



Source: Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

# Valley - Flood Risk Report

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# Introduction

The Valley Group of REM642 was retained by Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw to evaluate how local governments within Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw traditional territory are planning for and managing flood risk. In this context, flood risk is considered holistically to include fluvial (river), pluvial (rainfall), and coastal (sea level rise, wave action, and tsunami) flooding. This report represents one of six total, covering the northern portion of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw traditional territory, henceforth referenced as the Valley region. The Valley region includes the settler local governments of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Electoral Area D, the District of Squamish, and the Resort Municipality of Whistler, presented in Figure 1.

## Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD)

The SLRD is the unceded traditional territory of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw and Lílwat Nation. The regional district spans a total area of 16,500 square kilometers of land, and consists of four municipalities - Lillooet, Pemberton, Whistler and Squamish – as well as four electoral areas.<sup>1</sup> The SLRD experiences a range of flood risks from fluvial, pluvial, and coastal sources.

## Electoral Area D

Electoral Area D is the southernmost area of the SLRD, covering 3,041 square kilometers of land.<sup>1</sup> This area is home to the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw, including Skawshn and 1,057 additional residents (2021)<sup>1</sup> across the communities of Black Tusk Village, Pinecrest Estates, Tunnel Station, the Upper Squamish Valley, Ring Creek, Britannia Beach, Furry Creek, and Porteau Cove with low density. Electoral Area D is exposed to coastal flood risk at its southern border as well as fluvial flood risk from the Squamish River and other creeks in the region.

## District of Squamish (DOS)

The District of Squamish spans 105 square kilometers of land and is home to 23,819 residents (2021)<sup>2</sup> with a density of 227 people per square kilometer. The DOS neighbors the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw reserves of Wíw̓k'em (Waiwaikum), St'á7mes (Stawamus), Ch'iyákmesh (Cheakamus), Kaw̓ tín (Kowtain), Yékw'apsem (Yekwaupsum), and Siy'ich'em (Seaichem).<sup>3</sup> The Squamish, Cheakamus, and Stawamus Rivers are the primary sources of fluvial flood risk, as well as coastal flooding.

## Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW)

The Resort Municipality of Whistler spans 240 square kilometers. The RMOW is home to 12,000 permanent residents, 4,000 seasonal residents,<sup>2</sup> and approximately 3 million tourists<sup>4</sup> annually, resulting in a permanent density of 50 people per square kilometer. The primary flood risk in the RMOW is pluvial from rain on snow events and rapid snowmelt.

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<sup>1</sup> Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. (2025). *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1135-2013*.

<sup>2</sup> Government of Canada. (2021). *Census Profile*.

<sup>3</sup> District of Squamish. (n.d.). *Heritage*.

<sup>4</sup> Destination Canada. (2025). *The Story of Whistler, a Best Practice in Destination Development*.

## Methodology

This research was completed over a 4-week period in February 2026 by a group of master's students in REM642. To develop an understanding of how the Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD), Electoral Area D, District of Squamish (DOS), and Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) are planning for and mitigating flood risk, we retrieved publicly available documents from each government's online libraries. Documents were collected between February 10 and March 2, 2026. The collected documents encompass plans, policies, regulations, and projects related to land-use, water management, emergency response, hazard mitigation, climate action, infrastructure, building and development, and environmental management. Documents that had been superseded or no longer in effect were excluded from the analysis.

All documents were then reviewed for the inclusion of key terms: precipitation, climate, flood, inundate, deluge, overflow, creek, river, shore, coast; riverine, pluvial, stormwater, groundwater, sea, water, rain, hazard, resilience, submerge, storm, riparian, slope, landslide, debris flow, drought, and foreshore. Documents that included at least one key term were reviewed to determine whether they were assessing and/or responding to flood risk. Documents that did not include any focus on flood risk were excluded from further analysis. The remaining documents (n = 36) were reviewed and recorded for any inclusion of high-level policies and regulatory, financial, and monitoring tools and programs for flood risk. The documents were also recorded for any inclusion of flood risk assessments, data, and information. The full list of reviewed documents is available in Appendix B.

In addition, for each of the jurisdictions, the Official Community Plan, Emergency Management Plan, and Zoning Bylaw were fully reviewed to develop a broader understanding of each local government's overarching vision for the future and the supporting policy statements and tools.

## Spatial Methodology

Geospatial data was sourced from the Government of British Columbia (B.C.) publications and accessed through official portals, including the University of Toronto [Urban Data Research Center](#), the B.C. [ArcGIS Rest portal](#), and [iMap BC](#). QGIS was used to amalgamate the data. Data analyzed includes Parcel Map BC, B.C. Regional District boundaries, B.C. District boundaries, Sḵw̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) Land boundaries, B.C. dam and dyke vectors, and 200-year floodplain information. Municipal population data were accessed through B.C. Statistics. Information was compiled and analyzed through QGIS and exported as open-access using Leaflet to the [Squamish Flood Hazard Map](#).

# Spatial Analysis

## Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD)

An overview of the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Valley in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District shows that the distribution of dykes to be heavily concentrated around the DOS and the RMOW. The DOS and the RMOW contain most of the developed subdivisions and strata in the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh valley. While the dykes support a significant majority of residents in the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh valley, Electoral Area D and Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) territory outside of the DOS are left almost entirely unprotected, despite being exposed to the 200-year flood hazard in most of the area. Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw land is disproportionately exposed to flood hazard (Figure A3).

## Electoral Area D

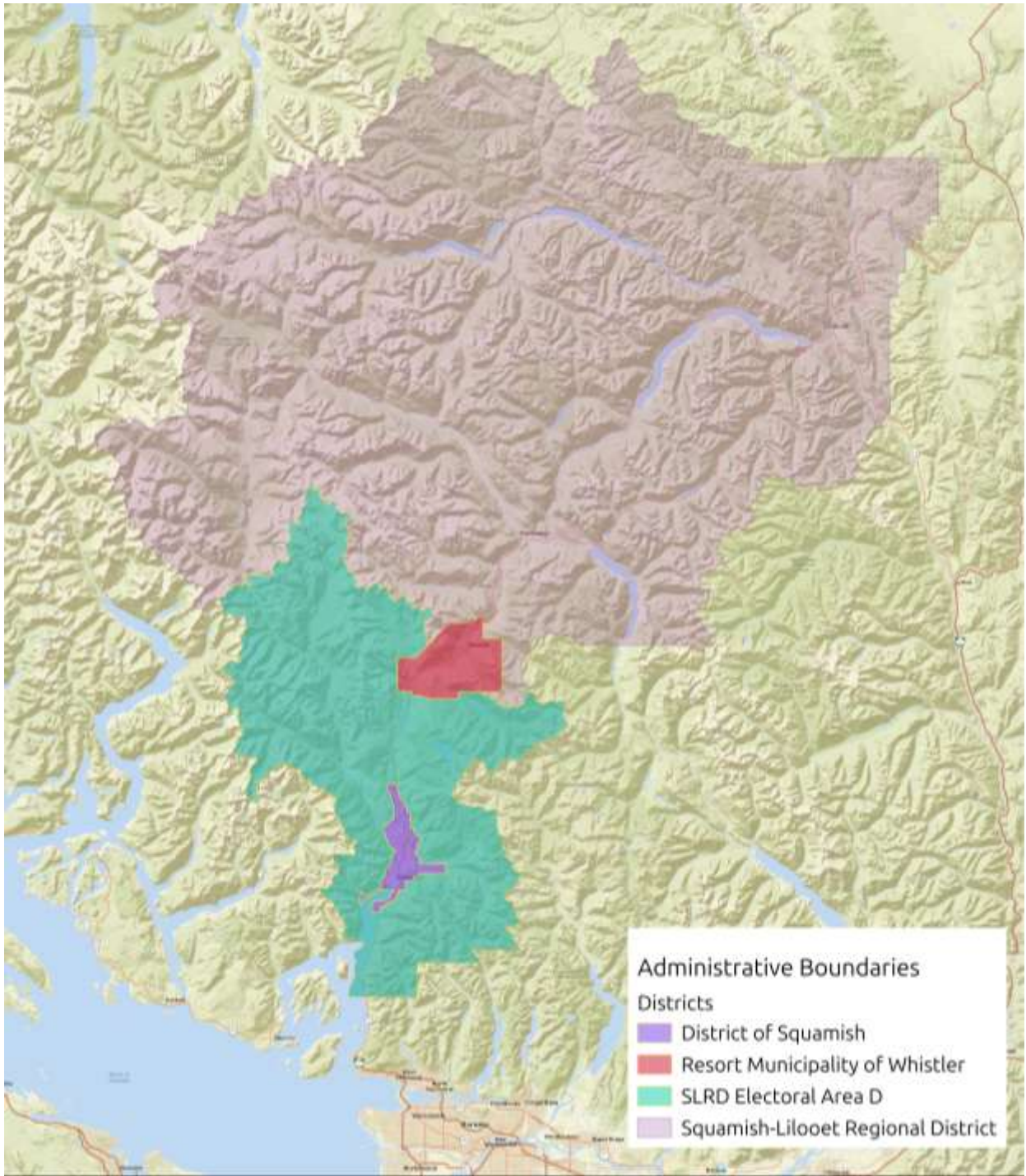
The large geographic area exposed to flooding in Electoral Area D, combined with a low population, provides challenges to building widespread flood infrastructure. Currently, the only existing flood infrastructure in Electoral Area D is in Furry Creek. All the parcels vulnerable to the 200-year flood hazard located in Electoral Area D, including several subdivisions and building strata on the Squamish and Cheakamus Rivers, are unprotected (Figure A3).

## District of Squamish (DOS) & Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW)

The DOS and the RMOW contain most of the population in the region and almost 100% of all flood infrastructure within the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Valley. The Squamish River, the Cheakamus River, the Statwamus River, the Mamquam River, the Cheekeye River, Whistler Creek, Fitzsimmons Creek, Millar Creek, and Nineteen-mile Creek all have dykes located in populated areas within the DOS and the RMOW. This flood infrastructure is primarily located in the 200-year floodplain and provides protection for subdivisions and buildings across the municipalities. Outside of the 200-year floodplain, certain areas near minor waterways have dykes protecting subdivisions and building strata. There is a gap in infrastructure in the Cheekeye area along the Cheakamus River, and in Whistler around Millar Creek, including Sproatt, Whistler Creek, part of Nester's, and part of Alpine Meadows (Figures A1, A2, A3, A4, and A6).

## Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw

The Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw reserve land within the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Valley is situated in the DOS and Electoral District D around the Squamish and Cheakamus rivers. Almost all of the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw territory is located around the 200-year floodplain of these two rivers. Land use analysis reveals that two communities, St'á7mes (Stawamus) and Xwakw'áyak'in, are exposed to the 200-year floodplain hazard. Four communities are protected by dykes, including Wíwḵ'em (Waiwaikum), Yékw'apsem (Yekwaupsum), Kawtín (Kowtain), and Siy'ich'em (Seaichem). There are four unpopulated, unprotected reserves, including Yekw'ápsm (Yekwaupsum), Pukwayúsm-Skemín (Poquiosin & Skamain), Skawshn (Skowishin), and Yewk'ts (Yookwitz), and one unpopulated, protected reserve, which is Aikwucks 15 (Figure A6).



**Figure 1.** Overview of Valley Region

# Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

## Plans

### Regional Growth Strategy (Bylaw No. 1062, 2010)

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) adopted the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in June 2010 to guide long-term growth and development across the region. While broad in scope, the Strategy directly addresses flooding through its climate change and hazard management objectives.

Goal 5, “Take Action on Climate Change,” requires that climate mitigation and adaptation be integrated into all community decision-making (p. 48–49). Section 11.3 (m–r) outlines specific actions related to climate-driven flood risk (p. 52). These include expanding institutional and infrastructure capacity to respond to current and future climate impacts, planning land use, buildings, and infrastructure with future climate conditions in mind, strengthening emergency preparedness for extreme weather events, supporting vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by climate hazards, and improving data collection and modelling to inform flood risk management decisions.

### Community Risk Assessment (2021)

The 2021 Community Risk Assessment evaluates hazards and their impacts to inform emergency response and recovery planning. Flooding is identified as a high-consequence hazard and is categorized into four types: riverine, freshet, storm surge, and outburst flooding.

Within Electoral Area D, the Upper Squamish Valley and Tunnel Station are identified as areas of high flood risk (p. 54). Flood events in Area D are rated as high consequence with occasional probability (p. 59). High-risk systems include the Squamish and Cheakamus River and Brandywine and Furry Creek (p.59). The assessment highlighted specific risks within these systems, such as outburst flooding in the Upper Squamish Valley caused by landslides, storm surge flooding of shoreline areas such as Britannia Beach and Furry Creek, and potential access disruption along Paradise Valley Road due to flooding associated with Daisy Lake Dam (p.60). The assessment also mentioned critical infrastructure that is sensitive to flooding events, such as Fergie’s Bridge, Paradise Valley Road, and Bailey Bridge (p. 54). These features provide critical access to areas such as Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw territory, which may be cut off during flooding events.

### Regional Geohazard Risk Assessment (2023)

The 2023 Regional Geohazard Risk Assessment provides a region-wide evaluation of geohazard risks, including flooding. This report's deliverables include geospatial flood hazard data, identifying flood-prone areas, and assessments of hazard likelihood and consequence ratings (p. 8). The recommendations from this assessment are the need to address gaps in flood protection measures and flood conveyance infrastructure, identification of high-risk and sensitive areas requiring improved flood assessments, recognition that wildfire can significantly alter hydrology and increase flood severity, and the need to review Development Permit Areas based on updated flood hazard information (p. 34–35).

### Upper Squamish River Flood Hazard Mapping and Risk Assessment (2018)

The Upper Squamish River system is identified as one of the highest flood risk systems within the SLRD. The 2018 Flood Hazard Mapping and Risk Assessment evaluates potential impacts, including residents affected, economic damages, critical habitat, and cultural impacts (p. 22–26). It also provides detailed maps describing the hazards of 9 sections of the Upper Squamish River in 50-, 100-, 200- and 500-year flooding scenarios (p.67-202).

Findings indicate that much of the valley is subject to flooding, and that floodwaters could reach downstream populated areas within hours (p. 30). Flooded areas are classified as high-hazard and dangerous for people caught inside them. The assessment recommends regulatory measures such as zoning amendments and development limitations in flood-prone areas, emergency preparedness planning, including evacuation routes and safe zone identification, and infrastructure improvements such as bank erosion protection along Squamish Valley Road and construction of flood protection dykes (p.30).

### Integrated Sustainability Plan (2013)

The 2013 Integrated Sustainability Plan addresses flooding more briefly but supports hazard risk reduction through land use planning and infrastructure protection. It calls for provincial resources and safeguards to protect agricultural lands from flooding (p. 14) and emphasizes that land-use planning and development standards should minimize natural hazard risks, including flooding (p. 15).

# Electoral Area D

## Plans

### Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 1135, 2013)

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District’s Electoral Area D’s Official Community Plan (OCP) was adopted in 2013 and has been consistently amended to May 2025. The OCP guides long-range land use planning within the Electoral Area for 30 years. Electoral Area D has not experienced significant growth since 2006 (population: 840), with minimal growth expected in the lifespan of this OCP. Instead, the OCP aims to support the cultural heritage of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw and Lil’wat Nations, ecological sustainability, community services, economic development, climate mitigation, and resilience from natural hazards. Namely, geotechnical hazards such as rockfall, landslides, floods, wildfires, adverse weather, and avalanches (p. 14).

The OCP references flood hazards from the Squamish River, Cheakamus River, Brandywine Creek, and Furry Creek (p. 15). Further, with the Howe Sound East Sub-area, there is specific acknowledgement regarding the unstable geology that can influence flooding and debris flows along Britannia Creek. The Electoral Area D OCP manages flood risk through Natural Hazard Develop Permit Areas (DPAs) ([Map 2](#); p. 2) to “[protect] development from hazardous conditions” (p. 56), including upslope and downslope properties. There are several exemptions to this DPA (p. 56) (including flood management); however, all developments that occur within these areas must register a Save Harmless Covenant, releasing the Electoral Area of liability (p. 62). There are 6 hazard-specific DPA guidelines that follow similar recommendations: the preferred approach is to avoid development, but mitigation measures such as a combination of a sea dyke and setback could be considered. All developments must be raised to the Flood Construction level (FCL).

### Coastal Hazard Areas Guidelines (p. 60)

The Coastal Hazard Areas Guidelines aim to address hazards from flooding, including high sea levels, waves, tsunamis, and erosion. A site-specific assessment from a Qualified Professional (QP) must be completed to determine the FCL, including consideration of foreseeable coastal flood levels for the life of the development. For properties below 8m, a further coastal assessment must be completed that considers sea level rise and wave run-up.

### Creek Hazard Areas Guidelines (p. 60)

The Creek Hazard Areas Guidelines aim to address hazards from flooding, including creek corridors, ravines, low channel confinement, and debris floods/flows. A site-specific assessment from a QP must determine the frequency and magnitude of future flooding, the potential area of impact, and the FCL. The assessment is required to consider climate change and land use changes that could alter flood impacts across the land parcel. A mitigation plan is also required to demonstrate that the development will not result in “transfer of risk” to other properties.

### Marine Shoreline Area Guidelines (p. 52)

The Marine Shoreline Area Guidelines exist within the larger Environmental Protection DPA, which primarily intends to protect ecological systems. However, the guidelines also require developments to consider coastal flood protection and sea level rise and balance these objectives with environmental sustainability.

### Howe Sound East Sub-area Plan (Schedule C to Bylaw No. 1135, 2013) (p. 85)

The OCP also includes focused land use plans for the Howe Sound East Sub-area, including the planned communities of Britannia Beach, Furry Creek, and the future community of Porteau Cove. The area is positioned as “one of the primary development areas within the Sea-to-Sky corridor” (p. 2). In response, this plan intends to provide specific direction for development within these areas, following a similar outline to the OCP.

### Britannia Beach Neighbourhood (p. 3)

The Britannia Beach Neighbourhood plan includes Stormwater Management Guidelines (p. 5) that encourage development to use best practice for stormwater management and minimize post-development peak flows. Further, the plan requires studies identifying potential flooding and debris flow risks within identified Natural Hazard areas ([Map 2](#); p. 2), and should identify areas unsuitable for development and mitigation measures. The plan prohibits residential uses in “Britannia Beach Townsite until such time that the flood hazard can be appropriately mitigated” (p. 7). Similarly, the plan prohibits development in the Flood Management areas ([Map 2](#); p. 2), representing the floodplain and alluvial fan of Britannia Creek, “until such time as a suitable flood protection system is in place” (p. 22). Temporary uses, parks, and parking may occur.

### Furry Creek Neighbourhood (p. 24)

The Furry Creek Neighbourhood plan includes similar Natural Hazard DPAs as the larger OCP, including the Coastal Hazard DPA for flooding from high sea level, waves, and tsunamis (p. 28), and the Creek Hazard DPA for creek corridors, ravines, low channel confinement, and debris floods/flows (p. 29).

### Porteau Cove Neighbourhood (p. 31)

The Porteau Cove Neighbourhood is designated as a DPA to protect from hazardous conditions, including erosion, debris flow hazard, stormwater drainage, groundwater management, and steep slopes. The DPA guidelines follow the same Natural Hazard DPA guidelines outlined above.

## **Regulations**

### Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw (No. 1350, 2016)

The Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw does not provide any guidance regarding floodproofing other than to stipulate that temporary farm worker housing must be constructed above the FCL.

## Summary

The SLRD's flood management and planning documents highlight the hazards and risks associated with flooding across the region. Flooding is recognized as a high consequence hazard, particularly in the Upper Squamish Valley and Electoral Area D. This recognition is supported by detailed flood hazard mapping that identifies flood prone areas and related threats, and the severity of flooding consequences in these areas. The documents also acknowledge climate change as a driver of increasing flood risk and recognize compounding impacts, such as the effects of wildfires on hydrology and flood severity. The emphasis on public education is also important in helping residents better understand risks within their communities.

Land use planning tools play an important role in flood risk management. The [Electoral Area D OCP](#) manages flood risk primarily through Natural Hazard DPAs. The OCP prioritizes avoiding development in hazard-prone areas and requires mitigation where development occurs. There is additional site specific DPAs such as Coastal Hazard and Creek Hazard DPAs, which consider site-specific hazards. Sub-area plans, particularly for Howe Sound East, further restrict development in known flood prone areas until adequate flood protection measures are in place.

However, several gaps remain. While flood risk identification and assessment are strong, implementation mechanisms are not clearly identified. There is limited information on timelines, funding strategies, or enforcement of mitigation measures. Infrastructure adaptation, such as diking and bank stabilization, is identified but not clearly prioritized. Additionally, the regulatory strength of the [Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw](#) is weak and provides very limited flood specific guidance.

Overall, the key challenge moving forward is transitioning from risk identification and policy direction to concrete implementation, infrastructure investment, and regulatory updates that address evolving climate-driven flood hazards.

# District of Squamish

## Plans

### Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 2500, 2017)

The District of Squamish’s Official Community Plan (OCP), was adopted in 2018 following three public readings and amendments. It establishes the District of Squamish’s long-term vision for growth and development over a 20-year planning horizon. The OCP aims to support a growing, diverse, and sustainable community through integrated policies addressing housing, economic development, environmental protection, parks and recreation, transportation, and flood risk management. The vision of the OCP emphasizes guiding necessary transitions to adapt to climate change and advance reconciliation through progressive and innovative action, while reflecting expressed community values related to livability, access to and protection of natural areas, health and wellness, lifelong learning, and cultural and creative expression

Flood risk management is addressed comprehensively throughout the OCP and is explicitly recognized as a key constraint on future growth. The plan acknowledges that a large proportion of community gathering locations, including downtown Squamish, are located within floodplains. As a result, the OCP integrates recommendations from [the Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan \(IFHMP\)](#) directly into land-use planning policies (pp. 56–64). Flood hazard lands and management approaches are detailed in Section 11: Hazard Lands (pp. 56–64), including:

- River and creek flooding policies, setbacks, and development (p. 61)
- Coastal flooding and sea level rise considerations (p. 63)
- Cheekeye Fan debris-flow hazard management (p. 66)

Floodplain and hazard mapping is provided in [Schedules B–M](#), with specific emphasis on [Schedule L](#), which identifies flood hazard areas used to guide Protection from Flood Hazard DPA 2. The OCP provides specific flooding guidelines, policies, and regulatory tools to control densification in flood-risk areas, manage retreat, regulate development permit areas, address flood infrastructure and dykes, respond to climate change and sea-level rise, promote nature-based solutions, and address debris-flow hazards from the Cheekeye Fan. Throughout the document, the OCP aims to incorporate natural solutions and green infrastructure to the maximum extent possible.

### Squamish River Estuary Policy (P. 46-47)

The Squamish River Estuary Policy aims to sustain the ecological health of the Squamish River Estuary that provides natural flood protection and drainage, while recognizes its use as a transportation corridor. All future transportation proposals and developments must consider the ecological impact of the estuary (p. 46-47).

### River and Creek Flooding Policies

Managed retreat is identified as a long-term strategic response to flood risk within the OCP. Policies support opportunistic retreat of existing development from vulnerable flood hazard areas, prioritize the relocation or removal of critical facilities at the end of their life cycle, and discourage new critical facilities in high-risk flood zones (p. 59).

The OCP establishes a controlled densification framework for flood-prone areas, applying a three-tier system (Restricted, Limited, Conditional) to regulate where and how development may occur within high-hazard zones. Development conditions include floodproofing requirements, erosion protection measures, riparian buffers and requirements for dyke upgrades to provincial standard where applicable. A map of flood hazard controlled densification areas can be found in Schedule D-2 (p. 61 – 62).

Floodway policies aim to protect primary and secondary floodways identified in Schedule L. No exemptions apply from Zoning Bylaws of DPA 2 except for pre-existing private property (p. 63).

### Coastal Flood Policies

Coastal flood policies aim to upgrade existing sea dykes and construct new ones in accordance to the [IFHMP](#). The OCP aims to follow provincial recommendations to plan for 1 meter sea level rise by 2100 and 2 meters by 2200 (p.63). The policy also encourages development to meet Greenshore Bronze requirements and use a precautionary approach. The OCP plans to update the Coastal Flood Hazard Mitigation Strategy every 10 years (p.64).

### Cheekeye Fan Debris Flow Hazard

The Cheekeye Fan Debris Flow Hazard policy aims to address the required mitigation requirements needed to maintain a reasonable risk standard across developments. These strategies must be implemented prior to development in debris flow area. Debris flow hazard area can be identified in Schedule D-1 (p. 66).

### [Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan \(IFHMP\) \(2017\)](#)

The Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan (IFHMP) was developed between 2014 and 2017 to replace the District's 1994 flood management plan, providing a comprehensive, long-term strategy for managing flood risk across Squamish's river systems and coastal areas with a planning horizon to the year 2100. The IFHMP is intended to reduce flood risk to people, property, and critical infrastructure while supporting sustainable community development, climate adaptation, and reconciliation objectives.

The IFHMP establishes differentiated flood protection targets based on risk, consequence, and community function. Flood Hazard assessments were done for the Squamish, Mamquam, Cheakamus, Stawamus and Cheekeye rivers and the coastline. Mitigation approaches and tools are provided from a site-specific level to broader watershed scales along with specific flood risk mitigation measures for each river in the district. Finally, the document recommends implementation avenues through policy, funding, and investments.

The IFHMP provides a detailed assessment of flood hazards and consequences across the district, including outlining flood and debris flow hazard areas, presented as Figure 2 below. Catastrophic dyke breach scenarios are quantified in Table 3-1 (p. 3-6), estimating potential damages of approximately \$447 million, displacement of 10,400 residents (approximately 60% of the population), and generation of 37,000 tonnes of debris. Historic flooding is documented as part of the hazard baseline, with the October 2003 flood identified as the largest recorded event, involving 369 mm of rainfall over four days and near overtopping of existing dykes (Section 2; Figure 2-1). These events are used as benchmark conditions for future risk planning.

### Flood Management Framework

Flood risk is addressed through a four-pillar mitigation strategy comprising Protect, Accommodate, Avoid, and Retreat (Tables 5-1 and 5-2 in the IFHMP and Table 1 below). This framework guides all subsequent policy, infrastructure, and regulatory recommendations within the Plan and is tailored by hazard area (Section 3) and risk level. Specifically:

- 1:200-year protection for coastal flooding (p. 3-2,3)
- 1:500-year protection for the Squamish and Mamquam Rivers (p. 3-3, 3-4)
- 1:200-year protection for the Stawamus, Cheakamus Rivers (p. 3-5, 3-6,7)
- 1:10,000-year protection for Cheekeye Fan debris-flow hazards (p. 3-8)

FCLs are defined across all flood hazard areas and form the technical basis for subsequent regulatory implementation for which extensive mapping has been done. (Section 3; Figures 3-1 to 3-6). The plan recommends over 100 specific tools on different scales. For land use planning tools, the plan recommends updates to the OCP, the creation of a floodplain bylaw and flood specific DPA (p. 6-1). The Plan further recommends FCLs and increased setbacks (p. 6-2), land acquisition in high-risk areas (p. 6-2), construction of a sea dyke (p. 6-3, 7-1), upgrades to existing river dykes (p. 6-3), protect river corridors and manage sediment and debris. The plan includes revisiting decisions in high-risk areas following a disaster to build back better (p. 6-4). How these opportunities can be applied in each Hazard area is explained through Section 7.

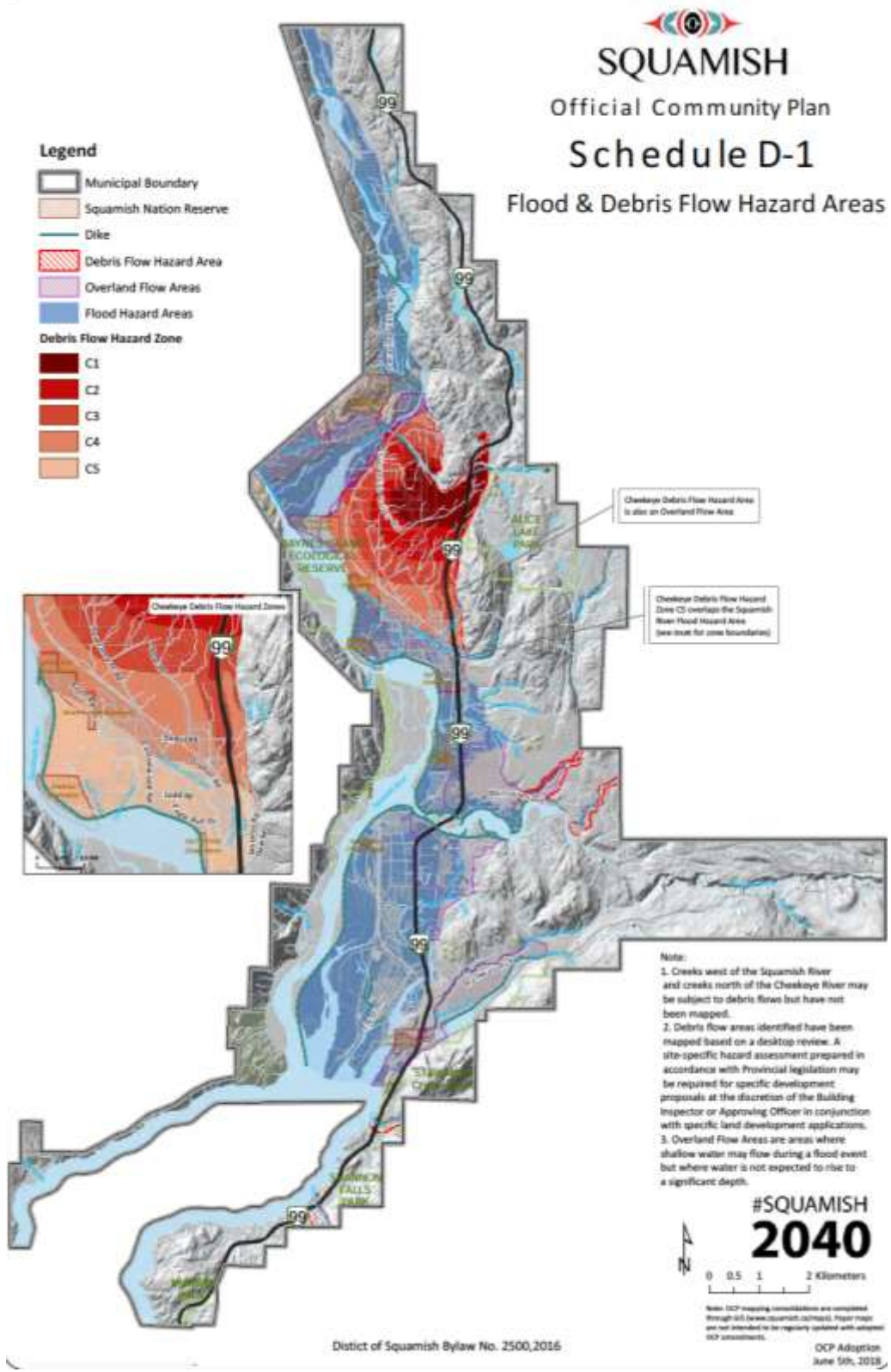


Figure 2. District of Squamish Floodplain (source: IFHMP Schedule D-1)

## Mitigation Measure Recommendations

### Coastal Areas

The plan recommends a rebuild Sea Dyke strategy, separated into 5 reaches and outlining the necessary upgrades in each area. Work is recommended to begin immediately to protect downtown area (p. 7-2). No recommendation is made on whether to keep or remove the Squamish Training Bern as a coastal flood mitigation strategy. Further the plan recommends minimum FLC's and setbacks (p. 7 -4).

### Squamish / Mamquam River

The plan recommends controlled densification within these floodplain areas, along with protecting primary and secondary floodways (p. 7-7) and dyke upgrades to match province minimum protection standards using bioengineering. Erosion protection requirements in these areas are based on modeled flood velocities, with three velocity classes defined in Table 7-1, and each requiring progressively more robust protection measures (p. 7-8).

### Cheakamus River

Many dykes along the Cheakamus River are private, faceted and do not meet provincial standards. Recommendations are made to designate the area as a primary floodway to better manage these dykes (p. 7-10). This remote area could benefit from improved access routes in case of flood event, with specific mention to Fergies Bridge, Paradise Valley Road and Bailey Bridge (p. 7-11).

### Stawamus River

No controlled densification is recommended in this area, along with areas in the mamquam blind channel with the exemption of Primary Floodways (p. 7-11,12). If densification occurs, the plan recommends upgrades to the Stawamus dyke to meet provincial standards (p. 7-11).

### Governance and Funding

Partnership with the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw is documented extensively in Section 4.3, including six formal engagement touchpoints with Chiefs and Council between 2014 and 2017. The Nation received the same technical materials as the District, and Nation-led technical work — including the Stawamus River assessment — directly informed plan outcomes. Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw perspectives are formally incorporated in Appendix C, including Chief Richard Williams' oral history of historical dyke impacts.

Capital investment priorities are organized using a four-tier priority system (Section 8.3), with a prioritized project list provided in Appendix I. The projected cost of all flood infrastructure upgrades approach \$82 million and the plan provides a funding strategy outlined by scale (p. 8-4, 8-5). Additionally, it establishes a 10-year update cycle, with future updates intended to integrate Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw flood planning initiatives (8-9), along with further studies needed in areas such as Culliton creek, stormwater management, seismic dyke vulnerability and tsunami hazard assessment (p. 8-5).

### [Integrated Stormwater Management Plan \(2019\)](#)

The Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP) is a comprehensive plan, developed in collaboration with members of Skw̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw, that provides guidance on the management of stormwater assets within the District. The plan acknowledges that properly managed stormwater infrastructure (both built and natural) provides services such as flood conveyance, while poorly managed infrastructure can instead contribute to localized flooding. In response, this plan outlines District-wide goals for stormwater management and recommends that the District increase their funding for stormwater infrastructure.

Further, three priority catchments are identified due to their high vulnerability to stormwater flooding resulting from highly developed land uses. The District has completed site-specific plans for two of these catchments through the [Howe Sound and Stawamus River Integrated Stormwater Management Plan](#) (2022). Another ISMP for Mamquam River Watershed is recommended. The Howe Sound and Stawamus River ISMP outlines best practices for stormwater management in the District including promoting on-site management through increased infiltration capacity, stormwater detention, and protecting natural assets - drawing from the [Natural Asset Management Strategy](#) (2022). These recommendations are suggested to be integrated in [the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 2649, 2018](#).

### [Adapting to Climate Change in Squamish: Backgrounder Report \(2016\)](#)

The background report of Adapting to Climate Change in Squamish provides a foundational overview regarding projected climate hazards for the District. Relevant to flooding, sea level rise and extreme precipitation are listed as near-term priorities, while changing river flows is listed as a long-term priority. The report provides several recommendations, many have been completed, including development of an [Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan](#) with a [River Flood Risk Mitigation Plan](#), a [Floodplain Bylaw](#), a [hazard DPA](#), and [climate adaptation considerations within the OCP](#). Further recommendations include encouraging green infrastructure (Green Shore Dykes) and reviewing opportunities for protecting development in hazardous areas appear to have prompted projects like the [Xwúnekw Park Sea Dyke](#) and [Multiplex Design Competition](#), respectively. An overview of current climate adaptation projects in the District is presented on the webpage, [Climate Adaptation in Squamish](#).

### [Squamish Marine Strategy \(2018\)](#)

The Squamish Marine Strategy guides planning and development for District waterfront over 10 years. The Strategy is guided by goals in the categories of shared governance, stewardship of coastal ecosystems, promotion of the marine economy, and community access to the marine gateway. Broadly, the strategy indicates that redevelopment of coastal areas should contribute to flood resilience. Further, protection of coastal ecosystems is positioned to have a co-benefit of flood mitigation. Finally, community access to the marine gateway includes consideration of community access to the sea dyke.

## Regulations

### Floodplain Management Bylaw (No. 3184, 2025)

The Floodplain Management Bylaw (No. 3184, 2025) is the District of Squamish’s primary regulatory instrument for flood risk management. The bylaw implements key recommendations of the Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan (2017) into legally binding development regulations and replaces earlier floodplain bylaws adopted between 2019 and 2020. The bylaw defines all terms related to floodplains to ensure flood regulations capture entire flood risk areas (p. 1-5). It established FCL minimums based on hazard type and location (p. 6-7), depending on proximity to existing or planned sea or river dykes. Where multiple FCLs apply, the most conservative (highest) elevation governs (p. 7). Comprehensive setback requirements are defined for major rivers, minor watercourses, existing dykes, planned “super dyke” footprints, and sea dykes (p. 7-8). Setback distances vary depending on whether dykes are existing, upgraded, or planned, and whether future sea-level rise scenarios have been incorporated (p. 8), along with specific Floodplain Setbacks that supersede any other applicable Setbacks (p. 7). Finally, erosion protection requirements are based on modeled flood velocities from the IFHMP and establishes protection ranging from vegetation to professional engineering for three velocity ranges (p. 10).

### District of Squamish Zoning Bylaw (No. 2200, 2011)

The district of Squamish’s zoning bylaw was amended in 2025 and consolidated in January 2026. It regulates land use, density and development across the District of Squamish and incorporates key tools to manage flood risks outlined in the IFHMP. The bylaw explicitly limits exposure to flooding by restricting habitable development below the FCL and requiring any non-habitable development, i.e.: parking lots, to be designed by a professional engineer (p. 57). Development in conditional densification areas, such as public service use or affordable housing, must follow strict flood mitigation measures such as setbacks, erosion control, and flood relief capability (p. 75). Exceptions in high-risk areas are made for agricultural lands that are more tolerant to periods of inundation (p. 138-141). Zoning related to Highway 99 and ecotourism areas must include services such as flood protection and stormwater management (p. 198).

### Flood Protection Upgrades Capital Work Loan Authorization Bylaw (No. 2693, 2019)

This bylaw enables the District to carry out the construction and acquisition of improvements to the dyke system outlined in the OCP (p. 1). It aims to borrow a sum of ~ 2M on the credit of the municipality and includes a table outlining the cost of the dyke upgrades (p. 2).

## District of Squamish Marine Zoning Bylaw (No. 2771, 2020)

This bylaw controls marine specific zoning within the coastal area of the District of Squamish and regulates commercial and industrial uses. Setbacks between mooring and sea dikes are established (p. 6), otherwise there is no mention of flood measures, recommendations, or actions.

## Emergency Response

### Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

The District's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is comprised of multiple plans that together provide staff with a "tool box" of response measures during a major emergency or disaster to help safeguard the public.

### Community Risk Assessment Report (2015)

The Community Risk Assessment Report is phase 1 of the CEMP, outlining hazards and vulnerabilities for the District. The report also aims to provide practical guidance on preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation to reduce the likelihood and consequence of disasters. To begin, the report outlines the District's context including geographical setting, climate, demographics, land use and critical infrastructure. This includes an overview of the Flood Protection Assets in the District: 19km of dykes, 4 pump stations, 9 flood boxes, and 50 gates. In terms of flood risk, the primary hazards include:

- **Atmospheric Hazards** (p. 25)
  - o Moderate risk level.
  - o Hazards include fog, hail, heavy rain, high winds, ice storms, lightening, temperature extremes, and heavy snowfall. Climate change is anticipated to double the duration and frequency of atmospheric rivers in the District.
  - o Hazard Area: whole community.
- **Debris Flow** (p. 27)
  - o High risk level.
  - o Hazards include liquefied landslides triggered during intensive rainfall. Climate change is anticipated to increase the frequency and magnitude of debris flow.
  - o Hazard Area: primarily the Cheekye Fan and Stawamus River.
- **Flood: Moderate-Major** (p. 30)
  - o Moderate-high risk level.
  - o Hazards include fluvial, pluvial, and coastal flooding.
  - o Hazard Area: floodplain presented in Figure 2.
  - o Past events: Minor flood event in October 2014, Major flood event with debris flow and riverine flooding in 2003 (\$3M damages), Major flood event with debris flow and riverine flooding in 1984 (\$1.9M damages), and Major flood event with debris flow and riverine flooding in 1980 (\$313K damages).

## All Hazards Plan (2016)

The All Hazards Plan is the second component of the CEMP, outlining directions for emergency management in the District. Flood and debris flow are identified as priority hazards. This plan provides a breakdown on emergency activation, roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency, and an overview on costs associated with emergency response. The Flood Emergency Response Manual is Annex C of the All Hazards Plan, but it is listed as a protected document and could not be reviewed.

The CEMP is complimented by several annexes. The [Squamish Evacuation Guide](#) provides guidance on evacuation zones, muster points and evacuation stages within the District. The [Sea to Sky Multimodal Evacuation Plan](#), is a joint document between the District of Squamish and the Resort Municipality of Whistler outlining hazards in the Sea to Sky region, including flood, as well as an analysis of evacuation routes and roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency. Flooding is indicated as a moderate-high likelihood; however, advance notice would be expected to reduce overall risk. [Squamish Alert](#) is an emergency notification system to help communication. Finally, an overview on actions to take during a flood event, paired with provincial and federal flood warnings are listed on the [District of Squamish's Hazards webpage](#).

## Infrastructure

The District has an extensive flood infrastructure network with long term plans to upgrade 21 kilometers of the dyke system. Phase 1 recommendations from the [Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan](#) have been completed, with Phase 2 upgrades planned over the next 5 years, as outlined in the [Annual Flood Protection Upgrades](#) website. Specific projects include:

- [Jimmy Jimmy \(Judd\) Slough Culvert Replacement & Dyke replacement](#) (Complete 2019)
  - o An improvement of the Squamish River dyke on private land between Wai'wakum Reserve and Aik'wuck's. Improvements included widening and raising of the sike to the 1:200-year flood with 0.6m of freeboard.
  - o The dyke has been widened to accommodate raising to meet the 1:500-year flood.
  - o This project was identified as a high priority item due to the potential impact to the Wai'wakum Reserve.
- [Xwúnekw Park Sea Dyke](#) (est. Completion in Summer 2026)
  - o Designed to protect the Xwúnekw Park on the Mamquam Blind Channel and Loggers Lane between Victoria and Main Street.
  - o The project will include habitat enhancement and intertidal plantings.
- [Whittaker Slough Pumping Station](#) (Construction planned for 2027)
  - o Design of a pumping station from the North Yards and North Industrial Park neighbourhoods to discharge into the Squamish River, preventing localized flooding seeping through the dyke into the slough. Designed to convey water through the Squamish River dyke to the 1:100-year event.

## Projects

### [Living With Water Research Project](#)

The District participated in the *Living With Water* research project, funded by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS). This work was a partnership between academic researchers and coastal communities, including the District of Squamish and Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw. Research explored opportunities for coastal communities to plan for sea level rise while balancing coastal ecological integrity and Indigenous Knowledge and values.

### [Multiplex Design Competition](#)

In 2024, the District ran a Multiplex Design Competition which invited architects and designers to submit building plans that fit a range of criteria, including density and FCLs. For example, the [first-place design for the Second Storey Dwellings category](#), which provides “Elevated living spaces ... of refuge protect against extreme flooding events” (p. 5). The building plans are promoted on the District’s website and recognized as being appropriate for certain Squamish neighbourhoods, meaning that the design does not need to undergo extensive review prior to permitting approval. The plans can be purchased directly from the designer.

## Summary

The primary flood risks facing the District of Squamish include river flooding from the Squamish, Mamquam, Cheakamus, and Stawamus rivers, coastal flooding and sea level rise along Howe Sound; and debris-flow hazards originating from the Cheekeye Fan. These risks are amplified by heavy precipitation events, including atmospheric rivers that are projected to increase in both frequency and duration under climate change, driving peak river flows and compounding flood hazards across the community.

In response, the District has developed a strong and integrated flood mitigation framework that combines policy direction, regulatory controls, and capital infrastructure investment, summarized in Table 1. The [Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan](#) provides a comprehensive foundation, establishing differentiated flood protection targets by risk level (ranging from 1:200-year coastal protection to 1:10,000-year protection for the Cheekeye Fan), outlining river-specific mitigation strategies, and prioritizing investments. These recommendations are translated into enforceable requirements through the [Floodplain Management Bylaw \(No. 3184, 2025\)](#) and [Zoning Bylaw \(No. 2200, 2011\)](#), which establishes Flood Construction Levels, setback requirements, and velocity-based erosion protection standards. Land-use exposure is further managed through the [Official Community Plan’s](#) controlled densification framework, which incorporates a three-tier approach across flood-hazard areas. Ongoing implementation of IFHMP priorities is evident in major infrastructure projects such as the [Xwúnekw Park Sea Dyke](#) and the [Whittaker Slough Pumping Station](#), as well as in initiatives like the [Multiplex Design Competition](#), which promotes flood-resilient building design at the neighbourhood scale.

Despite these strengths, several gaps remain. The [Integrated Stormwater Management Plan](#) identifies three priority catchments, yet site-specific plans have only been completed for two, with a Mamquam River Watershed ISMP still outstanding. Flood risk management along the Cheakamus River is equally complicated by many privately owned dykes that do not meet provincial standards and lack clear implementation pathways despite recommendations to uphold primary floodway. In addition, the OCP’s managed retreat policies rely largely on opportunistic or end-of-life development triggers, which may limit proactive risk reduction in the near term. Finally, the Flood Emergency Response Manual may include more strategies around flood response preparedness to address these limitations, but it is not publicly available.

**Table 1.** Summary of the District of Squamish's Flood Risk Mitigation Strategy (source: [IFHMP](#))

Flood Hazard Area	Flood Risk Mitigation Strategies				Mitigation Target
	Protect	Accommodate	Avoid	Managed Retreat	
Squamish / Mamquam River	●	◐	◐	○	1 in 500 year
Cheakamus River	○	●	●	○	1 in 200 year
Cheekeye Fan (assuming no area-wide mitigation)	○	◐	●	○	Up to 1 in 10,000 year
Stawamus River (Valleycliffe)	●	◐	—	—	1 in 200 year
Stawamus River (Estuary)	—	◐	●	—	1 in 200 year
Other Creek / River	○	◐	●	●	1 in 200 year
"Connected" Coastal (Downtown)	●	◐	—	○	1 in 200 year
"Unconnected" Coastal	<i>site-specific based on development proposals</i>				1 in 200 year

● Very Important      ◐ Important      ○ Use Carefully      — Not Recommended

# Resort Municipality of Whistler

## Plans

### Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 2199, 2018)

The RMOW's Official Community Plan (OCP) was released in 2020 and is an update to the 2013 OCP. The plan provides an overarching guide for community planning and land use management for the next five to ten years. The OCP signals an intention to grow in a manner that supports community wellbeing, equity, and quality of life, protects ecosystems, and develops a strong, diverse, and resilient economy. The OCP also acknowledges the need to work in partnership with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and Lil'wat Nation to advance reconciliation and shared interests. The RMOW has grown rapidly, and the OCP expresses a desire to carefully manage future growth and development to respect community and ecosystem capacity, having already reached 90% of its approved development capacity. The RMOW intends to concentrate future urban growth in existing village areas through an Urban Development Containment Area (Figure 3) to minimize infrastructure and servicing costs, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and to protect and sustain local ecosystems, among other goals.

The risk of flooding is discussed as a general hazard in the OCP, with a focus on the impacts to development, natural environment, public safety, and infrastructure. Specific policies include ensuring that all development is protected from flood hazards by abiding by provincial and professional standards (p. 4-13/43). This is supported through evaluation criteria for OCP and zoning amendments proposals, including an assessment of the proposed development on impacts to flood hazard (p. 4-16/45). The OCP references existing municipal flood hazard and risk mapping, with a goal to combine this data with climate change modelling to assess and inform development decisions, the protection of natural areas, and emergency management plans, policies, and education (p. 10-8, 12-6). The RMOW also outlines policies for maintaining and improving Whistler's drainage systems and flood-protection infrastructure and investigating its resilience to future climate change and hazards (p. 12-6).

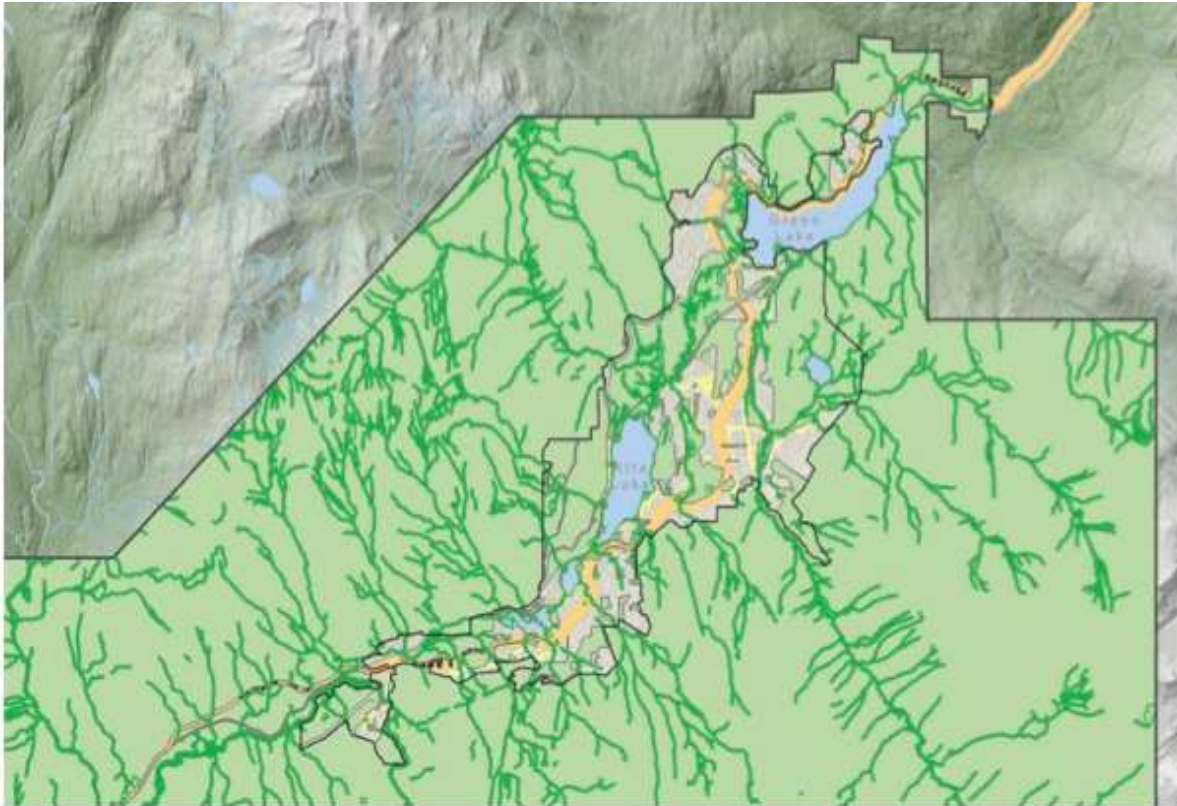
The OCP also includes design guidelines for Whistler Village, Village North, and Upper Village that address flood risk through recommendations to minimize runoff from snowmelt and rainfall through landscape features (p. S-41).

### Riparian Ecosystem Protection Development Permit Area (DPA)

The Riparian Ecosystem Protection DPA aims to protect riparian ecosystems and adjacent streams to maintain biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and ecosystem services, including flood mitigation. The DPA applies to all parcels of land within or partly within 30 meters of a stream, including residential, commercial, and industrial developments. The DPA includes guidelines for siting of structures, required setbacks, vegetation and habitat protection and enhancement, and environmental impact study requirements.

### Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems Development Permit Area (DPA)

The Protection of Sensitive Ecosystem DPA aims to protect, restore, and enhance sensitive ecosystems, which encompass species at risk habitat, ecosystems at risk, coastal western hemlock forest, cottonwoods, forested floodplains, raptors' nesting sites, and core forest habitat. Most remaining natural lands in the RMOW are protected by this DPA. The DPA includes guidelines for locating, planning and designing development to minimize any alteration of vegetation and flood mitigation services.



**Figure 3.** Map showing RMOW's Urban Development Containment Area (WUDCA) (inner black outline) and Riparian Ecosystems Protection DPA (dark green layer) and Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems DPA (light green layer). Source: [RMOW GIS Interactive Map](#).

### Big Moves Climate Action Plan (2022)

The RMOW's Big Moves Climate Action Plan was released in 2022 and combines the municipality's previous climate mitigation and adaptation work. Whistler's largest climate threats are hotter and drier summers, milder winters, and more frequent high-intensity precipitation events, contributing to more heat waves, wildfires, drought, and rainfall and flash flooding events. The strategy outlines nine actions to 2030, with six mitigation actions, focusing on transportation, building efficiency, and waste. Three actions are included for adaptation: prioritizing mitigating wildfire risk, increasing resilience to extreme weather events, and protecting local ecosystems and biodiversity (p. 5).

Under actions to increase resilience to extreme weather events, the report outlines several initiatives to address pluvial flooding events, including improving stormwater management plans, updating flood hazard maps in consideration of projected climate changes, improving plans and policies for potable water protection from contamination from extreme events, and improving public safety from extreme events through emergency preparedness (p. 54).

### [Whistler Natural Asset Inventory \(2021\)](#)

Whistler's Natural Asset Inventory is the first phase of a natural asset project and outlines the key natural assets a local government depends upon their condition, and the risks they are facing. Future steps for the natural asset inventory include a valuation study, creating and implementing asset management plans, policies, and practices, and practicing adaptive management (p. 4). The aim of the inventory is to incorporate natural assets into asset management practices to effectively manage the health and resilience of these assets and inform land-use and development decisions (p. 5). The report identifies the priority services that they wish to protect as surface and groundwater drinking water supply, flood mitigation, and stormwater management (p. 5). The inventory assesses the size and condition of 11 natural asset types, including grasslands, wetlands, and glaciers, and finds the majority in good and fair conditions (p. 16). The report also finds that the highest-risk threats include forest fire, drought, overuse of trails in source water protection areas, flooding, and development pressure (p. 19-20).

The assessment identifies that the biggest flooding threats for the community are to natural assets on private property in Whistler Village, Tapley's neighbourhood, and areas along Green Lake, such as lift stations and sanitary sewer manholes close to the high-water mark (p. 27). Additionally, the water intake above the 21 Mile Creek Watershed, which is Whistler's primary drinking water source, is vulnerable to flooding, which would impact drinking water quality (p. 28). These threats are addressed through the municipality's [21 Mile Creek Watershed: Source Water Protection Plan](#). The report identifies that the RMOW currently utilizes floodplain mapping to review development sites and the flood elevation for sites (p. 29). However, there are currently no flood management plans for utility infrastructure (p. 29).

### [Twenty-One Mile Creek Watershed: Source Water Protection Plan \(2015\)](#)

The 21 Mile Creek Watershed: Source Protection Plan identifies 21 Mile Creek Watershed as one of the two primary water sources for RMOW. The key concerns for 21 Mile Creek are degradation of water quality from anthropogenic sources such as recreational users, and natural hazards, including snowmelt and rainfall, increasing peak flows in rivers, debris floods, wildfire, and erosion. The plan outlines actions to address these threats through a turbidity monitoring station and fuel thinning in the watershed (p. 32, 35).

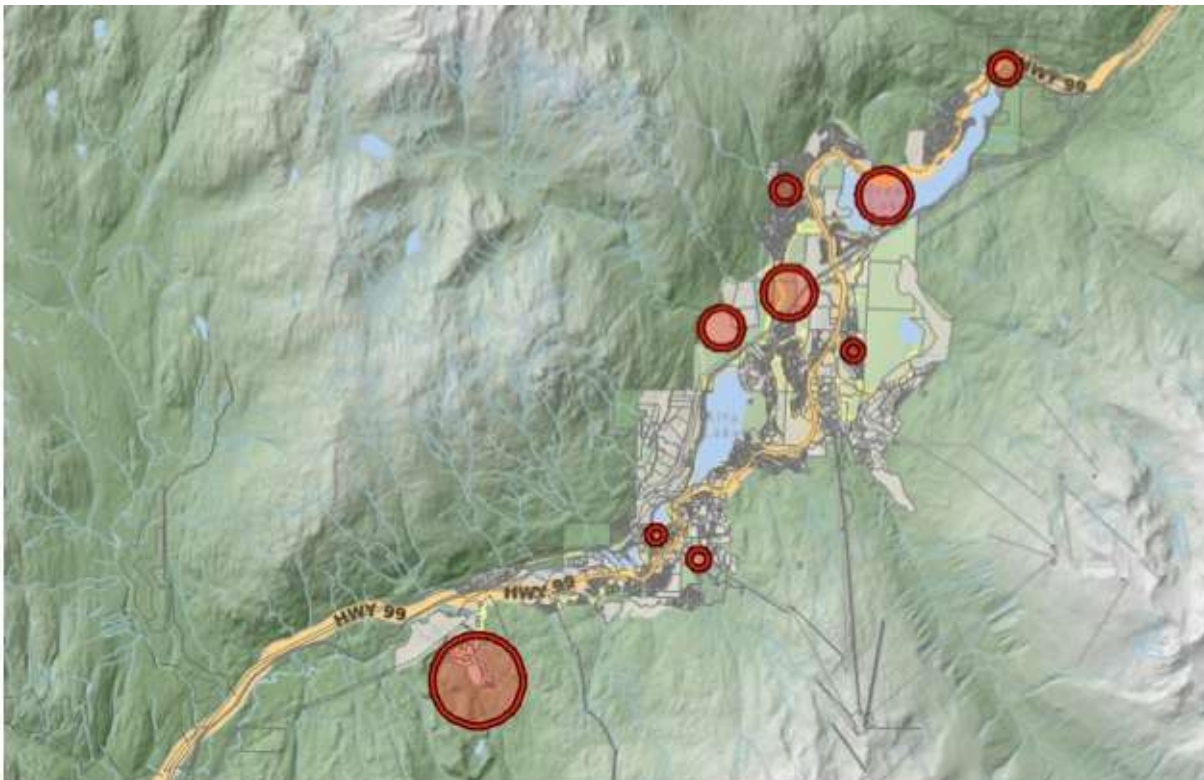
## Green Building Policy (2022)

The Green Building Policy is utilized by RMOW to assess all development permits, building permits, and rezoning applications, outlining key performance-based guidance and requirements for the design, construction, and operation of buildings and landscapes (p. 1). To mitigate flooding risk, the policy includes guidance for site planning and rainwater management. Rezoning applications are required to submit a Stormwater Management Plan and to maximize low-impact development measures and pervious surfaces to increase water retention and infiltration (p. 21, 25).

## Regulations

### Zoning Bylaw (No. 303, 2015))

The Zoning Bylaw (No. 303) designates a flood-proofing area in Green Lake, White Gold Estates, and Nita Lake (p. 24-8, 24-10, 24-13) (Figure 4). The bylaw also outlines flood proofing requirements for any building in proximity to any lake, swamp, pond, dyke, or watercourse, or Green River, Cheakamus River, Alta Creek, Whistler Creek, Sixteen Mile Creek, Nineteen Mile Creek, Twenty-one Mile Creek. The requirements stipulate flood construction levels, distance from the water body, and construction materials (p. 5-1).



**Figure 4.** Map of flood proofing areas in Whistler, B.C. Source: [RMOW GIS Interactive Map](#)

## Building Bylaw (No. 2482, 2025)

The Building Bylaw (No. 2482) requires an owner as part of a building permit application to hire a registered professional to obtain a letter of assurance and professional design and plan certification in the case that the parcel of land that the building or structure is proposed on is or likely will be within the floodplain or subject to flooding, or other hazards including erosion or debris flows (p. 12).

## Land Use and Fees Bylaw (No. 2205, 2022)

Under the Land Use and Fees Bylaw (No. 2205), applicants for amendments to the Zoning Bylaw or Official Community Plan, and applicants for development permits, temporary use permits, and development variance permits may be required to provide development approval information, including information on impacts to the natural environment, hazards, and snow management (p. 4-5). The bylaw also enables the General Manager to grant exemptions from flood construction levels or floodplain setbacks (p. 10).

## Infrastructure

- Whistler Creek: 2 debris barriers upstream of Whistler Creekside, over 600 meters of upgraded creek channel, 2 bridges, landscaping, and a secondary floodway for emergency flood protection.
  - o Whistler Creek Dyke
- Fitzsimmons Creek Flood Debris Barrier
- Fitzsimmons Creek dyke and berm system (between Blackcomb Way Gondola Transit Exchange and Nicklaus North Golf Course (Green Lake)
  - o Fitzsimmons Creek, Greenside Village – White Gold dyke
  - o Fitzsimmons Creek, Training Berm Dyke
  - o Fitzsimmons Creek, Mons-Green Lake Dyke
- 19 Mile – High School Creek Dyke
- Cheakamus River Treatment Plant Berm
- Green Lake – Alta Creek Berm Dyke
- Hortsmann Creek Berm Dyke

## Projects

- Fitzsimmons Creek: As part of the Fitzsimmons Creek flood mitigation program, the RMOW completes an annual gravel removal program to control flood levels according to maintenance and operation standards for downstream dykes.
- Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment: In 2025, the RMOW released a request for proposals for a climate risk and resilience assessment. The final assessment is expected to be completed by June 2026.

## Summary

The primary flood risk to the RMOW is heavy precipitation and rain-on-snow events that accelerate snowpack and glacier melt, increasing peak flows in adjacent waterbodies. With climate change, these rain-on-snow events are projected to become more frequent, altering the hydrological regime and increasing flood risk for the community.<sup>5</sup> Strong components of the RMOW flood mitigation approach include the comprehensive network of flood protection infrastructure, including dykes, flood boxes, pump stations, and debris barriers.<sup>6</sup> The [Riparian Ecosystems Protection DPA](#) and [Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems DPA](#) are important land-use regulations to maintain and improve the flood mitigation capacity of riparian, wetland, and other sensitive ecosystems. The flood proofing requirements under the [RMOW's Zoning Bylaw](#) are also important regulatory mechanisms for protecting development that is adjacent to waterbodies. The RMOW also states that they are utilizing flood hazard maps to evaluate development permit and building permit applications to ensure that development does not exacerbate flood risk.

However, there are several areas for improvement in the RMOW's flood management approach. The RMOW has allegedly created a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Integrated Stormwater Management Plan, and Integrated Flood Hazard Assessment and Management Plan. However, none of these plans are publicly available. The Riparian Ecosystems Protection DPA and Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems DPA primarily feature discretionary language, which may undercut the efficacy of these tools in mitigating flood risk. Developing a specific Flood Hazard DPA may support the RMOW's flood mitigation goals by identifying and protecting areas that are most at-risk of flooding and providing flood-specific development guidelines and professional flood hazard assessment requirements.

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<sup>5</sup> Resort Municipality of Whistler. (2022a). *Big Moves Climate Action Implementation Plan*. p. 62

<sup>6</sup> Resort Municipality of Whistler. (2023). *Priority Habitat Framework*. p. 41

## Conclusion

This report assesses how municipalities within Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw traditional territory are planning for and managing flood risk, specifically, within the northern portion of the territory known as the Valley region. Near this territory are the settler governments of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) and Electoral Area D, the District of Squamish (DOS), and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), whose planning and regulatory documents are reviewed.

We began by conducting a spatial analysis of each government's jurisdiction to review the current flood infrastructure and any locations where this infrastructure may have gaps. Maps provided in Appendix A highlight each region's flood risk and infrastructure. This spatial analysis is followed by a review of strategic and regulatory documents, which revealed that different governing bodies provided varying levels of flood governance and regulatory strength.

The SLRD's documents highlight the hazards and risks associated with flooding across the region. However, they lack implementation mechanisms and timelines that ensure adequate adjustments are made. Electoral Area D's Official Community Plan uses land use planning tools to guide flood risk management by avoiding development in hazardous areas. However, the zoning bylaw provides relatively weak enforcement and little flood-specific guidance.

In comparison, the DOS has a robust and integrated flood mitigation framework that focuses on the most at-risk systems and areas within the municipality. These include enforceable and detailed bylaws outlining regulations and standards for new development to protect them against flooding. Some systems still require further regulatory adjustments, particularly in assessing the functionality of flood infrastructure on private property. Additionally, the DOS lacks proactive risk reduction mechanisms that could strengthen overall flood management.

Finally, the RMOW has a moderate flood mitigation framework through their Development Permit Areas (DPAs), which focus on the flood mitigation capacity of riparian zones, wetlands, and other sensitive ecosystems. Areas for improvement include the publication of comprehensive flood management plans and the creation of flood-specific regulations, such as a flood-hazard DPA.

In conclusion, this report reviews the flood risk management policy and planning for municipalities within Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw traditional territory, provides a geospatial analysis of the flood risk and infrastructure, and outlines areas of success and opportunities for improvement in these jurisdictions.

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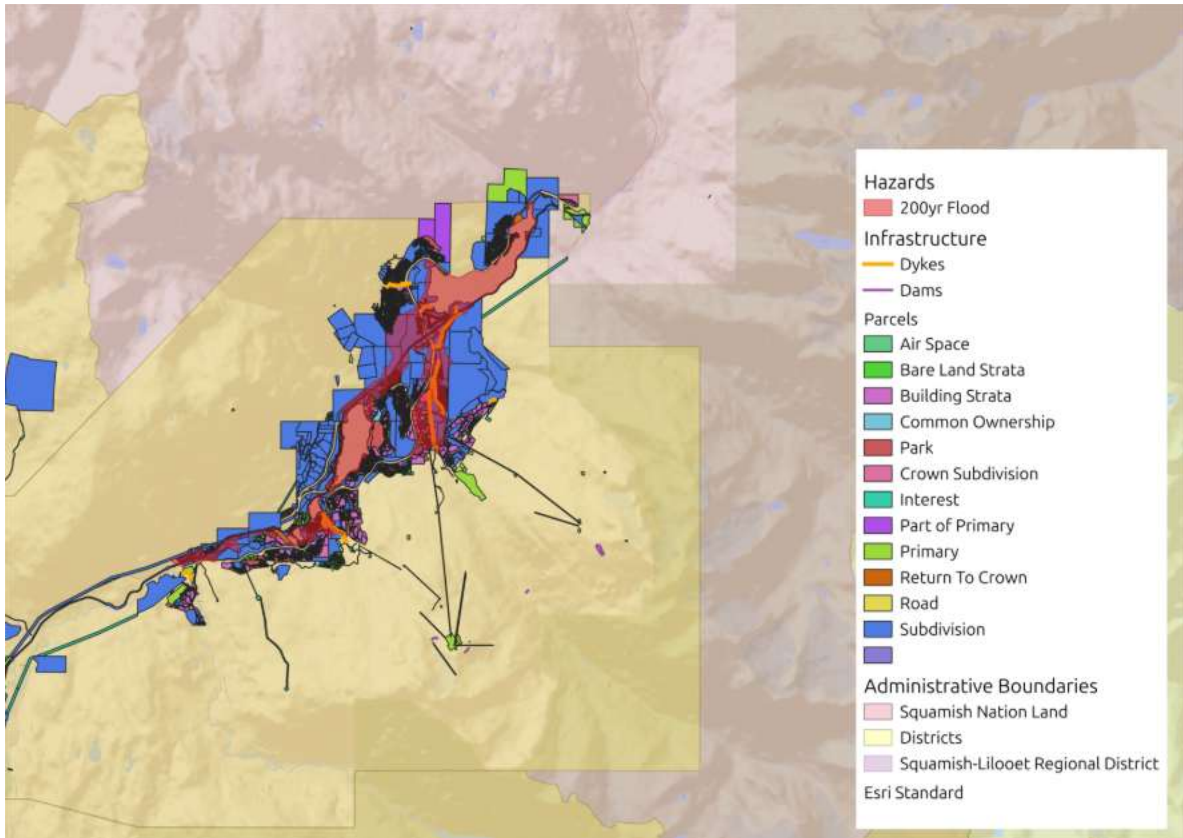
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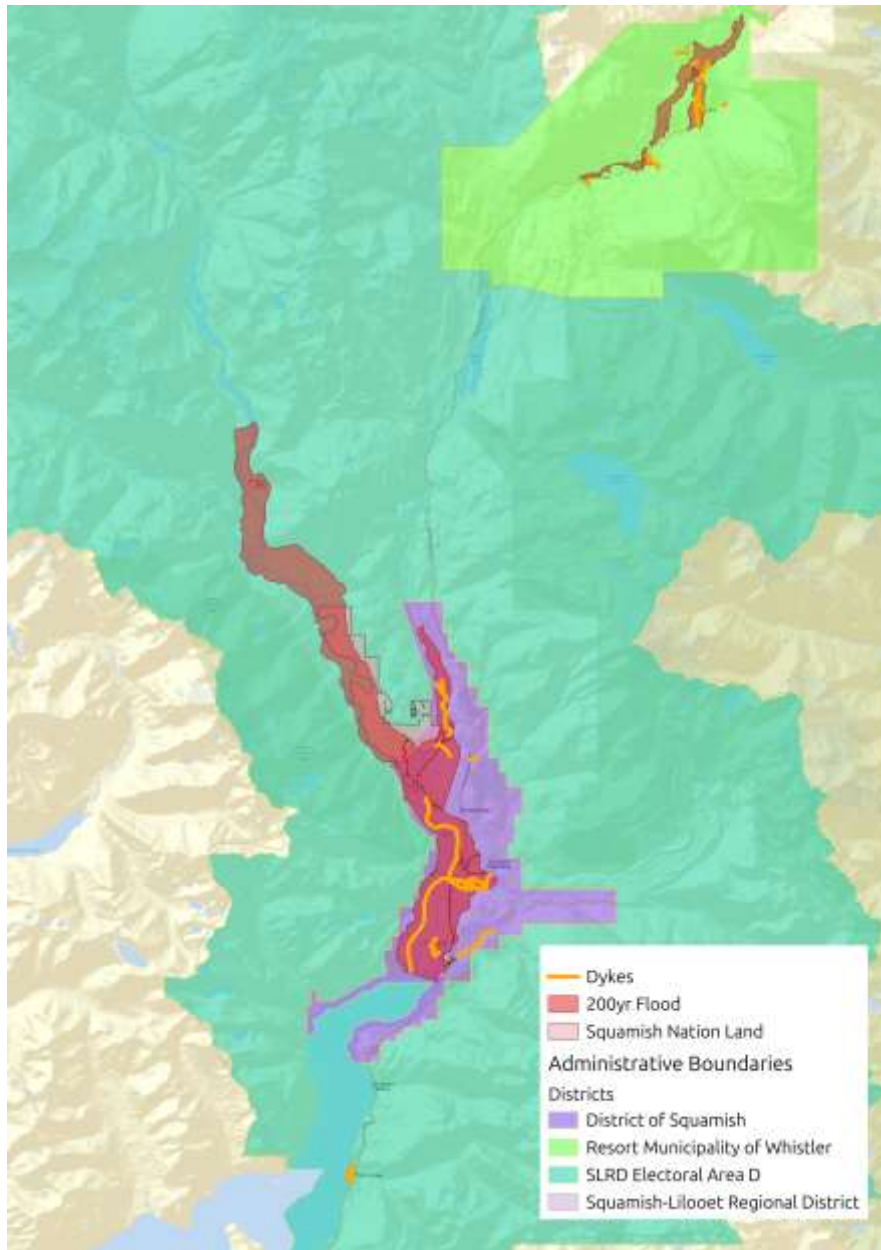
## Appendix A: Maps



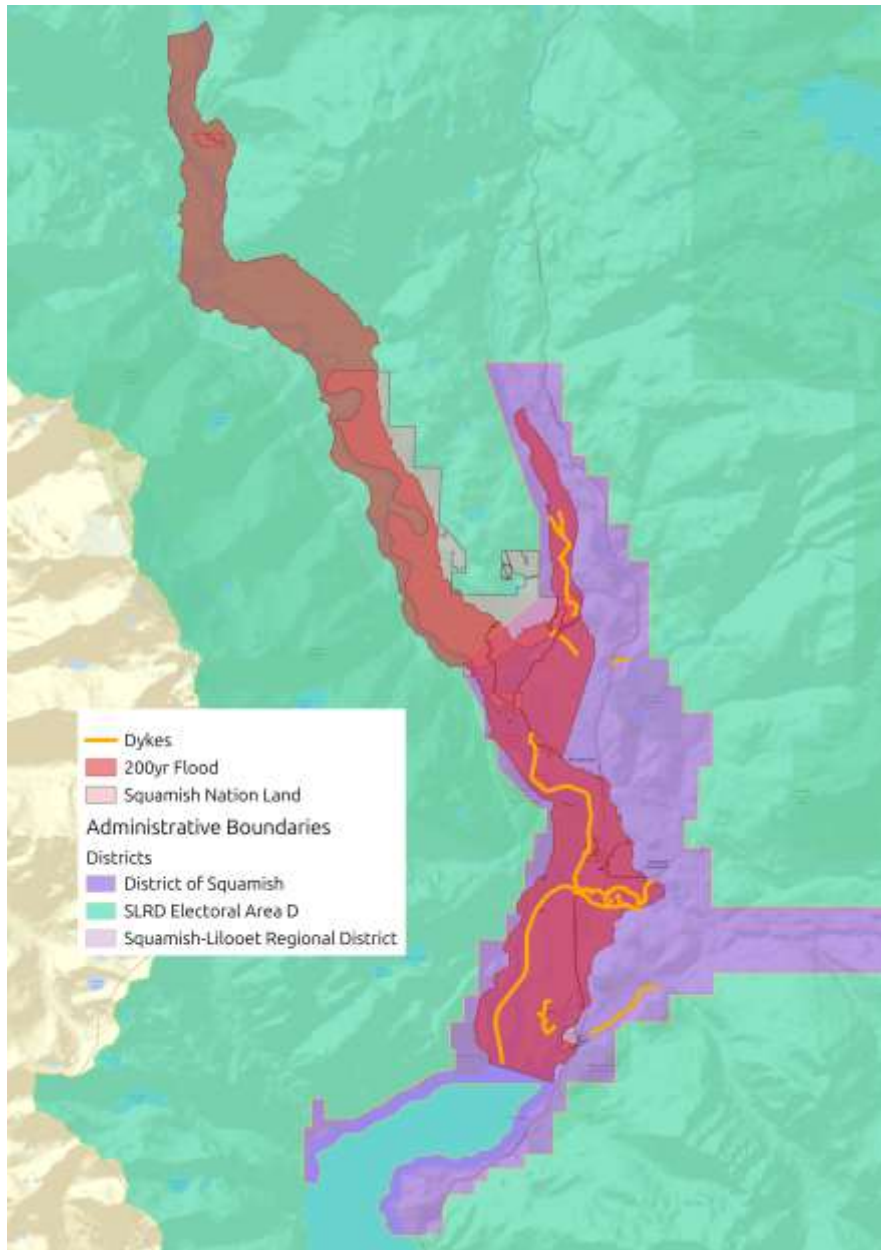
**Figure A1.** Resort Municipality of Whistler Floodplain, Infrastructure, and Land Use (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025).



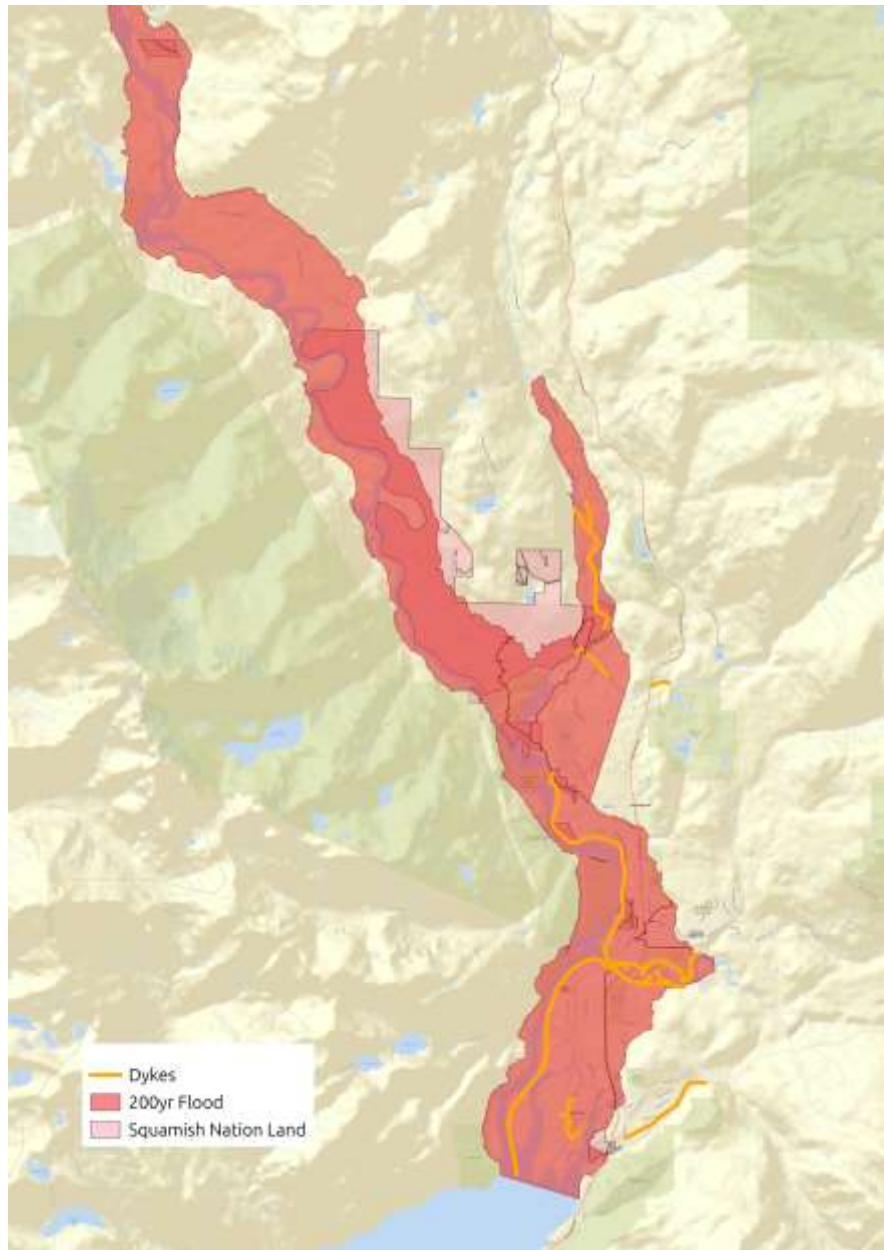
**Figure A2.** Resort Municipality of Whistler Floodplain, Infrastructure, and Land Use Close-up (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025).



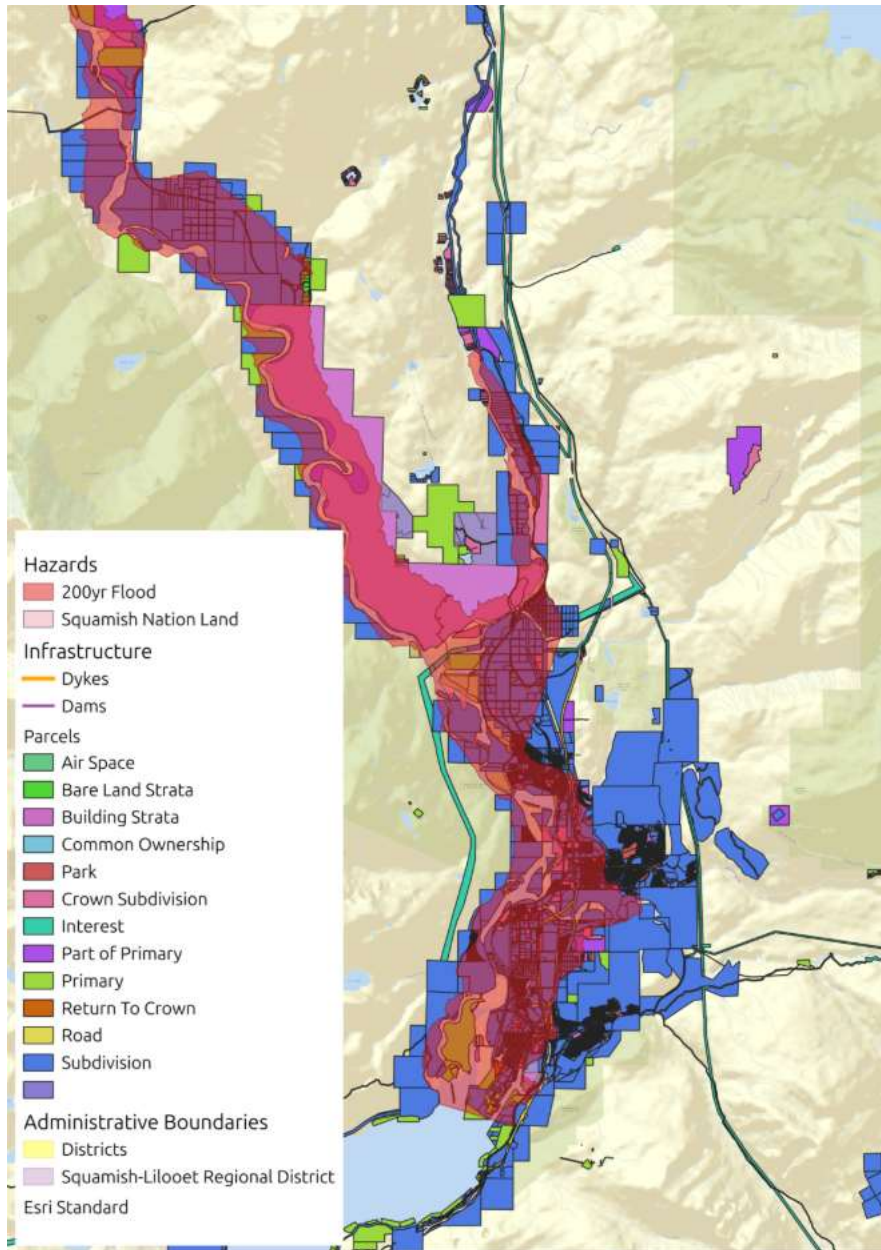
**Figure A3.** Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Valley Overview (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025).



**Figure A4.** Squamish Districts Hazard and Infrastructure (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025).



**Figure A5.** Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) Hazard and Infrastructure (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025).



**Figure A6.** Squamish Land Use, Hazard, and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) Land. (Government of British Columbia, 2017; Government of British Columbia, 2024; Government of British Columbia, 2025)

## Appendix B: Reviewed Documents

Year	Document Name	Type
<b>Squamish-Lillooet Regional District</b>		
2010	<a href="#">Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062</a>	Strategic Land-Use Plan
2021	<a href="#">Community Risk Assessment</a>	Strategy/Plan
2023	<a href="#">Regional Geohazard Risk Assessment</a>	Strategy/Plan
2018	<a href="#">Upper Squamish River Flood Hazard Mapping and Risk Assessment</a>	Strategy/Plan
2013	<a href="#">Integrated Sustainability Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
<b>Electoral Area D</b>		
2013	<a href="#">Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1135</a>	Strategic Land-Use Plan
2016	<a href="#">Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw No. 1350</a>	Bylaw
<b>District of Squamish</b>		
2017	<a href="#">Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2500</a>	Strategic Land-Use Plan
2017	<a href="#">Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan (IFHMP)</a>	Strategy/Plan
2019	<a href="#">Integrated Stormwater Management Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
2022	<a href="#">Howe Sound and Stawamus River Integrated Stormwater Management Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
2022	<a href="#">Natural Asset Management Strategy</a>	Strategy/Plan
2016	<a href="#">Adapting to Climate Change in Squamish: Backgrounder Report</a>	Report
2018	<a href="#">Squamish Marine Strategy</a>	Strategy/Plan
2025	<a href="#">Floodplain Management Bylaw No. 3184</a>	Bylaw
2011	<a href="#">District of Squamish Zoning Bylaw No. 2200</a>	Bylaw
2019	<a href="#">Flood Protection Upgrades Capital Work Loan Authorization Bylaw No. 2693</a>	Bylaw
2020	<a href="#">District of Squamish Marine Zoning Bylaw NO. 2771</a>	Bylaw
2015	<a href="#">Community Risk Assessment Report</a>	Strategy/Plan
2016	<a href="#">All Hazards Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
2019	<a href="#">Sea to Sky Multimodal Evacuation Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
<b>Resort Municipality of Whistler</b>		
2002	<a href="#">Emergency Measures Bylaw No. 1593</a>	Bylaw
2013	<a href="#">Whistler Blackcomb Master Plan Update</a>	Strategy/Plan
2015	<a href="#">Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303</a>	Bylaw
2015	<a href="#">Twenty-One Mile Creek Watershed: Source Water Protection Plan</a>	Strategy/Plan
2018	<a href="#">Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2199</a>	Strategic Land-Use Plan
2020	<a href="#">Climate Action Big Moves Summary</a>	Strategy/Plan
2021	<a href="#">RMOW Natural Asset Management Inventory Results &amp; Recommendations</a>	Report

<b>Year</b>	<b>Document Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
2022	<a href="#"><u>Big Moves Climate Action Implementation Plan</u></a>	Strategy/Plan
2022	<a href="#"><u>Green Building Policy</u></a>	Policy
2023	<a href="#"><u>Priority Habitat Framework</u></a>	Strategy/Plan
2022	<a href="#"><u>Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 2205</u></a>	Bylaw
2022	<a href="#"><u>Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan</u></a>	Strategy/Plan
2022	<a href="#"><u>Whistler General Climate and Climate Change Modelling Assessment</u></a>	Report
2025	<a href="#"><u>Building Regulation Bylaw No. 2482</u></a>	Bylaw
2025	<a href="#"><u>Environmental Protection Bylaw No. 2426</u></a>	Bylaw