

IMAGINE SLOCAN LAKE

*Community Values Study for RDCK Area H North
Residents and Property Owners*



November 22nd, 2012

A Study by the Slokan Lake Stewardship Society

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1. Acknowledgements

The Slocan Lake Stewardship Society sponsored the study to ensure the region-wide values concerning the lake were available along with science for future decision makers. The following people and organizations contributed in different ways:

The community values study was made possible with Columbia Basin Trust's *Community Initiatives* grants from:

Regional District of Central Kootenay Area H North
Village of New Denver
Village of Silverton
Village of Slocan

Thank you to the 14 member advisory committee who provided local knowledge and guidance from start to finish.

Lawrence Schiavon, Hills
Gary Wright, New Denver
Casey Law, New Denver
Peter Roulston, New Denver
Peggy Chatburn, Out of town property owner (rural New Denver)
Decker Butzner, Out of town property owner (New Denver)
Deborah Sword, Out of town property owner (New Denver)
Clarence denBok, Red Mountain
Bob Fuhrer, Red Mountain
Sally Hammond, Red Mountain
Kim Roshinski, Rosebery (property owner in Slocan)
Jody Cliff, Silverton
Jim Hicks, Silverton
Linda Bjerg, Slocan

Thank you to all participants of the Focus Group Workshop (September 11, 2012) who ensured the survey met the needs of a wide range of people.

Walter Popoff	Area H North
Helen Davis	Hills
Lawrence Schiavon	Hills
Richard Allin	Hills
Bill Richards	New Denver
Colin Moss	New Denver
Hennig von Krogh	New Denver
Jan McMurray	New Denver
Ken Smith	New Denver
Peter Roulston	New Denver

Therese DesCamp	New Denver
Nadine Raynolds	New Denver
Barb Yeomans	New Denver/Rosebery
Kevin Murphy	New Denver/Silverton
Peggy Chatburn	Out of town property owner (rural New Denver)
Clarence denBok	Red Mountain
Sally Hammond	Red Mountain
Kim Roshinski	Rosebery
Richard Johnson	Rosebery
Jim Hicks Jr.	Silverton
Ross Johnson	Silverton
Stuart Nelson	Silverton
Ty Capelle	Silverton
Jack Kelly	Silverton
Deb Corbett	Slocan
Linda Bjerg	Slocan
Patricia McGreal	Slocan
Rory Lindsay	Slocan

Thank you to the planners and consultants for sharing their knowledge on Lake Management Planning/Official Community Planning and more generally working with lake-based communities:

Karen McLeod, MCIP, RPP – Planner, Regional District of East Kootenay

Heather Leschied, Program Manager, Living Lakes Canada / Wildsight

Susan Ashmore – Wasa Lake volunteer

Dan Wallace, MCIP – Planner, Thompson-Nicola Regional District

Catherine Berris, MCIP, FCSLA – Landscape Architect & Planner, Catherine Berris Associates Inc.

Thank you to external reviewers of the draft survey for your comments and outside perspectives:

Catherine Berris, Catherine Berris Associates Inc.

Jennifer Ellis

Michael Harstone

Terri MacDonald, Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development, Selkirk College

Kate Mahoney

Heather Mitchell

Gary Ockenden

Lastly, thank you to Rachael Roussin for assisting in project logistics and communications; Lisa Theissen for the beautiful graphics that branded the project; and Jennifer Ellis for her exceptional skill and support on data analysis.

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3. Executive Summary

The community values study, “Imagine Slocan Lake”, surveyed residents and property owners aged 16 and over on their values and vision for the future of Slocan Lake. The study area was limited to Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Area H North including the Villages of Slocan, Silverton and New Denver.

Survey analysis was based on the broad groupings of values and vision, recreation, built structures, boating and marinas, and planning, land use and our environment. More detailed analysis was undertaken to compare the responses of permanent residents versus those of part-time/seasonal residents and absentee land/home-owners as well as each village and the combined rural area. Overall, the views of residents and property owners in the Slocan Lake study area were generally in alignment. 665 surveys were collected, which is more than double the number needed to be 95% confident the answers represent the views of the overall population (with +/- 5% confidence interval).

Values and Vision

With respect to values and visions, Slocan Lake residents and property owners place a very high value on clean water and healthy ecosystems. Consistent with the highest ranked values, the ideal vision for 2032 and beyond for the majority of respondents included clean water and healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Undeveloped Crown land and quiet were also high-ranking visions.

The vast majority of residents and property owners were concerned about the future of Slocan Lake (77.4%) with the top concerns being the inverse of what is most important to them (for example, reduced water quality and loss of biodiversity). Additional concerns that ranked high in respondents’ top choices included crowding on the lake, selling Crown land, and noise pollution.

High and low ranking choices should be taken in the context that participants were only allowed to select up to five choices in total. The desire for some limited growth/development emerged as a vision for some respondents in the open-ended responses. Perhaps respondents felt they could more clearly qualify their statements to specify they only wanted sustainable, limited development that was ‘done right’.

Recreation

With respect to recreational activities, the majority of respondents felt that the current situation is satisfactory with regard to swimming, fishing, canoeing/kayaking/rowing, sailing, and small electric or 4-stroke motor boating.

On the other hand, the majority of respondents (over 64%) felt that with respect to houseboating and sea-dooing/jet skiing, there should be either none or less than the current

situation. A large number of respondents (more than 43%), although not the majority, also felt that for ski boating and wake boating, there should be none or less than the current situation.

Camping and hiking were the only two activities that a small majority of respondents indicated there could be more of on or around Slocan Lake.

Built Structures

Overall, the results suggest that for the majority of respondents, there is substantial to total support for the maintenance of existing public wharves/docks/boat ramps. With respect to the development of additional public wharves/docks/boat ramps, the results are mixed, with the largest percentage of respondents indicating no support, the second largest percentage of respondents indicating only modest support and a small percentage of respondents (less than 20%) indicating substantial to total support.

With respect to location of new public wharves/docks/boat ramps/breakwaters, if they were to be developed, a strong majority of respondents (71.9%) expressed no support for locations outside of existing communities. A small majority (57.6%) expressed substantial or total support for locations within and around the villages of Slocan, Silverton, New Denver and the unincorporated communities of Rosebery and Hills.

In terms of private structures, the majority of respondents expressed no support for unlimited private development of wharves/docks/permanent and floating structures/breakwaters on the foreshore. Support for limited new private development on the foreshore ranged between respondents that expressed no support (49.6%), those that expressed modest support (29.6%) and those that expressed substantial or total support (19.6%).

Boating and Marinas

The greatest percentage of respondents indicated modest support (40.9%) for moorage expansions at existing docks, while 27.8% indicated substantial to total support and 28.1% indicated no support for moorage expansions at existing docks. With respect to the development of dock and moorage facilities at additional locations, a slight majority of respondents indicated no support. The bulk of respondents who indicated some support indicated only modest support.

Support for the proposed regulations and restrictions relating to boating and marinas was very strong with the majority of respondents indicating substantial to total support.

Planning, Land Use and Our Environment

Overall, the majority of respondents indicated support for a wide range of regulations associated with lake and land management and no support for the development of vacant Crown Land bordering the shores of Slocan Lake or development on the lakeshore. A sizable percentage of respondents (47%) indicated that more regulation is needed to ensure that the lake and foreshore is properly managed.