

## **Mallory Ridge Protection Proposal and History**

A group of local residents continues to actively pursue protection for a 255-hectare area of Crown Land on Mallory Ridge located between Gardom Lake and Enderby BC within unceded Secwepemc Territory. This Crown Land serves as crucial watersheds for the communities of Gardom Lake, Glenmary Road and upper Mallory Road. The following values have been identified:

- Maintenance of water quality and avoidance of disruption to ground water flow to Gardom Lake
- Avoidance of groundwater impacts on residential water usage in surrounding communities
- Support of historical and on-going stewardship work at Gardom Lake
- Retention of indigenous values in the area
- Preservation of old growth recruitment forest
- Protection of species at risk in a unique transitional habitat
- Maintenance of an undisturbed wildlife corridor and habitat
- Recreational values to surrounding communities
- Mitigation of climate change as a carbon sink

Advocacy for the protection of Mallory Ridge began over 23 years ago. In December of 2000 residents compiled the first Mallory Ridge Park Proposal and presented it to the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR D). The area had been recognized as an important conservation area with multiple values by community members.

In 2008, as a result of this advocacy, the CSR D published their Electoral Area 'D' Parks Plan Final Report which identified Mallory Ridge as being High Priority to be made a Conservation Park with implementation in 1-2 years. While residents assumed that protection had been accomplished, the protection never happened. Residents became aware of this when Tolko Industries proposed logging in March of 2020. Residents surrounding Mallory Ridge were galvanized into action. Letter writing campaigns to Tolko and the CSR D were organized and residents reached out to Splat sin and other levels of government for support.

Residents have been hard at work:

We immediately formed the Mallory Ridge Advocacy Group made up of residents from the Gardom Lake, Glenmary and Mallory Road communities.

We commissioned a professionally produced educational video of the proposed protected area which includes drone footage and interviews with key community members. The video is accompanied by a separate slideshow on flora and fauna provided by community photographers.

Work on a Section 57 application is in progress to register the existing social trail system with the BC government. These trails have been maintained and new trails developed by volunteers for over 45 years.

The Mallory Ridge Community Trails Society has been established. We have been leading multiple hikes for individuals and organizations for years to showcase this beautiful area and increase public awareness of the threats. We have reached out to Splat sin membership re hikes.

We commissioned a hydrology assessment by MacDonald Hydrology Consultants Ltd. (MacHydro) which was completed in August 2022 and will be submitted to other governments and posted on the GLSS website as an appendix to the Protected Area Proposal.

This brings us to our latest advocacy work:

Wayne McCrory of McCrory Wildlife Services and staff was commissioned to prepare an Ecological and Conservation Assessment and Protected Area Proposal for submission to Splatins and then to other government levels. Wayne McCrory is an extremely well-known professional wildlife biologist and conservationist. As one of the original founders of the Valhalla Wilderness Society, Wayne and his colleagues initiated a campaign to protect the Valhalla Range, a project that resulted in the establishment of Valhalla Provincial Park. He spearheaded Valhalla Wilderness Society research and drives to save the Khutzymateen Grizzly Sanctuary (1993), the White Grizzly/Goat Range Park (1995) and the Spirit Bear Conservancy Complex (2006). Collectively, these areas represent about half a million acres of protected habitats for bears in BC. Western Canada's first wild horse preserve in the Nemaiah Valley is also the result of Wayne's research for the Xenigwet'in First Nation and Friends of Nemaiah Valley and he is leading a ground-breaking wild horse genetics and genome study in cooperation with Xenigwet'in First Nation. He is the president of the Valhalla Foundation for Ecology which achieved a huge conservation success with the purchase (2017) of the 35-acre Snk'mip Marsh at the head of Slocan Lake. In December 2017 Wayne was one of the 75 individuals named to the Land Trust Alliance of BC's Canada 150 Land Trust Honour Role. He is working on the Valhalla Society's 251,000- hectare Selkirk Mountain Caribou Park Proposal. His impressive resume and expertise led us to invite him to tour Mallory Ridge to see if it was a worthy project. We are delighted that he visited the area and agreed the project was very worthy and to work with us under his company name McCrory Wildlife Services with his staff biologist Amber Peters.

We are grateful and honoured that this eminent highly experienced and successful team took the Mallory Ridge project on. **They recommended protection for the entire 255-hectare crown land and offered proposals and options for protection and stewardship, coordinating with First Nations interests if possible.** Wayne McCrory and Amber Peters were a delight to work with and wish us "well deserved success in our efforts to achieve permanent protection for Mallory Ridge".

Both candidates for CSRD Director for Area D have promised to support the Protected Area Proposal in public. We believe that partnerships can occur between various levels of government and First Nations that can make protection of Mallory Ridge achievable.

The adjacent communities and supporters from surrounding areas have been advocating for protection of Mallory Ridge for 20 years PRIOR to the present clearcut logging threats. We take stewardship of this beautiful gem seriously and it is unquestionably worthy of permanent protection for its multiple values.

The Gardom Lake Stewardship Society fully supports the protection of Mallory Ridge and is adamant that no logging should take place in the Gardom Lake watershed.

Respectively submitted by Eleanor and Tom Marshall - October 10/22