

June 3, 2025

Dear Board members of the Sunshine Coast Regional District:

Re: SCRD-owned parks on Chá7elkwnech/Gambier Island.

We are writing to request the SCRD board support the recognition and protection of SCRD parks on Gambier Island.

Our organization is responsible for managing the Átl'ka7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region designation. In 2022, we received funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada to identify lands within our region that qualify for submission to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Area Database (CPCAD) and to work on strengthening conservation management.

The SCRD has ten parcels of land on Gambier Island that are parks. We have identified opportunities for the SCRD to 1) recognize these lands for submission to CPCAD and 2) strengthen protection through rezoning and/or explore opportunities to divest of certain parcels to ensure protection in perpetuity.

In January 2024, we corresponded with the SCRD Parks Department staff regarding the opportunity to utilize our available resources. We requested consent to review SCRD parks on Gambier Island for submission to CPCAD (copy of the letter is attached).

Over the past year, on request from parks to wait for SCRD Parks to conduct an overall service review, we undertook a review of the 10 parks on Chá7elkwnech/Gambier Island based on publicly available data to pre-determine eligibility. This report, called Recognizing SCRD-owned parks on Chá7elkwnech/Gambier Island as Protected Areas or Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) is attached. The report includes maps and details on each property, including their size, zoning, history, ecological features, photos, and rationale for inclusion. This report has been submitted to the Squamish Nation's portal for information.

We are now in our final year of funding to support this work. We can minimize the amount of time and resources required to advance conservation and protection if you will consent and direct staff to work with us as follows:

1. Recognize these lands for submission to CPCAD. The consent letter will provide the necessary permission for us to consider these lands for recognition into CPCAD based on their current criteria. This requires minimal time of staff. Most of the work we have already undertaken to assess the criteria. We need one point of contact at the SCRD and some mapping and GIS support.

2. Our research has identified that some of the zoning by Islands Trust is not in alignment with the Park's use. We are seeking support from SCRD board to work with the appropriate staff member to explore a rezoning request and/or divestment opportunities.

We have been working with BC Nature and municipalities within the biosphere region on their submissions to CPCAD as part of our commitment of contribution toward the global goals of protecting 30% of land and waters by 2030.

We appreciate your cooperation on supporting our commitment toward the 30x30 biodiversity conservation goals and the long-term protection of ecologically rich park lands on Gambier Island.

Sincerely,

Ruth Simons

Ruth Simons,

Executive Director,

Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society

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copy to: Gambier Island Local Trust Committee