with landowners.

The Slocan River is one of the last undammed fifth-order rivers in the Columbia Basin, and its valley bottom contains rare and threatened ecosystems. Mature black cottonwood floodplains, including the provincially red-listed Black Cottonwood, Snowberry and Roses ecological community, support a range of species at risk. These riparian areas also help filter water, stabilize riverbanks and provide important connections for wildlife across the valley. Much of this land is privately held, so the future of the river depends on good information, strong relationships with landowners and a shared commitment to stewardship.

“The land along the Slocan River is mostly in private hands, so the health of this river has always depended on the people who live beside it,” said Walter Popoff, Area H Director. “This mapping will help us see the whole river while still recognizing that each property is part of a larger system. Good information does not replace the care that landowners and neighbours already bring to the river. It strengthens it. It helps people see what they are already stewarding and their place in the river’s story.”

The project is funded through a \$100,000 Community Works Fund grant approved by the Regional District of Central Kootenay Board in July 2026. It is led collaboratively by the Slocan Lake and River Partnership, which brings together the Sinixt Confederacy, the Syilx Okanagan Nation Alliance, the Regional District of Central Kootenay, the Villages of New Denver, Silverton and Slocan, and the Province of British Columbia.

The mapping will follow the provincial Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) methodology and update baseline mapping completed by the Slocan River Streamkeepers in 2012. An SEI is an information resource that records which ecosystems are present and their condition. It gives the SLRP and its members a shared foundation for conservation, restoration and development decisions, and a starting point for working with landowners. The mapping itself does not create new regulations or change how any property can be used.

The RFP is posted at rdck.ca/bids and closes on October 28, 2026. To keep the process fair and open to all proponents, questions about the RFP must be directed only through the process set out in the RFP document. The Slocan Lake and River Partnership cannot answer proposal questions through informal channels.

The Slocan Lake and River Partnership works toward a healthy Slocan Lake and River ecosystem and balanced land and water uses. It brings together First Nations, local governments and the Province to share information and guide development across the watershed.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

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