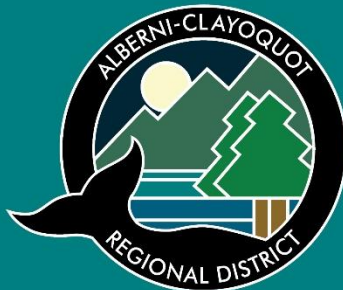


SPROAT LAKE AND AREA

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Schedule "A" - Bylaw No. P1540

June 2026



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of healing, reconciliation, and gratitude, we acknowledge that Sproat Lake and Area rests on the traditional territories of c̓išaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshah First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation, who have stewarded land within the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) since time immemorial. As members of the Nuuchahnulth Nations, Hupačasath First Nation and c̓išaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshah First Nation) continue to proudly celebrate and practice their cultures, governance, and traditional ways of living today and into the future.

Acknowledging our relationship to place is something Nuuchahnulth peoples have been doing for countless generations. The ACRD respects and recognizes the deep and intrinsic relationship to the land and water and strives to follow the example of First Nations within the Alberni Valley as we continue to learn from their vibrant traditions and respect for the territory.

The ACRD recognizes the ongoing impacts of colonization and embraces the Nuuchahnulth Guiding Principles of ʔiisaak (respect for everyone and everything), ʔuuʔaaʔuk (taking care of), and ɥačatakin čawaak (everything is connected) as a north star for our collective journey, lighting the way forward in our relations.

The ACRD is committed to:

- Working together in the spirit of inclusivity, collaboration, and mutual respect;
- Seeking opportunities to build and strengthen relationships between governments;
- Gaining a better understanding of the rich and vibrant culture of the Nuuchahnulth peoples;
- Respecting the rights and ongoing presence of First Nations communities within these territories.

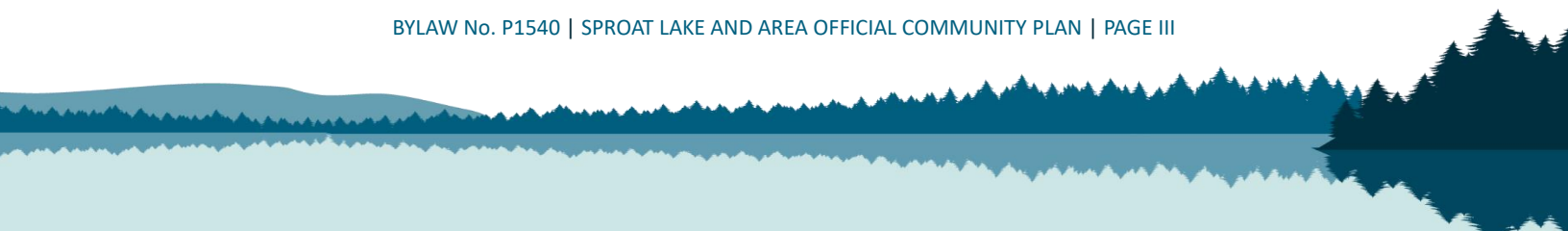


Photo by Roland Smith

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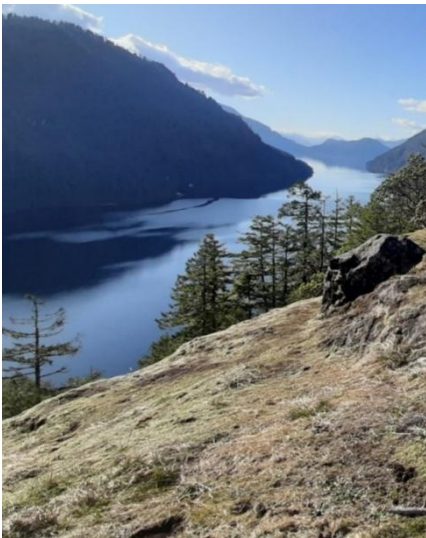
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HISTORY

Time immemorial - Present

Sproat Lake and Area has been inhabited by Nuu-chah-nulth peoples for thousands of years. Since time immemorial c̓išaaʔath (Tseshah First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation have lived within what we know today as Area “D”, the Alberni Valley, and Barkley Sound. These Nations continue to have strong and ongoing connections to the lands and waters, still using them for fishing, harvesting and cultural practices today.



Traditional Place Names

There are many places in and around the Plan area with traditional names and many have a Nuu-chah-nulth origin. Before being called Sproat Lake, it was known as ʔi kuut (Klee-Coot) meaning ‘wide open’ and is a central aspect of c̓išaaʔath and Hupačasath First Nations’ traditional territories. The traditional name of Great Central Lake is ʕa-ʔuk-kuk muʔ-huʔ (Moo-hoolth-aht) meaning ‘burned ground’. The name refers to a forest fire caused by an electrical storm. In recent years, Area First Nations have begun working to restore traditional place names.

1860s



The first European settlers arrived in the Valley, including Gilbert Sproat and Edward Stamp. They established a sawmill at the Alberni Inlet which helped to create a permanent settler presence in what is now Port Alberni. The Valley became a major hub for the forestry

industry with several mills in operation in the area. Forestry has been the primary industry for more than 100 years. ʔi kuut (Klee-Coot) was renamed for Gilbert Malcolm Sproat in the 1860s. ʕa-ʔuk-kuk muʔ-huʔ (Moo-hoolth-aht) was given the name Great Central Lake in 1864 by the Royal Geographical Society.

1892

The Alberni Indian Residential School operated from 1892 to 1973 as part of Canada’s residential school system designed to forcibly assimilate Indigenous children. It was run by the Presbyterian Church of Canada and later by the United Church of Canada in partnership with the federal government. Over 4,000 First Nations children from across British Columbia were taken from their families and communities and sent to the school. In its early decades, many students came from c̓išaaʔath (Tseshah First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation. Like many residential schools, Alberni’s was marked by harsh conditions and systemic neglect. Students experienced overcrowding and repeated outbreaks of disease, with documented cases of abuse of all types. Today, the legacy of the school continues to affect Survivors, their families and communities.

Early 1900s

From the early 1900s onwards, small farms around Stirling Arm, Taylor Arm and on the south shore of Sproat Lake supplied locals and logging camps with milk, butter, and eggs. Milk was often delivered by boat along the lake or by wagon to work camps where they didn't raise their own cows.



PN00828 Alberni Valley Museum

Settlers such as Albert Faber and George Smith established farms on the south side of Stirling Arm at what is now Fossli Provincial Park, and on the north side of Klee-coot Arm at Smith's Landing, currently known as Sproat Lake Provincial Park.

1920s

Sproat Lake became a destination for seasonal cabins and recreational use. A small number of seasonal hunting and fishing lodges were built attracting the wealthy elite from Vancouver, Victoria, and the United States. Sport fishing on Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake became popular and attracted commercial fishing and tourist opportunities throughout the 20th century.

1922

Dairy farming has a long history in the Alberni Valley (over 120 years). In 1922, Owens (Cliff Owen) Dairy was established in Port Alberni and later at McCoy Lake (now called Tooth Acres). Mr. Owen's farm once provided milk and cream to over 500 customers.

1910

Klitsa Lodge was the summer home of E.P. Davis, a lawyer from Vancouver built in 1910. In 1919, Mrs. Josephine Wark bought the property and operated the resort until she died in 1942. Operating a lodge was unusual for a woman at the time and she was known to be independent and resilient. Sproat Lake continues to be a summer retreat for visitors from all over the world. Hollywood stars such as Charli Chaplin, Mae West, Olivia De Haviland and Walt and Roy Disney visited the lodge. The resort catered to those seeking excellent fishing and a peaceful scenic wilderness.



PN05251 Alberni Valley Museum

1920s (cont'd)

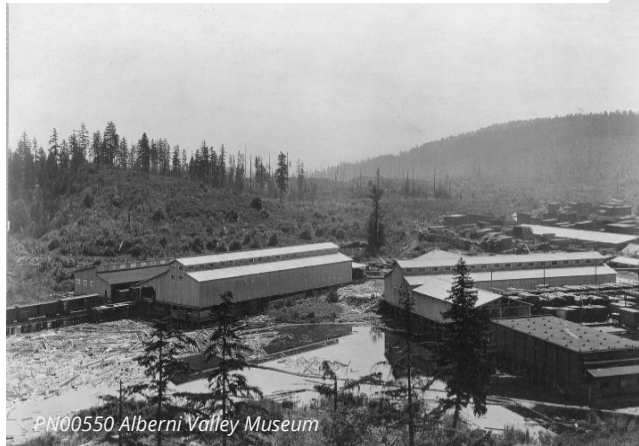
The Ark resort was operated by Joe Drinkwater and Clive 'Snowball' Paxton. The Floating hotel had 16 rooms. Guests paid roughly 75 cents to dine of fresh trout or venison. The hotel allowed anglers to fish right from their bunkhouse windows or troll for trout and lake salmon with rowboats.



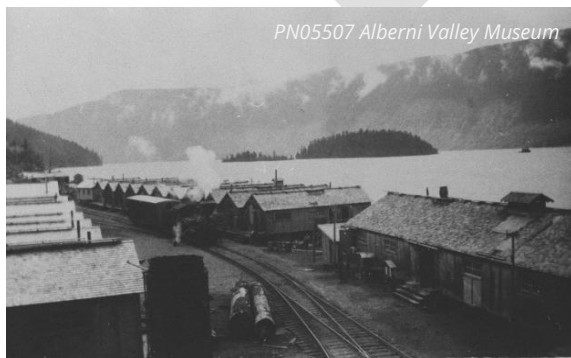
PN02542 Alberni Valley Museum

1920s-1950s

Great Central Lake became settled with the establishment of Great Central Sawmills Ltd. in Boot Lagoon at the east end of the lake. This location allowed for logs to be boomed directly across the lake and was ideal for transport. A rail line linked the sawmill to Port Alberni. Camp Nine was established further up Great Central Lake along a logging railway line that connected to the mill at Boot Lagoon. Along with the sawmill, the company built an entire townsite quickly in under a year. The mill employed over 100 people. The settlement included family homes, bunkhouses for single men, stores, and cookhouses.



The expansion of the Stamp River Dam raised the water level at Great Central Lake. This flooded parts of the mill and townsite and closed the sawmill at Great Central Lake. Workers and families relocated to Port Alberni, and Great Central Lake transitioned from an industrial hub to a recreational retreat.



Overtime, the logging industry had depleted the timber easiest to reach from the lake. Loggers began to harvest timber from further into the back country and up the mountains which was difficult, inefficient and expensive. The industry began to move to truck logging which supported larger road-based sawmills. The Central Sawmills operation was designed for water transport and the rail system. Trucks were a cheap and easy way to transport timber to centralized operations. MacMillan Bloedel centralized larger, modern and efficient mills in Port Alberni.



The workforce of the sawmill at Boot Lagoon and Camp Nine was multicultural. Japanese and Chinese workers were in the area prior to World War II. The industry also employed Scandinavian, German and First Nation workers from the area.

1925

Established in 1925, McCoy Lake Dairy Farm was 160 acres. Bill Thomson was the third generation of the family to run the farm. Farmer Bill was a founding member of the ACRD's Agricultural Advisory Committee and Agricultural Development Committee. He was an active member of the Fall Fair Association and 4-H and was a significant support and resource to local farmers for many years.

1930s-1950s

The dairy industry around Sproat Lake was the most active during this period. Small dairies kept around 15 cows. When roads improved, farmers were able to deliver their milk by truck, making distribution much easier.

1956

The Sproat Lake Weir was installed to manage water levels and supply for the Port Alberni Pulp Mill.

1956-1962

School District 70 opens Sproat Lake School and Faber Elementary School.

1972

Robertson Creek Hatchery begins as the largest pink salmon spawning channel in North America and now is used as a coho and chinook salmon enhancement facility.

1973

The Alberni Indian Residential School was finally closed. c̓išaaʔath̓ (Tseshah First Nation) has since established a memorial at the 'orange bridge' to support the survivors and their families.

1993

Alberni Valley Regional Airport opens to serve Port Alberni and the surrounding region.



1950s

Year-round homes began to appear on the lakefront. A new established road from Port Alberni enabled year-round residents to settle at Sproat Lake.

1956

Retired by the US Navy, the Martin Mars fleet was purchased by a group of BC Forestry companies (Forest Industries Flying Tankers (FIFT)). The Hawaii Mars and the Philippine Mars known as the "Ladies of the Lake" were based on Sproat Lake into the 2010s and are an iconic part of Canadian aviation history. The planes could drop roughly 7200 gallons of water per scoop. The aircraft were deployed in BC and abroad, particularly to the United States.



Photo credit: Ed Kendall

2000s

The Philippine Mars was retired in 2007 initially and fully retired from firefighting around 2015. The Hawaii Mars retired around the same time. They remained at Sproat Lake until 2024 when they took their final flights to the BC Aviation Museum (Hawaii Mars) and Arizona (Philippine Mars).

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility means the practice of developing laws, standards, and practices that remove barriers and support persons with disabilities to live with dignity and to meaningfully participate in their own communities.

Accessory means a use, building or structure on the same lot as, and is incidental and ancillary to, the principal use, building or structure.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) means an independent residential dwelling unit, located on the same lot as the primary residence, which may be a single-detached dwelling.

Affordable Housing is housing that costs less than 30% of the occupying household's before-tax income.

Ageing in Place means the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or physical ability.

Agri-tourism means a tourist activity, service, or facility that is accessory to an agricultural facility or use classified as a farm operation under the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.

Aquifer means

- A geological formation
- A group of geological formations, or
- A part of one or more geological formations

that are groundwater bearing and capable of storing, transmitting and yielding groundwater or as defined within the *Water Sustainability Act*.

Archaeological Site means a location containing physical evidence of past human activity that is protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

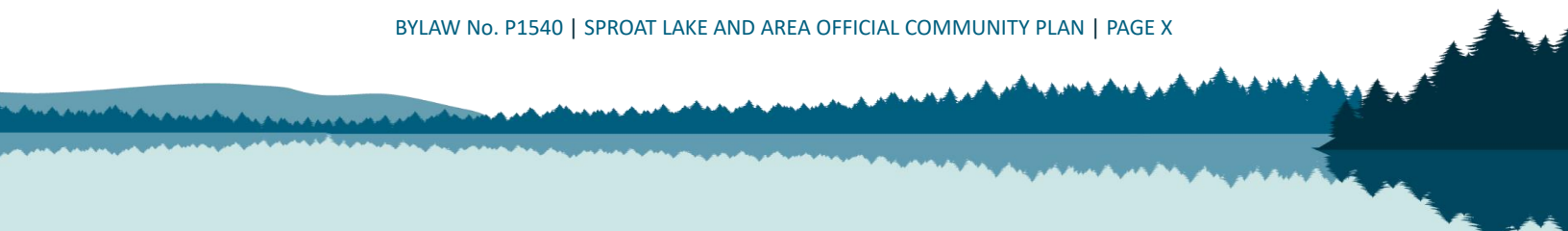
Bed and Breakfast means a home occupation use of a single detached dwelling that is rented for the temporary accommodation of not more than four guests, in accordance with the regulations for home occupation in this OCP.

Building means any structure and portion thereof, including mechanical devices, that are used or intended to be used for the purpose of supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

Community Gardens means the use of land for gardens cultivated by a group of people, utilizing either individual or shared plots on private or public land.

Community Gathering Spaces refers to areas where people naturally congregate and can include a diverse array of spaces that foster social interaction, inclusivity, and community connection. These are often the places community looks to in times of emergency.

Communal Sanitary Sewer System means a sanitary sewer system which is in compliance with the appropriate legislation, and is owned, operated, and maintained by an improvement district



pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, the ACRD, or a strata corporation pursuant to the *Strata Property Act*.

Communal Water System means a system of waterworks which is approved under the *Drinking Water Protection Act*, and is owned, operated, and maintained by an improvement district pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, a water utility pursuant to the *Water Utility Act*, the ACRD, or a strata corporation pursuant to the *Strata Property Act*.

Core Housing Need means the metric used by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation to measure three critical housing criteria and whether reasonable alternatives exist in the market. A household is in core housing need if its housing does not meet one or more of the following standards:

- *Adequate* – Housing is considered adequate when it isn't in need of major repairs. Major repairs include defective plumbing or electrical wiring, or structural repairs to walls, floors, or ceilings;
- *Suitable* – Housing is considered suitable when there are enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households. This is according to National Occupancy Standard requirements;
- *Affordable* – Housing is affordable when it costs less than 30% of the occupying household's before-tax household income.

Development Permit Area means areas within the plan established in accordance with the *Local Government Act* where the ACRD can ensure development aligns with community goals such as preserving and enhancing the environment, protecting the public from natural and climate-driven hazards and supporting the form and character of the area. All new development occurring in areas designated as a DPA may be subject to DPA-specific guidelines and exemptions where appropriate.

Dock means a floating structure used for the purpose of mooring a vessel, watercraft or boat(s) and for providing pedestrian access, and can consist of a single dock, wharf or pier, including walkway and access ramp.

Duplex means a building or structure that is divided into two self-contained dwelling units and joined by a common wall or floor.

Dwelling Unit means a building or self-contained portion thereof containing sleeping, sanitary, and cooking facilities, used or intended to be used as a residence for one household, but specifically excludes recreational vehicles.

Eco-tourism means responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, integrates interpretation and education, and serves to sustain the well-being of residents.

Environmentally Sensitive Area means an area of ecological significance that has, or with restoration or enhancement could have, natural features which contribute to the retention or creation of wildlife

habitat, soil stability, water retention or recharge, vegetative cover, or similar vital ecological functions. Environmentally sensitive areas range in size from small patches to extensive landscape features, and can include rare or common habitats, plants, and animals.

FireSmart means the national FireSmart program intended to help Canadians increase community resilience to wildfire and minimize its negative impacts.

Float Home means a floating structure built on a flotation system intended for overnight use, occupancy or accommodation; intended generally to be anchored in place and is often serviced from shore and does not include any vessel or watercraft designed or intended for navigation.

Flood Construction Level means the observed or calculated elevation above the natural boundary of a waterbody to the underside of a floor system, or to the top of a slab on grade, for buildings located within a designated flood area or within an area that is subject to, or likely to be subject to, flooding. In the case of a manufactured home, the ground level or top of the concrete or asphalt pad upon which a manufactured home rests.

Floor Area means the total horizontal area of each floor of a building or structure measured between the interior finished surface of the exterior walls, including the space occupied by interior walls and partitions, and excluding decks and garages.

Floor Area, Gross means the aggregate floor area including all habitable space and

basements, measured from the interior finished surfaces of the exterior walls, but excluding any detached accessory buildings, an open porch, unenclosed sunroom, deck, veranda or attic. In the case of a multi-unit dwelling, it excludes common stairwells and corridors.

Food Security means access to adequate, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food to meet dietary needs and food preferences.

Food Sovereignty is the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

Foreshore means the land lying between the highest and lowest water level that is alternatively covered and exposed by water with the normal rise and fall of the level of the body of water.

Freshwater means lakes, rivers, streams and similar bodies of inland waters.

Group Moorage Facility means a multi-berth moorage similar to a private moorage facility but for the personal use of a group, strata or association of residents from the surrounding community, and not for any commercial use.

Home Industry means a business or industry, conducted in an accessory building, structure or outside, that is incidental and ancillary to the principal residential use of a lot, may include accessory retail sales and may include

processing, assembly and manufacturing of products.

Home Occupation means the use of a portion of a dwelling unit, by a resident of the premises, to operate a business.

Houseboat means a vessel, watercraft or boat that is fitted for temporary use as a floating dwelling unit and that can be motored from location to location.

Local Food System means the entire food cycle, to a community-wide or regional-extent, encompassing the growing, harvesting/foraging, processing, preserving, distributing, sharing, eating, and disposal of food.

Lot means any lot, parcel, block or other area, created under the *Land Title Act*, or the *Strata Property Act* in which land is held or into which it is subdivided.

Low-Density Residential means areas intended to accommodate residential development with a density generally no more than 3-5 residences per hectare. Permitted uses include single detached dwellings, secondary suites and accessory dwelling units. Low-density development maintains rural character and relies on on-site services such as wells and septic systems.

Marine Transportation means the movement of a person or persons by watercraft, vessel or boat, but does not include temporary accommodation.

Multi-Unit Dwelling means a residential use consisting of three (3) or more dwelling units such as an apartment, townhouse, or row house.

Multi-Use Path (MUP) means an off-street pathway that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and can be used by any non-motorized user, including but not limited to walking, cycling, skateboarding, scootering, rollerblading, and other active modes.

Natural Boundary means, as established by a British Columbia Land Surveyor, the visible high-water mark of any body of water where the presence and action of the water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to mark upon the soil of the bed of the body of water a character distinct from that of the banks, in vegetation, as well as in the nature of the soil itself.

Open Space means an area consisting largely of landscaped open areas, which may include communal water systems, communal sewer systems, roads, trails, transmission lines, recreational areas, natural areas, playgrounds, playing fields or similar uses, but does not include a campground.

Parkland Improvements refer to the development, enhancement, or addition of amenities and infrastructure to a park, trail, open space, or other such recreation area for public use and enjoyment, including but not limited to landscaping, playground equipment, sports fields or courts, outdoor exercise equipment, trails and walkways, restrooms, seating areas, picnic tables, waste management receptacles, lighting improvements, signage/wayfinding, and accessibility upgrades.

Passive Recreation means outdoor recreation activities that do not involve the use of buildings, structures, camping, motorized vehicles or motorized equipment.

Private Household refers to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling for more than six months of one calendar year and do not have a usual place of residence else in Canada or abroad, as defined by Statistics Canada.

Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) means private land, in respect of which there is a management commitment, and that is classified as managed forest land under the *Assessment Act*.

Qualified Professional (QP) means a registered professional in good standing in a relevant field such as:

- Registered Professional Biologists (RP Bio),
- Registered Professional civil, hydrological, or geotechnical Engineers (P Eng),
- Registered Professional Geoscientists (P Geo),
- Professional Agrologists (P Ag)
- Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners (MCIP)
- Registered Professional Foresters (RPF)
- Architects (MAIBC)
- Landscape Architects (BCSLA)
- Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (RWOP),
- BC Land Surveyors (BCLS)
- Registered Forest Technicians,
- or any other qualified professional registered to practice in the

Province of BC as required.

Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) means a registered environmental professional in good standing with expertise in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and meets the criteria established under the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*.

Riparian Area means lands adjacent to streams, wetlands, lakes, and other water bodies, where the vegetation and soils show evidence of being influenced by the presence of water. Riparian areas are the green zones around lakes, rivers, and wetlands. They are the transitional zone between surface water and the drier uplands and play a vital role in the healthy functioning of both.

Residential Use means the occupancy or use of a building or part thereof as a dwelling unit and excludes temporary accommodation.

Secondary Suite means a self-contained dwelling unit located within, and secondary to, a principal building or portion of a building pursuant to the British Columbia Building Code.

Setback means the required minimum horizontal distance measured perpendicular from the respective lot line or natural boundary to any building, structure or use. No building, structure or use shall be located within a setback unless permitted by this Bylaw.

Short-Term Rental means a short-term rental accommodation service as defined under the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act*.

Single Detached Dwelling means a building consisting of one (1) dwelling unit which is occupied or intended to be occupied as the permanent residence of one (1) or more persons and may include a secondary suite.

Steep Slope means lands that have a natural slope of 30% or greater.

Stream means:

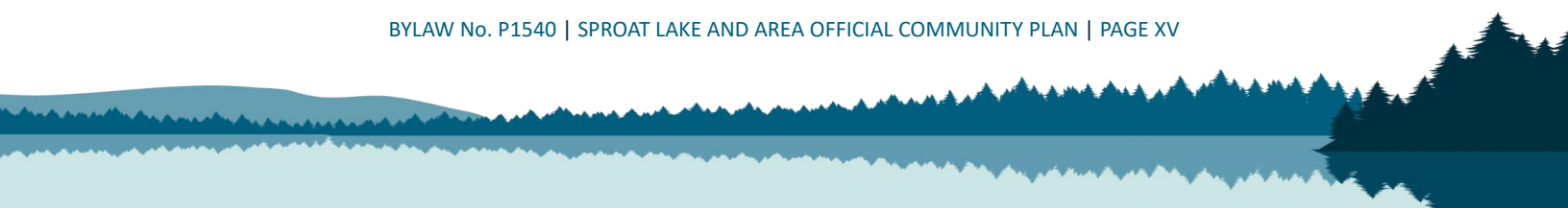
- 1) a natural watercourse, including a natural glacier course, or a natural body of water, whether or not the stream channel has been modified, or
- 2) a natural source of water supply, including, without limitation, a lake, pond, river, creek, spring, ravine, gulch, wetland or glacier, whether or not usually containing water, including ice, but does not include an aquifer.

Transportation Services means the use of land, buildings or structures for the provision of air, water, railway, truck, bus or taxi transportation services.

Utility means the use of lands, buildings or structures to facilitate public transportation, the collection and disposal of sewage, garbage, recycling and other waste, or the production, transmission, delivery and furnishing of water, gas, electricity or communication services to the public.

Waterfront means land that borders a body of water, and in tidal areas, that is upland of the natural boundary of the water.

WildSafe means the provincial WildSafe program administered by WildSafeBC intended to prevent or minimize wildlife conflicts through pro-active, collaborative, and community-championed management of wildlife attractants.



ABBREVIATIONS

ACRD	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
CDA	Comprehensive Development Area
CSA	Canada Safety Association
DPA	Development Permit Area
FSR	Forest Service Road
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
HWY	Highway
LGA	Local Government Act
MOTT	Ministry of Transportation and Transit
MUP	Multi-Use Path
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCP	Official Community Plan
QP	Qualified Professional
QEP	Qualified Environmental Professional
SPEA	Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area
TUP	Temporary Use Permit

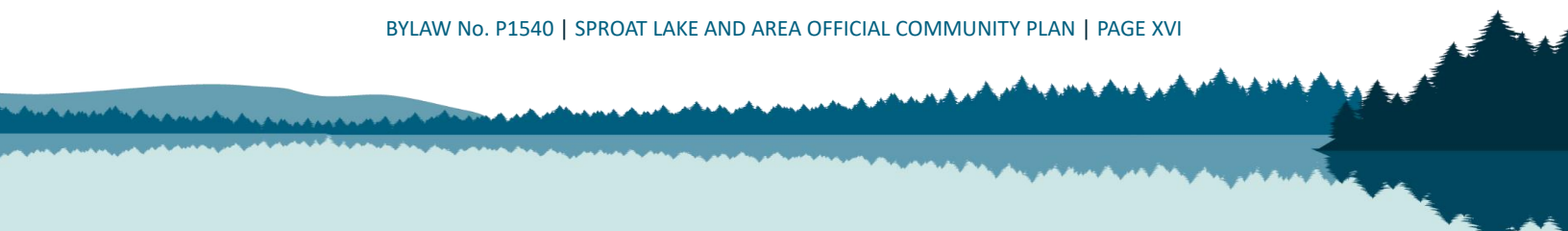




Photo by Denay Piatka

PART I | BACKGROUND

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO PLANNING FRAMEWORK

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

An Official Community Plan (OCP) guides planning and development by establishing a community's vision and goals. It provides policy direction for topics such as housing, emergency management, and environmental protection. The OCP is a living document used by the Board of Directors, planners, developers, and the public when planning future land use. An OCP provides direction to elected officials in their decision-making and guides the Advisory Planning Commission's recommendations to the Board, which support community needs, goals, and values.

The Sproat Lake and Area OCP is established under the authority granted via section 472 of the *Local Government Act*, as amended. This OCP replaces the previous *Sproat Lake OCP P1310*, which was adopted in 2014 and amended in 2023.

1.1.1 REQUIRED CONTENT

Section 473 of the *Local Government Act* requires that an OCP contain the following:

- location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet the community's anticipated 20-year housing need;
- location, amount, and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreation, and public utility land uses;
- the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
- restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
- the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;
- the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks, and solid waste treatment and disposal sites;
- policies respecting affordable housing, rental housing, and special needs housing;
- policies with respect to targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the Plan Area, and policies and actions with respect to how the local government will achieve those targets.

1.1.2 OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN AREA

The OCP area comprises approximately one-third of Electoral Area (EA) “D”, covering the central and eastern regions. The Plan area extends northward to include the majority of Great Central Lake, which forms part of the Somass watershed. The lands situated to the north, west, and south of the Plan area are largely uninhabited forestry tracts. Adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Plan area are the Beaufort and Beaver Creek Electoral Areas (EAs), cīšaaʔath (Tseshaht First Nation), Hupačasath First Nation, as well as the City of Port Alberni. While the OCP outlines a general vision for community planning in its designated area, it does not have jurisdiction over First Nations reserves. Its authority is also restricted regarding Federal or Provincial Crown lands, as well as forestry operations on privately owned properties classified as Managed Forest under the *Private Managed Forest Land Act*.

Figure 1. Map of the Official Community Plan Area for Sproat Lake and Area



1.1.3 AMENDING THE PLAN

Changes to the OCP may be proposed by ACRD staff to keep the plan up-to-date and to meet the evolving needs of the community. The *Local Government Act* regulates the process for an OCP amendment, which requires public notification, public hearing, and opportunities for consideration of the application by the ACRD Board.

The ACRD may also consider amendments to this OCP. These amendments may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Periodic assessment of the OCP Plan Area to determine area revisions.
- Alignment to reflect changes made to Provincial legislation (e.g., *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter*, etc.).
- Applications by property owners, residents, or the development industry.
- Alignment with new or revised Provincial plans and policies that relate to land use and community issues within the Plan Area.
- Alignment with new or revised regional plans and policies (e.g., Regional Growth Strategy).
- Changes resulting from transportation planning or capital improvements.
- Changes to the known geographic extent of Environmentally Sensitive Areas, as determined through updates to existing data or the review of plans, reports, and applications submitted by applicants to the ACRD.
- Changes suggested by c̓išaaʔath̓ (Tseshaht First Nation), Hupačasath First Nation or the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.

1.2 OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN PROCESS

The Sproat Lake and Area OCP update took place over five phases as shown in [Figure 2](#). From 2025-2026, the community had both in-person and virtual opportunities for engagement throughout all phases. The update was led by a team of ACRD project staff, with internal support from an ACRD Technical Advisory Group and external consultant support. Overall guidance was provided by the Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission, with additional direction and approvals from the ACRD Board of Directors. The vision, goals, objectives, and policies within this Plan are informed by input from community members, community groups, and First Nations.

Figure 2. OCP Update Process



2.0 HOW TO USE THIS OCP

The OCP is a community planning tool that will guide strategic decision-making for development and land use planning in Sproat Lake and Area. It is intended to be a reference document for all members of the community to understand how Sproat Lake and Area may evolve over time. The OCP lists potential community projects within the core policies in Section 5 to help strengthen grant funding applications which ultimately lessens the burden on area taxpayers. Listing projects in the OCP does not mean they will be completed within the 10-20 year span of the Sproat Lake and Area OCP. The OCP has several key components: Vision and Goal Statements, Objectives and Policies, a description of Temporary Use Permits and how they are applied, Development Permit Area Guidelines, and Schedules.

2.1 VISION AND GOALS

2.1.1 VISION

The vision for Sproat Lake and Area outlines the OCP framework and includes community-specific vision statements for Great Central Lake, Central Lake Road and the Agricultural Areas. The vision statements were created using community feedback as part of the OCP engagement process to guide growth and development. All policy direction outlined in the OCP is intended to achieve these long-term community visions for Sproat Lake and Area.

2.1.2 GOALS

The goal statements provide a framework for implementing the vision statements. Each goal statement represents a key theme or focus area for the OCP and is intended to guide decision-making.

2.2 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

2.2.1 OBJECTIVES

Objectives expand on the goal statement(s) to achieve what is important to community members. All objectives and policies in the document align with one or more of the goal statements.

2.2.2 POLICIES

Policies guide decision-making for achieving the direction outlined by the vision, goals, and objectives. Policies are intended to provide specific direction to the ACRD Board of Directors, staff, developers and community members regarding the land use priorities of Sproat Lake and Area. Additionally, OCP policies can support opportunities for collaboration with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations.



2.3 TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) are a tool authorized by the *Local Government Act* for the purpose of allowing temporary uses that align with the vision and goals of the OCP, but which are otherwise prohibited. TUP policies guide the kinds of activities for which TUPs may be issued, including short-term land uses, opportunities to diversify the economy, or innovative responses to an emerging community need.

2.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES

Development Permit Areas (DPAs) have been established in accordance with the *Local Government Act* to allow for development to better align with the goals of the community. These goals are preserving and enhancing the natural environment, protecting the public from natural and climate-driven hazards, and supporting the form and character of the OCP area. All new development occurring in areas that have been designated as a DPA may be subject to the DPA-specific guidelines.

2.5 SCHEDULES

A series of mapping figures have been included in the OCP to provide spatial context to the policy direction established throughout the Plan. These schedules may be used as a visual reference for the reader to interpret the OCP.

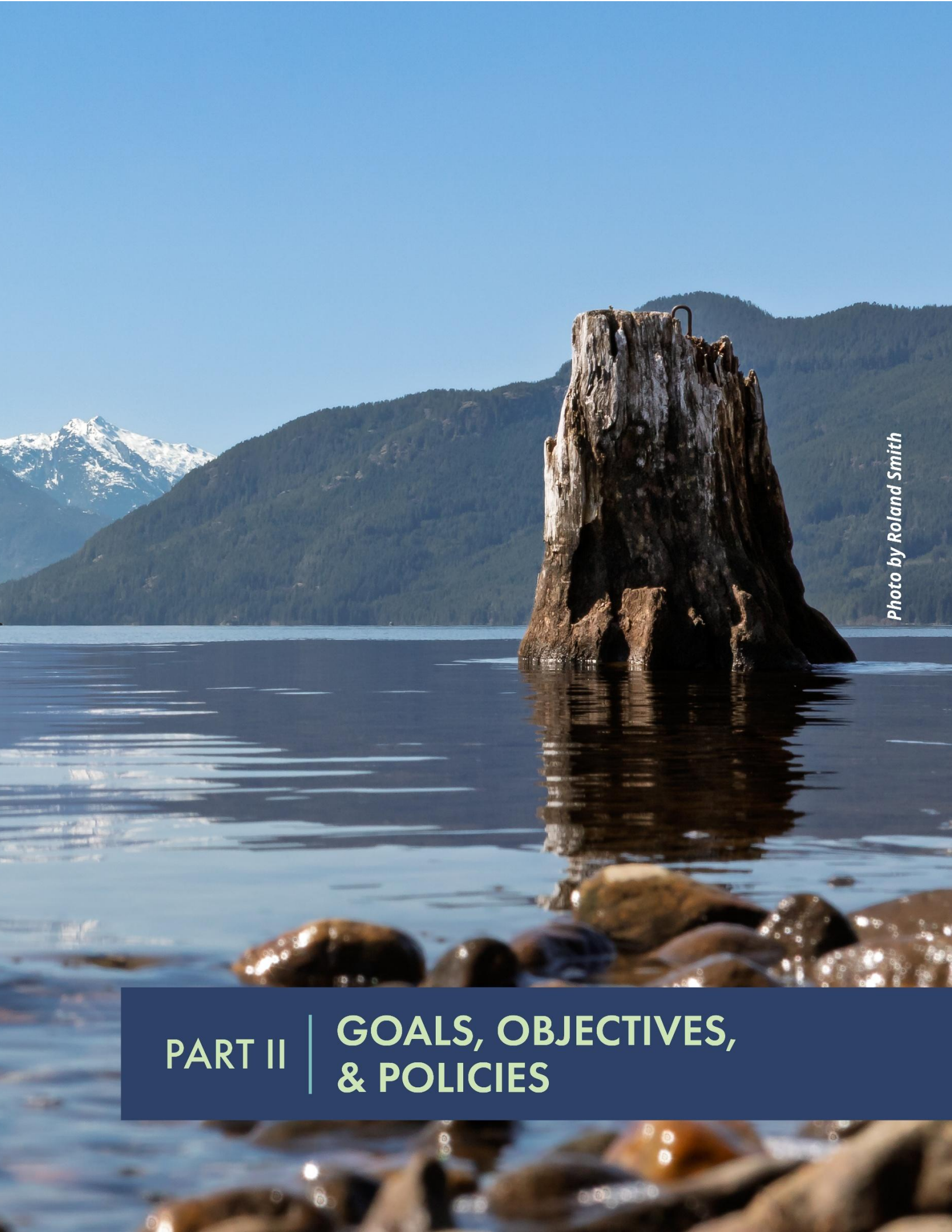


Photo by Roland Smith

PART II | GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

3.0 VISION AND GOALS

3.1 SPROAT LAKE AND AREA VISION STATEMENT

The following vision statements aims to capture the sentiments and aspirations of residents for their community's future. This vision statement informs the policy direction of this plan.

3.1.1 SPROAT LAKE AND AREA

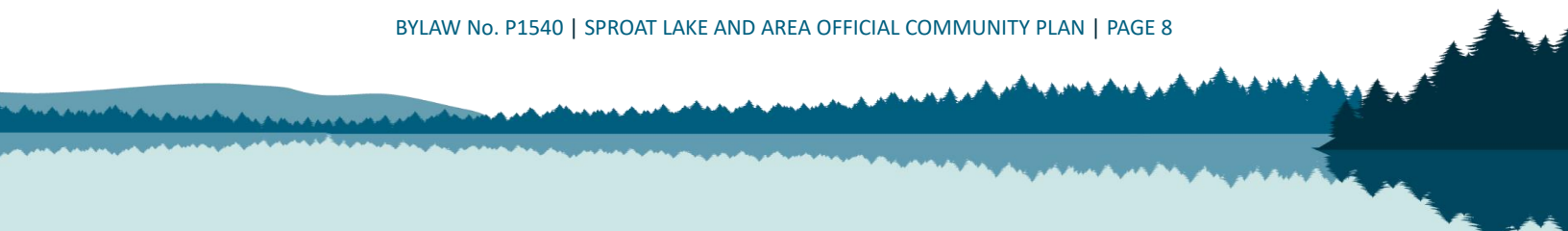
Sproat Lake and Area, located on the traditional territory of c̓šaaʔath̓ (Tseshaht First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation, is a community known for its beautiful lakes, rural character, and strong sense of community. Preserving rural character, supporting residential and recreational areas, maintaining water quality and fish habitat, and managing invasive species will be prioritized through environmental stewardship. Providing a community focal point around Sproat Lake, including community gathering spaces and neighbourhood-scale commercial activity, will be explored in key areas. Sustainable tourism will enhance the local economy, while parks and trails will be community oriented. Emergency preparedness will promote community safety and resiliency for all.

3.2 COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENTS

Area-specific vision statements are outlined in the following sections to reflect the unique nature of Sproat Lake and Area communities. These vision statements aim to complement the overarching vision statement for the Area while conveying the aspirations of residents within each of the sub-communities.

3.2.1 GREAT CENTRAL LAKE

Located at the edge of the pristine Great Central Lake, the quiet community adjacent to this waterbody is known for its recreational camping areas, float homes and access to exceptional outdoor recreation. Over the next 20 years, Great Central Lake will maintain its remote character and preserve its natural environment while providing more opportunities for housing. Protecting water quality, management of invasive species, adoption of improved emergency management and response practices, and better access to the lake will contribute to retaining and enhancing the community's quality of life.



3.2.2 CENTRAL LAKE ROAD

Central Lake Road, known locally as 'Little Germany', is a rural community blending agricultural and rural residential uses recognized for its peaceful connection to the surrounding natural environment and strong sense of community. The community aims to preserve its existing rural, agricultural character and relationship with the natural environment. The community will seek to achieve this goal over the next 20 years by maintaining thoughtful forms of low-density rural development, improving road infrastructure to address traffic safety concerns, and celebrating its unique history.

3.2.3 AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Recognized for their vital role in local food security, agricultural areas will support thriving farms and environmentally sustainable practices. To improve farm success, improvements to regulations, water supply, food processing, invasive species management, and compost availability will be explored to support future prosperity.

3.3 GOAL STATEMENTS

The following goals are intended to support the community's vision, while informing the specific objectives and policies established in Sections 4.0 and 5.0 of this OCP.

3.3.1 ENVIRONMENT

Preserve and protect natural areas and ecologically significant habitats, including through Development Permit Areas and improved monitoring.

- Preserve the health of natural areas with an emphasis on maintaining high water quality and preserving fish health in lakes, rivers, streams and aquifers.
- Encourage the removal of invasive species from all land use designations including the Alberni Valley Regional Airport and the Alberni Valley Sort'nGo Centre to promote restoration of ecologically significant habitats.

Advocate to the Provincial Government to modernize dam and weir infrastructure.

- Advocate to modernize dam and weir infrastructure to better regulate water levels within the community and promote resident safety and fish health.

Increase the diversion rate of solid waste.

- Find solutions to reduce waste generation, increase diversion, and promote reuse within the community.

Support local organizations and community members with environmental stewardship endeavours.

- Support environmental stewardship by collaborating with local organizations and empowering community members.

3.3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Support food security and commercial agriculture.

- Find solutions for increasing agricultural activities on parcels designated as Agricultural Land Reserve and support food security at every parcel size.

Reduce regulatory barriers to agricultural development.

- Review and update existing regulations to reduce barriers for food system development. Advocate to provincial and federal agencies for regulatory updates when applicable.

Support Indigenous food sovereignty through supporting access to traditional food harvesting lands and watercourse preservation.

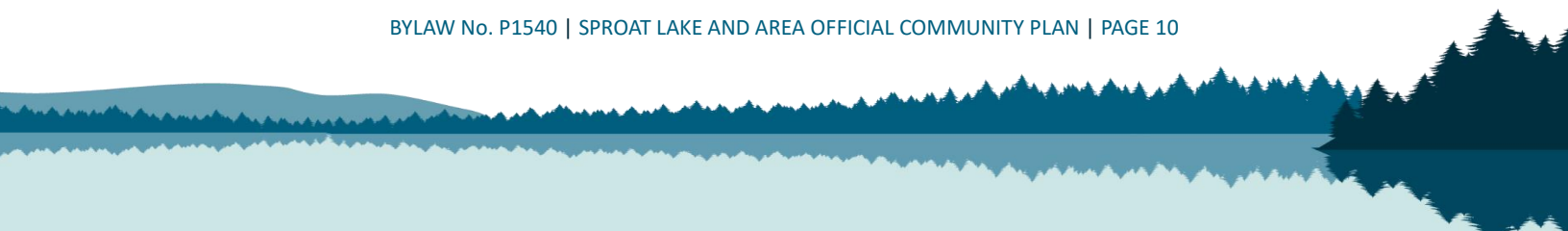
- Consult with First Nations to reduce barriers to accessing traditional foods on both land - and water-based ecosystems.

Support food processing facilities.

- Encourage the development of food processing facilities, such as abattoirs.

Preserve water supply for agricultural purposes, including food production and processing.

- Support strategies for increasing water supply available for food production and processing.



3.3.3 GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND HOUSING

Support housing options that recognize Sproat Lake and Area's rural qualities.

- Support the development of housing that complements the rural character of Sproat Lake and Area. Options that meet the evolving needs of the community, encourage and welcome families, and provide for an ageing population are prioritized.
- Maintain larger lot sizes and encourage the development of accessory dwelling units where parcels can support on-site wastewater management and water supply.

Advocate for improved road maintenance and safety measures.

- As development occurs, advocate to the Ministry of Transportation and Transit and other provincial agencies for improved road maintenance and safety measures, including the widening of shoulders.

3.3.4 RECONCILIATION

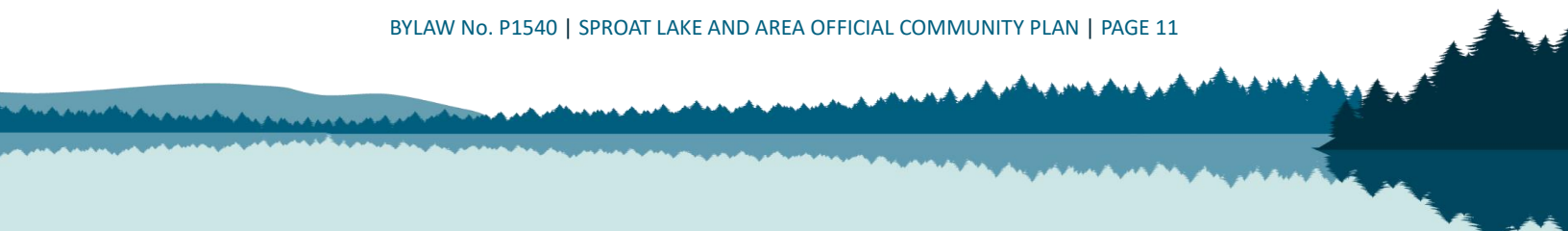
Foster strong, collaborative partnerships with local First Nations.

- Continue to build strong relationships with c̓išaaʔath (Tseshaht First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation, to facilitate meaningful partnerships.
- Engage in collaborative decision-making on key priorities such as economic opportunities and shared stewardship of the natural environment.

3.3.5 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Enhance emergency management measures to strengthen regional resilience.

- Advance the four pillars of emergency management - mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Promote community awareness and preparedness to protect health, safety, and wellness during emergencies.
- Prioritize actions that reduce disaster risk, improve response activities, and mitigate the impacts of emergencies and disasters.
- Strengthen strategies to address hazards such as wildfires, tsunamis, flooding, drought, poor air quality, and earthquakes by collaborating with neighbouring



communities.

3.3.6 EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

Foster a resilient local economy.

- Promote a sustainable year-round economy that is compatible with the preservation of Sproat Lake and Area's rural lifestyle. Home-based occupations and small businesses along with agriculture and low-impact tourism are supported and encouraged.
- Support the development of a small-scale commercial hub where community members can buy necessities.
- Explore how policies can support the long-term development of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport, which is a significant economic asset to the region.

3.3.7 PARKS AND TRAILS

Expand the network of trails and outdoor gathering spaces.

- Provide opportunity for all community members to enjoy Sproat Lake and Area's natural and recreational attractions.
- Continue to advocate for safe and accessible infrastructure to expand walking and cycling networks



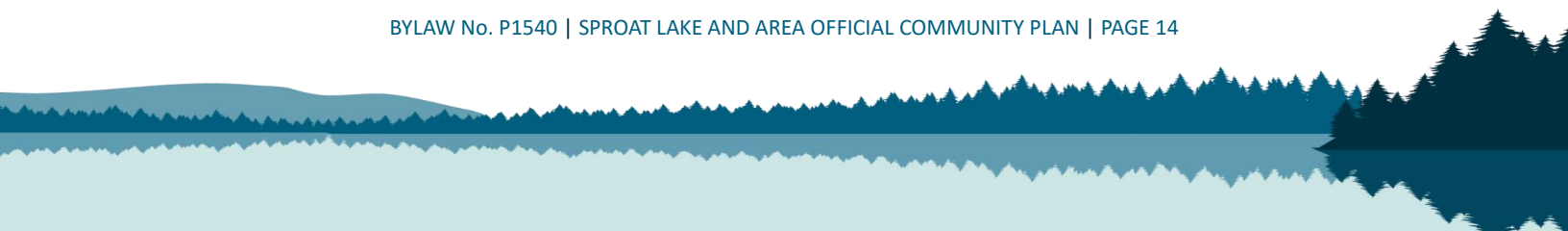
Photo by Steve Kendall

4.0 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

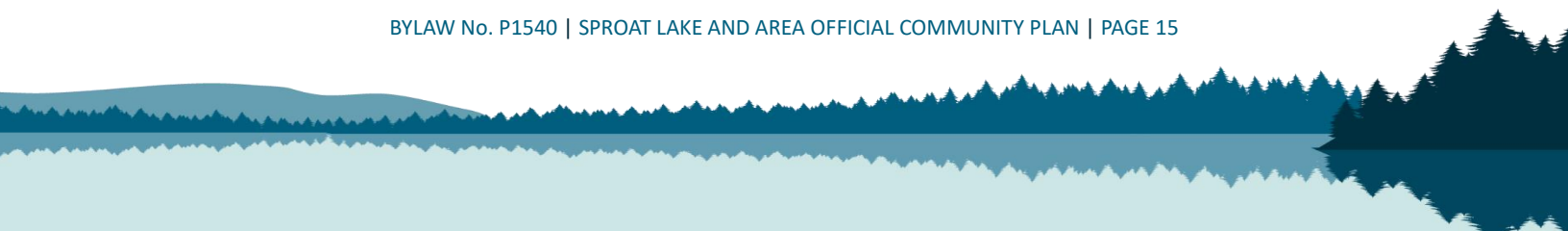
The Land Use Designations found in this section describe the future land uses of Sproat Lake and Area, as shown on Schedule B – Land Use Designations. The table below provides an overview of the Land Use Designations comprising this OCP. Lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve are subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, including regulations under it, and the orders of the Agricultural Land Commission, which take precedence over this OCP on matters of land use and subdivision within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
Agriculture	Areas designated for agricultural activities with an emphasis on the long-term preservation of the land for agricultural uses and food production.	Agricultural uses and food production, such as farming; ranching; processing of farm products that are grown and raised on local farmlands. Uses shall be consistent with the <i>Agricultural Land Commission Act</i> and Regulations. Interim uses of agricultural lands, such as silviculture; open space; and recreational uses that will not impair the future viability of the land for agriculture or food production can be permitted. Minimum Lot Size: 4 hectares

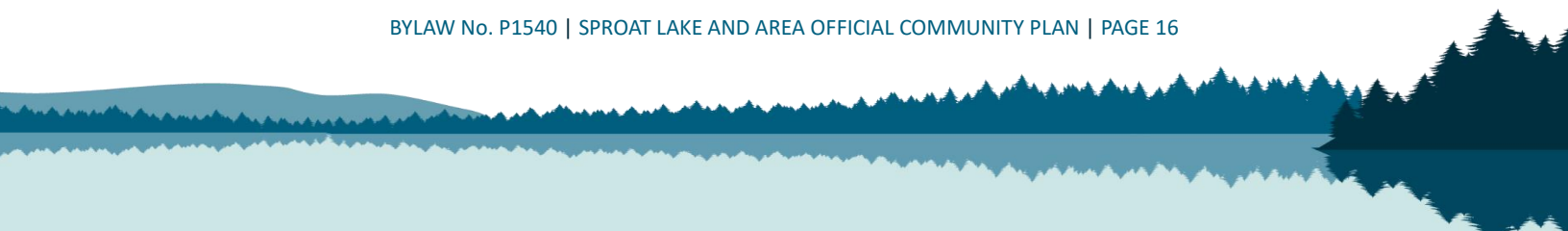
DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
Airport	The land within the Alberni Valley Regional Airport used for airport services, businesses, industrial, and recreational activities that complement the aviation focus of the lands.	Airport operations and aviation-related uses. The designation also supports aviation-compatible uses, including light industry; commercial; storage and warehousing; manufacturing and fabrication; business and industrial parks; institutional; and recreational uses. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Civic	Encapsulates all civic uses, including community amenities, services, utilities, fish hatcheries, the Alberni Valley Sort'nGo Centre, the Great Central Lake boat launch, the Sproat Lake Community Hall, the City of Port Alberni sewage lagoon facility located at the mouth of the Somass River, as well as other institutional uses.	Public, not-for-profit and privately owned facilities, services, and institutional uses. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Commercial	Areas where commercial operations serving full-time residents, seasonal residents, property owners, and visiting tourists are to be concentrated, including small-scale commercial uses, tourist activities, and tourist accommodations.	Small-scale provision of commercial services and related retail sales, including professional and personal services; health services; retail sales; food services; recreation services; tourist services and accommodations; campgrounds and cottages; short-term vacation rentals; and any ancillary



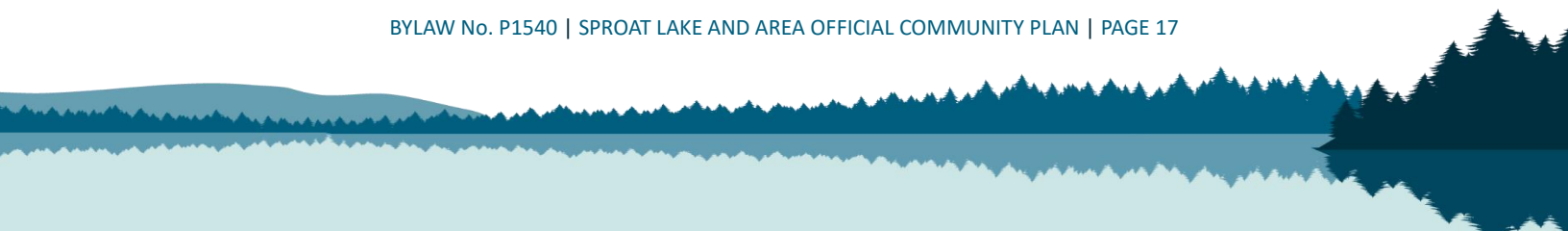
DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
		administration and caretaker uses. Minimum Lot Size: 1 hectare where serviced by individual on-site water and sewer systems; or 0.24 hectare where serviced by either communal water system or communal sewer system, or both.
Comprehensive Development	Designates large tracts of land and establishes high-level guiding principles for parcel or area-specific development that may occur in phases and comprise a mix of uses. Where development is proposed, comprehensive land use plans will be required for properties within this designation that takes into consideration unique features of the specific site.	Mixed-use development, with an emphasis on multi-unit residential, commercial, small-scale industrial, park, and civic uses, in compliance with the appropriate legislation and meeting any servicing requirements. Minimum Lot Size: 1 hectare where serviced by individual on-site water and sewer systems; or 0.24 hectare where serviced by either communal water system or communal sewer system, or both.
Conservation	Aquatic and terrestrial areas of ecological significance providing habitat diversity and invaluable ecological services. These lands are designated for enhancement of ecological values and preservation from development, construction, camping, and overnight mooring.	Uses that do not infringe upon the ecological function and preservation of the area, such as conservation areas; wildlife sanctuaries; low-impact recreation (walking trails), traditional harvesting and foraging of culturally important foods and plants;



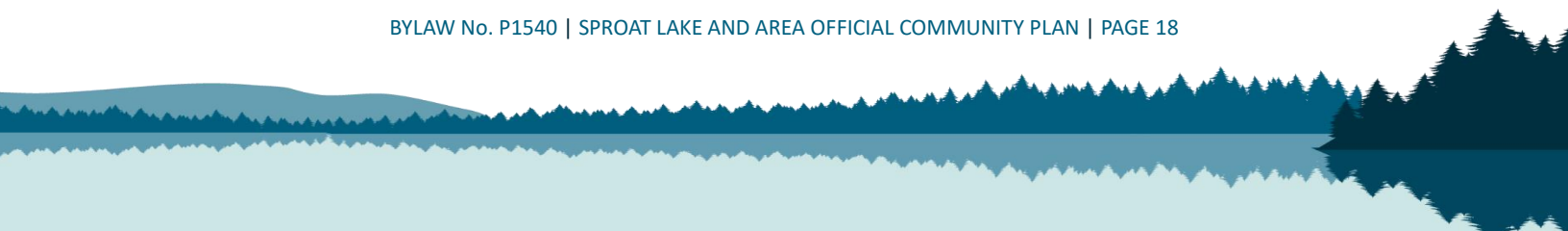
DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
		and small-scale forestry practices. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Float Home	Existing areas designated for lawful float homes functioning as recreational and permanent residences located on the east shore of Great Central Lake.	Float home specific uses to support float home structures, maintenance, and watercraft storage. Float homes are only permitted within the area of Great Central Lake with the land use designation of Float Home. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Industry	Areas where existing employment lands are located, comprising both heavy and light industrial uses, as well as areas for the concentration of future employment lands. Uses under this designation are largely industrial in nature (e.g. manufacturing and fabrication), but could also include commercial operations (e.g., office).	Industrial uses such as manufacturing and processing; industrial equipment and materials yards; storage; wholesale trade and truck transport; utilities infrastructure; resource uses; and may also include any ancillary commercial, administrative, and caretaker uses. Minimum Lot Size: 1 hectare where serviced by individual on-site water and sewer systems; or 0.24 hectare where serviced by either communal water system or communal sewer system, or both.
Marina	Areas where the storage of boats, including the mooring of commercial houseboats, is permitted. The Marina use regulates the impact of	Boating specific uses such as watercraft storage and houseboat mooring, along with limited small-scale



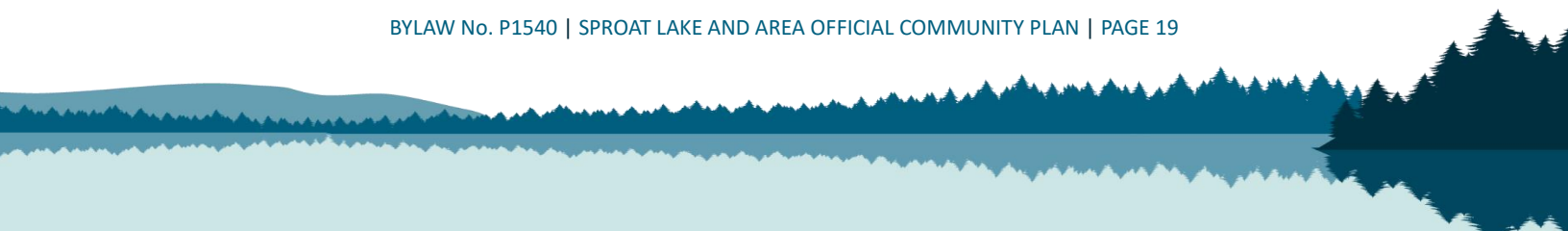
DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
	boating and watercraft moorage on Sproat and Great Central Lakes to minimize the impact that a wide variety of watercraft have on sensitive shorelines, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat.	commercial services oriented to water users. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Mobile Home Park	Areas designated for the continued use and presence of mobile home parks.	Mobile homes and low-density residential uses, including single-detached dwellings. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Parks and Trails	Existing trails, parks, greenspace, and other outdoor gathering space(s) designated for passive and active outdoor recreation by residents and tourists. The Parks and Trails designation comprises provincial, regional, community parks, and greenspace, as well as undeveloped areas that are suited for future park uses.	Passive or active recreation uses, including walkways; trails; playground equipment; wildlife sanctuaries; conservation areas; and nature interpretation areas. Community gardens, orchards or greenhouses may also be permitted as deemed appropriate by the ACRD. Minimum Lot Size: n/a
Recreational Residential Use	Low-density residential properties utilized as seasonal or recreational properties on Sproat Lake. Properties in this designation may not be adequately serviced or accessible for full-time residency and may not meet regulatory health and safety requirements for full-time occupation.	Part-time residential use for seasonal or recreational purposes for individuals and families maintaining permanent residence elsewhere. Short-term rental accommodation is not supported in this designation. Minimum Lot Size: 1 hectare where serviced by individual on-site water and



DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
		sewer systems; or 0.24 hectare where serviced by either communal water system or communal sewer system, or both.
Residential	Existing residential settlement areas, with or without servicing, where future development via acreage residential subdivisions and low-density residential development is intended to be focused within the community.	Low-density residential uses including single-detached dwellings, duplexes, secondary suites, and accessory dwelling units; home occupations; limited short-term rentals supported by a TUP; and small-scale agricultural uses. Minimum Lot Size: 1 hectare where serviced by individual on-site water and sewer systems; or 0.24 hectare where serviced by either communal water system or communal sewer system, or both.
Resource	Large tracts of privately- and Crown-owned lands valued and used for resource development, including First Nations traditional harvesting and foraging of culturally important foods and plants including cedar bark, forestry practices, and resource extraction activities. These lands contain known sand and gravel deposits. The Resource designation contributes significantly to the character of Sproat Lake and Area	Forestry; forestry-related activities; agriculture; natural resource extraction; power-generation facilities; and communications facilities. Minimum Lot Size: 16 hectares



DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED USES
	through its importance in generating economic activity and employment, protecting wildlife habitat, maintaining drinking water source protection and other aesthetic and environmental functions.	
Rural	Large, unserviced lots intended for low-density residential uses, small-scale agriculture, home occupations, and home industry uses where appropriate.	Low-density residential uses including single-detached dwellings, secondary suites, and accessory dwelling units; home occupations and home industry; limited short-term rentals supported by a TUP; and agricultural uses. Minimum Lot Size: 2 hectares
Rural Central Lake	Existing rural-residential and agricultural settlement area on Central Lake Road known locally as “Little Germany” that comprises a mix of low-density residential uses, home occupations and home industry, and agricultural uses. To respect the area’s existing community character and reduce adverse effects on the local aquifer, commercial and industrial uses are discouraged in this designation.	Low-density residential uses including single-detached dwellings; accessory dwelling units and secondary suites; home occupations and home industry; and agricultural uses compatible with the specific form and character of the neighbourhood. Minimum Lot Size: 2 hectares



4.1 GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The objectives and policies in this section provide direction for growth management, development approvals, and zoning that apply to the entire Plan Area of this OCP. Additional land use policies are included throughout the Core Policies established in Section 5.0.

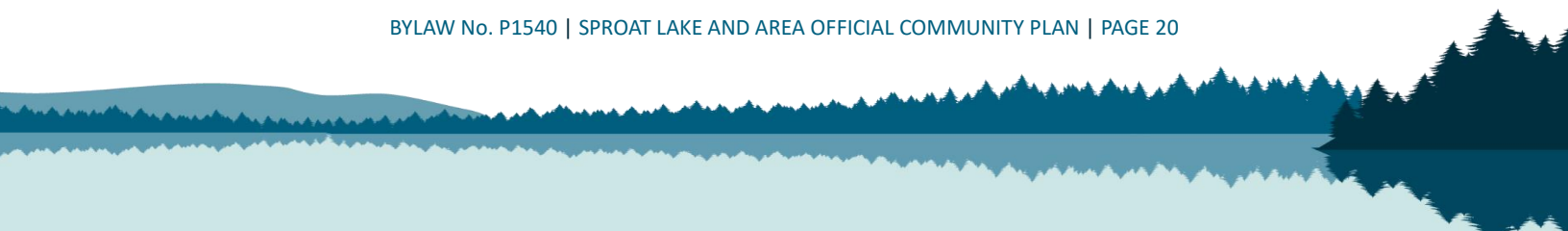
4.1.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Facilitate development that responds to the evolving needs of Sproat Lake and Area residents.
- b) Retain the Area's existing character and ensure any new development is complementary to the existing rural nature.
- c) Minimize the potential for land use conflicts and danger from natural or climate-related hazards.
- d) Mitigate and manage potential negative impacts of development on the quality of drinking water sources, such as lakes and aquifers.

4.1.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

- a) Where new development is feasible, ensure that:
 - i. the development complements the character and scale of existing development and land uses;
 - ii. the proposed development does not result in remnant parcels that cannot be serviced, accessed, or are otherwise impractical to develop;
 - iii. natural features such as streams, lakes, and wetlands are preserved;
 - iv. a thorough development referral process is followed and facilitates consultation with First Nation neighbours where necessary.
- b) Discourage commercial or industrial development applications on lands designated as Rural, Rural Central Lake, or Residential.
- c) Maintain agriculturally designated lands for farming purposes and uphold the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.



- d) Amend land use designations and applicable DPA Guidelines to reflect current community planning principles as needed.
- e) Engage with community members to explore options for regulating short-term rentals in Sproat Lake and Area.
- f) Discourage additional Marina uses at Sproat Lake.
- g) Identify locations where sand and gravel deposits are present in the area.
- h) Pursue the development of an incorporation study for Electoral Area "D."

4.2 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Development designation applies to lands considered appropriate for future development that are subject to unique conditions and environmental features requiring site specific comprehensive land use planning and design. Developers may propose projects that are completed in phases or comprise a mix of uses. Proposals for development in Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs) are required to include a comprehensive land use plan. Developments in CDAs may include multiple properties, infrastructure, environmental or archaeological considerations and long-term planning. Proposals will be considered with input and involvement from residents and property owners to a greater extent than other development applications.

4.2.2 OBJECTIVE

- a) Provide opportunities for comprehensive development planning by designating appropriate lands under a Comprehensive Development designation and creating the necessary policy framework to enable new developments.

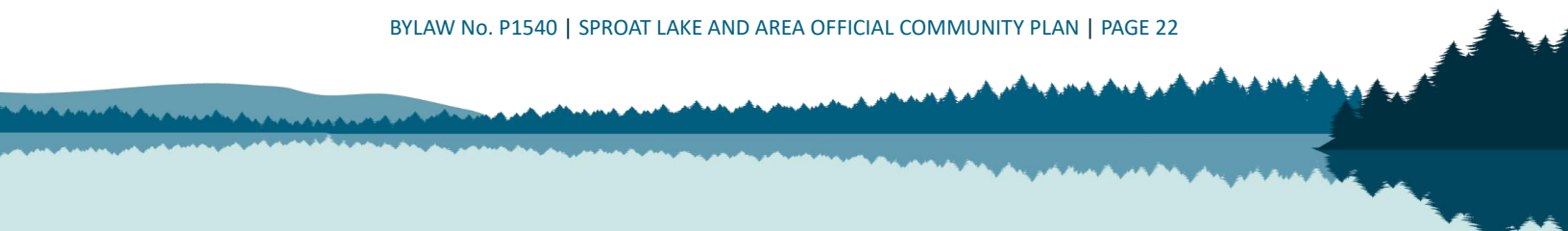
4.2.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

- a) Require the submission of a CDA plan to outline the details of the proposed development and inform subsequent applications for rezoning.
- b) Ensure development respects the unique features of the affected site, as well as the rural form and character of surrounding areas.
- c) Consider comprehensive development proposals only where community

infrastructure may be extended sequentially and cost-effectively, or where on-site servicing can be suitably accommodated.

- d) Ensure the proposed development avoids or mitigates any impacts on community aquifers and water quality.
- e) Ensure any hillside and environmentally sensitive areas are protected through park dedication (beyond the usable land dedication requirements identified in Section 5.8.3, registration of a restrictive covenant, or other mechanisms in alignment with applicable DPAs for such features).
- f) Encourage green building and landscaping strategies for all new comprehensive developments to conserve water and energy resources as well as reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ensure climate resiliency.
- g) Consider opportunities to allow for residential densities beyond existing permissions where affordable housing units are proposed, so long as servicing requirements can be met, the development is informed by and compatible with adjacent uses and the existing community character, and is in accordance with Section 5.4.3.
- h) Encourage comprehensive development that protects existing community amenities, aligns with desired community land uses, and creates an appropriate transition between existing land uses.
- i) Encourage comprehensive development that integrates universal access design standards.



5.0 CORE POLICIES

The policies and objectives found in this section pertain to the entire Plan Area and are intended to ensure that future development aligns with the community's vision and goals. Over the next 20 years, these policies will provide a decision-making framework to guide development and land use throughout Sproat Lake and Area.

The core policies have been developed after survey data analysis, and conversations with community members, community groups, First Nations and others. The core policies emerged from initial community engagement that created the community's vision and goal statements. These core policies are woven throughout the OCP and are intended to organize objectives and policies into achievable actions.

Core policies include:

- Environment
- Agriculture and Food Security
- Growth Management
- Housing
- Reconciliation
- Emergency Management
- Employment and Economy
- Parks and Trails



5.1 ENVIRONMENT

5.1.1 INTRODUCTION

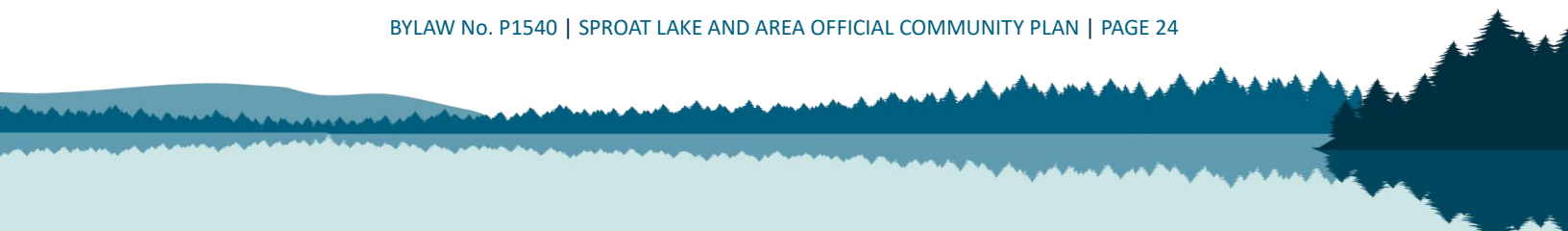
The OCP area is remarkable for the quality of its physical environment. Residents enjoy spectacular mountain views, boating on large lakes, and hiking through old growth forests. The natural environment is fundamental to the community's identity, providing clean water resources, wildlife habitats, and a valued rural landscape. The region encompasses wetlands and riparian areas, forests, wildlife corridors, and sensitive ecological areas that are vital for biodiversity, climate resilience, and the community's overall well-being. Anchored by Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake, the protection of these environmental features is critical for maintaining water quality, supporting fish and wildlife populations, and mitigating risks associated with natural and climate-related hazards such as wildfires and floods.

Water plays a vital role, as both quality and supply are essential for drinking water, agriculture, recreation, and maintaining healthy aquatic ecosystems. Residents are mindful of the importance of preserving this asset. Since the area does not have community water or sewer infrastructure, residents depend on surface water sources or wells for drinking water supply and private on-site septic systems for sanitary waste management. Preserving natural water sources is fundamental for community and environmental health.

Objectives and policies in this section are intended to guide the stewardship, restoration, and long-term conservation of these natural systems and support a resilient community.

5.1.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Maintain water quality and efforts to sustain water levels in Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake to protect fish and wildlife habitat, and to strengthen long-term ecological resilience.
- b) Protect drinking water through the conservation and enhancement of surface, ground, and aquifer water sources.
- c) Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of septic systems to protect drinking water sources and the natural environment and advocate to Island Health to monitor and flag failing systems.
- d) Promote responsible marine stewardship by advocating for and collaborating with federal and provincial authorities on safe, environmentally sensitive boating and



foreshore use.

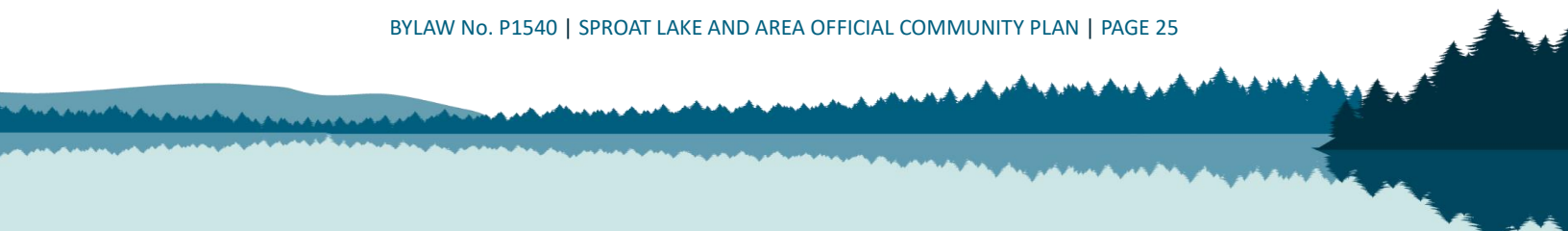
- e) Work towards consultation with residents and property owners, community groups, and interested parties to foster regional ecological connectivity, environmental stewardship, and conservation.
- f) Preserve and enhance natural areas to:
 - i. promote carbon capture and stormwater management;
 - ii. strengthen community resilience to environmental hazards and climate change;
 - iii. improve the connectivity of environmentally sensitive areas to enhance biodiversity and ecological function;
 - iv. minimize habitat loss and fragmentation of environmentally sensitive areas and rehabilitate previously degraded or fragmented environmentally sensitive areas.
- g) Support and facilitate actions for the removal of invasive species to enhance natural areas and biodiversity.
- h) Maintain and enhance solid waste management options and practices.
- i) Facilitate the reduction of community greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from 2007 baseline levels.

5.1.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

Environmental Protection and Stewardship

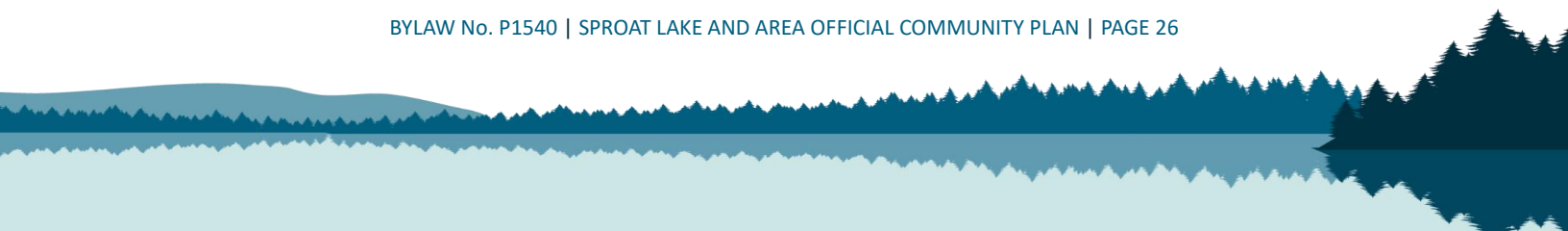
- a) Preserve and enhance environmentally sensitive areas to protect biodiversity and ecological function. Explore opportunities in consultation with provincial authorities to designate publicly owned environmentally sensitive lands to the Conservation land use designation, where appropriate (e.g. the Somass Estuary and the Taylor River flats).
- b) Support removal of invasive species by:
 - i. collaborating with property owners and interested parties on regional invasive species removal projects, including public education;
 - ii. encouraging community-led invasive species removal and replanting efforts;



- iii. exploring additional opportunities for invasive species removal such as reduced tipping fees, or curbside pickup programs.
- c) Consult with residents, property owners, community groups, and interested parties to strengthen ecological networks and wildlife corridors.
- d) Collaborate with private landowners and Crown corporations to balance the preservation of environmentally significant areas and extracting resources on lands designated as Resource, where appropriate.
- e) Encourage lakefront property owners to limit lighting on docks, dock approaches and shorelines to preserve and protect fish habitat on Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake.

Water Quality

- f) Explore opportunities, where grant funding is available, to conduct a watershed report in partnership with residents, property owners, and all interested parties to understand the long-term health of Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake.
- g) Establish a collaborative watershed committee comprised of residents and property owners, and all interested parties, focusing on implementing local policy solutions to protect and enhance regional watersheds and aquifers.
- h) Permit only those structures, such as new moorage and dock structures on the foreshore, that comply with all applicable provincial and federal regulations and Development Permit Area guidelines.
- i) Continue to advocate to federal and provincial authorities to implement and enforce boating rules and best practices that protect lake water quality and sensitive ecosystems:
 - i. to establish a “slow – no wake” speed limit near highly-populated residential areas on Sproat Lake and adjacent to farmland along the Somass, Sproat, and Stamp Rivers;
 - ii. to support the Sproat Lake Marine Patrol to familiarize boaters and lakeshore residents with federal and provincial rules and regulations for safe, courteous and sensitive use of the water and the foreshore at formalized boat launch locations;
- j) Lobby relevant agencies for continued upkeep and maintenance of both provincial



and privately-owned weirs and dams in Sproat Lake and Area.

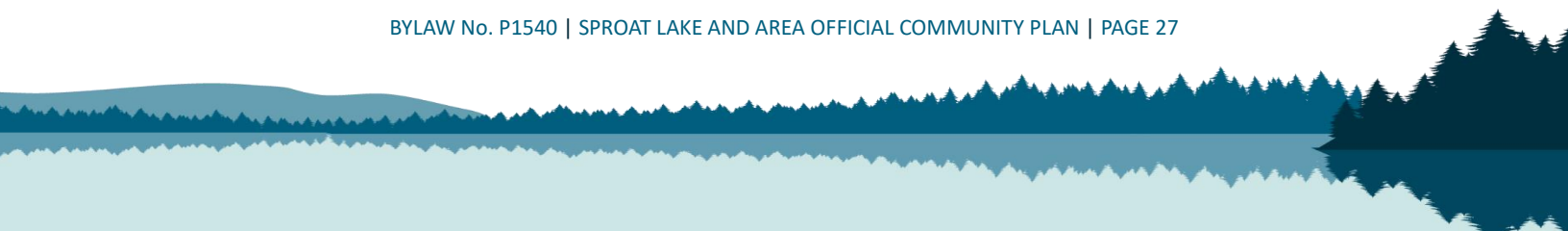
- k) Lobby Island Health to facilitate additional assessment of dysfunctional septic systems within DPA I.
- l) Promote public awareness on the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, cleaning products and vehicle fluids that may enter lakes and negatively affect water quality, sensitive ecosystems, and fish and wildlife habitats.
- m) Support water conservation initiatives and encourage residents, short-term rental operators, farms, and all new and existing development to consider water use reduction strategies and rainwater capture/storage.

Partnerships

- n) Build collaboration with residents and property owners, community groups, and other interested groups on initiatives including biodiversity corridors, protection of forests, climate adaptation, GHG emissions reduction, regional food security, and shared ecosystem management priorities.

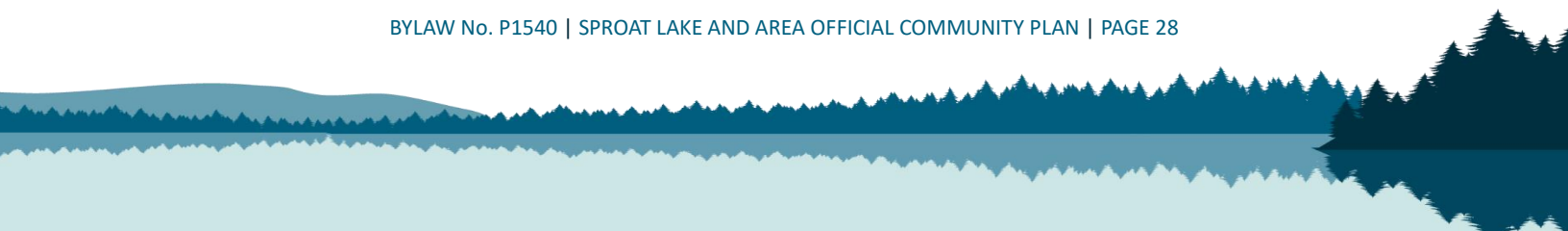
Management of Solid Waste

- o) Explore opportunities with First Nations to increase the Alberni Valley Landfill diversion rate by reducing commercial and construction waste, expanding organics programs, and promoting recycling throughout the community.
- p) Engage with residents and property owners, community groups, local businesses, and other interested parties to promote solid waste reduction and the circular economy.
- q) Support fair cost recovery through the imposition of a modernized tipping fee structure that targets users disposing of high volumes of waste.
- r) Implement the recommendations of the *Solid Waste Management Plan*.
- s) Explore opportunities to collaborate with private landowners, provincial agencies, and interested parties on education and incentives to reduce illegal dumping.
- t) Seek grant funding opportunities and collaborate with federal and provincial authorities to remove abandoned boats, docks, and other derelict infrastructure from Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake.



Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

- u) Seek to achieve a target of a 40% reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from 2007 levels by 2040 by:
 - i. undertaking studies to better understand the existing GHG emissions profile of Sproat Lake and Area, and identifying opportunities and strategies for reducing emissions levels;
 - ii. creating a community emissions reduction plan that establishes clear actions for reducing community GHG emissions;
 - iii. developing a climate mitigation strategy that provides a clear path to achieving the GHG reduction target by collaborating with adjacent local governments, including education and incentives to decarbonize the existing built environment;
 - iv. encouraging retrofitting of older buildings and green construction of new buildings to achieve energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions;
 - v. working with partners to support installation of electric vehicle chargers;
 - vi. expanding incentives to improve the efficiency of woodstoves and encourage emissions-free heating sources;
 - vii. creating incentives for solar systems and energy storage;
 - viii. acquiring green spaces through subdivision and development and incentivizing tree planting to contribute to climate change mitigation;
 - ix. supporting nature-based climate adaptation solutions which help prevent climate hazard damage and promote carbon sequestration;
 - x. finalizing and implementing the *ACRD Solid Waste Management Plan* to expand organics diversion to commercial businesses and multi-family homes and reduce landfill GHG emissions;
 - xi. supporting educational campaigns for emissions reduction, engagement initiatives by citizens, businesses, and the school district.



5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

5.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Agriculture and food security are foundational to the long-term resilience, rural character, and community well-being of Sproat Lake and Area. The local food system must consider the full food cycle: production, harvesting, processing, distribution, consumption, and composting. Considering both small-scale farms and larger commercial activities for local food security is critical for sustainability in the future. The Agricultural Land Reserve is another important support for farming and long-term agricultural viability.

Given the region's vulnerabilities to natural hazards and weather events, limited food self-sufficiency, and dependence on external supply chains, the objectives and policies in this section aim to strengthen local food system resilience and support more reliable access to locally sourced food year-round.

5.2.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Work to foster regional agricultural and food sovereignty initiatives and food security in collaboration with all interested partners.
- b) Strengthen agriculture and local food systems by protecting farmland and expanding farm uses, production, and processing on agricultural lands.
- c) Protect, sustain, and enhance water resources and systems for agricultural use.
- d) Enable a sustainable and resilient food and agriculture system to promote increased self-sufficiency.

5.2.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

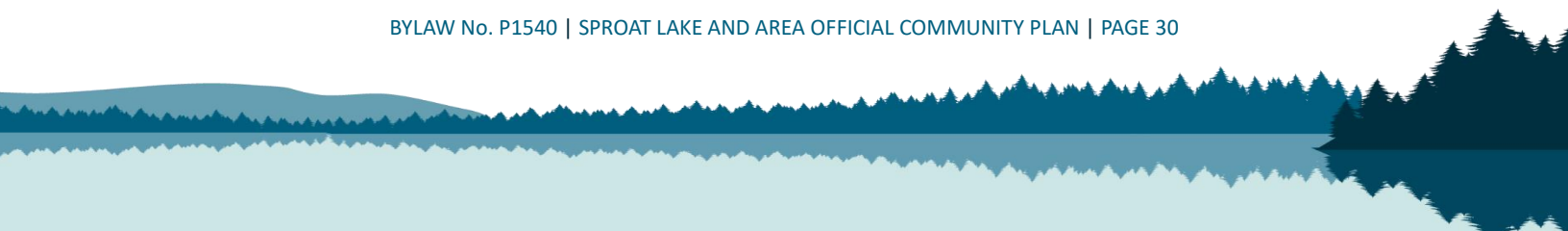
Regional Food Systems

- a) Collaborate with interested parties on regional agriculture and food security initiatives, including public education to promote the relationship between food systems, human well-being, and environmental protection.
- b) Collaborate with interested parties to develop long-term solutions to sustainably manage organic waste through the generation of soil suitable for food production.

- c) Support partnerships that improve the production, harvesting, processing, distribution, and sharing of food between residents and with neighbouring communities.
- d) Support initiatives that increase local food production/harvesting of products raised on farms within the Alberni Valley, enhance agricultural activities, and provide opportunities for the sale of local food products throughout the region to increase food security and self-sufficiency.
- e) Consider opportunities to address barriers to accessing safe, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food for all residents through the establishment of community food hubs.

Local Food Systems and Food Security

- f) Encourage edible landscaping, community gardens, small-scale agriculture, and greenhouses in existing settlement areas and on vacant or underutilized parcels, in conjunction with WildSafe and FireSmart principles.
- g) Support agricultural processing opportunities on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve for farm products raised or grown on local farmlands, consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, including:
 - i. opportunities for farm product processing facilities for local products;
 - ii. opportunities for abattoir facilities.
- h) Protect traditional harvesting lands and practices that contribute to the Area's economic base, food security, character, cultural significance, and sense of place.
- i) Support the implementation of actions and recommendations from the *Alberni Valley Food Security Emergency Plan*.
- j) Pursue grant funding for refrigerated and frozen cold storage space equipped with back-up generators outside of the tsunami inundation zone.
- k) Support the implementation of recommendations and findings from the *Alberni Valley Livestock Emergency Plan*.
- l) Consider updates to the *Zoning Bylaw* to ensure small-scale land- and marine-based food production/harvesting, processing, warehousing, distribution, and related activities to enhance the local food system are permitted in those zones appropriate for such uses.

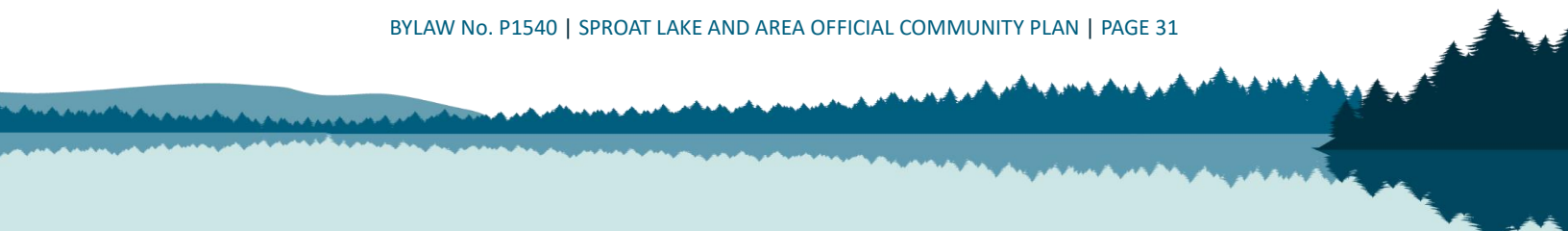


Agricultural Land Reserve

- m) Prioritize agriculture as the primary use on lands designated as Agriculture.
- n) Discourage the exclusion of agricultural lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- o) Discourage the subdivision of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve into parcels too small to support economically viable agricultural activities.
- p) Regulate temporary uses of Agriculture lands consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and ensure temporary uses will not impair future agricultural viability.
- q) Support applications to add Rural, Rural Central Lake, Agriculture, and Resource designated properties to the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Water Availability, Quality, and Protection

- r) Support the implementation of recommendations and findings from the *Alberni Valley Agricultural Water Plan*.
- s) Consider opportunities to improve access to community water for agricultural lands, where appropriate.
- t) Ensure that regional water planning accounts for the needs of agriculture and local food systems and identify and amend any existing regulations that create obstacles to accessing potable water.
- u) Identify opportunities to ensure the protection of lakes and rivers from agricultural runoff to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and ecologically sensitive areas.
- v) Consider opportunities to improve the use and storage of non-potable water for irrigation in support of both backyard and on-farm solutions including:
 - i. supporting drought-resistant farming practices and efficient irrigation methods;
 - ii. incentivizing residents and property owners to install on-site rainwater collection systems;
 - iii. supporting farmers in developing new dugouts and cisterns;
- w) Supporting changes to production methods that support more efficient use of water.



5.3 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

5.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Sproat Lake and Area community members want to preserve the existing rural character by keeping population density low, keeping home sizes small, and prioritizing rural development within the limits of existing infrastructure. Residents acknowledge many of the community's key challenges, including an ageing population, available housing options and difficulty attracting volunteers for important services such as the Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Objectives and policies in this section seek to balance preservation of the community's existing character while managing future growth thoughtfully and responsibly.

5.3.2 OBJECTIVES

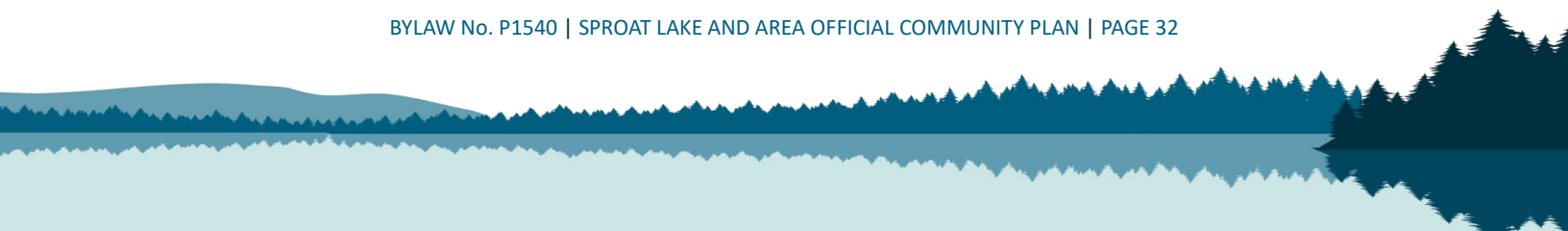
- a) Limit new development and concentrate it in areas with existing services, wherever possible.
- b) Preserve the rural character of Sproat Lake and Area.
- c) Maintain and enhance existing public infrastructure, services and amenities such as community gathering spaces.
- d) Balance growth with servicing and environmental constraints

5.3.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

Future Development

- a) Limit development in areas where surface water and aquifer quality and quantity would be impacted.
- b) Limit development in areas where on-site water and sanitary sewer systems cannot be accommodated in accordance with provincial and Island Health regulations.
- c) Require developers to pay for any infrastructure upgrades necessary to facilitate new development.
- d) Prioritize updates to ACRD bylaws to reflect the servicing constraints of lots by:
 - i. updating the *Zoning Bylaw*;



- ii. creating a subdivision and development servicing bylaw for Electoral Areas.
- e) Discourage development applications that propose to amend the Agricultural, Rural, and Rural Central Lake land use designations to facilitate additional density.
- f) Ensure placement and lighting of docks remains sensitive to views, impacts on adjacent properties, and orientation in relation to neighbouring docks.
- g) Update the *Development Procedures Bylaw* to:
 - i. clearly define the application review process;
 - ii. establish measures to improve efficiency and transparency;
 - iii. enhance public notification regarding permit issuance.

5.4 HOUSING

5.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Preserving the character of Sproat Lake and Area's existing neighbourhoods is important to residents. Community members generally support new residential development that complements the rural feel of the community in the form of additional accessory dwelling units and would prefer development to occur on non-lakefront properties. Residents tend to be conflicted on how best to regulate short-term rentals (STRs) in the community while recognizing that STRs contribute to the local economy and housing affordability for residents.

The *Electoral Area "D" (Sproat Lake) Housing Needs Report* anticipates that 297 additional housing units will be required by 2041 to address population growth alongside a need for more affordable, attainable, and diverse housing forms. Within the context of the OCP, housing is affordable when it costs less than 30% of the occupying household's before-tax income. The report highlighted that affordability is a key consideration in the community, with the median home price increasing 71% from 2019 to 2022. Efforts should focus on gently increasing the number of housing units where infrastructure can support it, ensuring all residents have access to suitable homes they can afford.

The objectives and policies in this section support housing forms that align with rural servicing capacity, environmental constraints, and community values to promote housing that meets the community's 20-year housing needs assessment.

5.4.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Understand what housing forms are most appropriate for the community and update regulations accordingly to enable these housing types.
- b) Improve housing affordability for residents.
- c) Consult the community to understand the future of short-term vacation rentals within Sproat Lake and Area.

5.4.3 POLICIES

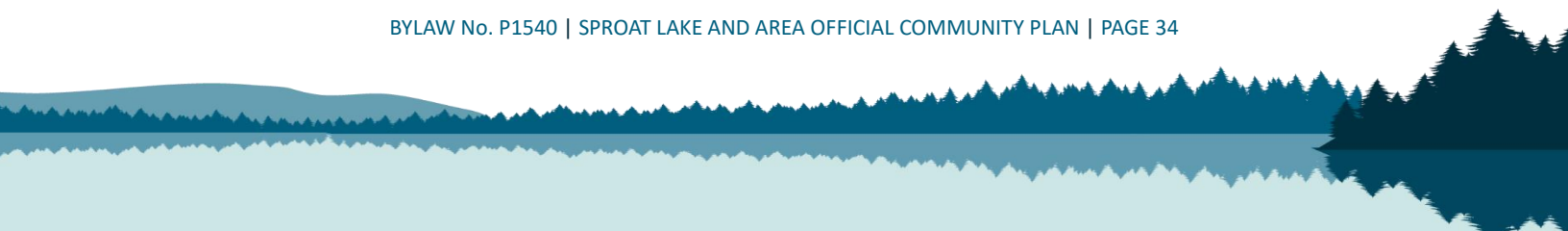
The ACRD shall:

General

- a) Support the development of new lots in the Recreational Residential designation only where access is provided either by dedicated roads or by forestry roads.
- b) Support the continued use of the existing mobile home parks on lots with the Mobile Home Park designation.

Housing Supply

- c) Support detached accessory dwelling units on lots designated as Rural, Rural Central Lake, Residential, Resource, or Comprehensive Development that are larger than 0.4 hectares (1 acre) in lot area. On-site servicing must be provided where such developments are proposed.
- d) Encourage the development of secondary suites attached to the principal dwelling on lots designated as Rural, Rural Central Lake, Residential, or Comprehensive Development with no minimum lot size and where the zoning permits residential-only uses. On-site servicing must be provided where such developments are proposed.
- e) Explore amendments to the *Zoning Bylaw* that enable additional flexibility of housing types, where servicing and environmental constraints can be addressed.
- f) Ensure housing located on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve complies with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- g) Explore opportunities to incentivize the development of long-term rental housing as a means of increasing long-term rental housing stock in the community.



- h) Consider exploring opportunities through partnership with other organizations to better facilitate ageing in place for residents.
- i) Explore additional opportunities to streamline the building approval process and remove cost barriers where appropriate to support improved delivery of housing.

Short-Term Rentals

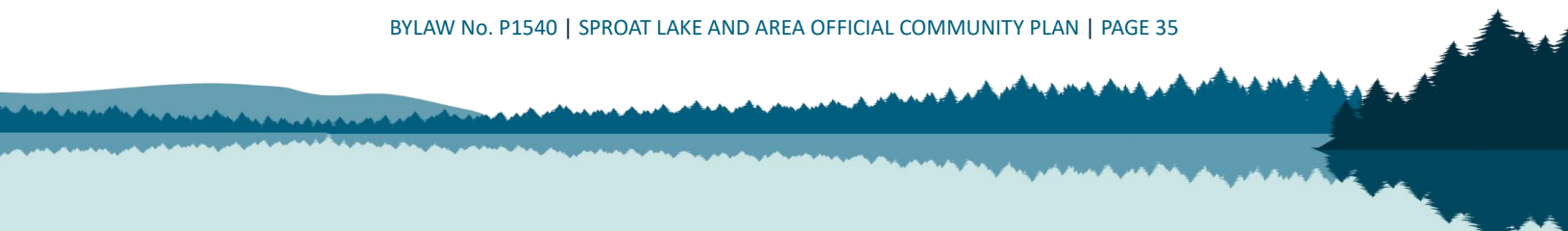
- j) Consider the use of a dwelling unit as a short-term rental in accordance with the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* and the *ACRD Short Term Vacation Rentals Temporary Use Permit Policy*.
- k) Engage and collaborate with residents to determine acceptable quantity, form, and location of legal short-term rental accommodation. Consider updates to the short-term rental policy accordingly.
- l) Encourage short-term rental (STR) operators or caretakers to reside on-site to better manage the short-term rental.
- m) Support enforcement actions taken by the Province to ensure compliance with the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act*.

Marine-Oriented Housing

- n) Permit the mooring of commercial houseboats only in areas designated for Marina as specified in the *Zoning Bylaw*.
- o) Strongly discourage an increase in the number of houseboats on Sproat Lake.
- p) Strongly discourage any development of float homes on Sproat Lake, any further development of float homes on Great Central Lake and only support the use and occupation of float homes at Great Central Lake within the existing area designated as Float Home.

Partnerships

- q) Collaborate on regional housing initiatives with provincial authorities, and other interested parties to:
 - i. explore opportunities related to housing that supports employers in the region.
 - ii. explore opportunities related to non-market housing, seniors housing, or



- accessible housing where appropriate and where grant funding is available.
- iii. support initiatives related to the provision of accessible housing opportunities and collaborate with local and regional accessibility advocacy groups.

5.5 RECONCILIATION

5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Sproat Lake and Area OCP is located within the traditional territories of c̓šaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshaht First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation. The ACRD recognizes the ongoing work of truth and reconciliation with c̓šaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshaht First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation, the continuing impacts of colonization, the Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) once located on c̓šaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshaht First Nation) territory, and the role the Regional District plays in moving forward with our neighbours in a good way. The ACRD is committed to supporting actions which, over time, strengthen relationships between First Nations and non-First Nation peoples.

This section outlines objectives and policies that demonstrate how the ACRD's commitment to reconciliation is integrated into community planning. The objectives and policies in this section aim to foster respectful government-to-government relationships, promote meaningful engagement, and embrace and uphold the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation.

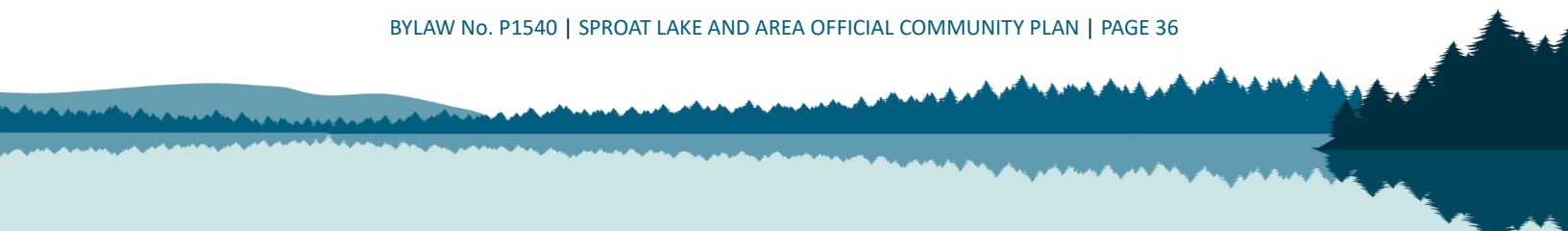
5.5.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Strengthen relationships to build trust, respect, and resiliency between the ACRD and its First Nations neighbours.
- b) Support traditions, knowledge, and efforts toward protecting the environment.
- c) Enhance opportunities for collaborative engagement regarding land use.

5.5.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

- a) Consult with c̓šaaʔaṭḥ (Tseshaht First Nation) and Hupačasath First Nation to identify opportunities where alignment exists.
- b) Support First Nation communities with seeking external grant funding opportunities.



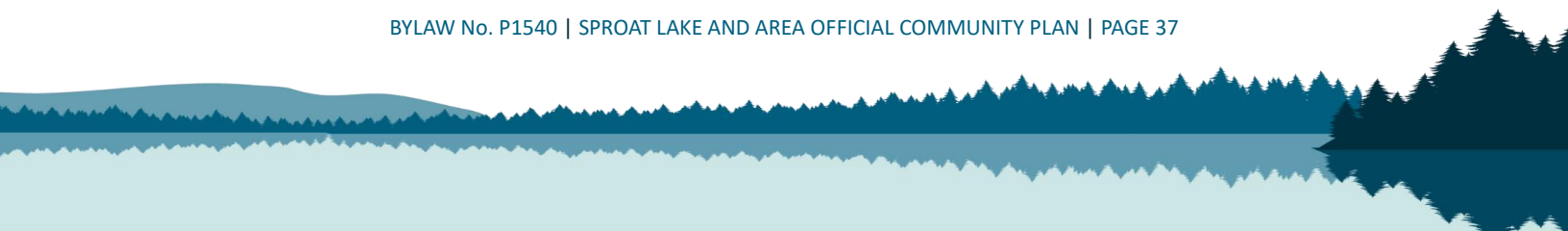
- c) Engage with First Nations to understand and support their priorities for stewardship, restoration, and protection of sensitive and other important ecosystems.
- d) Meaningfully consult with First Nations understanding that amendments to this Plan may affect their Nations' interests, particularly when:
 - i. land designations on Crown land or along community boundaries are under consideration, or
 - ii. proposed development could have an impact on water and salmon habitat.
- e) Understand and support priorities related to housing, economic development, tourism, food security and food sovereignty.
- f) Partner with First Nations to share in celebrating and enhancing public awareness of cultural histories and traditional territories through the integration of accessible signage, place-naming, plantings, art, and language into public spaces and ACRD communication materials.

5.6 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

5.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Sproat Lake and Area is exposed to a range of natural and climate-driven hazards, including extreme weather, drought, wildfires, flooding, sea level rise, earthquakes, poor air quality, and tsunamis. These events can disrupt essential services, require rapid evacuations, and cause transportation or supply chain interruptions that may severely affect daily life. Effective emergency management that protects Sproat Lake and Area relies on ongoing cooperation and coordination with c̓išaaʔath (Tseshaht First Nation), Hupačasath First Nation, the City of Port Alberni, private landowners, provincial agencies and community groups. These partnerships strengthen regional and community resilience and ensure planning reflects shared risks throughout the Alberni Valley.

Highway 4 provides the only roadway connection between the west and east coasts of Vancouver Island. There is a strong community desire to create an additional route in and out of the Alberni Valley for emergency purposes. The Ministry of Transportation and Transit is responsible for the management and maintenance of Highway 4, as well as all public roads in Sproat Lake and the Area.



Critical infrastructure and resources such as the Sproat Lake Fire Department, the Port Alberni/Sproat Lake Tanker Base Heliport, community water systems, and weirs play a vital role in keeping residents safe in the event of a wildfire or flood. Community members recognize the significant risk of natural and climate change-related hazards and support improved preparedness, mitigation, and coordinated response measures.

The objectives and policies in this section are intended to enhance long-term community safety and build resilience by pursuing collaborative decision-making, risk reduction, and increasing public awareness around emergency preparedness and response across all areas of risk.

5.6.2 OBJECTIVES

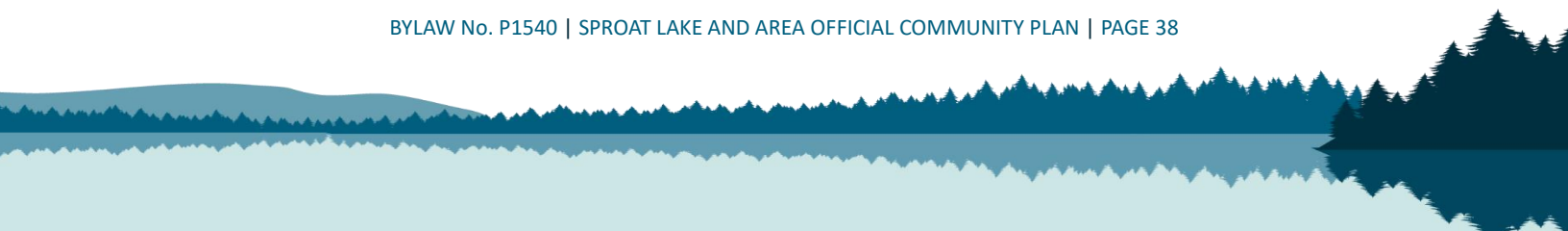
- a) Improve community safety through the provision of sufficient fire, rescue, and emergency services.
- b) Improve emergency preparedness, hazard mitigation, and climate adaptation in response to the increased frequency of climate-driven events, including wildfires, flooding, drought, sea level rise, and poor air quality, along with natural hazards such as earthquakes, and tsunamis.
- c) Ensure that accessibility and the needs of vulnerable populations are key principles of emergency management initiatives at both the regional and community level.

5.6.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

Emergency Management Services

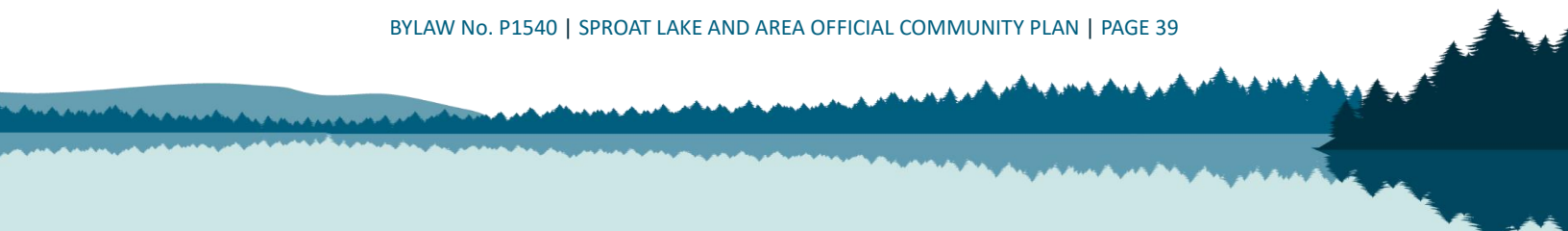
- a) Explore partnership opportunities to improve emergency response and hazard management efforts.
- b) Explore opportunities to improve regional emergency response planning and program coordination by:
 - i. incorporating accessibility considerations in future regional emergency response planning and program coordination;
 - ii. identifying opportunities to support improved cellular service;
 - iii. reviewing existing designated emergency routes to improve access and response times;



- iv. identifying opportunities to help reach isolated communities and vulnerable populations in emergencies.
- c) Support public education and emergency planning and preparedness efforts at the community level.
- d) Prioritize updates to the ACRD *Disaster and Emergency Management Plan* to ensure community members are equipped with the most recent information to maximize emergency preparedness.
- e) Incorporate considerations for vulnerable populations and those with accessibility needs in public education and emergency planning and preparedness efforts, including:
 - i. how persons with disabilities can access emergency services;
 - ii. ways that community members can support their neighbours who have disabilities in the event of an emergency;
 - iii. the responsibility of individuals to ensure that their emergency preparedness is appropriate for their needs.
- f) Seek grant funding to support the use of the Sproat Lake Community Hall for Emergency Support Services (ESS).
- g) Consider opportunities and incentives that support training and increase the number of volunteers in Emergency Support Services (ESS).
- h) Seek grant funding to support the continuation of the Sproat Lake Marine Patrol program in partnership with federal and provincial agencies, and First Nations.
- i) Seek grant funding opportunities and partnerships for the development of a disaster debris management plan to guide storage, disposal and recycling of materials generated by a natural disaster.

Emergency Access

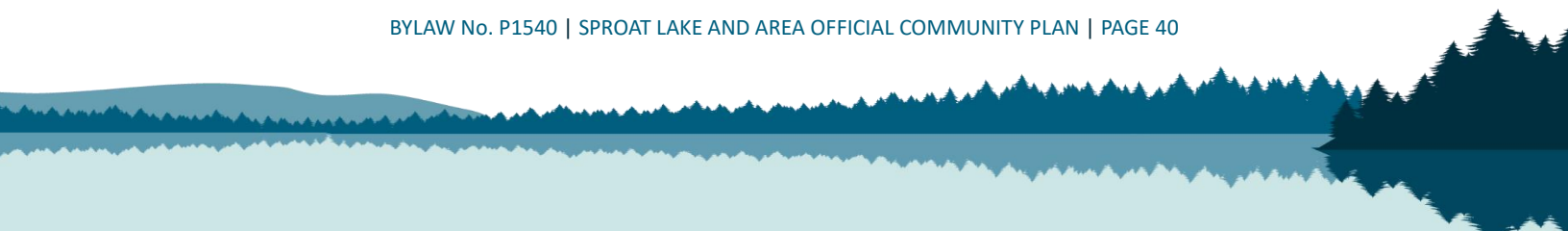
- j) Explore opportunities to improve access to the waterfront for emergency purposes.
- k) Lobby the Ministry of Forests to reopen and maintain the full length of Stirling Arm Main as a secondary evacuation route to Highway 4 for Sproat Lake residents.
- l) Recognize and support use of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport as critical infrastructure for:



- i. emergency response for equipment staging, medical professionals and first responders.
 - ii. transportation in and out of the Alberni Valley during extended periods where primary transportation routes are unavailable.
 - iii. supporting business continuity and community economic resilience
- m) Support the Ministry of Transportation and Transit and the Ministry of Forests in maintaining the Road Network Map as in Schedule N, in accordance with the following road classifications:
 - i. Highway: the Pacific Rim Highway (Highway 4) provides primary vehicular access to Sproat Lake and Area and serves as a major connection within the broader West Coast region's transportation network; all numbered highways are owned and maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.
 - ii. Arterial: McCoy Lake Road, Hector Road, Faber Road, Central Lake Road, Lakeshore Road, Stirling Arm Drive, Bell Road, and Stuart Avenue are critical local connections that serve higher vehicle volumes; these roads are owned and maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.
 - iii. Unpaved Resource: Unpaved Resource roads are located on Crown lands that are not part of the provincial highway system and are used to access natural resources. These roads are also known as Forest Service Roads and are managed via permit with the Ministry of Forests.

Wildfire

- n) Support local wildfire and interface fire risk reduction efforts through continued implementation of the *Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan*. Review and update the plan, as needed.
- o) Collaborate with provincial authorities, community groups and other parties on regional wildfire resiliency efforts.
- p) Identify community/forest interface areas that are at the highest risk of wildfire and pursue provincial funding and resources to:
 - i. undertake wildfire risk reduction and resiliency efforts in these interface areas;
 - ii. integrate FireSmart principles into land use planning, where applicable.



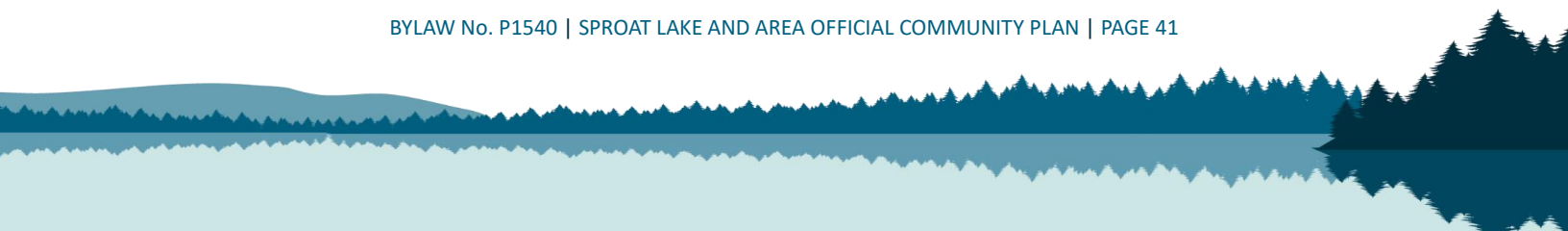
- q) Identify opportunities to increase public awareness and education about wildfires and FireSmart principles in collaboration with provincial authorities, and other interested parties.
- r) Develop long-term solutions to manage organic waste materials collected through wildfire risk mitigation in collaboration with provincial authorities, and other interested parties.
- s) Support new development that implements FireSmart principles and best practices related to building and landscape materials.
- t) Encourage retention, replanting, restoration, and maintenance of trees and vegetation according to FireSmart principles, whenever possible.
- u) Consider opportunities and incentives that support volunteerism, training, and equipment at the Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department.
- v) Support undertaking a comprehensive drought risk assessment and response plan in collaboration with community members, and other interested parties.

Sea Level Rise, Tsunami Inundation, and Flooding

- w) Collaborate with provincial authorities, community groups, and other parties on regional public education efforts related to sea level rise and flood risk.
- x) Continue to implement the *Somass Watershed Flood Management Plan* to protect and enhance flood mitigation measures in the Alberni Valley.
- y) Prioritize infrastructure replacement or repair in areas of greater risk of flooding or sea level rise.
- z) Consider opportunities to better regulate and restrict development in areas at greater risk of flooding, tsunami inundation, or sea level rise, including:
 - i. updating the *Zoning Bylaw*; and
 - ii. developing a floodplain bylaw.

Earthquake and Tsunami Preparedness

- aa) Collaborate on regional public education efforts related to earthquake and tsunami preparedness with provincial authorities, community groups, and other parties.
- bb) Improve tsunami evacuation route signage within tsunami inundation zones in collaboration with neighbouring communities.



5.7 EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

5.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Sproat Lake and Area's economy is shaped by its rural character, rich natural resources, and location near Port Alberni – the nearest economic hub and service centre. The local economy comprises home occupations, forestry, fishing and fish hatcheries, limited aggregate extraction activity, industrial uses, tourism, as well as economic activity at the Alberni Valley Regional Airport. A significant portion of the Electoral Area consists of lands designated for resource use, primarily supporting the forestry sector.

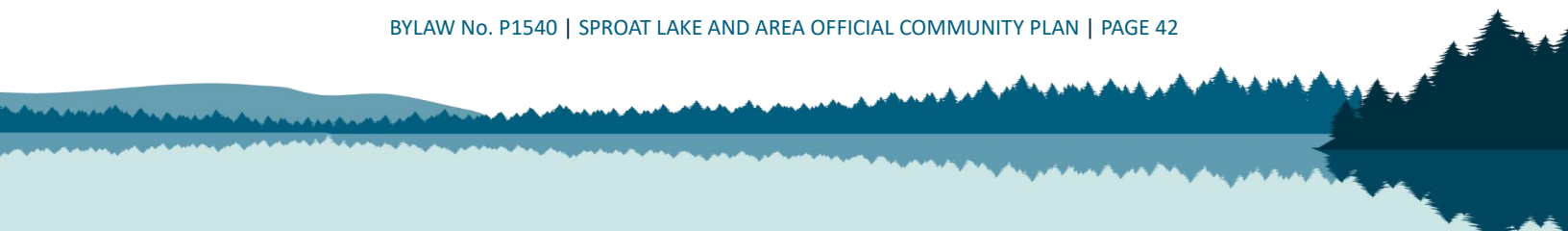
The area hosts a small but varied commercial sector, with businesses generally serving tourism and local needs, and maintaining the region's predominantly rural atmosphere.

The Alberni Valley Regional Airport, owned and operated by the ACRD, plays a significant role in the area's economic landscape. In addition to standard airport services, the site supports numerous airport-related and industrial uses, as well as agricultural uses on the portion that is within the ALR. The Electoral Area also includes a variety of heavy and light industrial operations that generate employment and promote economic diversity. Area residents prefer to support existing businesses and operations rather than expanding commercial or industrial lands.

The objectives and policies in this section aim to foster a robust, year-round economy that supports local businesses, enhances community well-being, and meets the employment and service requirements of residents. Additionally, these policies guide resource management and economic development throughout the area and inform responses to government referrals regarding resource-based industries. Some economic opportunities occur on provincially or privately-owned resource lands beyond the authority of the ACRD. In these instances, the objectives and policies offer advocacy guidelines to higher levels of government for consideration in their planning and decision-making processes.

5.7.2 OBJECTIVES

- a) Support a resilient local economy to retain and expand existing businesses and create new local employment opportunities.
- b) Facilitate the establishment and operation of small-scale commercial development that is compatible with the area's rural character.
- c) Provide opportunity for the Alberni Valley Regional Airport to generate economic



development through compatible businesses.

- d) Support economic development initiatives that maintain the environmental quality of the Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake watersheds.
- e) Maintain the Area's natural resource land base and preserve its value and potential. Direct future resource development toward sites that have no significant adverse environmental impact or where the impact can be adequately addressed.
- f) Promote and encourage sustainable forms of tourism, specifically eco-tourism, that generate economic impact while complementing community values.
- g) Ensure opportunities for home industry across Sproat Lake and Area.

5.7.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

Partnerships

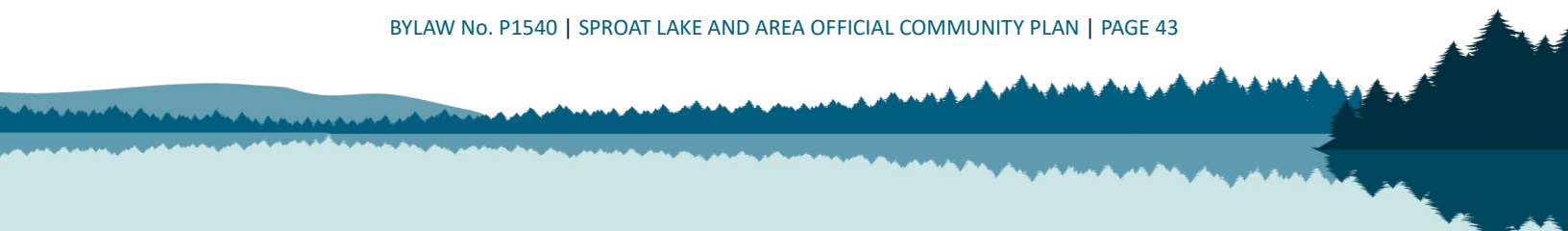
- a) Collaborate on regional economic development initiatives with interested parties.
- b) Explore opportunities to recruit and retain medical professionals in partnership with community organizations, municipal and provincial agencies.

Employment

- c) Support small-scale commercial, industrial, and home industry uses that accommodate community needs, are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood character, and are located within appropriately designated lands where there is sufficient infrastructure and servicing capacity.
- d) Support the expansion and location of commercial uses in the vicinity of Highway 4 and in proximity to Bomber Base Road.
- e) Support commercial enterprises that wish to establish a small-scale, local-service business in commercially designated areas.
- f) Support community group initiatives and local businesses to employ youth and seasonal workers.

Home Occupations & Home Industry

- g) Support home occupations on all Agriculture, Resource, Rural, Rural Central Lake



and Residential designated lands, provided the uses are compatible with the surrounding character and feel of the neighbourhood.

- h) Support home industry on all Agriculture, Resource, Rural, and Rural Central Lake designated lands that are a minimum of two hectares in lot area.
- i) Update the *Zoning Bylaw* to clearly define home industry uses, including where home industry is permitted on a lot and in what form.
- j) Update the *Zoning Bylaw* to permit home occupation uses within an accessory building.

Alberni Valley Regional Airport

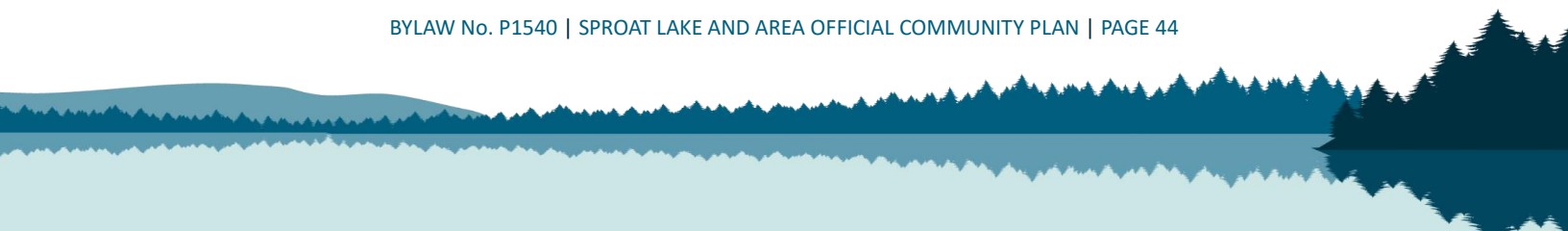
- k) Work to promote greater use of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport and greater availability of land at the airport for compatible businesses and services.
- l) Support future industry, aviation and aviation-compatible, agricultural, and civic uses in proximity to the Alberni Valley Regional Airport.

Responsible Tourism

- m) Promote eco-tourism practices that complement existing tourist-driven services.
- n) Support low-impact tourist commercial uses and neighbourhood services in the vicinity of Highway 4 and Stuart Avenue, Kimola Road, and Lakeshore Road.
- o) Ensure new tourist uses are low-impact, avoid critical habitats, have minimal disturbance on resource designated lands, and are compatible with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood..
- p) Discourage the development of tourism uses that may impact the community's rural form and character, water quality, and natural habitats.
- q) Support the development of agri-tourism uses on lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Zoning Bylaw*.

Sustainable Resource Development

- r) Support the operation of existing publicly and privately-owned fish hatcheries. Support the development of future fish hatcheries provided sufficient services and lot size are present, the development minimizes odours and noise levels, and it suits the existing neighbourhood form and character.



- s) Support forestry and related activities, agriculture, natural resource extraction, power-generation facilities, fish hatcheries, and communications facilities on Resource lands, provided all necessary provincial and federal approvals are obtained.
- t) Support sustainable forestry practices, such as selective harvesting, to preserve the land's capacity to absorb and retain water, maintain slope and soil integrity, prevent erosion, and create a buffer adjacent to non-Resource lands.
- u) Support community forestry for the benefit of the local community.
- v) Work with organizations operating on Resource lands and applicable levels of government to support First Nations' access to Resource lands for foraging and harvesting of culturally significant foods and plants.
- w) Support the rehabilitation and remediation of spent resource extraction sites.

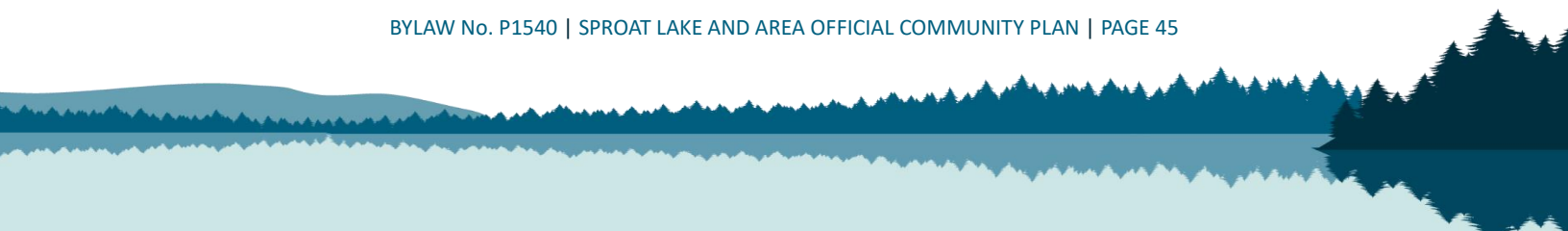
5.8 PARKS AND TRAILS

5.8.1 INTRODUCTION

Parks and trails are essential to the quality of life in Sproat Lake and Area, offering opportunities for recreation, supporting community enjoyment, health and well-being, and reflecting the area's rural and lake-oriented character. These spaces help residents and visitors connect with neighbours, enjoy nature, and strengthen community identity. Community members are enthusiastic about natural spaces and enjoyment of the outdoors. Residents feel maintaining and enhancing existing resources is essential for upholding the community's quality of life and is integral to Sproat Lake and Area's character. Parks managed by BC Parks include Sproat Lake, Taylor Arm, and Fossli Provincial Parks. Recreation Sites and Trails BC manages the trail access to Fossli Provincial Park, as well as Snow Creek located on Taylor Arm, Sproat Lake and Scout Beach, on the northern shore of Great Central Lake. The ACRD manages Cougar Smith Park, Dickson Park, Bishop Park and Klitsa Park, as well as trails along Lakeshore Road and Faber Road. These roadside trails are critical to neighbourhood connectivity. Beyond ACRD jurisdiction, residents often access private or Crown lands for additional recreational areas.

Objectives and policies in this section provide direction regarding the management of lands used and valued for recreational activities.

5.8.2 OBJECTIVES



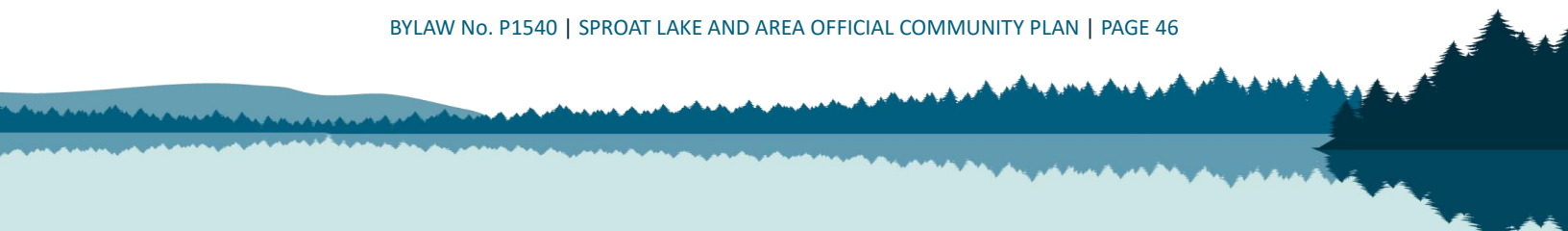
- a) Integrate environmental protection principles and climate resilience into park design, management, and use.
- b) Enhance opportunities for low impact, accessible recreation that complements existing park assets and the surrounding natural environment.
- c) Improve existing public access to and accessibility of park amenities, including beach accesses along Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake.
- d) Enhance opportunities to utilize park and open space assets to improve local and regional food systems.
- e) Focus on creating a well-maintained network of trails and gathering spaces that connect neighbourhoods by walking, biking or rolling if grant funding becomes available.
- f) Explore partnerships with residents and property owners, community groups, First Nations, industry and the Province to support the maintenance of parks and trails.

5.8.3 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

Planning and Design

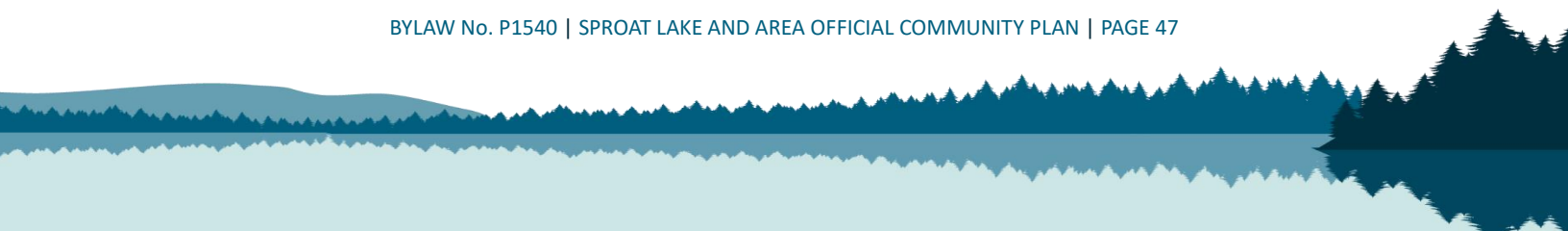
- a) Prioritize maintenance of existing parks, trails, and open spaces addressing key issues, including dangerous trees and vegetation.
- b) Prioritize facility improvements for existing parks, trails, and outdoor gathering spaces.
- c) Establish a parks and trails master plan for Sproat Lake and Area that considers the natural environment and recreational needs of the community.
- d) Where grant funding allows, explore opportunities to improve accessibility in parks for all ages and abilities, including paved or smoothed trails where appropriate,.
- e) Ensure that new or upgraded playground equipment conforms to and is maintained in accordance with CSA Z614:20 or universal access design standards. Consideration for the provision of such equipment may involve consultation with user groups and related agencies.
- f) Advocate to the Ministry of Transportation and Transit for installation of new roadside trails, multi-use paths and highway crossings.



- g) Collaborate with residents, property owners, community groups, and other interested parties to:
 - i. explore grant funding opportunities to establish a new playground in the Lakeshore area;
 - ii. explore opportunities to expand the boundary of Cougar Smith Park.

Acquisition

- h) Establish adequate park space through land dedication at the time of subdivision, or by payment in lieu of land dedication, in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act*.
- i) Consider the following when requiring park dedication in the form of land or payment in lieu of land dedication:
 - i. existing park space sizes and location distributions;
 - ii. existing and projected population, and associated demand for parkland;
 - iii. suitability of the land for recreational uses, distribution access, maintenance requirements and related efficiencies;
 - iv. minimum size requirements for effective use.
- j) Explore opportunities to grant density bonuses for development proposals where parkland dedications exceed 5% of the total land area, excluding dedicated lands deemed unsuitable for development due to the presence of site constraints, so long as servicing requirements can be met.
- k) Consider allowing parkland dedication of less than 5% of the total land area to be subdivided where contributions in the form of parkland improvements are proposed by the applicant and approved by the ACRD.
- l) Obtain ownership of park, trail, and conservation areas, as opposed to statutory rights-of-way where possible.
- m) Encourage the dedication of lands deemed unsuitable for development due to site constraints (e.g., steep slopes, ravines, unstable soils, streams, sensitive ecosystems, etc.) as natural, undeveloped open space, in addition to the required dedication of parkland appropriate for public access.
- n) Require existing public access to streams be maintained and enhanced for public use and enjoyment in a manner that supports environmental stewardship.



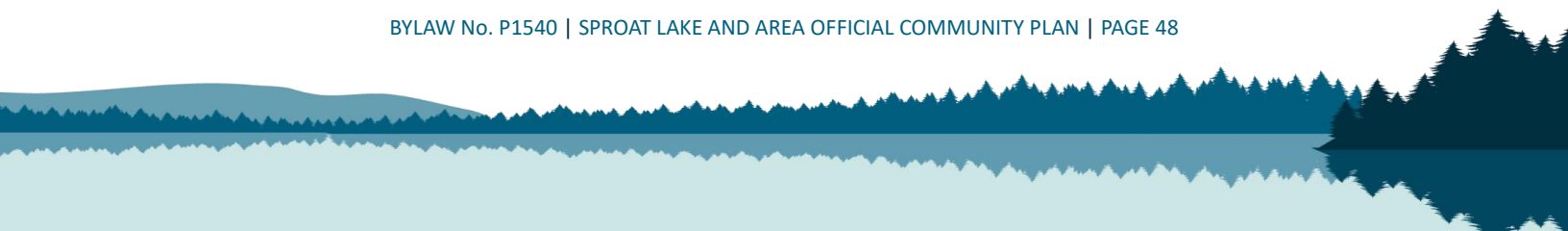
- o) Seek grant funding and partnership opportunities to establish contingency funds for the purchase of privately-owned woodlands when they are available for sale and development.
- p) Monitor opportunities for parkland acquisition in Sproat Lake and Area, particularly those that:
 - i. will enhance public access to the waterfront;
 - ii. are located in areas where residential development is concentrated; or
 - iii. are in proximity to existing parkland and would support the growth of existing park size and connectivity.

Placemaking

- q) Encourage community-led stewardship of parks and trails where guidance from the ACRD in the form of training and liability considerations can be provided.
- r) Seek grant funding opportunities to identify, improve, and provide accessible signage for public access to the foreshore and streams in accordance with the ACRD's Signage Strategy.
- s) Support community-led placemaking initiatives in public spaces such as community gardens, public art or little libraries.
- t) Support the preservation and enhancement of existing community gathering spaces such as local parks, trails, and the Sproat Lake Community Hall.

Recreation

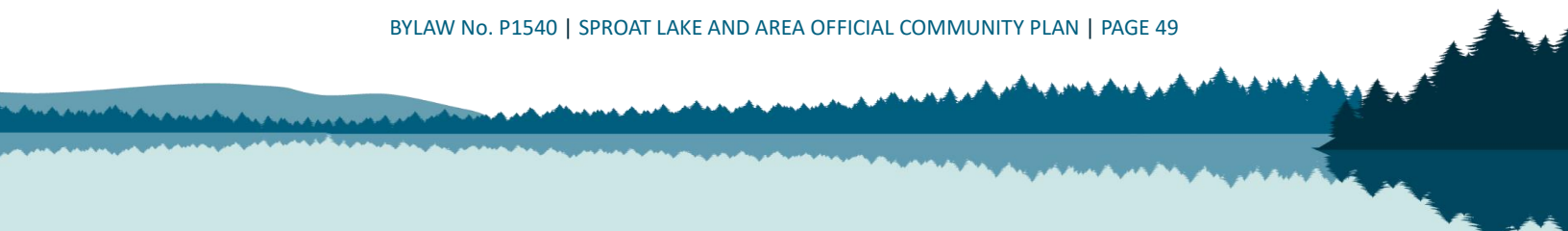
- u) Seek grant funding opportunities to develop safe road-side walking pathways and trails in collaboration with provincial ministries, residents, property owners, and community groups.
- v) Explore grant funding opportunities to improve existing parks for recreation purposes in consultation with residents and property owners.
- w) As grant funding opportunities arise, pursue improvement of the boat launches at Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake Provincial Park by:
 - iv. considering the inclusion of upgrades to the Great Central Lake Boat Launch in future financial planning.
 - v. advocating to provincial authorities for improvements of the Sproat Lake



boat launch.

- x) Encourage owners of privately managed resource lands to support public access and responsible community use of areas for recreational purposes, such as hiking, bird watching, foraging, and harvesting of culturally significant foods and plants.
- y) Advocate to provincial authorities, specifically Recreation Sites and Trails BC to improve Fossli Provincial Park by maintaining trail access from Stirling Arm Forest Service Road and expanding park boundaries.

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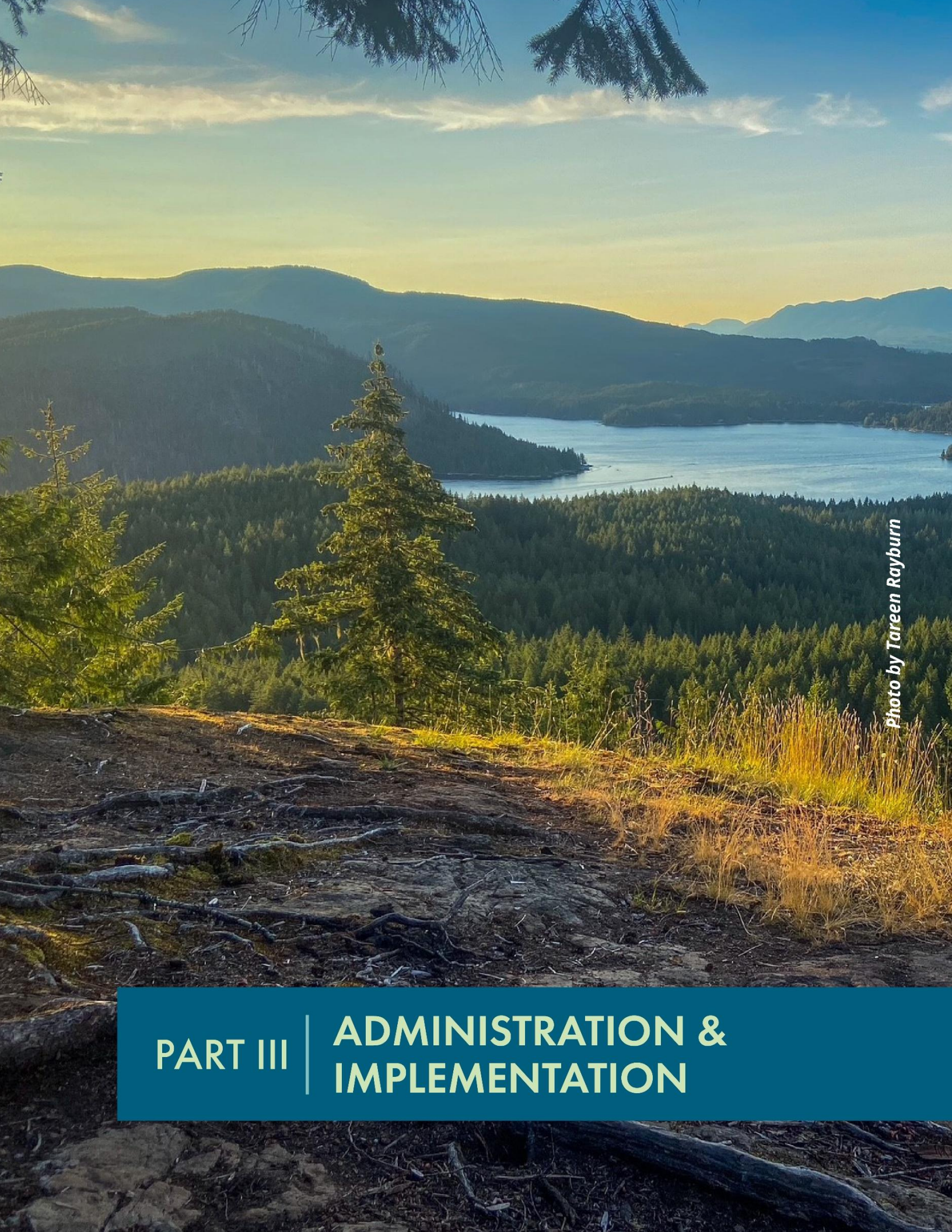


Photo by Tareen Rayburn

PART III | ADMINISTRATION & IMPLEMENTATION

6.0 TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

Local governments are granted the authority to designate TUP areas within their OCPs under section 492 of the *Local Government Act*. A TUP may do one or more of the following:

- temporarily allow a specific use not permitted by a zoning bylaw;
- specify conditions under which the temporary use may be permitted;
- allow and regulate the construction of buildings or structures in respect of the use for which the permit is issued.

6.1 APPLICATION AND PURPOSE

Temporary uses provide for short-term land use opportunities, diversification of the economy, innovation in response to community need, or potentially act as a bridge to a permanent change of use.

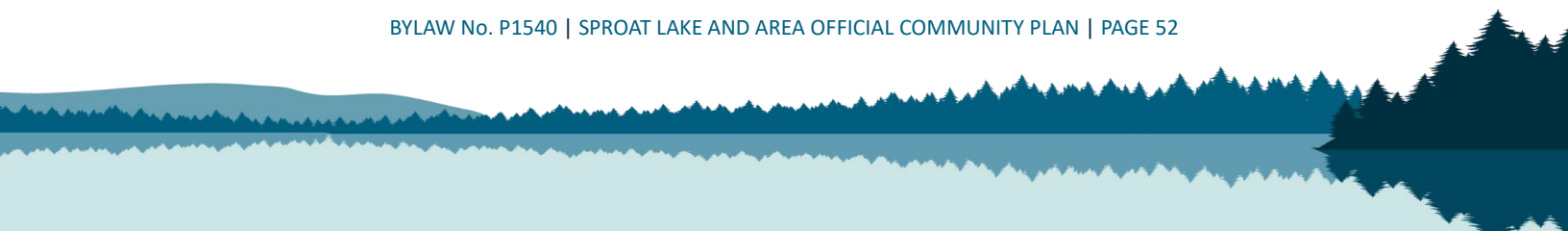
TUPs may be issued for temporary uses proposed in any land use designation within the Plan Area but are subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* for lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

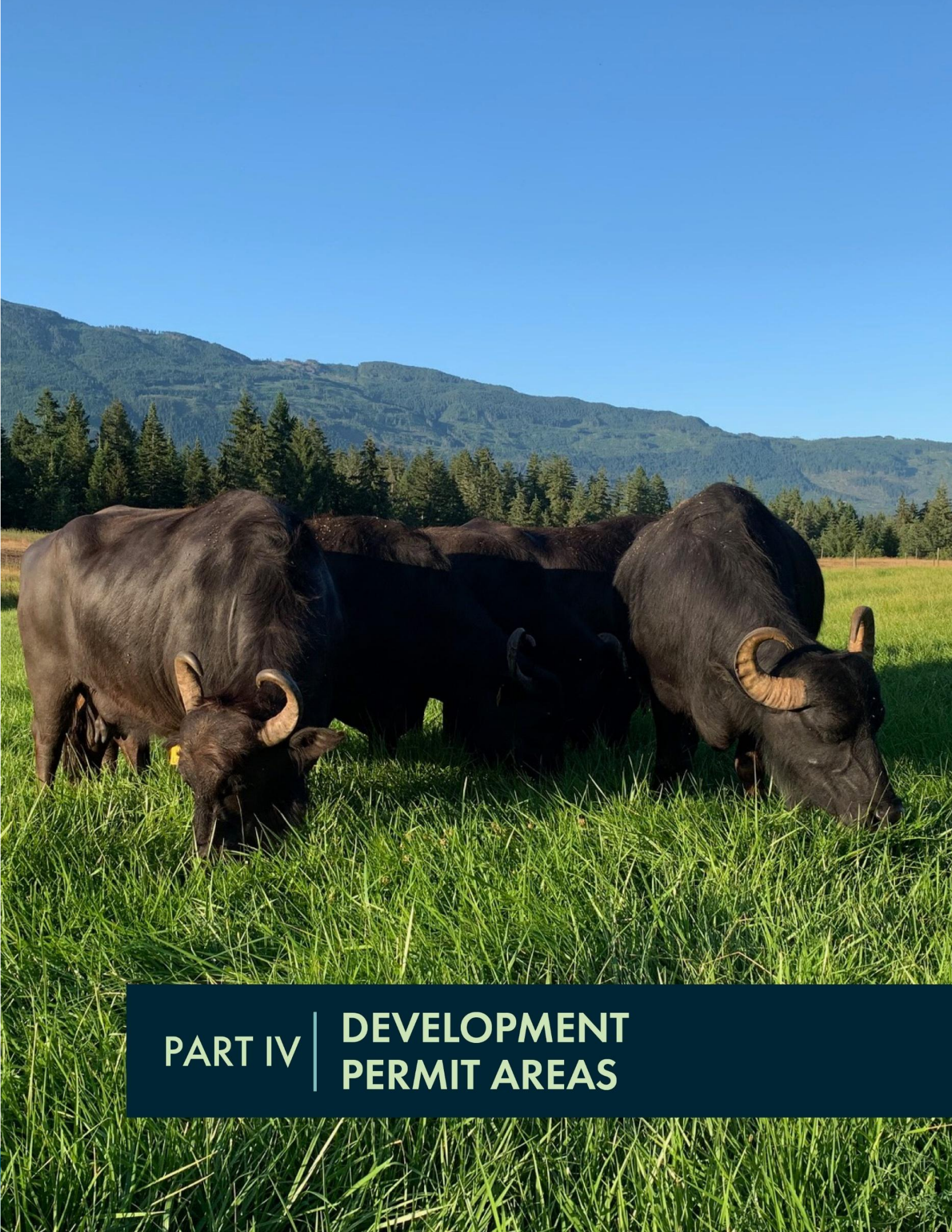
6.2 POLICIES

The ACRD shall:

- a) Consider applications for TUPs based on the following:
 - i. compatibility of the proposed use with any existing uses on the property and the surrounding area;
 - ii. compatibility of the proposed use with the property's land use designation;
 - iii. compatibility with the overall policy direction of the OCP;
 - iv. potential impact of the proposed use on any environmentally sensitive areas;
 - v. potential impact of the proposed use on existing infrastructure and servicing capacity.
- b) Consider applications for TUPs subject to the following requirements:
 - i. the proposed use is temporary or seasonal, or a bridge to a permanent use;
 - ii. the proposed use will have minimal impact on existing infrastructure and servicing capacity;

- iii. where proposed use is commercial or industrial in nature, or is anticipated to generate a positive economic impact;
 - iv. proposed site alterations are deemed temporary in nature; and
 - v. the proposed use will not cause any noxious or undesirable sights, odours, noise, vibrations, radiation, or interferences.
- c) Apply any conditions to a TUP, including but not limited to:
- i. hours of operation;
 - ii. minimum/maximum gross floor area, and maximum lot coverage;
 - iii. location, form, and siting of uses or buildings within the property;
 - iv. landscaping, screening and fencing, site rehabilitation;
 - v. other required permits or agreements (e.g., development permits, housing agreements, etc.); or
 - vi. any other matters deemed appropriate by the ACRD.
- d) Issue a TUP for a period of up to three years.
- e) Consider applications to renew an approved temporary use once, for an additional period of up to three years.





PART IV | DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

7.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

Local governments are granted the authority to designate DPAs in their OCPs under section 488 of the *Local Government Act*. This section of the LGA describes why DPAs may be established, the types of activities requiring a development permit, and the requirements a local government may impose on a proposed development according to the type of DPA.

By requiring a development permit for proposed developments within these areas, the ACRD can require a greater level of assessment for lands that are considered to have special or sensitive conditions to better assess the impact of a project.

7.1 APPLICATION

A property owner must obtain a development permit prior to beginning any work within a DPA. These activities include:

- subdivision of land;
- construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or structure;
- alteration of land within a DPA designated under section 488 for protection of the natural environment or for protection of development from hazardous conditions.

Where land is within more than one DPA, the applicable requirements for all DPAs will apply for the portion of land within each DPA. The issuance of a Development Permit by the ACRD in no way exempts the property owner from obtaining all other necessary permits and approvals from provincial and federal agencies.

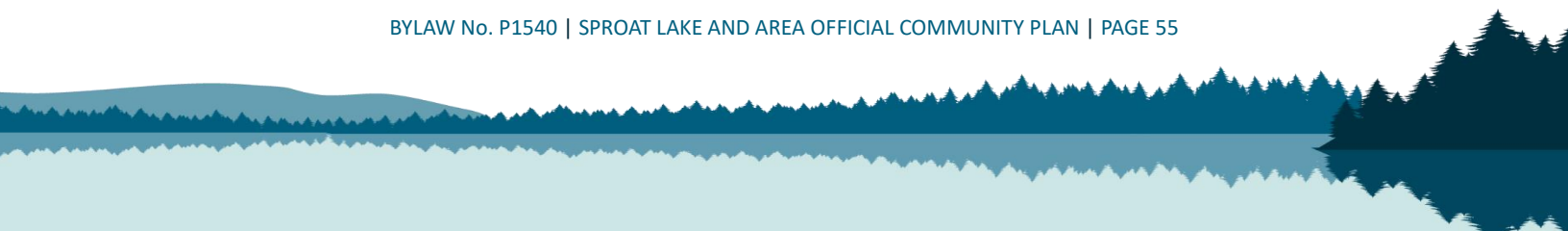
Where development is considered in areas of known cultural heritage significance (in accordance with the Provincial *Heritage Conservation Act* and as identified by Remote Access to Archaeological Data or traditional knowledge keepers), the scope and form of consultation shall be determined through discussion with each First Nation, the Regional Board, and the *Local Government Act*.

7.2 EXEMPTIONS

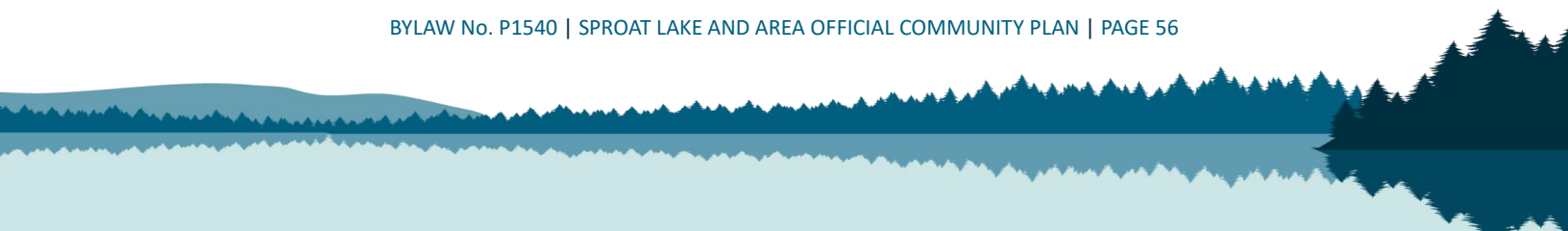
The following list of exemptions outlines conditions under which a development permit would not be required and applies to all DPAs forming part of the OCP for Sproat Lake and Area. The authority to exempt conditions or activities from requiring a development permit is granted under section 488 of the *Local Government Act*.

A Development Permit is not required for:

ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
Construction Activities and Alteration of Land	a) Construction, repair, alteration, or maintenance of public works, amenities, and facilities undertaken by the ACRD, or its agents, provided the works are carried out in accordance with applicable DPA guidelines. Other government agencies not subject to ACRD jurisdiction are not required to obtain a development permit but are encouraged to consider applicable DPA guidelines. b) Repair or maintenance of, or renovations to, existing lawfully constructed buildings, or utilities within the existing building footprint, including those structures described in Division 14 of the <i>Local Government Act</i> - Non-conforming Use and Other Continuations. A building permit may still be required. c) Maintenance, replacement, or repair of existing driveways. d) The construction of one small accessory building or structure within the DPA per parcel that is less than or equal to 10 sq. m. in building area where a building permit is not required and where the building or structure is located within an existing landscaped or developed area. e) Construction of a single trail, where the General Manager of Planning and Development is satisfied the applicant has designed the trail, and that it is shown on an initial landscape plan such that: i. the trail provides the most direct route of feasible passage through the DPA; ii. the location is chosen to require a minimum amount of vegetation removal or disturbance, and where there is limited excavation and removal of soils; iii. erodible banks or other erosion prone areas must be avoided; iv. the ground must be stable where the trail is located within a steep slope area. The ACRD may rely upon the recommendation of a QP to confirm that the trail is safe; v. the trail is built to BC Parks standards for the type of trail proposed, and built using established best management practices; vi. the trail must be a maximum 1.5 metres in width;



ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
	vii. the trail's surface must be pervious but may be constructed with materials that limit erosion and bank destabilization (certain structures may require a building permit); viii. no vehicles are permitted; ix. all invasive plants are removed ongoing for the lifespan of the trail. f) Emergency procedures to prevent, control, or reduce erosion or other immediate threats to life and property, occurring because of a natural or human-caused event including: i. emergency actions for flood protection and erosion protection; ii. clearing of an obstruction from bridge, culvert, or drainage flow; iii. repairs to bridges and safety fences in accordance with the <i>Water Sustainability Act</i>; iv. any emergency works to be undertaken in accordance with Provincial and Federal regulations. Notwithstanding the above, emergency actions for flood protection and clearing of obstructions by anyone other than the ACRD or Province should be reported to the ACRD and applicable Provincial Ministry as soon as practicable. Note that once the emergency has passed, a development permit may be required for remediation or permanent protection works. g) All forestry management activities on lands subject to the <i>Private Managed Forest Land Act</i>. h) Forestry activities permitted by the provincial government on Crown forestry lands. i) Public works and services constructed following best management practices. j) Farming activities on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve. k) Pruning trees where a minimum of 75% of the original crown of any tree is retained to maintain tree health and vigor in accordance with Provincial and Federal regulations. l) Planting or replanting of native trees, shrubs, or ground cover for the purposes of slope stabilization, habitat improvement, or

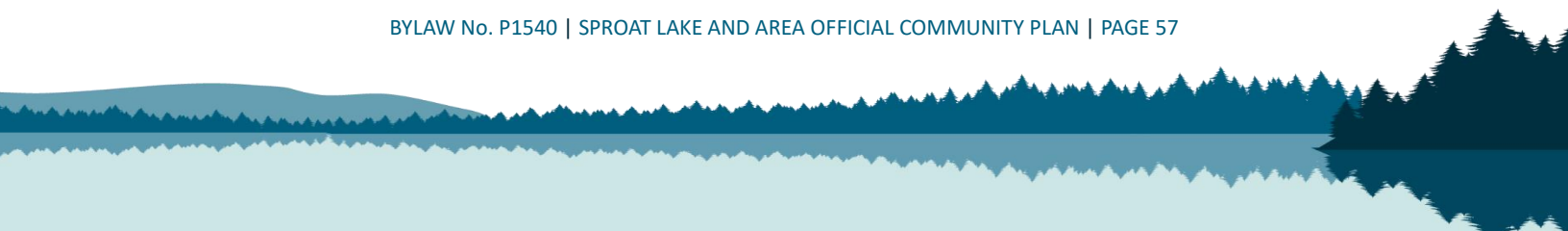


ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
	erosion control. m) The small-scale, manual removal of invasive plants or noxious weeds. n) Removal of trees deemed hazardous or subject to environmental health conditions such as root rot or pest/disease infestation, by a Certified Arborist or Registered Professional Forester, that pose an imminent threat to property, public safety, or the overall integrity of the ecosystem. o) Removal of hazardous trees that also contain nests pertaining to the species listed under the <i>Wildlife Act</i>, in addition to active nests of species listed under the <i>Migratory Birds Convention Act</i>, is exempt only if a permit under the <i>Wildlife Act</i> has been obtained. p) Gardening and yard maintenance activities within an existing landscaped area, such as lawn mowing, tree and shrub pruning, vegetation planting and minor soil disturbances that do not alter the general contours of the land. For clarity, this exemption does not apply to the placement of retaining walls or any structures that may require a building permit for construction.

7.3 DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL INFORMATION DESIGNATION

The ACRD is granted authority under section 485 of the *Local Government Act* to designate areas where development approval information may be required to support an informed decision-making process. Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, the lands designated as Comprehensive Development Areas in this OCP are also designated as Development Approval Information Areas (DAIAs) to ensure that adequate information on the site is obtained before development is considered.

Within the DAIAs, the information provided to inform planning process can consider and mitigate the impact of development in designated areas on the natural environment including riparian area protection, on local infrastructure, and in protecting development from hazardous conditions. The ACRD's procedures and authority for requiring development approval information are outlined in the ACRD's *Development Approval Information Bylaw*.



7.4 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DPA I)

7.4.1 DESIGNATION

The Environmental Protection DPA encompasses lands identified on Schedule C for the purpose of establishing guidelines for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems, and biological diversity pursuant to section 488 of the *Local Government Act*.

7.4.2 JUSTIFICATION

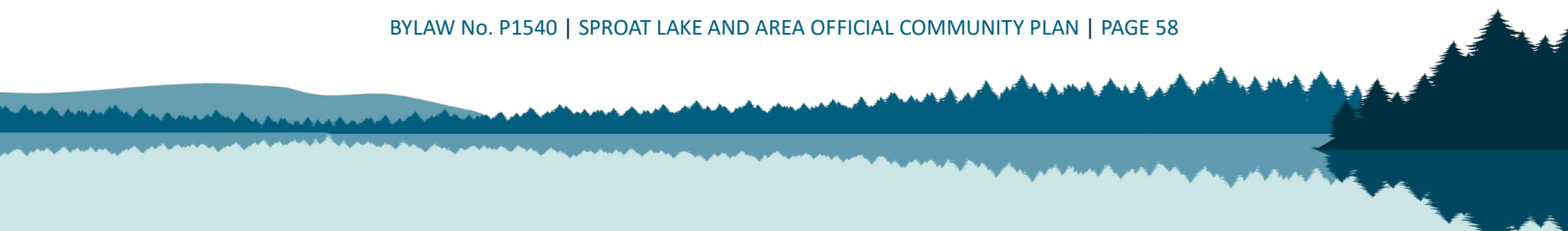
Sproat Lake and Area has many aquatic ecosystems in the form of foreshore and riparian areas that are critical to the overall ecological health of the area, including the Somass River, Alberni Inlet, Sproat River, Sproat Lake, Great Central Lake, and several small lakes and creeks. In addition, Sproat Lake and Area has several forested areas that comprise a significant proportion of the community. These terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. The Environmental Protection DPA aims to conserve Sproat Lake and Area's ecological functions by mitigating the impacts of new land use practices on the natural environment and encouraging the restoration of environmentally sensitive areas where past disturbances have occurred.

DPA I areas include all lands within 30.0 metres of the natural boundary, measured horizontally in both upland and foreshore directions, from all major streams including Sproat Lake, Great Central Lake, Boot Lagoon, Taylor River, Ash River, Stamp River, Somass River, Sproat River, Nook Creek, Demens Creek, Heath Creek, McCoy Creek, Santu Creek, and the Alberni Inlet. DPA I areas also include all lands within 15.0 metres of the natural boundary, measured horizontally in both upland and foreshore directions, of minor streams and all other named and unnamed creeks, lakes and wetlands.

7.4.3 APPLICATION

A development permit is required for any development occurring on land within the DPA that may be classified as one of the following activities, as per section 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

- subdivision of land;
- construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building;
- alteration of land, including planting natural vegetation, earth works and other forms of landscaping.

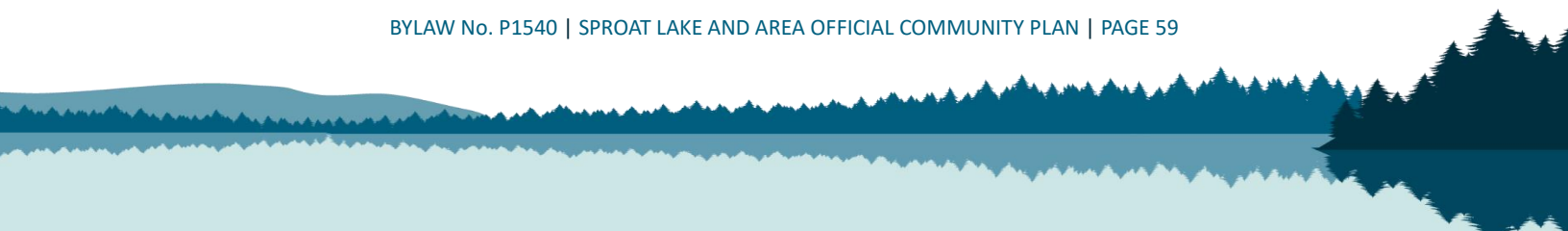


7.4.4 GUIDELINES

All applicable development activities occurring within the Environmental Protection DPA, unless exempt under Section 7.2 or 7.4.5 are subject to the following:

.1 All applicants must submit:

- a) A detailed site plan (scale 1:250 or larger) showing existing and proposed development, grading, streams, environmental features, roads, trails, driveways, yards, and areas to remain free from development.
- b) An environmental assessment report prepared by a QEP for the purpose of identifying sensitive biophysical features, aquifers, riparian areas, rare or endangered species, wildlife habitats, and any other important ecological features on or near the property and providing recommendations and conditions for development to avoid or mitigate impacts to these features. The report must include:
 - i. identification of any ecologically important areas within the development site on a site plan, including wetlands and streamside protection and enhancement areas (SPEAs), and criteria from Wetlands of British Columbia: a guide to identification developed by the BC Ministry of Forests to define the boundaries of the wetlands or SPEAs;
 - ii. identification of the criteria used to define the boundaries of the ecologically important area(s);
 - iii. an inventory of plant and animal species and related habitat(s) on a landscape plan, including identification of any mature trees;
 - iv. a description of the anticipated effects of the proposed development on the site's natural conditions;
 - v. procedures for protection of ecologically important area(s) during construction;
 - vi. recommendations or requirements for mitigating degradation of any ecologically important areas, including limits of proposed leave areas and buffers or conditions for development.
- c) An environmental monitoring plan prepared by a QEP that describes the proposed monitoring program to be used during the development process. Monitoring must continue for a period of at least one year after development



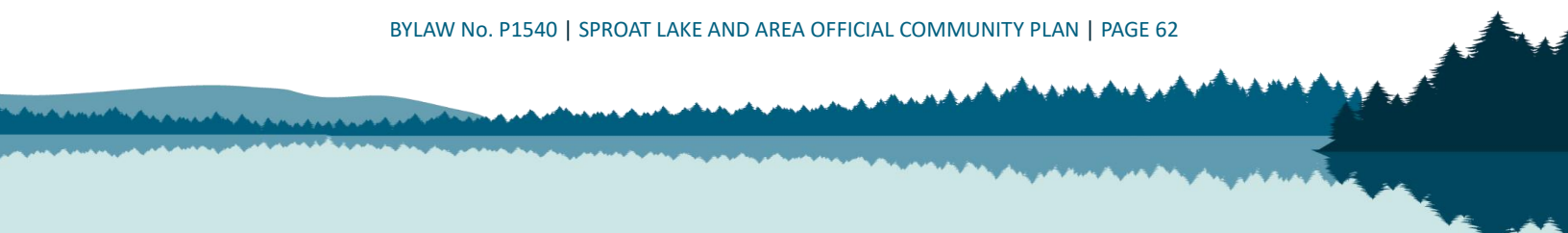
has been deemed complete by the ACRD, unless otherwise specified by a QEP. A post-development report prepared by a QEP may be required at the end of the monitoring period to confirm that all potentially negative environmental impacts have been effectively addressed.

- d) A restoration plan for any proposed site disturbances, including restoration of areas where invasive species are established and areas that have been cleared previously or will be cleared during development. The plan must also identify strategies for ongoing maintenance of the restored area(s). Where riparian restoration is required, the ACRD may require the property owner to provide security in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit or a bond in the amount of up to 120% of the total estimated cost of the work to ensure all requirements of the restoration plan have been met.
- .2 Where landscaping works are proposed or required, the applicant must submit a detailed landscaping plan showing existing landscaping and proposed plantings and landscape features, trees to be removed and retained, the location of any proposed barriers to protect trees to be retained, and an itemized cost estimate including a planting list describing proposed species and associated pot sizes. The landscape plan cost estimate shall be prepared by a QEP and may be used to determine the value of the required security deposit to ensure the landscape works are completed and maintained in accordance with plans submitted.
- a) Applicants are encouraged to consider pruning trees in accordance with best practices in instances where retention of trees in their existing state may pose substantial challenges to development or threats to property or public safety.
 - b) Existing native landscape features including mature and old growth western red cedar and yellow cedar should be retained wherever possible to minimize disruption to habitat and maintain ecological processes that support ecosystem function, wildlife ecology, and unique ecosystems. These include, but are not limited to:
 - i. vegetation, trees, snags, standing and fallen dead wood (e.g., stumps), and root systems;
 - ii. rare and uncommon species and plant communities;
 - iii. soils and soil conditions (moisture, nutrients and permeability);

- iv. birds, fish, and other wildlife and their habitats, such as nesting, breeding, or spawning areas;
 - v. topography and relative orientation of environmentally sensitive areas on neighbouring properties.
 - c) The use of artificial grass turf as a permeable surface is discouraged.
 - d) Replacement trees, shrubs, and groundcover vegetation must be native species and shall be sited and managed in accordance with FireSmart principles, where practicable. Any trees retained on site must be shown on the required landscape plan. New plantings should consider vegetation that support pollinators.
 - e) A post-development landscaping report prepared by a QEP may be required to confirm that all potentially negative environmental impacts have been effectively addressed and that all landscape plantings are thriving.
- .3 Development proposals must demonstrate that soil conditions have been considered in both building and site design.
- .4 Impervious surfaces must be minimized where possible, with hardscaping limited to the overall building footprint, roof area, paved patio areas and surfaces, and paved access roads.
- .5 All drainage occurring because of development must be managed on-site.
- .6 Where possible, buildings and other structures such as driveways, garages, and sheds should be located close to one another, or clustered, to make efficient use of the site and better protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- .7 For areas that the applicant's QEP recommend to remain undeveloped:
- a) the ACRD may require a Section 219 covenant to be prepared at the applicant's expense, to the satisfaction of the ACRD, to ensure that the identified areas remain free from development to the satisfaction of the ACRD;
 - b) prior to construction commencing, the installation of temporary fencing or flagged stakes marking the protection area is required to avoid encroachment within the areas to be protected through to the completion of the development.
- .8 The applicant's QEP may be required to provide post-development written

confirmation that the property has been developed in accordance with the QEP's recommendations.

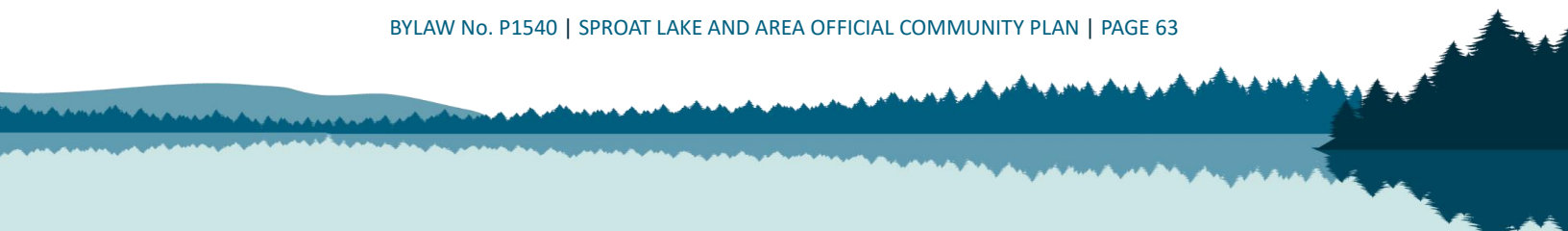
- .9 Where development or alteration of land is proposed to encroach within an environmental protection area, it shall be located where it will cause the least impact on the natural environment. Hardscaping is to be avoided. Where such development or alteration of land is proposed on lands which are not wholly within the DPA, it should be demonstrated that locating the development entirely outside of the DPA has been considered and a rationale as to why the relocation is not being proposed should be provided.
- .10 Revegetation of exposed soils shall occur after any necessary land alteration is complete to prevent erosion and noxious weed/invasive species infestation.
- .11 Actions to rehabilitate and restore any ecologically important areas to an enhanced ecological state are encouraged on sites that have been subject to negative impacts because of past development activities. Restored or rehabilitated areas must be protected through registration of a covenant under the *Land Title Act* prepared at the applicant's expense and to the satisfaction of the ACRD to ensure that the areas remain free from development.
- .12 Landscaping, rehabilitation, and restoration activities shall use native species and be in accordance with FireSmart principles where practicable. New plantings are highly encouraged, particularly those that support pollinators.
- .13 Timing of development should avoid, when possible, times of the year when critical wildlife activities occur (i.e. nesting and breeding season). Further, any development, construction or land alteration that may disturb critical habitat, active nesting sites, or breeding areas for wildlife should not be permitted unless properly guided by a QEP.
- .14 Any development, construction, or land alteration that may disturb critical habitat, active nesting sites, or breeding areas for wildlife are not permitted unless properly guided by a QEP.
- .15 The design and construction of any new roads and trails shall occur in a manner that limits disturbances to natural areas.
- .16 Building and structure design should incorporate the existing terrain as much as possible. New structures, including retaining walls should not negatively impact the root systems of trees, shrubs, or other native vegetation on neighbouring properties.



- .17 Hardscaped retaining walls, including concrete, masonry, timber or engineered structural walls, are discouraged within the riparian area except where demonstrated to be necessary for geotechnical safety, or protection of existing lawful structures.
- .18 Retaining walls should be limited in height, extent and visual prominence to the greatest extent possible and should avoid creating large, continuous expanses of hardscape within the riparian area.
- .19 Development should aim to preserve or enhance any existing wildlife corridors identified on the site by a QEP.
- .20 Applicants are encouraged to provide landscaping features that aid existing, or provide new, habitat (e.g. bat boxes), as recommended by a QEP.
- .21 In the absence of a QEP assessment confirming satisfactory protection of ecologically important areas, no development or alteration is permitted.

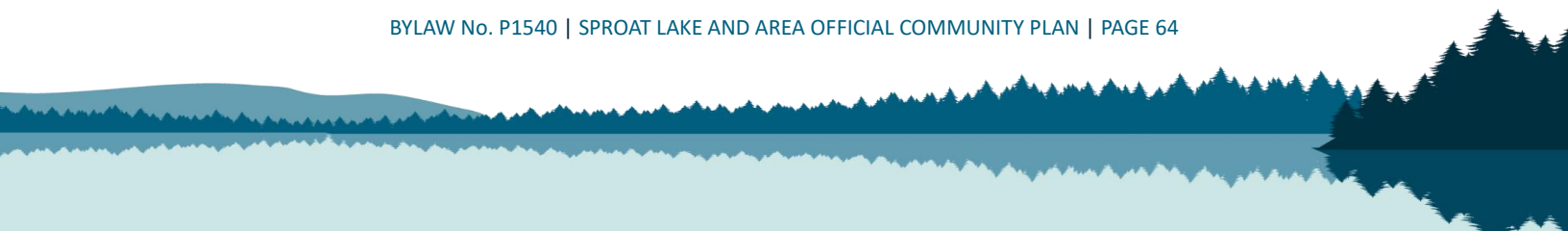
Moorage Facilities

- .22 The construction of private, commercial, and group moorage facilities are permitted only in accordance with the following conditions:
 - a) commercial moorage facilities must be designed and constructed in compliance with the applicable best management practices of the province; refer to the Province for General Permission for private moorage facilities, and authorization for Specific Permission, or under the *Residential Policy* or *Commercial Marina Policy* for group moorage, or under the Adventure Tourism Policy for moorage for adventure tourism activities, where applicable on Crown land;
 - b) a property owner must obtain and adhere to a Marine Habitat Assessment Report completed by a QEP prior to commencing construction of a dock in an aquatic environment;
 - c) shoreline stabilization measures, pilings, floats, docks, boat lifts, wharves and other structures which disrupt light penetration to the water column or obstruct public access to the foreshore are discouraged;
 - d) impervious surfaces, including materials to construct docks and wharves, shall be kept to a minimum;
 - e) new piers, docks and ramps shall be allowed only for water-dependent uses or for public access, and only permitted when the applicant has



demonstrated that a specific need exists to support the intended water-dependent use;

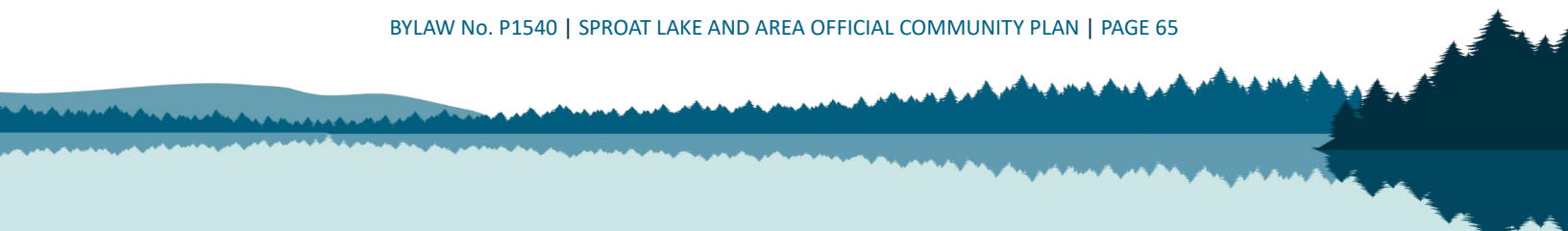
- f) no more than one moorage facility shall be located on or appurtenant to any single lot.
- .23 Docks and wharves shall not extend over wetlands or other productive foreshore areas, including critical salmon spawning habitats.
- .24 Structures in contact with the water shall be constructed of stable materials, including finishes and preservatives that will not degrade water quality.
- .25 All docks shall be constructed so that they do not rest on the bottom of the foreshore at low water levels.
- .26 Any Styrofoam, plastic foams or other non-biodegradable materials used in the construction of floats and docks shall be fully encased within sealed rigid plastic shells to prevent escape into the natural environment.
- .27 Piers should use the minimum number of pilings necessary, with preference to large spans over more pilings.
- .28 Piers should be constructed with a minimum clearance of 0.5 metres above the elevation of the natural boundary of the adjacent waterbody.
- .29 Preference is given to the placement of mooring buoys and floats instead of docks.
- .30 Dock lighting should be limited to prevent light spill onto lakes and riparian areas to avoid disruption of fish habitat, including spawning areas. Care should be taken in shallow, nearshore environments, and areas close to mouths of rivers.
- .31 New shoreline residential development of two or more dwellings should provide joint use or community dock facilities rather than individual docks for each residence.
- .32 The issuance of a Development Permit by the ACRD in no way exempts the property owner from obtaining all necessary permits and approvals from provincial and federal agencies.



7.4.5 EXEMPTIONS

An Environmental Protection Development Permit is not required if the proposed development falls within the exemptions listed below:

ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
Subdivision	a) Subdivision where the following criteria are met: i. Required minimum lot sizes are achieved exclusive of the environmentally sensitive areas(s), as identified by ACRD mapping or confirmed by a BC Land Surveyor or QEP; ii. The subdivision is a lot consolidation, or a lot line adjustment, that does not result in the creation of an additional vacant lot or parcel and does not involve any development within the DPA; iii. No development activities including grading, clearing, trenching, or installation of pipes, relating to the creation of any lots will occur within the environmental protection DPA(s); iv. A covenant under the <i>Land Title Act</i> is registered to protect the natural environment in a manner that is consistent with the applicable DPA guidelines.
Construction Activities and Alteration of Land	b) Development in an environmental protection area as shown on Schedule C where the ACRD is satisfied that any of the following conditions applies in respect of the area to be developed: i. the area was designated incorrectly due to mapping inaccuracy; ii. the area is no longer deemed ecologically important due to natural processes (e.g., wildfire, flood, forest succession); or iii. the area is no longer deemed ecologically important due to the loss of functions and conditions caused by development previously approved by the ACRD; provided that, for certainty, this exemption does not apply to any area that is no longer deemed ecologically important due in whole or in part to human activity that occurred without a development permit, or otherwise in an unlawful manner. The ACRD may require written confirmation from a



ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
	QEP that this exemption applies, and the conditions that justify it. i. Stream enhancement and fish and wildlife habitat restoration works carried out under Provincial or Federal approvals and on provision of evidence of such approvals to the ACRD. c) All park or parkland ancillary uses not containing commercial, residential, or industrial activities.

7.5 NATURAL HAZARD AREAS PROTECTION (DPA II)

7.5.1 DESIGNATION

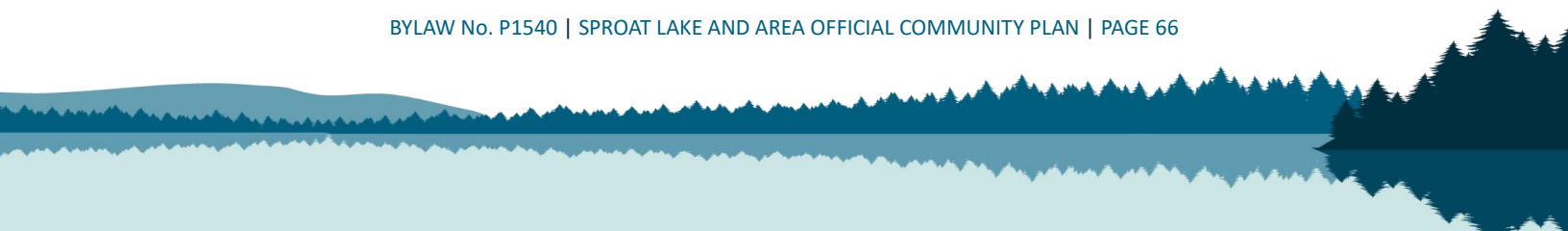
The Natural Hazard Areas Protection DPA encompasses lands identified on Schedule D for the purpose of establishing guidelines to protect development from hazardous conditions pursuant to section 488 of the *Local Government Act*.

7.5.2 JUSTIFICATION

The Natural Hazard Areas Protection DPA is designed to preserve and restore the integrity of shorelines and steep slopes, with the goal of minimizing and mitigating risks to new developments in areas most susceptible to flooding, subsidence, erosion, and tsunami-related hazards. This DPA is particularly important given that some lands near Sproat Lake, the Somass River, and the Alberni Inlet have experienced flooding and continue to be at risk of flood hazards, as well as, in certain regions, erosion or sloughing. Steep slopes also pose a high risk for erosion and slippage, especially if tree cover is significantly reduced. Such hazardous conditions on steep slopes can often be avoided by retaining adequate tree cover and minimizing surface water runoff.

DPA II includes lands located within 15 metres of the top of bank, and the toe of slope, of steep slopes with a 30 percent or greater slope for a vertical distance of at least 4 metres, plus the sloped land between the top and toe.

DPA II also includes lands within the tsunami inundation zone which encompasses lands located below 20 metres elevation above sea level, and the designated 200-year floodplain and associated mapped flood extents established by the *ACRD Somass Watershed Flood Management Plan, 2020*.



7.5.3 APPLICATION

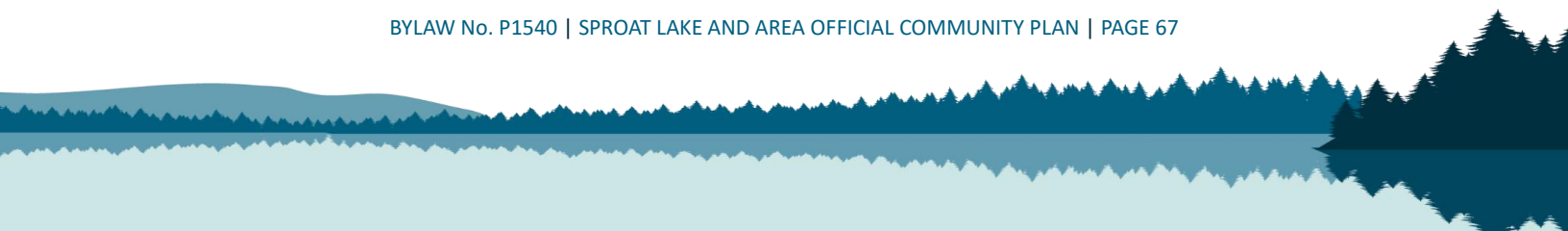
A development permit is required for any development occurring on land within the DPA that may be classified as one of the following activities, as per section 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

- subdivision of land;
- construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or structure;
- alteration of land, including earth works and other forms of landscaping.

7.5.4 GUIDELINES

Efforts should be made to avoid new development within the Natural Hazard Areas DPA. Where encroachment into the DPA is unavoidable due to other hazardous conditions or topographical challenges, all development activities must consider the following:

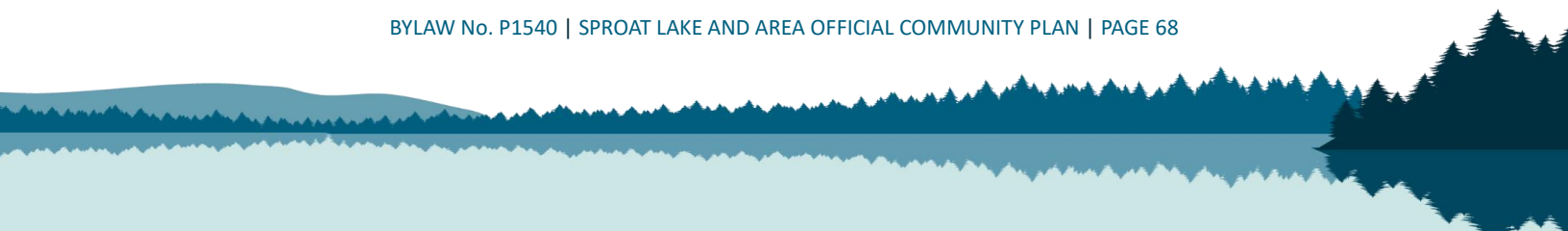
- .1 All applicants must submit:
 - a) A detailed site plan (scale 1:250 or larger) showing existing and proposed development, grading, streams, environmental features, roads, trails, driveways, yards, and areas to remain free from development.
 - b) An assessment report prepared by a QP for the purpose of identifying any hazards which may affect the safe development of the land, including but not limited to flooding, tsunami inundation, steep slopes, subsidence, and ground water flows on or near the property, and providing recommendations and conditions for development to avoid or mitigate impacts to these features. The report must include:
 - i. identification of any hazards, on a site plan, which may affect the safe development of the land;
 - ii. identification of any deficiencies in the design of the proposed development or intended construction standards;
 - iii. recommendations or requirements for mitigating hazard-associated risks to new development, including:
 - a. establishment of a minimum setback from the natural boundary;
 - b. establishment of a Flood Construction Level for new construction;
 - c. additional technical requirements, reviews, and inspections (i.e.,



- design or inspection by a geotechnical engineer);
- d. conditions of development;
- e. restricting the use of land.
- iv. verification that the land may be used safely for the proposed use with the probability of a geotechnical failure or another substantial hazard resulting in property damage of less than 10% in 50 years.
- c) Where a QP has provided recommendations and conditions for development to require infrastructure to mitigate impacts of any hazards, the ACRD may require the property owner to provide adequate financial security, in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit or the deposit of securities in a form satisfactory to the ACRD, in the amount of up to 120% of the total estimated cost of the work to ensure all requirements of the plan have been met.
- .2 No development or alteration of land is permitted where the report by the QP indicates that a hazardous condition would result.
- .3 Where development is proposed on a steep slope, or within 15 metres of the toe of the slope, or the top of bank, of a steep slope, no development will be permitted without a report prepared by a QP verifying that the land can be used safely for the proposed use.
- .4 Where development is proposed in the tsunami inundation zone, within 20 metres elevation above sea level, no development will be permitted without a report prepared by a QP verifying that the land can be used safely for the proposed use.
- .5 Where development is proposed in the designated 200-year floodplain, established by the *ACRD Somass Watershed Flood Management Plan*, no development will be permitted without a report prepared by a QP verifying that the land can be used safely for the proposed use.

Shoreline Stabilization

- .6 Where possible, green infrastructure will be prioritized over engineered shoreline devices.
- .7 Where a shoreline stabilization device is proposed or required, the applicant must submit an assessment report prepared by a QP which includes:
 - a) assessment of erosion risk on the subject property and the suitability of the

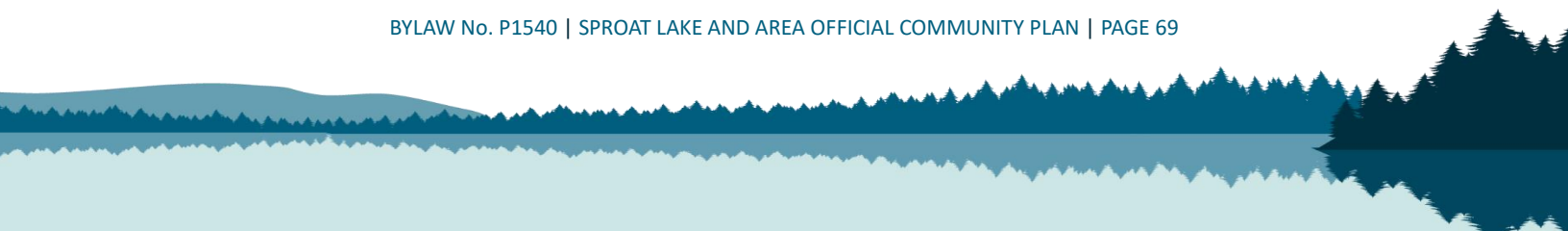


- subject property for a shoreline stabilization device;
 - b) identification of potential impacts on coastal geomorphologic processes as a result of installing the device;
 - c) identification of potential impacts on adjacent properties as a result of installing the device;
 - d) recommendations or requirements for mitigating potential negative impacts on coastal geomorphologic processes or neighbouring properties;
 - e) rationale for recommendations.
- .8 Shoreline stabilization devices are only supported on parcels that are subject to active erosion.
- .9 Shoreline stabilization devices must be located entirely within the property boundary.
- .10 Boat launch ramps are discouraged and will only be considered if they can be located on stable, non-erosional banks where a minimum amount of substrate disturbance or stabilization is necessary.

7.5.5 EXEMPTIONS

A Natural Hazard Areas Protection Development Permit is not required if the proposed development falls within the exemptions listed below:

ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
Subdivision	a) Subdivisions where any of the following criteria are met: i. Required minimum lot sizes are achieved exclusive of the natural hazard area(s), as identified by ACRD mapping or confirmed by a BC Land Surveyor or QEP; ii. The subdivision is a lot consolidation, or a lot line adjustment, that does not result in the creation of an additional vacant lot or parcel and does not involve any construction, including the installation of underground infrastructure or utility services or the construction of roads; or b) A covenant under the Land Title Act is registered to protect development from natural hazards in a manner that is consistent with the applicable DPA guidelines.



ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
Construction Activities and Alteration of Land	i. Development or alteration of land that is to occur on a portion of one or more lots where the area to be developed is located outside the designated DPA. The ACRD may require written confirmation from a BC Land Surveyor or QP that the area to be developed is located outside the designated DPA.

7.6 FORM AND CHARACTER (DPA III)

7.6.1 DESIGNATION

The Form and Character DPA encompass lands identified on Schedule E for the purpose of establishing objectives for the form and character of industrial, commercial, multi-family residential, and intensive residential development, pursuant to section 488 of the *Local Government Act*.

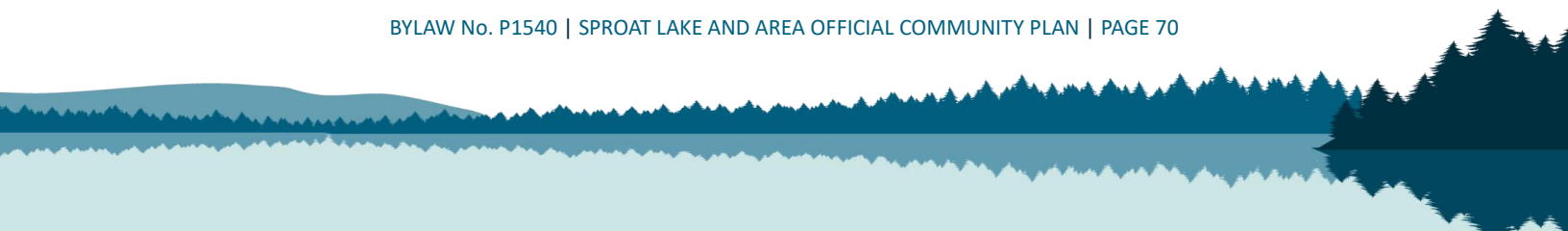
7.6.2 JUSTIFICATION

Visitors and residents traveling to Sproat Lake and Area or onward to the west coast follow Highway 4, leading visitors and residents through Sproat Lake and Area's agricultural and residential areas, and through lush, mature forests. Most of the commercial lands in Sproat Lake and Area are concentrated along this highway corridor. The scale and character of the built environment have an impact on the impression formed by both residents and visitors to the western portion of the Alberni Valley. The objective of this development permit designation is to ensure that the development, of existing sites or lots, form a positive impression to the greatest extent possible. The intent is to encourage enhancement of the built environment by high-quality design and screening, and to minimize the visual impacts of such development on the transportation network.

7.6.3 APPLICATION

A development permit is required for any development occurring on land within the DPA that may be classified as one of the following activities, as per section 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

- Construction of, addition to, or alteration of a structure relating to a commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, or intensive residential use.

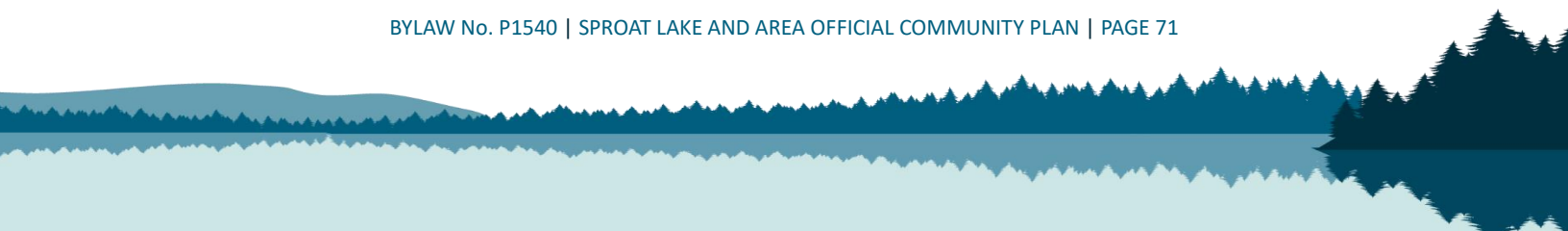


- Alteration of land, including earth works and other forms of landscaping associated with a commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, or intensive residential use.

7.6.4 GUIDELINES

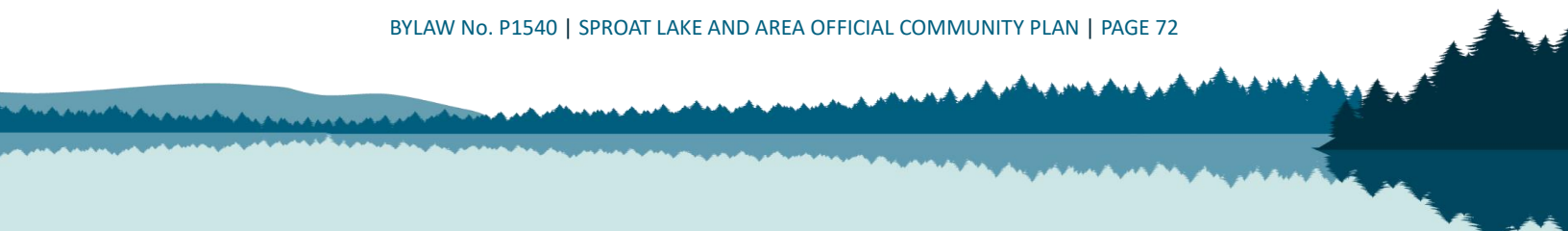
All applicable development activities occurring within the Form and Character DPA, unless exempt under Section 7.2 or Section 7.6.5, are subject to the following:

- .1 Development permits are required for commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, or intensive residential development located on lands designated within DPA III.
- .2 The shape, siting, roofline and exterior finish of buildings should be sufficiently varied to avoid visual uniformity yet reflect a west coast style and tradition. The use of wood-style fibre cement board as external cladding and metal roofing in accordance with FireSmart principles is encouraged where appropriate.
- .3 The scale and shape of proposed development should not detract from the rural nature and the welcoming character of the area, neighbouring developments as well as to the specific site. Buffering and screening with natural materials is required to reduce visual impact. Developers are encouraged to follow FireSmart landscaping principles.
- .4 Encourage the use of architecture, design, and construction materials based on Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles and standards.
- .5 Building siting form and massing must be responsive to:
 - a) the overall development context and scale of the plan areas;
 - b) adjacent development;
 - c) pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation;
 - d) topography;
 - e) geology and soil conditions;
 - f) hydrology, drainage and flood plain considerations;
 - g) native vegetation – encourage the retention of existing trees and shrubs;
 - h) existing view planes.
- .6 Commercial developments adjacent to Highway 4 should place their main structures adjacent to the highway and locate parking and loading at the rear,



away from the travelling public.

- .7 A minimum 3-metre-deep landscaped strip measured from the property boundary should be established and maintained on frontages along Highway 4 and adjacent to neighbouring Residential, Rural, Comprehensive Development, and Civic uses.
- .8 Where the development is located adjacent to residential uses, the residential aesthetic should be reflected.
- .9 Off-street parking is provided in accordance with the *Zoning Bylaw* and should balance safety and visual aesthetics.
- .10 Off-street loading spaces are to be provided in accordance with the *Zoning Bylaw*.
- .11 All signage should be unobtrusive and comply with the requirements of the ACRD *Sign Bylaw* and the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.
- .12 Access to the development shall be suitable for emergency vehicle access and approved by the MOTT.
- .13 Bicycle racks for use by the general public should be provided near entries to commercial, multi-family residential, and intensive residential buildings.
- .14 Any outdoor lighting should be directed downward with full cut-off and fully shielded fixtures that provide only the amount of light necessary for safe pedestrian passage at night.
- .15 Support service structures and facilities such as loading bays, refuse containers and storage areas should be screened with any combination of walls, fencing, hedging, planting, or other screening materials.
- .16 New multi-unit residential buildings shall consider providing three-stream waste diversion facilities including bear-resistant storage.
- .17 A landscape plan for the development shall be prepared as an integral part of the design and layout. Where landscaping works are proposed or required, the applicant must show existing landscaping and proposed plantings and landscape features, trees to be removed and retained, and an itemized cost estimate including a planting list describing proposed species and associated pot sizes. FireSmart landscaping principles should be used where possible. The landscape plan cost estimate shall be prepared by a QP and may be used to determine the value of a required security deposit to ensure the landscape works are completed and



maintained in accordance with plans submitted.

7.6.5 EXEMPTIONS

In addition to the exemptions listed in Section 7.2, a Form and Character Development Permit is not required for:

ACTIVITIES	EXEMPTIONS
Construction Activities and Alteration of Land	a) Form and character of buildings and structures that do not involve commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, or intensive residential uses. b) Interior renovations within an existing building. c) Regular maintenance and minor exterior repairs such as replacing windows, doors, trip, or roofing with similar materials/colours. d) Temporary buildings or structures that are erected for offices, construction or marketing purposes for a period that does not exceed the duration of construction. e) Replacement of signage in accordance with the <i>ACRD Sign Bylaw</i>. f) Demolition of buildings or structures. g) Any development that is not commercial, industrial or multi-family residential in nature. h) External alterations that do not alter or affect overall visual impact of the character of the building.



Photo by Roland Smith

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY CONTEXT

8.0 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

8.1 GEOGRAPHY AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Sproat Lake and Area landscape is characterized by large lakes, including Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake, old growth forests, snowcapped mountains, abundant wildlife, and rich biodiversity. The OCP area provides excellent recreational opportunities and is valued by members of the community for its natural beauty and rural character. The Area encompasses a portion of the Somass River floodplain, including the Sproat River, the west side of the Stamp and Somass Rivers, the Somass Estuary, and the watershed of Sproat Lake, Great Central Lake, Nahmint Lake, and many other minor lakes and rivers. Public parks in the area include three Provincial Parks – Sproat Lake, Taylor Arm and Fossli. Several community parks are under the jurisdiction of the ACRD, including Cougar Smith, Faber Park, Bishop Park and Klitsa Park.

The Area's location lends itself to many environmentally sensitive areas and habitats, including the Somass Estuary. Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake are critical for the sockeye salmon run that is both environmentally and economically important to the entire Alberni Valley. Old growth forest is culturally important to Hupačasath First Nation, c̓išaaʔath (Tseshaht First Nation), industry and the public. The area is susceptible to natural hazards such as tsunami inundation along the Somass River, high winds, landslides, earthquakes, excessive precipitation and seasonal flooding.

8.2 FIRST NATIONS

Sproat Lake and Area is located within the traditional territories of the c̓išaaʔath (Tseshaht First Nation) and the Hupačasath First Nations and neighbours both of their reserve lands.

The ACRD includes lands governed by the Maa-nulth Final Agreement, a modern Treaty negotiated and implemented in 2011 by the Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia, and the Maa-nulth First Nations. Some parts of Electoral Area "D", outside of the OCP area are included in the Maa-nulth Final Agreement. The administrative boundaries of the ACRD are located adjacent to lands of four of the five Maa-nulth Treaty First Nations: Yuułuʔiłʔath (Ucluelet First Nation), Huu-ay-aht First Nations, tukʷaaʔath (Toquaht Nation), and Uchucklesaht Tribe Government. The fifth nation, Ka:yu:k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' (Kyuquot/Cheklesath First Nation) is located north of the administrative boundary of the ACRD.

Though the Plan has no authority over First Nations' reserve lands, the ACRD has expressed a commitment to develop partnerships with local First Nations to support reconciliation and mutually beneficial agreements such as aligned economic opportunities, joint historical, cultural, and heritage initiatives and shared natural environment stewardship.

8.3 KEY COMMUNITY TRAITS

The established community primarily consists of residential lots surrounding Sproat Lake, residential and agricultural areas near the Sproat and Somass Rivers, and recreational areas on the east end of Great Central Lake. While the Area is home to numerous permanent residents, the availability of outdoor recreational activities (such as camping, hiking, and boating) across the region, including nearby Provincial Parks, attracts seasonal residents and tourists. Consequently, the Area hosts many vacation homes and short-term tourist accommodations, all of which influence the availability and affordability of housing supply.

Additionally, Sproat Lake and Area is comprised of agricultural land and rural properties. Within the broader Electoral Area boundary, the lands to the north, west, and south of the OCP Area are largely forestry resource lands. Along the eastern border of the OCP Area are the Beaufort and Beaver Creek Electoral Areas and the City of Port Alberni.

Sproat Lake and Area is primarily accessible from eastern Vancouver Island by car via Provincial Highway 4, which connects to the Island Highway (Highway 19) just south of Qualicum Beach and west of Parksville. Alternatively, the Area can be reached by air travel through the Alberni Valley Regional Airport.

8.4 COMMUNITY PROFILE

The current OCP boundaries for Sproat Lake and Area constitute approximately one third of Electoral Area "D". Data reported in the community profile is derived from Electoral Area "D" as a whole, as Census Canada and BC Stats do not collect data that is specific to the OCP Area. As a result, information stated here may differ slightly from actuality.

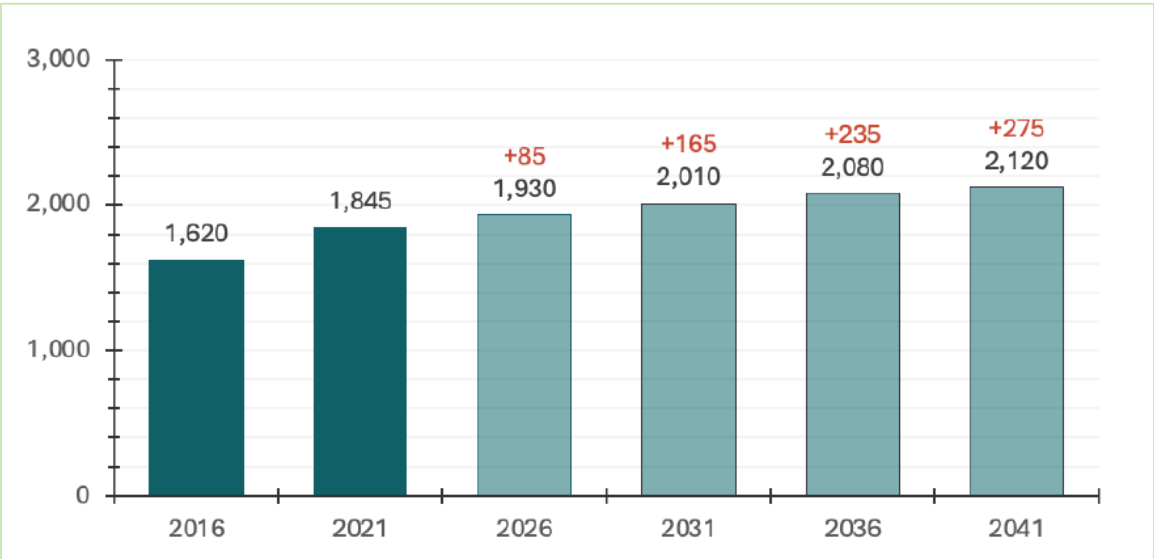
8.4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The 2021 Census reported a total population for Sproat Lake and Area of 1,843 permanent residents. This marks a 14% increase (227 people) since the 2016 Census, which recorded

1,616 residents. Prior to the 2021 Census, the population of Sproat Lake and Area was steadily declining from its peak of 2,053 residents in 1996. BC Stats estimates that the total population in 2026 was approximately 1,930 individuals, which is comparable to the population levels observed before 2011 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Historical and Anticipated Population Growth in Sproat Lake and Area from 2016 - 2041



The total population reported by the 2021 Census for Sproat Lake and Area does not include any residents of reserve communities located within the Area’s geographical boundaries, as Census data is reported separately for ‘on reserve’ communities. The total population reported by the 2021 Census for each ‘on reserve’ community located within Sproat Lake and Area is summarized in the table below. When considering the population of reserve communities in addition to the population reported for Sproat Lake and Area, the total number of people residing in the Area is 2,454.

Table 1. Total Population of On Reserve Communities Located within Sproat Lake and Area

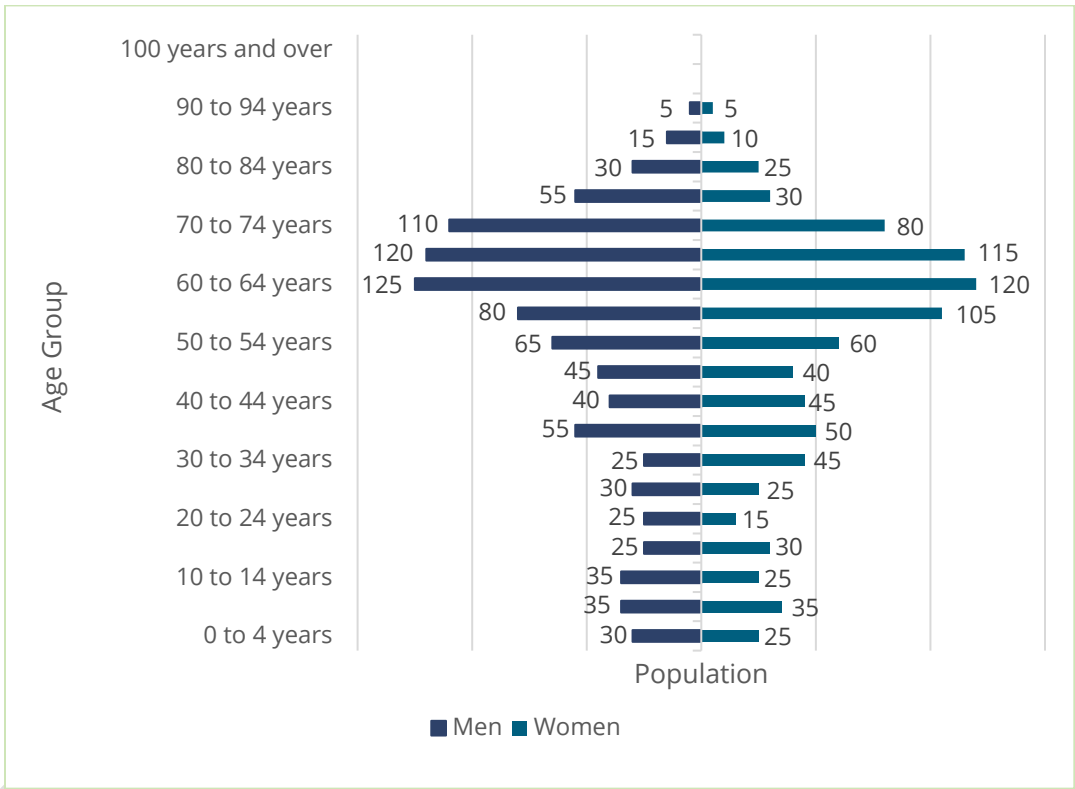
COMMUNITY	TOTAL POPULATION
Klehkoot (Hupačasath First Nation)	15
Tsahaheh (Tseshah First Nation)	596

Age

The median age in Sproat Lake and Area was 58.8 in 2021; this represents a significantly older population than the province of BC, which reported a median age of 42.8 in 2021.

Sproat Lake and Area’s population is distributed as follows: 13.0% aged 19 and younger, 29.7% aged 20-54, and 56.3% aged 55 and over (Figure 4). Of these broader age groups, the largest cohort is residents aged 60-69, representing 25.5% of the total population. Sproat Lake and Area represents an ageing population.

Figure 4. Total Sproat Lake and Area Population By Age Group and Gender (2021)



Households

The average household size remained at 2.1 people from 2016 to 2021. However, the total number of Sproat Lake and Area residents residing in private households shifted from 1,610 persons to 1,820 persons over that same period. (Table 2).

Table 2. Household Size in Private Households in Sproat Lake and Area Compared to the Province of BC (2021)

	SPROAT LAKE AND AREA	ACRD	PROVINCE OF BC
Average Household Size	2.1	2.2	2.4

8.4.2 CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Per the 2021 Census, 98.3% of Sproat Lake and Area residents are Canadian citizens, with 65.9% of the total population identifying as third generation (or more). This varies significantly from the Provincial citizenship rate of 88.7%, where just 44.5% of the total population is third generation or more (Table 3).

Table 3. Percentage of Canadian Citizens & Generational Status for Sproat Lake and Area Compared to the Province of BC (2021)

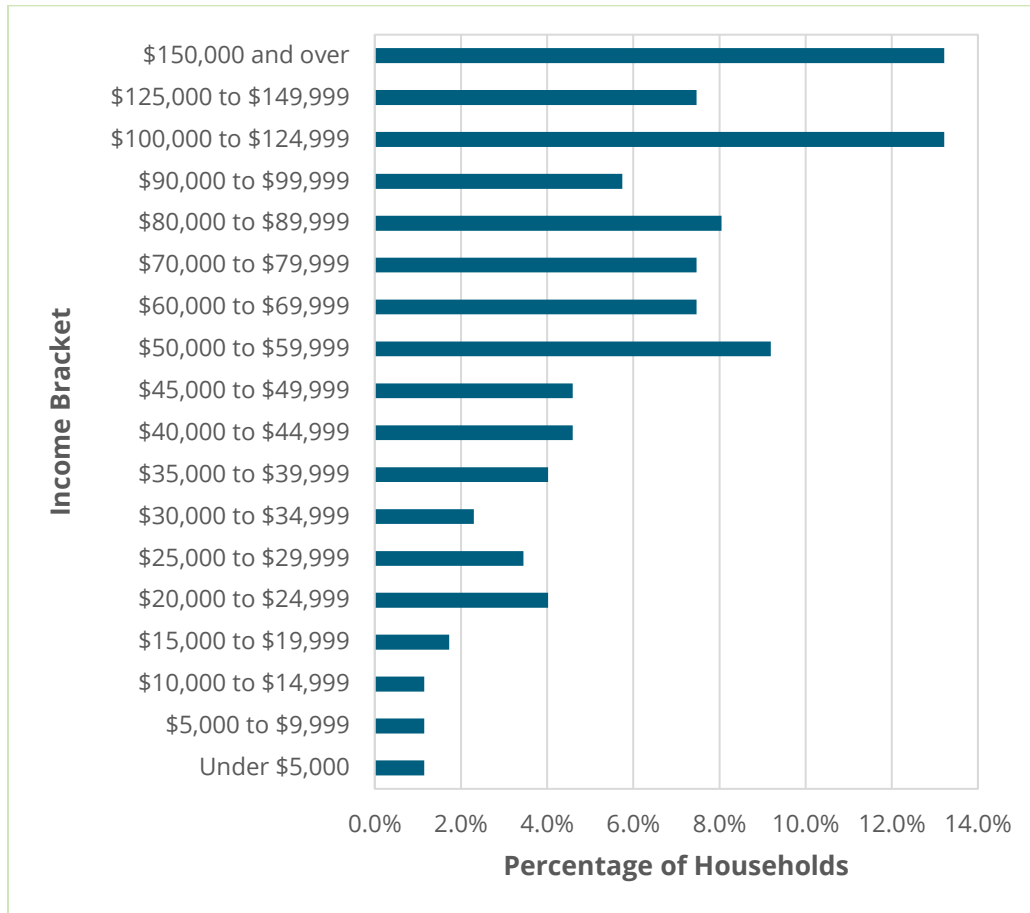
		SPROAT LAKE AND AREA	PROVINCE OF BC
Percentage of Population that are Canadian Citizens		96.9%	88.7%
Generation Status	First Generation	11.5%	33.7%
	Second Generation	22.3%	21.7%
	Third Generation or More	65.9%	44.5%

8.4.3 ECONOMIC PROFILE

Income

Based on 2021 Census income data, the largest household after-tax income groups in Sproat Lake and Area are \$100,000 to \$124,999 and \$150,000 and over, each comprising 13.2% of households. The smallest household after-tax income groups are \$10,000 to \$14,999, \$5,000 to \$9,999, and \$5,000 or less – which each represent 1.1% of Sproat Lake and Area households (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Sproat Lake and Area Household After Tax Income (2020)



The average total income of Sproat Lake and Area households in 2021 was \$109,000. This average is influenced by 40.2% of Sproat Lake and Area households which earn more than \$90,000 per year. Comparatively, the average total income of households across the Province in 2021 was \$108,600 – as influenced by the 47.3% of BC’s households which earn more than \$90,000 a year (Table 4).

In 2021, the median total income of Sproat Lake and Area households was identical to that of BC households, which was \$85,000. In contrast, the median total income of households in the ACRD as a whole was \$63,200. This highlights a wealth disparity between Sproat Lake and Area and the rest of the ACRD.

Table 4. Average and Median Total Incomes of Households in Sproat Lake and Area Compared to the Province (2020)

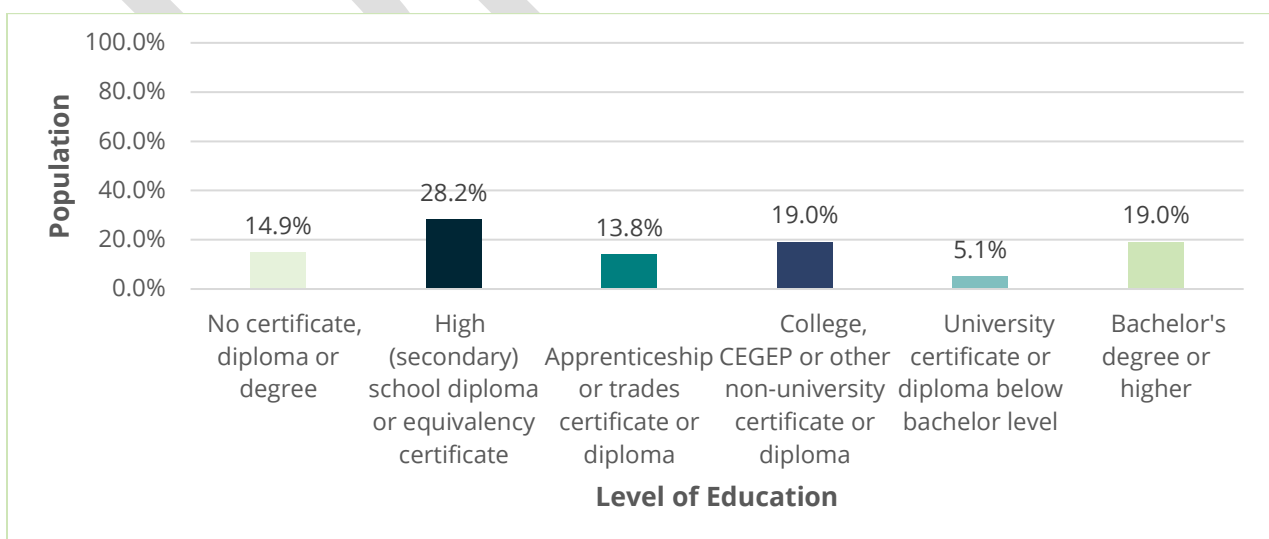
	SPROAT LAKE AND AREA	ACRD	PROVINCE OF BC
Average Total Income of Households in 2020	\$109,000	\$73,200	\$108,600
Median Total Income of Households in 2020	\$85,000	\$63,200	\$85,000

Educational Level

Over half of Sproat Lake and Area residents between the ages of 25 and 64 (56.9%) have obtained a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree. As shown in (Figure 6), 19.0% of all residents aged 25 to 64 hold a university degree at or above a bachelor's degree level, which is slightly above the 17.3% reported in 2016, but below the 29.9% and 35.0% reported at the Provincial level in 2016 and 2021, respectively.

Slightly less than one third (28.2%) of Sproat Lake and Area residents aged 25 to 64 have achieved a secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate as their highest level of education, while 14.9% of residents have no certificate, diploma, or degree. This demonstrates a slight decrease in the overall level of educational attainment for Sproat Lake and Area residents aged 25 to 64 since 2016, when 26.8% had achieved a secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate as their highest level of education, and just 10.1% had not completed any certificate, diploma, or degree.

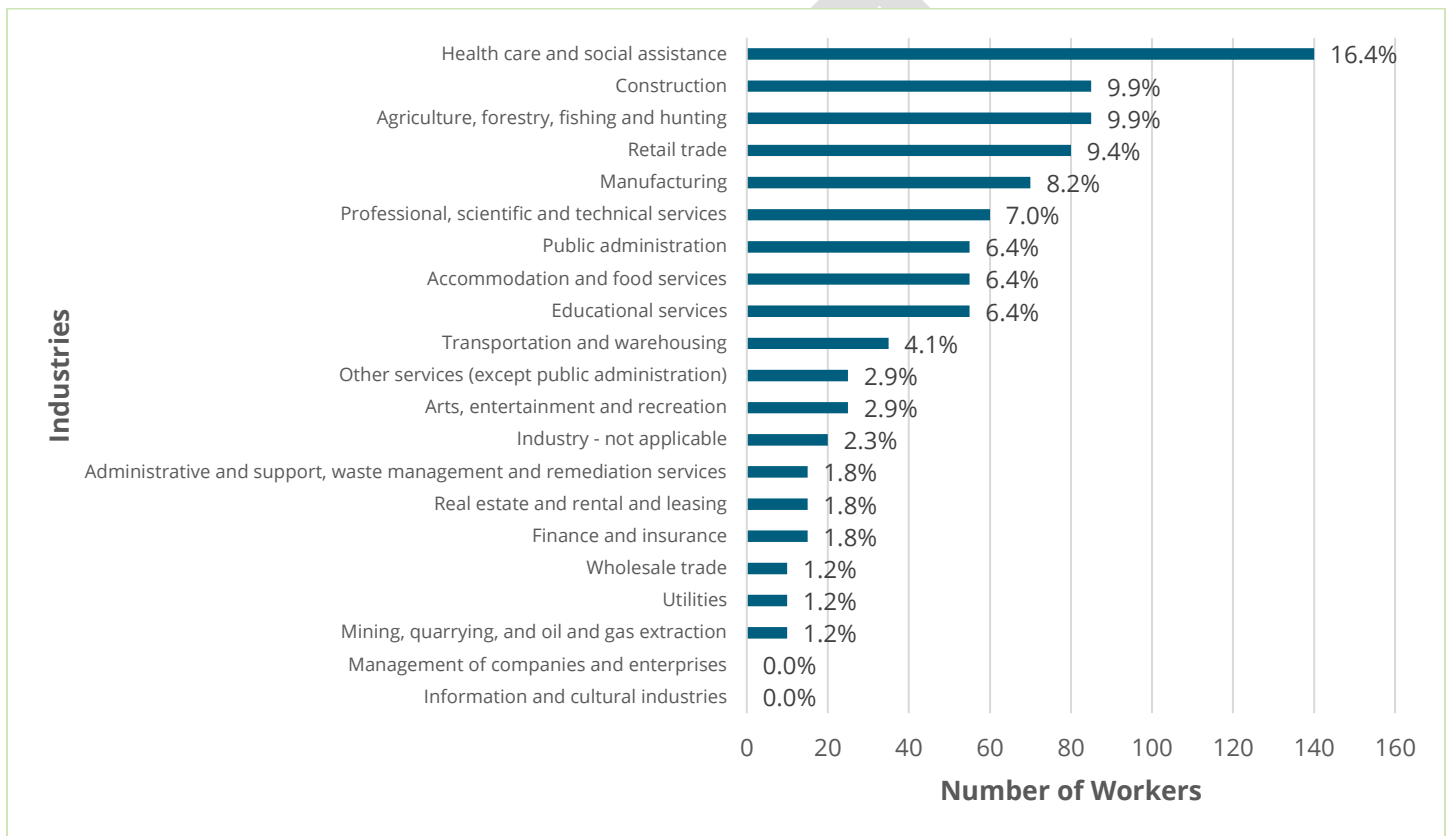
Figure 6. Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Sproat Lake and Area Residents Aged 25 to 64 Years in Private Households (2021)



8.4.4 INDUSTRY

According to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) from 2017, health care and social assistance was Sproat Lake and Area's largest industry, representing 16.4% of all industries in the Area. The next top four industries were agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (9.9%), construction (9.9%), retail trade (9.4%), and manufacturing (8.2%). Sproat Lake and Area's three smallest industries were mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (1.2%), utilities (1.2%), and wholesale trade (1.2%) (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Industries in Sproat Lake and Area (2017)



In 2021, the classification categories for industries were revised, so direct correlation to industry data from past Census profiles is not possible; however, assumptions can be made about general trends. The most recent data available from 2021 identifies the top occupations of the labour force for Sproat Lake and Area, which are: sales and service (24.0%), trades, transport and equipment operators (18.7%), and health occupations (15.2%)

8.4.5 HOUSING PROFILE

Historic Housing Starts

Between 2014 and 2025 a total of 149 building permits were issued in Sproat Lake and Area for new residential dwellings, with 80% of permits for single-detached residences and 20% of permits for movable dwellings (mobile and modular) (Table 5).

Table 5. Building Permits Issued for New Residential Dwellings Between 2014 and 2025 in Sproat Lake and Area

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Single-Detached	7	6	9	8	13	15	7	11	17	16	2	9	120
Row	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Semi-Detached	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duplex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apartment (<5 floors)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apartment (5+ floors)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile	2	1	4	4	1	3	7	3	1	1	2	0	29

Of existing dwelling units, 69.6% (871) in Sproat Lake and Area were occupied by a usual resident in 2021, meaning that about 30% of dwellings in Sproat Lake and Area may not be used for permanent occupation. In comparison, the provincial average of private dwellings that are occupied permanently was 92.3% in 2021. This discrepancy between existing dwellings and full-time residency highlights the seasonal and short-term nature of residential activity in Sproat Lake and Area. A significant proportion (85%) (Table 6) of occupied dwellings in Sproat Lake and Area are single-detached residences; 92% of which are owner-occupied, while 8% are occupied by renters. Mobile homes account for 12% of the housing stock. Less than 1% of occupied dwellings in Sproat Lake and Area are row or semi-detached apartments.

Table 6. Occupied Dwellings by Structure Type in Sproat Lake and Area (2021)

	TOTAL	SINGLE DETACHED	ROW	SEMI- DETACHED	DUPLEX	APARTMENT (<5 floors)	APARTMENT (5+ floors)	MOBILE
Total	875	745	0	0	0	10	0	105
Proportion of Total	100%	85%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	12%
Owner	91%	92%	-	-	-	-	-	100%
Renter	9%	8%	-	-	-	-	-	0%

Projected Population Growth

The population of Sproat Lake and Area has been steadily increasing since 2016 and is anticipated to continue growing, as illustrated by Table 7. According to the Housing Needs Report for Sproat Lake and Area based on historical growth patterns and current urban-rural migration trends, projected population is anticipated to reach 2,120 by 2041. This represents a 15% population increase.

Table 7. Historical and Anticipated Population from 2021-2041

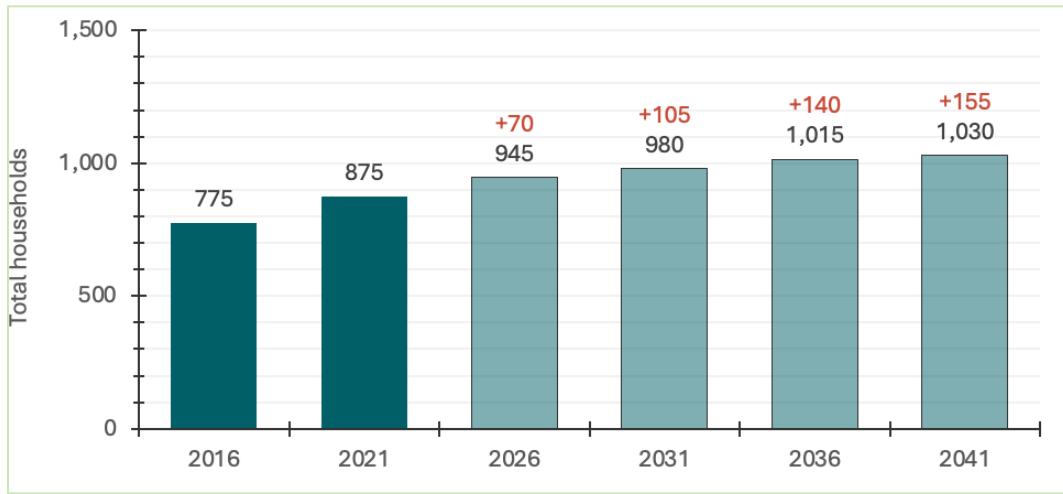
	TOTAL	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-84	85+
Historical Population							
2016 population	1,620	155	95	230	645	455	30
2021 population	1,845	180	100	315	645	570	40
% change ('16-'21)	+14%	+16%	+5%	+37%	+0%	+25%	+33%
Anticipated Population							
2026 population	1,930	180	110	350	575	650	50
%change ('21-'26)	+5%	+0%	+10%	+11%	-11%	+14%	+25%
2041 population	2,120	190	120	450	605	620	130
% change ("26-'41)	+10%	+6%	+9%	+29%	+5%	-5%	+160%
% change ('21-'41)	+15%	+6%	+20%	+43%	-6%	+9%	+225%

Source derived from Statistics Canada, BC P.E.O.P.L.E projections

Anticipated Housing Needs

The total number of private households in Sproat Lake and Area is projected to continue increasing in correlation with projected population growth. Based on historical and projected population patterns and household size, it is estimated that the total number of households in Sproat Lake and Area will reach 1,030 by 2041, an increase of 155 from 2021 (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Historic and Projected Households from 2016-2041



Source derived from Statistics Canada, BC P.E.O.P.L.E projections

Notwithstanding the number of private households projected for Area “D”, the Area’s anticipated dwelling demands for the next five, and 20 years illustrate that there are numerous factors contributing to housing attainability for Sproat Lake and Area residents. Over half (59%) of the estimated 297 units required by 2041 are necessary to address projected population growth in Sproat Lake and Area (Table 8). As well, approximately 2.3% of the total units required by 2041 are needed to accommodate Extreme Core Housing Needs largely experienced by low- and very low-income households respectively in Area “D”.

Table 8. Five and 20-year Anticipated Dwelling Demand for Sproat Lake and Area

DWELLING DEMAND COMPONENT	FIVE-YEAR	TWENTY-YEAR
Extreme Core Housing Need	2	7
Homelessness	10	20
Suppressed Household Formation	23	91
Anticipated Growth	90	178
Rental Vacancy	0	1
Demand Factor Adjustment	0	0
TOTAL	125	297

Significant factors contributing to anticipated dwelling demand are affordability (cost) and adequacy (appropriateness given household size, age, and ability), though the age and

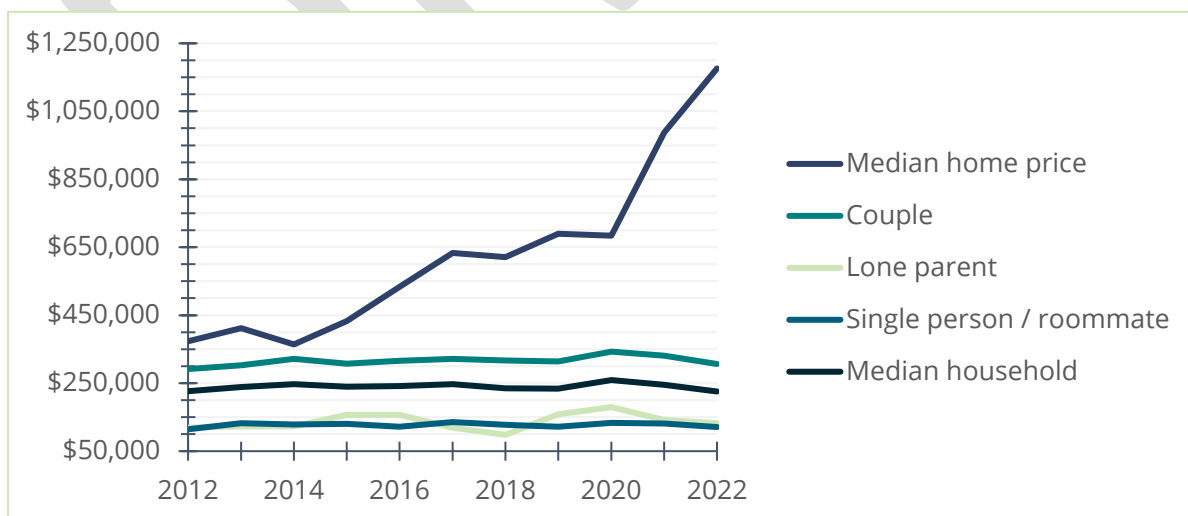
quality of Sproat Lake and Area's existing housing stock also contributes significantly to the attainability of appropriate housing. In 2021, approximately 12% of households were living in unaffordable dwellings while 8% of households were living in inadequate dwellings. Moreover, 3% of Area "D" households were in Core Housing Need (Table 9).

Table 9. Share of households experiencing a specific housing indicator by tenure, 2021

HOUSING CRITERIA & CORE HOUSING NEED	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
Inadequate dwellings	65	7.7%
Unsuitable dwellings	0	0.0%
Unaffordable dwellings	100	11.8%
Households in Core Housing Need	25	3.0%
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	845	

The affordability of home ownership in Sproat Lake and Area changed dramatically between 2012 and 2022. During this period, the median home price increased from \$373,200 to \$1,176,000 – representing a 215.1% change over 10 years, or an annual increase of 21.5%. This rapid and substantial increase in median home price does not reflect a correspondingly rapid or sizable increase in average household income for Sproat Lake and Area residents. Rather, the discrepancy between median home price and housing affordability has grown significantly, as illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Change in Housing Affordability: Median Home Price Compared to Housing Affordability for Various Household configurations in Sproat Lake and Area (2021)



The affordability of rental housing in Sproat Lake and Area has not changed as dramatically as the affordability of home ownership. Rather, the monthly shelter costs for renters increased by 13.9% between 2011 and 2021, as opposed to the 34.5% increase in monthly shelter costs for homeowners during that same period (Table 10).

Table 10. Change in Housing Affordability: Average Monthly Shelter Costs in Sproat Lake and Area from 2011 to 2021

	2011	2016	2021
Owner	\$913	\$1,014	\$1,228
Renter	\$1,053	\$826	\$1,200

8.4.6 REGIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS

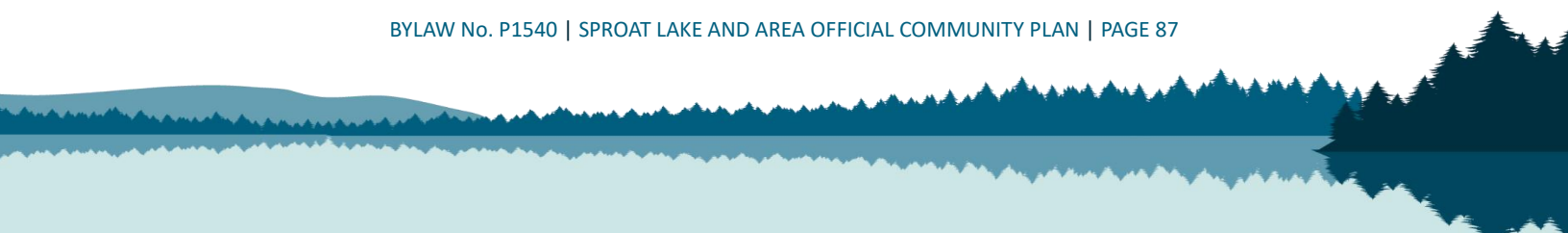
Alberni-Clayoquot Local Health Area

Island Health presents relevant, aggregated information relating to the Local Health Area (LHA) which includes the Alberni Valley, the West Coast, and Bamfield. As a result, the following data does not represent Area “D” specifically. These data summarise the population’s housing, employment status, income and education attainment and are indicators of overall public health.

A large percentage of the population in the LHA are spending greater than 30% of their household income on housing and 36% of renter households and 13% of owner households are living in unaffordable housing. Residents of the LHA have a median after-tax household income of \$62,800 which exacerbates housing affordability.

The population of the LHA is ageing. The population of those 75 years and older is anticipated to grow by 51% by the year 2044. Life expectancy at birth (75.5 years) is lower than the BC average where individuals life expectancy at birth is 81-82 years.

Residents of Area “D” are concerned about food security and recognise the importance of agriculture and food production in the Alberni Valley. Food costs are increasing and monthly food bills have reached an average of \$1366 for a family of 4 in the LHA. This is the most expensive on Southern Vancouver Island. In 2023, nearly 1 in 5 adults have worried about having enough food to eat over the past year causing a significant amount of stress. 8% of seniors aged 75+ worry they will run out of food before they can buy more, while 10% of youth in grades 8-12 say they have gone to bed hungry at least some of the time (2023). This additional stress and worry has further impact on health outcomes.



While these statistics are aggregated to reflect the entire region, they help to illustrate how overall public health is impacted by a wide range of factors. Some of these topics such as housing and affordability and agriculture and food security are included in the Sproat Lake and Area OCP.

Employment Lands

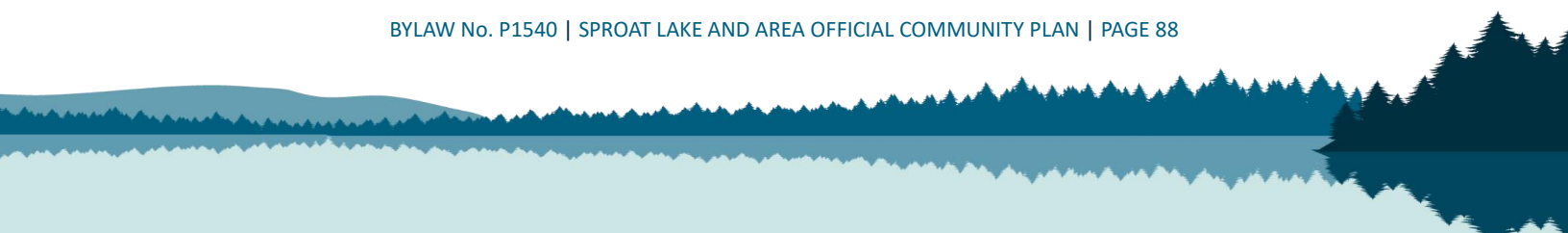
In accordance with section 473 of the *Local Government Act*, this section identifies the approximate amount and type of existing and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses in Sproat Lake and Area at the time of this Plan's adoption. Understanding these land uses provides context for policies in the Area "D" OCP that support a diverse and resilient local economy while ensuring that employment uses are appropriately located and compatible with surrounding land use.

Existing Employment Lands

Existing 2014 OCP Land Use	Area of Land (hectares)
Agricultural Use	1,988
Airport Use	113
Commercial Use	33
Community Service Use	79
Comprehensive Development Area	203
Conservation	399
Fish Hatchery Use	29
Float-home Use	10
Industrial Use	59
Marina Use	1.9
Mobile Home Park Use	10
Parks & Recreation Use	340
Resource Use	41,838

Proposed Employment Lands

2026 OCP Land Use	Area of Land (hectares)
Agriculture	1,990
Airport	113



Civic	128
Commercial	34
Comprehensive Development	177
Conservation	392
Float-Home	10
Industry	59
Marina	2.0
Mobile Home Park	10
Parks and Trails	361
Resource	41,857

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