



Chilliwack River
Watershed Strategy

DRAFT Issues & Alternatives Document

**COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL, & RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

October 11, 2007

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- Dawn Smith, Fraser Valley Regional District
- Lance Lilley, Fraser Valley Regional District / Fraser Valley Regional Watershed Coalition (Project Lead)
- Graham Daneluz, Fraser Valley Regional District
- Shannon Sigurdson, Fraser Valley Regional District
- Terry Pratt, Resort Development Branch, Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

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Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy Issues & Alternatives: COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL, & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 General Description of the Issue

1.1 *Development in the Chilliwack River Watershed*

Settlement/Residential:

As documented by archaeology, ethnography, and Sto:lo - Ch-ihl-kway-uhk oral history, there is a long history of human settlement in the Chilliwack River Watershed, extending back at least five thousand years.¹ The area lies within the traditional territory of the Sto:lo² and the Nlaka'pamux First Nations³; the Chilliwack River Valley is the homeland of the Ch-ihl-kway-uhk Tribe. Currently, the only First Nation Reserve located within the Chilliwack River Watershed is that of the Soowahlie First Nation. This Reserve, located at the junction of Sweltzer Creek and the Chilliwack River, is approximately 3.8 square kilometers in size, and has approximately 250 band members living on site currently.⁴

Non-aboriginal use of the Chilliwack Valley began in the late 1800s, but permanent settlement occurred primarily following World War II. Current residential development exists sporadically along the Chilliwack River, and in a number of settlement clusters (see Figure 1), including:

- Baker Trails
- Ryder Lake
- Edwards Road area
- Bell Acres
- Slesse Park
- Post Creek.

Additional development also occurs in Cultus Lake, Lindell Beach, and within the Columbia Valley, but these settlements are outside of the planning boundaries of the Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy.

While the Soowahlie First Nation controls development on their reserve lands, development in the other portions of the Chilliwack River Watershed is controlled by local government. The Ryder Creek uplands and Ryder Lake area is within the boundaries of the City of Chilliwack; other areas of the watershed are within the boundaries of Electoral Area E under the jurisdiction of the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD).

¹ Schaepe, 1998.

² BC Treaty Commission Website.

³ George et al, 2005.

⁴ Francis Mussell, personal communication.

2006 Census data recorded the population within Electoral Area “E” as 3481, up 4.6% from 2000.⁵ Electoral Area “E” includes areas outside of the Chilliwack River Watershed planning area (i.e., Cultus Lake, Columbia Valley), and does not take into account residents living in the Ryder Lake uplands area within the City of Chilliwack jurisdiction, or band members living on the Soowahlie First Nation Reserve. The number of residents within the Chilliwack River Valley is estimated to be approximately 2000 individuals.⁶

According to the Official Settlement Plan for this area, “apart from some potential for infill on the few lots in the Bell Acres area, and the odd vacant lot in other largely settled areas, the Valley is essentially fully developed”⁷. Additional residential growth is constrained by a number of factors, including:

- instability of escarpment and clay banks
- flood hazards
- difficult terrain
- surface erosion
- debris flow hazards
- sensitivity of shallow ground water aquifers
- limited transportation routes
- service delivery
- water availability
- forest fire hazard
- existing tenures and zoning, and
- Sto:lo Nation land claims as part of their Traditional Territory.

Commercial and Institutional Development:

Although not of great abundance, there are a number of commercial and institutional developments within the Chilliwack River Watershed, primarily along Chilliwack Lake Road. Commercial developments include a restaurant, convenience stores, a service station, a private campground, a scrap yard, a nursery, and a greenhouse. Community hall services are provided both at the Chilliwack Fish and Game Protected Association’s clubhouse, and at the volunteer fire hall. The majority of commercial services utilized by residents and users of the Chilliwack Valley are located outside of the Valley.

Historically, institutional development within the Chilliwack River Watershed primarily consisted of numerous minimum security correctional facilities (Tamihi Creek, Mount Thurston, Centre Creek, Pierce Creek, and Ford Mountain) as well as the military base and training facilities of CFB Chilliwack. Most of the correctional facilities have closed over recent years; Ford Mountain Centre is the only correctional centre still in operation within the Chilliwack Valley. This is a medium security centre that houses up to 110

⁵ Stats Canada, 2006 Census results.

⁶ From CRWS Background Report

⁷ FVRD, 1983 (p14)

adult offenders.⁸ CFB Chilliwack was closed in 1998, but a number of military training facilities remain in operation throughout the watershed, including the former Pierce Creek Correctional Centre.

1.2 General Community Concerns

Although geographical and geological constraints have not permitted commercial and residential development to occur within the Chilliwack River Watershed at the same scale as it has within other watersheds in the Lower Mainland, the appeal of the watershed's recreational and rural value will inevitably place some degree of potential development pressure on the area. Ensuring that this development occurs at appropriate rates, scales, locations, and conditions that do not threaten the existing environmental, recreational, and aesthetic appeal of the watershed was repeatedly expressed as a very important issue by residents and users during recent public input proceedings as part of the Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy.⁹

Depending on the prior use of the site, there are a number of direct and indirect watershed impacts associated with increased development. Some of these potential impacts include:

- Habitat loss or impacts
- Hydrological changes associated with increasing watershed imperviousness
- Increased numbers of recreational users and associated impacts on the environment (including garbage, pollution, habitat disturbances, etc.)
- Reduced enjoyment of popular recreation areas due to overcrowding, habitat damage, etc,
- Increased human-wildlife interactions
- Increased vehicle traffic (congestion, safety, pollution)
- Increased noise, light, and air pollution
- Increased risk of interface fires (both as a risk of property damage and as a potential source of ignition)
- Increasing water demand resulting in the potential need for additional water sources (e.g., from damming and diverting existing streams)
- Impacts to Traditional Use and Cultural value of the watershed (both from direct impacts to a site and from indirect impacts by reducing the spiritual value of the site by developing near a site)

As a result of questionnaires received and comments made during this public input process, a community vision was suggested for the Chilliwack River Watershed that includes a desire by the community to see a future Chilliwack River Valley much as it is today, except with more sustainable resource extraction, improved recreation and garbage management, and limited and controlled development (e.g., small scale, low impact).¹⁰ The community expressed its desire for new development to be kept to a minimum, especially commercial development, and to be situated in/around areas already

⁸ FVRD, 2005

⁹ Chilliwack River Watershed Forum. Chilliwack Fish & Game Protective Association Clubhouse. Dec 1, 2005.

¹⁰ Englund, 2006.

developed. Specific concerns were expressed about the potential impacts of commercial and residential development on:

- The environment (water quality and habitat loss),
- Visual quality/aesthetic appeal (e.g., development and roads built too close to the river, sprawl associated with Peach Road & Promontory), and
- Wildlife (e.g., from dogs, encroachment).

Other concerns were expressed about:

- potential impacts of resort development in the watershed,
- traffic congestion,
- negative impacts of overdevelopment on future tourism, and
- the sale or lease of Crown land to private interests without input from, or consideration of, current residents and users.

2.0 Specific Location/Examples

2.1 Residential Growth

As previously discussed, the residential growth potential of the Chilliwack River Watershed is relatively low, and as stated in the Official Settlement Plan for the area, “the Valley is essentially fully developed”¹¹ apart from the odd vacant lot or infill opportunities. Proposals for new developments are faced with a number of constraints associated with the local topography, geotechnical hazards (including flooding and debris slides), limited road access, servicing limitations (septic and water supply), and FVRD policies that do not generally support isolated developments. These constraints, and the subsequent low-density and rural zoning for much of the Chilliwack Valley, indicate that the low growth rate seen over the last number of years will continue.

Despite this low development potential, the Province (Land and Water BC Inc.) recently conducted a study of Crown land within the Fraser Valley to identify possible sites for development opportunities to help accommodate the region’s expected population growth.¹² A number of the identified sites for development potential are within the Chilliwack River Watershed, including locations near Slesse Park and Post Creek (Figure 2). As many of these sites are either located in development permit areas, are currently zoned by the FVRD to not facilitate suburban residential-type development, or have issues pertaining to servicing and isolated communities, the development opportunities in the Chilliwack River Watershed remain relatively low.

2.2 Resort Development

There is strong interest in resort and recreational development in the Chilliwack River watershed. While development pressure is focused on lowland areas along the river corridor,

¹¹ FVRD, 1983 (p14)

¹² Urban Systems, 2005

upland areas are also the subject of development interest. The following two recent examples illustrate the interests and pressures for resort development in this area.

Chipmunk Ridge Resort Area Proposal:

Resorts West BC Development Corporation has proposed a resort development along the Chipmunk Ridge area of the region. This proposal includes a mix of low and medium density residential development (with 290 single family lots and 1,200 multifamily units), a year-round aerial tram of approximately 3km in length, and a potential ski area development.¹³ The tram is anticipated as a sightseeing and recreation destination that provides access for activities such as hiking, paragliding, snowshoeing, ski touring, and mountain biking. The company website¹⁴ discusses plans for constructing three theme villages as part of their final proposed project: a ski in and ski out Alpine Village, a West Coast Rainforest Village, and an 18th/19th century European Village.

Although the proposed residential development and base terminal facilities for the tram are located within the City of Chilliwack boundaries and not within the Chilliwack River Watershed (Figure 1), the upper terminal and much of the recreational activities are within both the boundaries of the FVRD and the boundaries of the Chilliwack River Watershed. Consequently, much of the environmental and visual quality impacts associated with the proposed development are of consequence for the Chilliwack River Watershed.

The developers acquired an Investigative Use Permit and a License of Occupation by the Province in 2003 for the tram right of way and the mountaintop tram terminal area, but development plans have been delayed due to complications. The current licenses issued to the proponents have recently expired, but the Province maintains a Notation of Interest over the area in case the development proceeds. The developers have also applied for zoning bylaw amendments with the FVRD to consider the tram and towers. This application received first reading on March 23, 2004; however, further readings of the bylaw still await further information from the developer and a community consultation process.

Mount Thurston/Centre Creek Correctional Facilities:

The former correctional facilities located at Mount Thurston and Centre Creek (Figure 1) were purchased in 2006 by the Ch-ihl-kway-uhk Tribe Society, an organization representing nine local First Nations bands, for \$1.86 million.¹⁵ Mount Thurston is planned as a tourism resort and conference centre; an Aboriginal health and wellness centre is planned for Centre Creek. Both of these sites are in an area subject to land claims as part of the traditional territory of local First Nations.

¹³ Brent Hartley and Associates Inc, 2003

¹⁴ Available: <http://www.resortswestbc.com/> (Apr 25, 2007)

¹⁵ Chouinard, 2006

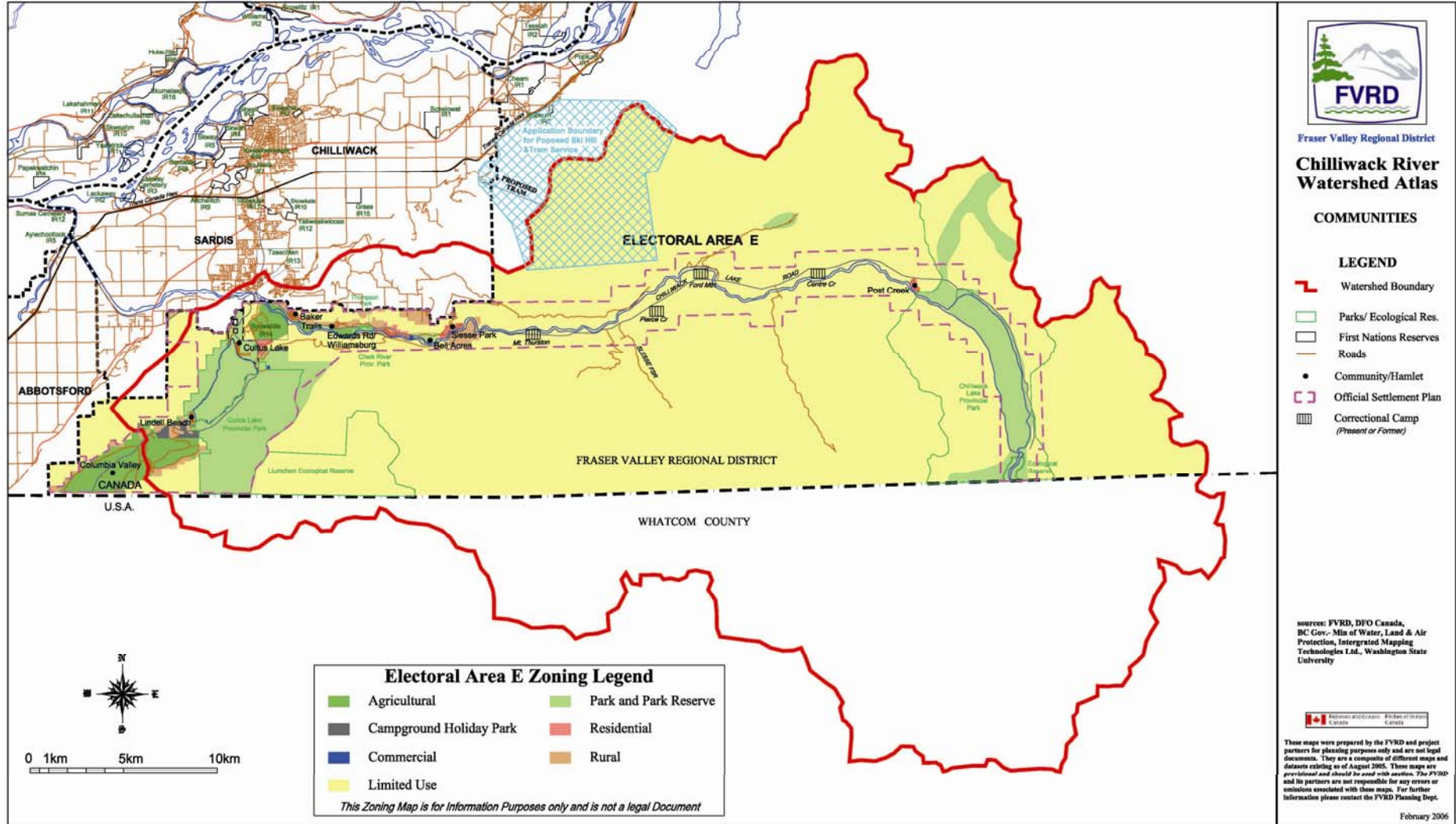


Figure 1. Selected community and development features, and current land use zoning, within the Chilliwack River Watershed.

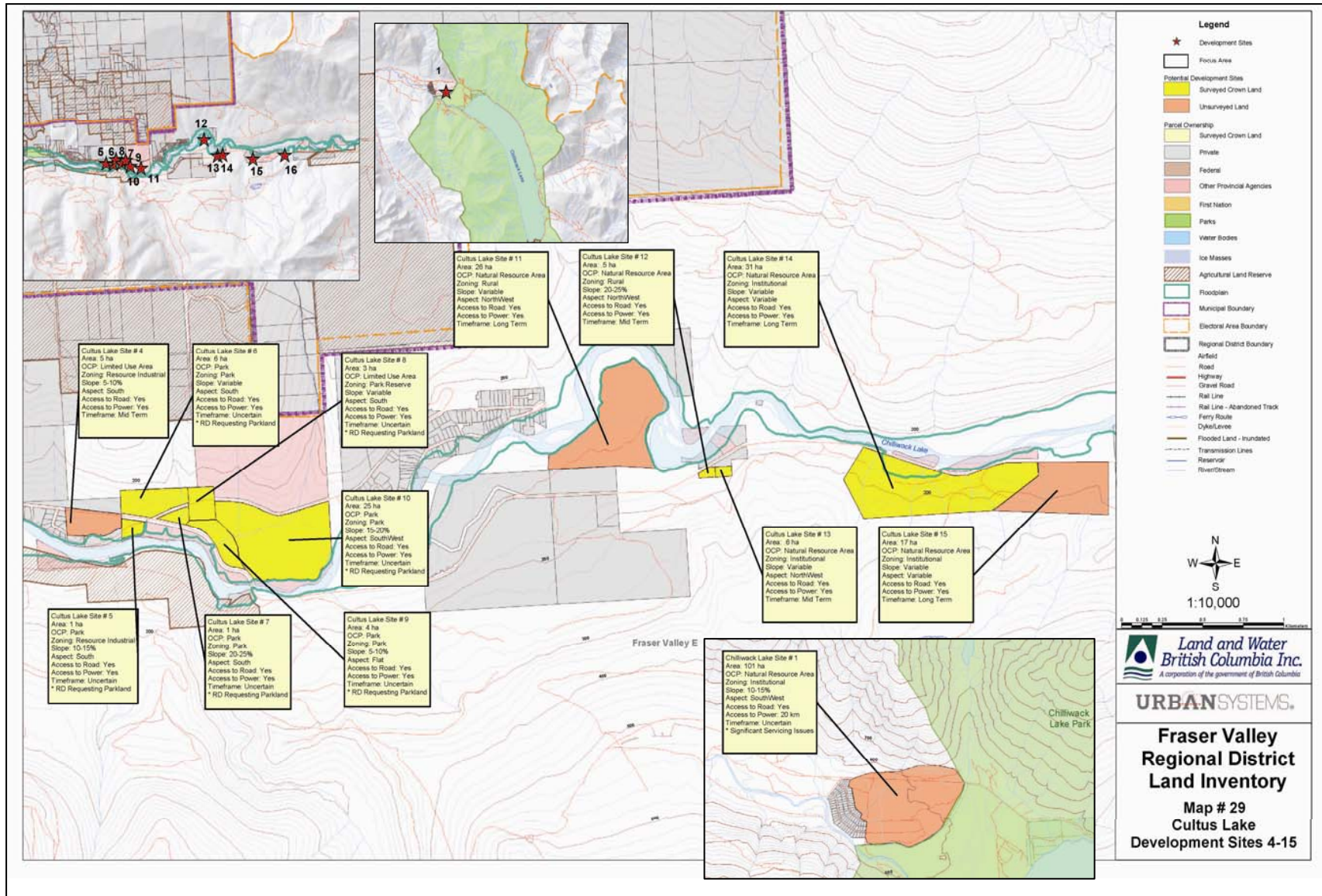


Figure 2. Crown land sites in the Chilliwack Valley identified by Land and Water BC for potential development (from Urban Systems, 2005, p 70 & 72).

3.0 Contributing Factors/Causes

The following factors have been noted as potentially contributing factors to the concerns expressed about residential and commercial development within the Chilliwack River Watershed:

- Relatively outdated Official Settlement Plan for the area
- Conflicting values within the community regarding the desired level of local government services (e.g. urban vs. rural service levels)
- High demand for residential and recreational properties and experiences in proximity to Vancouver
- Conflicting interests within the watershed (e.g., desire to both maintain existing value as well as share the watershed with others)
- Lack of strategic land use plan (e.g., Land and Resource Management Plan) for crown land in the watershed
- Constraints of local topography/geography/hydrology that puts added pressures on available or suitable locations for development
- Lack of understanding of Sto:lo Traditional Values.

4.0 Overall Level of Community Concern

Based on the large number of comments received during public outreach activities in December 2005, development-related impacts to the environment and to existing users and residents are of **very high** concern in the Chilliwack River Watershed.

5.0 Current Policies, Strategies, and Legislation

5.1 *Provincial Jurisdiction and Legislation*

Crown land development falls primarily under the jurisdiction of the BC Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) within the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, with other agencies, (including Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts (MTSA) also involved. The Surrey ILMB office deals with tenure, lease, and license applications for the Chilliwack River Watershed, as well as proposed sales of Crown land sites. Forest recreation activities are regulated by MOFR, whereas proposals for resort development, which used to be sent to the Ministry of Forests, are now under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. The Resort Development Branch of MTSA is located in Kamloops, BC.

Much control relating to development design and location is retained by local government, however.

A number of Provincial laws and regulations are relevant to the potential environmental and social impacts associated with residential and commercial development, including:

- **Riparian Areas Regulation, Fish Protection Act (2004)** ¹⁶
 - Developments occurring within a Riparian Assessment Area need verification from a Qualified Environmental Professional that “there will be no harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of natural features, functions and conditions that support fish life processes in the riparian assessment area” (Section 4) prior to the local government issuing the required development permits.
 - Riparian Assessment Areas are defined (Section 1) as:
 - for a stream - the 30 meter strip on both sides of the stream, measured from the high water mark,
 - for a ravine less than 60 meters wide - a strip on both sides of the stream measured from the high water mark to a point that is 30 meters beyond the top of the ravine bank, and
 - for a ravine 60 meters wide or greater - a strip on both sides of the stream measured from the high water mark to a point that is 10 meters beyond the top of the ravine bank.

- **Land Act (1996)** ¹⁷
 - Pertains to the administration of Crown land within BC
 - Parts 2-4: Disposition of Crown Land

- **Local Government Act (1996)** ¹⁸
 - Allocates powers, duties, and functions to local governments, including bylaw and zoning powers and the creation of official community plans.
 - Outlines the purposes of regional districts (Section 2) to include:
 - providing good government for its community,
 - providing the services and other things that the board considers are necessary or desirable for all or part of its community,
 - providing for stewardship of the public assets of its community, and
 - fostering the current and future economic, social and environmental well-being of its community.
 - Enables the use of Development Permit Areas (Section 919.1) for one or more of the following purposes:
 - protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;
 - protection of development from hazardous conditions,
 - establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development;
 - establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development.

¹⁶ Available: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/F/FishProtect/376_2004.htm (Apr 25, 2007)

¹⁷ Available: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/L/96245_01.htm (Apr 25, 2007)

¹⁸ Available: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/L/96323_00.htm (Apr 25, 2007)

- Proposed amendments (Bill 11) have recently (March, 2007) passed through third readings to facilitate resort development within the province by allowing resorts to become incorporated as their own municipality.¹⁹
- **Community Charter (2003)**²⁰
 - In conjunction with the Local Government Act, the Community Charter provides the broad framework for municipal government for their core areas of authority, including Municipal Purposes and Powers (Part 2), bylaw enforcement, taxation, and Public Participation and Council Accountability (Part 4).
 - Intended to apply to all municipal governments excluding Vancouver, but certain provisions also apply to regional districts, the City of Vancouver, and the Islands Trust.
 - It is a declared objective of the Community Charter to provide “strengthened accountability to citizens.”

5.2 Provincial Development Guidelines

The Ministry of Environment has prepared a series of development guidelines²¹ entitled “Develop with Care: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia” (2006), which replaces the previous “Environmental Best Management Practices for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia”. The Guidelines, which are intended as recommendations and not legal requirements, were written “to provide province-wide guidelines for maintaining environmental values during the development of urban and rural lands.”

The Province currently abides by a “results-based approach” to environmental management, which establishes various environmental objectives and allows discretion by developers and approval agencies as to how to achieve these objectives.

Section 2 (Community Planning), Section 4 (Environmentally Valuable Resources), and Section 5.2 (Regional Information Package for the Lower Mainland Region) are particularly relevant. Some of the environmental guidelines pertaining to commercial and residential development impacts include:

- Inventory:
 - Gather detailed information on environmentally valuable resources on and near the development site
 - Identify heritage sites and First Nations interests
- Community Plan Development and Site Planning:
 - Protect environmentally valuable resources

¹⁹ 2007 Legislative Session: 3rd Session, 38th Parliament Third Reading. March 28, 2007. Available: http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th3rd/3rd_read/gov11-3.htm (Apr 25, 2007).

²⁰ Available: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/C/03026_00.htm (Apr 29, 2007)

²¹ BC Ministry of Environment, 2006

- Establish policies and bylaws that support environmental protection and stewardship
- Consider impacts on neighbouring sites
- Protect aquatic and riparian ecosystems
- Consider the cumulative impacts of site-level developments
- Identify potential wildlife conflicts when planning new developments
- Protection During Development:
 - Avoid disturbing environmentally valuable resources during development
 - Schedule construction activities to avoid sensitive time periods
 - Protect water quality during construction
- Smart Growth:
 - Encourage growth and redevelopment in existing developed areas
 - Avoid rural sprawl
- Water Use and Management
 - Promote integrated rainwater management
 - Maintain surface and ground water quantity
 - Control erosion and sediment
- Hazard Management
 - Assess and mitigate flood risk
 - Identify and assess terrain hazards

5.3 FVRD Development Planning

Regional Growth Strategy:

Choices for our Future was adopted on October 26, 2006 as a Regional Growth Strategy for the Fraser Valley Regional District “to address the growth challenges the FVRD will face over the next 20-30 years” (p7). As stated, “The region’s rural and recreational lands will be protected and managed by:

- preserving rural identity and lifestyle;
- encouraging rural residential development within existing rural communities;
- encouraging recreational, residential and resort development to develop in clusters;
- participating in provincial land use planning of Crown lands; and
- minimizing land use conflicts between agriculture and recreational uses.” (p30)

Some of the recommended actions identified within the Regional Growth Strategy include:

- Support settlement patterns that minimize development costs to communities and the risks associated with geotechnical and environmental constraints (3.6)
- Encourage development that is sensitive to the sense of place, history, and unique character of each community (4.1)

- Encourage community sustainability and viability by recognizing the importance of considering economic, social, and environmental factors in decision-making processes (4.2)
- Cooperate with local governments, provincial and federal agencies and other stakeholders to implement consistent, region-wide, best management practices to protect and enhance the region's biodiversity, environment, and ecology (5.4)
- Encourage local government to develop a process to identify and protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas of regional significance and prevent, where possible, further landscape fragmentation (5.11)
- Seek the cooperation of senior levels of government to create policies and programs that will improve the management of land use on Crown Lands (6.1)
- Consider the merits of an economic strategy that will improve the viability of smaller resource based communities and help them adapt to economic change and become more sustainable (7.2)

Official Community Plans:

The Fraser Valley Regional District has an Official Community Plan (or Official Settlement Plan) for most communities within the electoral (rural) areas of the Region. Prepared using public involvement and stakeholder consultation, OCPs provide the long-term vision for the community and consist of objectives and policies to guide future development planning and land use management decisions within the plan area. Although the FVRD is not committed to implementing any strategy or action within the OCP, all bylaws enacted or works that are undertaken must be consistent with the policies outlined in the Plan. They are not intended to be a static document, but should be periodically updated to respond to changing values and conditions.

The Official Settlement Plan for Electoral Area "E"²², prepared in 1983, identifies a number of Land Area Designations and associated policies and uses that have been adopted for the OSP planning area within the Chilliwack River Watershed (Figure 1). The most common designations, and some of the associated policies pertaining to residential or commercial development, are described below.²³

1. NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS (NRES)

- Forestry, fishing, mining and other natural resource development issues will be a primary consideration in the formulation of all Regional District land use policies for Electoral Area "E".
- Crown lease applications and development schemes involving residential use of lands isolated in NATURAL RESOURCE areas, and not contiguous with existing settlement areas, will not be supported or encouraged by the Regional District.
- NATURAL RESOURCE areas may be used only for resource extraction, fishing, forestry, and for institutional, recreation and conservation uses.

²² FVRD, 1983

²³ Further details on OSP Land Area Designations and policies are available in the Electoral Area "E" Consolidated OSP Bylaw No. 400 (available online through the FVRD website - <http://www.fvrd.bc.ca/FVRD/>).

2. HAMELT RESIDENTIAL (HR) and MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL (MHR)
 - “The purpose of the residential area policies and designations is to encourage a settlement pattern which will promote the viability of existing communities and respect the unique landscape and rural lifestyles of Electoral Area "E".” (p.58)
 - The majority of residential growth will be directed towards already established settlement nodes.
 - The direction of development will be away from lands susceptible to mass movement (stability) hazard, unless the safety and environmental concerns of the development are studied and satisfied.
 - Watercourses in the vicinity of residential areas will be protected through the establishment, wherever possible, of buffer areas and leave strips, and through measures to control storm run-off, sedimentation, and erosion.
 - Plans for proposed residential subdivisions in the settlement plan area will be referred to Fish and Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Environment, for input and recommendations regarding resources under their jurisdiction.
 - Without services, the minimum lot size in HAMELT RESIDENTIAL areas is 2 hectares.

3. LIMITED USE (L)
 - “the general policy of this plan respecting LIMITED USE areas is to prevent isolated development, to protect the environment, to protect development from hazardous conditions, and to preserve and buffer areas of environmental sensitivity and special scenic value.” (p87)
 - Development should be limited in areas with difficult site features.
 - Environmentally-sensitive areas and community watersheds should be preserved and buffered from development.
 - LIMITED USE areas may be used only for farming, fishing, forestry, residential; institutional, local transportation, utilities, recreation, low density commercial recreation, and conservation uses.

4. PARK (P)
 - PARK areas may be used only for recreation, conservation and ancillary uses, except as otherwise provided by the responsible authority. (Note: The Regional District has no jurisdiction over provincially owned and operated parks.)
 - Areas of significant recreation potential or high biological productivity will be reserved for future park development.

Zoning:

While Official Community Plans provide guidance for future land use decision making, zoning bylaws are the primary tool used by local governments to regulate current land use activities and development conditions and to ensure that specific land uses are located in appropriate areas and do not conflict with surrounding properties. Electoral Area “E”

Zoning Bylaw No.66 establishes zoning provisions for the Chilliwack River Valley.²⁴ Unlike the OSP Land Area Designations, zoning applies to the entire Electoral Area (i.e., the Crown land outside of the OSP boundaries), and defines more detailed criteria for development activities rather than broad policies and objectives. Minimum lot sizes and permitted uses and activities are commonly provided.

The zoning bylaw for Electoral Area “E” provides both general regulations that apply to the entire Electoral Area, as well as specific regulations applicable to each zoning designation. The most common zones within the Chilliwack River Watershed, and some of the associated regulations pertaining to residential or commercial development, are described below and shown in Figure 1.²⁵ Table 1 provides a breakdown of the zoning designations within Electoral Area “E”. Please be advised that this summary is for information purposes only, is subject to change, and should not be used in place of the zoning bylaw.

Table 1. Current FVRD Landuse Zoning for Electoral Area “E” (subject to change, see zoning bylaw)

Zoning	Codes	Area (Ha)	% of Electoral Area “E”
Park, Park Reserve, and Campground Holiday Park	P-1, P-2, and CHP	6,997	9.02 %
Residential	CR and RS-2	243	0.31 %
Rural	R	765	0.99 %
Limited Use and Institutional	L-1 and L-2	67,801	87.43 %
Agricultural	Ag-1	1726	2.23 %
Commercial	C-1	14	0.02 %
Total:		77,546	100 %

1. INSTITUTIONAL (L-2)

- The majority of the Chilliwack River Watershed, reflecting the large percentage of Crown land and forest reserve within the watershed.
- This zone designates land that is used for, held for, or otherwise is best suited principally for major public and semipublic institutional purposes.
- Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be 32.4 hectares (80 acres).

2. LIMITED USE (L-1)

- This zone designates land that has difficult site features, servicing problems or limited access, and land or water that serves as major transportation routes and waterways.
- There shall be not more than one one-family residence or mobile or modular home on a lot except as permitted.
- Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be 8 hectares.

²⁴ FVRD, 1976

²⁵ Further details on Electoral Area E landuse zones and specific regulations are provided in the FVRD Zoning Bylaw No. 66 (available online through the FVRD website - <http://www.fvrd.bc.ca/FVRD/>).

3. RURAL (R)

- Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be 4 hectares.
- The purpose of this zone is to identify lands which by reason or resource potential, predominant large parcels, general arability or isolation from urban development and complete freedom from flooding or erosion, are best suited for extensive upland agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, or other large holding, low density rural use.

4. PARK (P-1) and PARK RESERVE (P-2)

- P-1: The purpose of this zone is to identify public lands that because of National, Provincial or Regional Park designation, require protection from potential sources of pollution and other causes of environmental deterioration.
 - There shall be no subdivision of land within a P-1 zone.
- P-2: The purpose of this zone is to identify and preserve lands having potential for future park, wildlife sanctuaries, ecological reserves, historic sites and similar uses, and to provide policies to help prevent irreversible damage to the recreation potential of the designated lands.
 - There shall be not more than one one-family residence or mobile or modular home on a lot except as permitted.
 - Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be 8 hectares.

5. COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL (CR) and MULTI-USE RESIDENTIAL (RS-2)

- CR: Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be one ha except that where an approved community water system is provided upon subdivision the minimum parcel size shall be 0.5 ha.
- RS-2: The purpose of this zone is to provide opportunity for the establishment of mobile homes, as well as conventional homes, on individually owned lots of 20,000 square feet or more which are serviced or will be serviced by a public water system.

6. AGRICULTURAL (Ag-1)

- The purpose of this zone is to identify lands which by reason of soil quality, resource potential or location in a floodplain, are best suited for extensive agriculture, resource development, or outdoor recreation.
- Subject to conditions, the minimum parcel size shall be 8 hectares.

7. LOCAL COMMERCIAL (C-1)

- The maximum site coverage for buildings and structures in the C-1 zone shall be 20%.
- Permitted uses include retail bake shop, nursery, fresh fruit and vegetable market, gift and souvenir shop, hobby shop, general store, restaurant or café (seating capacity of 48 persons maximum), barber or beauty shop, service station, bank, meeting hall, post office, or one-family residence.

8. CAMPGROUND HOLIDAY PARK (CHP)

- The purpose of this zone is to identify lands which, because of their location and physical environment, are suited for development as campgrounds, holiday parks and outdoor recreation on parcels of 1 hectare or more.

Development Permit Areas:

The OCP outlines two Development Permit Areas (DPAs) in the Chilliwack River Watershed: Chilliwack River DPA No. 2-E, and Chilliwack River Valley Slope Hazard Development Permit Area 3-E. The purpose of these DPAs is to protect development from hazardous conditions within the watershed, including slope hazards, potential flooding, erosion, and debris slide activities. The extent of these DPAs throughout the watershed, reflective of the results from a hazard management study prepared in 1992 for the area²⁶, demonstrate the hazards associated with the local topography and flood risks inherent within many of the developable sites within the OSP boundaries of the Chilliwack River Watershed.

In addition to the protection of development from hazardous conditions, the Chilliwack River DPA 2-E is also designated for the protection of the natural environment. Two of the objectives outlined in the Official Settlement Plan for this DPA that new development proposals need to be demonstrate include: “to protect water quality” and “to protect aquatic habitat and populations.” (FVRD, 1983, p114). Guidelines are established within the OSP to ensure that these objectives are met. For the protection of the natural environment, these guidelines include:

- Proposed developments within the 100-year Erosion Limit Line may be required to demonstrate through an engineering study, signed and sealed by a professional engineer registered in the Province of British Columbia, that the proposed sewage disposal, water supply and site drainage facilities are adequate and **will not result in negative impact on the environment in the long term.** (No. 6.2.1)
- The maintenance of streambank integrity and water quality shall be promoted in areas of land adjacent to and including the natural boundary of water courses by maintaining the appropriate vegetation. (No. 6.2.4)
- All bank protection measures implemented in advance of the comprehensive mitigative work for the Valley shall be designed to be integrated into the overall hazard management plan. (No. 6.2.7)
- Conditions may be imposed with respect to the sequence and timing of works in or about the River so as to avoid conflict with fish populations and flooding periods. (No. 6.2.8)

²⁶ HAYCO, 1992

Tree Cutting Bylaw:

FVRD Bylaw No. 0014 (1997) regulates and prohibits the cutting of trees in designated areas within Electoral Area “E”. A permit may be necessary depending on the number of trees cut, slope of the subject lands, or distance from a watercourse. At the FVRD Board’s discretion, proponents may be required to provide a report prepared by a qualified person stating either the proposed tree cutting will not create a danger from flooding or erosion, or outlining the necessary works to mitigate flooding and erosion potential, prior to issuance of the appropriate permit by the FVRD.

5.4 *Aboriginal Interests*

As the watershed is part of their Traditional Territory, the Sto:lo Nation have a significant voice in development occurring throughout the region. The Sto:lo Heritage Policy Manual (2003) works proactively to preserve heritage sites and traditional use sites, and defines the policies and requirements for development proposals within their Traditional Territory. For example, prior to development, investigation permits are required from both the Province and the Sto:lo Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC). These two permits are issued with slightly different considerations for heritage protection – including the treatment of sites found and the scope of site types considered for protection (see also Cultural Approaches Issues and Alternatives Report).

6.0 Vision & Goals

6.1 *VISION*

Residential, commercial, and institutional development is planned so as to preserve the Chilliwack River Watershed’s environmental, recreational, cultural, and aesthetic value for future generations.

6.2 *GOALS*

1. Future development does not negatively impact the environmental health, the recreational opportunities, the Traditional value, and the visual quality within the watershed.
2. Future development is situated in/around areas already developed.
3. Future development occurs with appropriate input from, or consideration of, First Nations, residents, and users.

6.3 *MEASURES*

1. Population, recreation, and visitor numbers
2. Conversion or sale of Crown land
3. Visitor/user/resident surveys and public opinion polls of their Chilliwack River Watershed experience (satisfaction levels)

4. Building permit applications, development permit area applications, and rezoning applications (related to development) applied for, and issued by, the FVRD for properties within the watershed

6.3.1.1 Analysis

The development potential within the Chilliwack River Watershed will inevitably result in various opportunities, ideas, and proposals that will require consideration by local authorities. The potential impact of these developments will vary depending on a number of factors, including:

- type of development
- proposed design
- proposed location
- scale of development
- prior land use
- adjacent land use
- required services/amenities, etc.

These factors and others arising will need to be considered to determine the potential environmental, recreational, and aesthetic impacts of a proposed development. Assessing these factors will require collaborative efforts involving multiple government agencies, multiple levels of government, and community input.

Community concerns in the Chilliwack River Watershed related to commercial and residential development impacts on environmental quality, aesthetic appeal, wildlife, and recreational opportunities, both for current residents and users, as well as for future generations and tourism appeal of the watershed. Many of the strategies for addressing these concerns have already been prepared, in the Best Management Practices produced by the Ministry of Environment, and the recommended actions described in the FVRD Regional Growth Strategy. Empowering the FVRD with a sufficient mandate and suitable tools to ensure adoption of these strategies requires strong community support and input.

The Fraser Valley Regional District is a very significant authority pertaining to commercial and residential development within the Chilliwack River Watershed. Consequently, provisions for minimizing or avoiding environmental, aesthetic, and recreational impacts due to development pressure needs to be incorporated into existing plans and bylaws for Electoral Area “E”. Many provisions to regulate commercial and residential development already exists in the Zoning Bylaw and Official Settlement Plan, but these should be updated to better reflect current conditions. Recently prepared OCPs in other Electoral Areas contain approaches for preserving environmental conditions, including cluster development, impervious surface limitations, environmentally sensitive area identification, protection of visual quality, etc. Updating the Electoral Area “E”

Official Settlement Plan will potentially help address current concerns about possible impacts of commercial and residential development in the Chilliwack River Watershed.

7.0 Recommendations

1. Encourage the FVRD to update the Official Community Plan for Electoral Area “E”.
 - The new OCP should include goals and objectives that are reflective of community values and will help to address community concerns pertaining to residential and commercial development impacts. For example, in response to the question ‘What do you want the Valley to be like in 20-50 years?’, the following Community Vision was suggested by community respondents to questionnaires during the early planning stages of the Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy:

The community would like the Chilliwack River Valley to be much as it is today, except with improved recreation and garbage management, limited and controlled development (e.g. small scale, low impact), and more sustainable resource extraction activities (e.g. fishing, forestry). They envision a valley that (a) is as close to natural as possible with sustainable populations of native wildlife, intact ecosystems, and clean air and water, (b) is respected by users, and (c) will continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

2. Support the continued implementation of the FVRD Regional Growth Strategy.
 - In particular, specific actions recommended in the Strategy that would help achieve the Vision and Goals of the community within the Chilliwack River Watershed include:
 - Encourage development that is sensitive to the sense of place, history, and unique character of each community.
 - Cooperate with local governments, provincial and federal agencies and other stakeholders to implement consistent, region-wide, best management practices to protect and enhance the region’s biodiversity, environment, and ecology.
 - Encourage local government to develop a process to identify and protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas of regional significance and prevent, where possible, further landscape fragmentation.
3. Support FVRD adoption of Provincial *Develop with Care* Guidelines.
 - Specific strategies included in these Guidelines that would help alleviate impacts associated with commercial and residential development include:
 - Gather detailed information on environmentally valuable resources and heritage sites on and near the development site
 - Protect environmentally valuable resources
 - Consider cumulative impacts and impacts on neighbouring sites
 - Protect aquatic and riparian ecosystems
 - Identify potential wildlife conflicts when planning new developments

- Schedule construction activities to avoid sensitive time periods
 - Protect water quality during construction
 - Encourage growth and redevelopment in existing developed areas
4. Encourage additional community and First Nations consultation by proponents.
 - Encourage land development proposals to undergo early and ongoing consultation with the community and with First Nations.
 5. Promote ongoing community stewardship through local environmental organizations.
 - Promote or encourage either the development of existing organizations, or the establishment of a new environmental organization, that serves: to represent a common community voice (strength in numbers), to act as an informed and knowledgeable contact source for local governments and proponents, and to foster ongoing outreach and advocacy works within the Chilliwack River Watershed.
 - The presence of a local, passionate, and knowledgeable environmental organization within a watershed:
 - provides a valuable resource to the FVRD,
 - ensures that the community's vision for the Chilliwack River Watershed is heard and maintained, and
 - helps to protect environmental values within the watershed through ongoing community outreach and education.
 6. Promote additional and more detailed mapping by the FVRD of streams (including lost streams) and environmentally sensitive habitats around settlement areas within the Chilliwack River Watershed.
 7. Encourage additional community and First Nations consultation by proponents.
 - Encourage land development proposals to undergo early and ongoing consultation with the community and with First Nations.

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