

PROJECT UPDATE: SPRING/SUMMER 2016



» **STAVE WEST** «
FOREST & RECREATION AREA
mekw̓ wa't a'xwest ikw̓elo' | everyone shares here



Changing for the Better

The newly named Stave West Forest & Recreation Area is the 50 sq. km. western portion of Mission's Tree Farm Licence (TFL#26), and has been given provincial designation as an interpretive forest. *Mekw̓ wa't a'xwest ikw̓elo'* is the local Halq'emeylem language name that shows respect for this area, and means *everyone shares here*. It recognizes that these culturally significant lands and waters have been, for countless generations, the shared traditional territory of the Kwantlen and other local First Nations. *Mekw̓ wa't a'xwest ikw̓elo'* also acknowledges the joint stewardship and governance of this sustainable forest between the Kwantlen Nation, the District of Mission, and the Province of BC.

Guided by a Plan

Lower Mainland and Mission residents have enjoyed using Mission's Tree Farm Licence 26 for decades. In recent years there has been an increase in the misuse of the area. The new *Stave West Master Plan* addresses these issues and includes a set of recommendations that will transform this large working forest into a more family-friendly destination for outdoor recreation and learning.

Our Approach

To make these improvements in Stave West, a solid partnership has been developed between the District, local Aboriginal communities and the provincial government. Local user groups have also been involved and will continue to help with the slow-but-sure transition ahead. The Plan follows these ten key guidelines

1. Maintain a Sustainable Working Forest
2. Demonstrate First Nations Collaboration
3. Focus on Public Safety and Security
4. Practice Cultural and Heritage Protection
5. Develop Education, Training, & Research Programs
6. Develop Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Infrastructure
7. Build Economic Investment and Job Creation
8. Provide Environmental Stewardship
9. Ensure Effective Governance and Oversight
10. Show Effective Communications and Engagement





The Context of a Working Forest

A showcase for integrated land-use planning, Stave West will continue to operate as a sustainable working forest, while adapting to accommodate new recreation and learning uses. Tree Farm License 26 provides steady local employment and revenue. Activities include harvesting, reforestation, plantation brushing, road construction, forest fire prevention and trail maintenance. Over 4 million seedlings have been planted to date, supporting a healthy forest for generations to come.

► 2016 Action Items

Improving Safety

Land-use conflicts, illegal activity, reckless behaviour and vandalism have resulted in a weakened reputation in the area. Steps to reverse this are high priorities. This year, in partnership with the RCMP, nighttime access to Stave West will be restricted, firearm and vehicle laws will be enforced, and a summertime Gateway facility will all help mitigate abuse of the area. The Off-Road Vehicle Act is now in force, and applies on roadways and public land, requiring all users to have registration, wear helmets and operate responsibly.



Building Strong Aboriginal Partnerships

The Kwantlen Nation, and neighbouring Aboriginal communities, have been actively involved since the beginning of this project, and are full members in site governance and policy activities. The Seyem'Qwantlen Business Group now manages the successful Sayres Lake campsite, and additional co-management opportunities are being explored. This year, the Kwantlen Nation, Mission, and BCIT are collaborating on an ambitious practicum project for two students, using Stave West as a base.

Access & Recreation Infrastructure

The new campground at Sayres Lake is a promising first step in infrastructure improvements, and is entering its third year of operation. To broaden recreational opportunities, the Stave West project has three activities underway in 2016: **1) complete the road engineering plans required for road upgrades from Zajac Ranch to Sayres Lake** **2) undertake field work to review the recently completed Stave West campsite study and prioritize future campground development and** **3) begin to identify trail network locations for future development.**

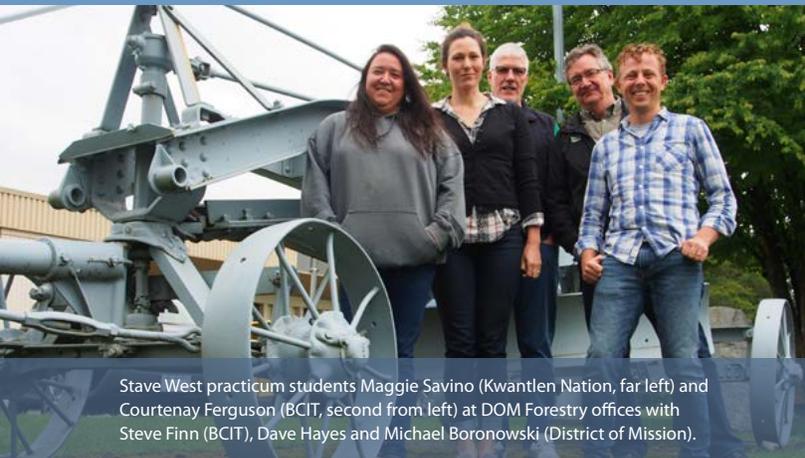


The Area (see back cover)

Stave West covers approximately 5,000 hectares on the western side of the Stave Reservoir. It includes five small lakes, second growth forests, small waterfalls, streams and diverse wildlife. It's home to the Zajac Ranch for Children as a key facility, and the Stave West Master Plan has identified future opportunities for outdoor recreation amenities for all kinds of user groups.

Action Team

The development of Stave West is being guided by an Action Team representing the District of Mission, Kwantlen Nation, RCMP and other stakeholders. The team is developing a five year work plan to support the Outdoor Learning Alliance, commercial recreation opportunities, and build partnerships. It's currently supporting the 2016 action items outlined below:



Stave West practicum students Maggie Savino (Kwantlen Nation, far left) and Courtenay Ferguson (BCIT, second from left) at DOM Forestry offices with Steve Finn (BCIT), Dave Hayes and Michael Boronowski (District of Mission).



Stave West Outdoor Learning Alliance

The Alliance will integrate outdoor learning, training, and applied research projects within the context of a working forest. Programs will focus on forest and natural areas management, the environment, forest careers skills and training, traditional Aboriginal knowledge and outdoor education & recreation. The six initial partners will develop programs and curriculum to attract more students and adult learners. **Initial partners include: District of Mission, Mission Public Schools, Kwantlen First Nation, BC Institute of Technology, University of the Fraser Valley, and the Zajac Ranch for Children.**

Commercial Recreation Opportunities

In 2015, a high level survey of commercial recreation opportunities was undertaken as part of the Stave West Master Plan. This year, the Action Team will support a more detailed market-driven assessment, and determine the process to support viable business opportunities. These could include the potential of an additional 645 campsites (including *glamping*

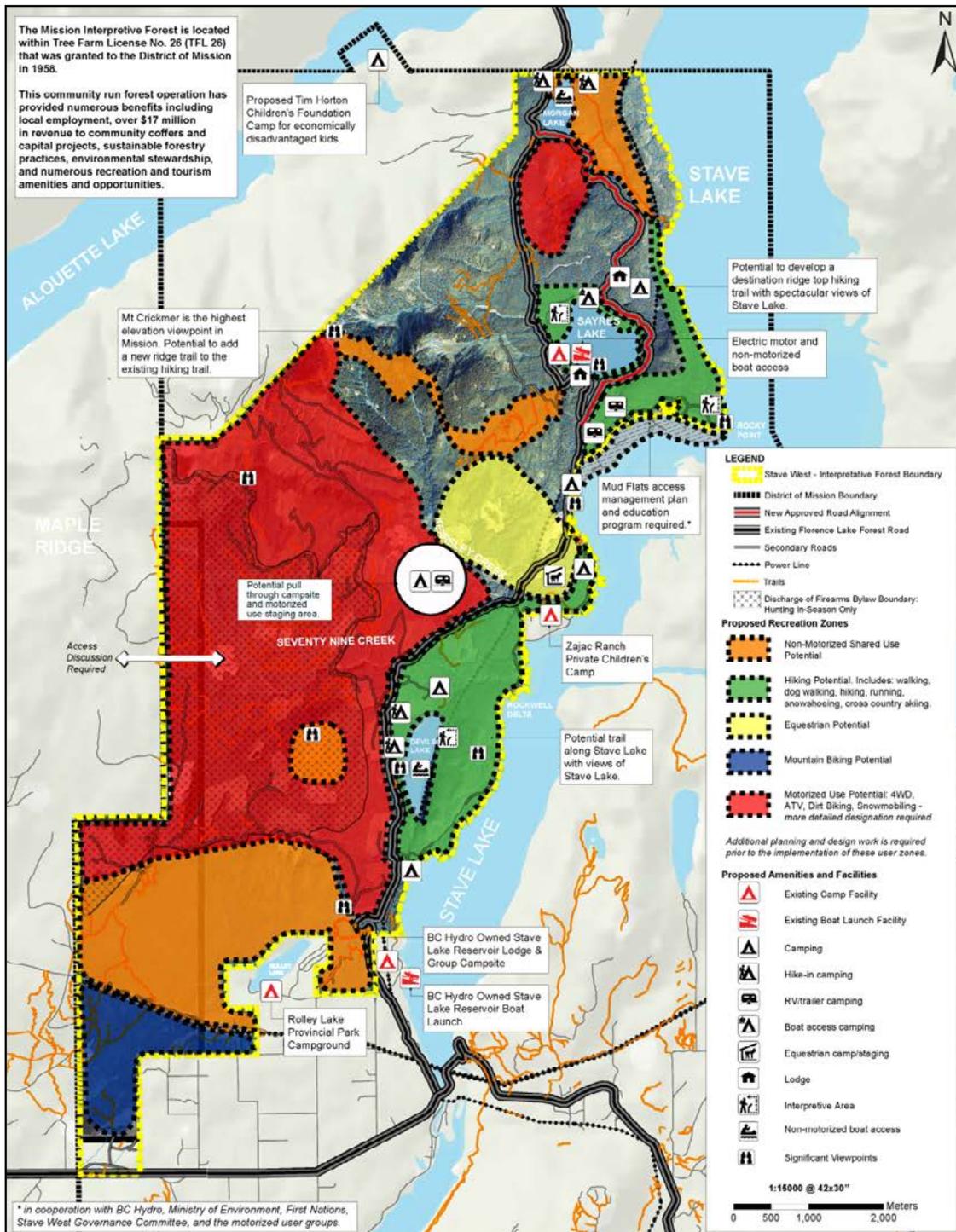
and RV facilities), eco lodge accommodation, motorized offroad vehicle amenities, aerial parks, concessions & rentals, and expanded recreation trails for various users (e.g. mountain bikes, horses, hikers, 4x4s etc).

Developing a Partnership with Zajac

The highly-acclaimed Zajac Ranch for Children is situated on private lands, at the heart of the Stave West Forest & Recreation Area. The Ranch provides camps for children and young adults with chronic, life-threatening and/or debilitating conditions. Since opening in 2004, the Ranch has welcomed over 5,000 children and numerous volunteer doctors and nurses. In the off-season, Zajac depends on facility rental income to help support the children it serves.

The Stave West Outdoor Learning Alliance members are working to provide incentives for Alliance education providers to use Ranch facilities for student learning. Also, this year will see the completion of Zajac Ranch's Aboriginal cultural themed learning centre. This will be a perfect location for seminars and workshops in Stave West.

Stave West Proposed Recreation Zones



* Proposed zones not final – subject to change following further consultation.

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