

**PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT  
FOR STONE CREEK RESORTS INC. PROPOSED  
SILVERTIP GONDOLA PROJECT**

**Located within the Town of Canmore, Alberta**

**ISSUED BY: Stone Creek Resorts Inc.**

**DATE: April 20, 2022**

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## **PURPOSE OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The purpose of this document is to identify for Stone Creek Resorts Inc. (Stone Creek), Indigenous communities and appropriate stakeholders, the information required by government agencies for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report prepared under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) for the Gondola Project (the Project).

Stone Creek Resorts Inc. is proposing to construct and operate an aerial passenger ropeway system (gondola) along with a day lodge, trail networks, viewing platforms, suspension bridge and associated utility services infrastructure (the Project) as part of the Silvertip Integrated Village Resort. The proposed passenger aerial gondola will connect the base area of the Silvertip Resort to an upper terminal on the summit ridge of Mount Lady MacDonal, via a mid-station integrated with the Silvertip Resort Village. The Project spans lands administered by three jurisdictions: Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park, Public Land, and land within the Town of Canmore. The total proposed development area is approximately 14.9 hectares (ha), with 13.9 ha of that on Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park and 1 ha on public land.

## **SCOPE OF THE EIA REPORT**

Stone Creek shall prepare and submit an EIA report that examines the environmental and socio-economic effects of the Project.

The EIA report shall be prepared considering all applicable provincial and federal legislation, codes of practice, guidelines, standards, policies and directives and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

The EIA report shall be prepared in accordance with these Terms of Reference and the environmental information requirements prescribed under EPEA and associated regulations. The EIA report will form part of Stone Creek's application to the Natural Resource Conservation Board (NRCB). An EIA report summary will also be included as part of the NRCB Application.

Stone Creek Resorts Inc. shall refer to the *Guide to Preparing Environmental Impact Assessment Reports in Alberta* published by Alberta Environment and Parks (the Guide), and these Terms of Reference when preparing the Environmental Impact Assessment report. In any case where there is a difference in requirements between the Guide and these Terms of Reference, the Terms of Reference shall take precedence.

## **CONTENT OF THE EIA REPORT**

### **1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION**

- [A] Document the public engagement program implemented for the Project including:
- a) a list of all meetings and the specific comments or issues raised at the meetings;
  - b) a description and documentation of concerns and issues expressed by the public, the Stone Creek analysis of those concerns and issues, and the actions taken to address those concerns and issues; and
  - c) how public input was incorporated into the Project development, impact mitigation and monitoring.
- [B] Document the Indigenous consultation program implemented for the Project including:
- a) a list of all meetings and the specific comments or issues raised at the meetings;

- b) a description and documentation of concerns and issues expressed by Indigenous communities and groups, Stone Creek’s analysis of those concerns and issues, and the actions taken to address those concerns and issues;
  - c) how Indigenous input was incorporated into the Project development, impact mitigation and monitoring; and
  - d) the consultation undertaken with Indigenous communities and groups with respect to traditional ecological knowledge and traditional use of land.
- [C] Describe plans to maintain the public engagement and Indigenous consultation process following completion of the EIA report to ensure that the public and Indigenous peoples will have an appropriate forum for expressing their views on the ongoing development, operation and reclamation of the Project.

## **2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Overview**

- [A] Identify and provide background information on the legal entity that will develop, design and construct the Project; and the legal entity that will manage and operate the completed Project and hold the operating approvals.
- [B] Describe the purpose and rationale for the Project including the current need for the Project. Include the overall economic, environmental and social impacts of the Project in comparison to its economic, environmental and social benefits.
- [C] Describe and provide maps and/or drawings of all components of the Project.
- [D] Provide generalized Project phasing and a construction schedule.
- [E] Discuss the alternatives for the Project and reasons for not selecting any identified alternatives.
- [F] Discuss the implications resulting from a delay in proceeding with the Project, or any phase of the Project; and the implications of not going ahead with the Project.

### **2.2 Constraints**

- [A] Discuss the process and criteria used to identify constraints to development and how the project was designed so that it meets the objectives and goals of:
- a) any applicable *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* Regional Plan, sub-regional plan or watershed plan; and
  - b) applicable Municipal Plans.
- [B] Describe the process and criteria used to select sites for Project infrastructure and identify any existing infrastructure that may be affected by the Project.

### **2.3 Regional and Cooperative Initiatives**

- [A] Discuss Stone Creek’s involvement in regional and cooperative efforts to address environmental and socio-economic issues associated with regional development.
- [B] Describe opportunities for sharing infrastructure (e.g., access roads, utility corridors, water infrastructure) with other resource development stakeholders. Provide rationale where these opportunities will not be implemented.

## **2.4 Waste and Wastewater Management**

- [A] Describe the systems that will be put into place to handle all waste and wastewater resulting from the Project.

## **2.5 Conservation and Reclamation**

- [A] Provide a conceptual Conservation and Reclamation Plan for the Project.

# **3 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

## **3.1 Air Quality and Noise**

### **3.1.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Identify residences or other facilities that could be affected by construction noise and vibration or dust from construction or operation.

### **3.1.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Identify construction and operational components of the Project that have the potential to increase noise levels or affect air quality.
- [B] Discuss the nature, severity, extent and duration of activities likely to produce noise, vibration and dust that could affect residences or other facilities.
- [C] Describe how air quality and noise impacts resulting from the Project will be mitigated including noise management, monitoring plans and complaint resolution, if applicable.

## **3.2 Hydrogeology**

### **3.2.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Provide an overview of the existing geologic and hydrogeologic setting for the Project.

### **3.2.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe Project components and activities that have the potential to affect groundwater resource quantity and quality at all stages of the Project.
- [B] Describe the nature and significance of the potential impacts from the Project on groundwater.

## **3.3 Hydrology and Water Quality**

### **3.3.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Describe and map the surface hydrology in the Project area.
- [B] Provide surface flow baseline data, including:
  - a) seasonal variation, low, average and peak flows for watercourses; and
  - b) low, average and peak levels for waterbodies.
- [C] Identify any surface water users who have existing approvals, permits or licenses.
- [D] Describe the baseline water quality of watercourses and waterbodies and their seasonal variations. Consider appropriate water quality parameters.

### **3.3.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Discuss changes to watersheds, including surface and near-surface drainage conditions, potential flow impediment, natural runoff captured in the system and potential changes in open-water surface areas caused by the Project.
- [B] Describe the extent of hydrological changes that will result from the Project.
- [C] Describe impacts on other surface water users resulting from the Project. Identify any potential water use conflicts.
- [D] Describe the potential impacts of the Project on surface water quality, including:
  - a) changes in water quality that may exceed the *Surface Water Quality Guidelines for Use in Alberta* or the *Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life*; and
  - b) seasonal variation.

## **3.4 Aquatic Ecology**

### **3.4.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Describe the existing fish and other aquatic resources (e.g., aquatic and benthic invertebrates) potentially affected by the Project. Also identify any species that are:
  - a) listed as “at Risk, May be at Risk and Sensitive” in the *General Status of Alberta Wild Species* (Alberta Environment and Parks);
  - b) listed in the federal *Species at Risk Act*;
  - c) listed by COSEWIC; and
  - d) traditionally used species
- [B] Describe and map, as appropriate, the fish habitat and aquatic resources of impacted water bodies and identify:
  - a) key indicator species and provide the rationale and selection criteria used;
  - b) all areas used by fish, whether seasonally or year-round, including critical or sensitive areas such as spawning, rearing, and over-wintering habitats;
  - c) water quality parameters in water bodies and water courses that may affect suitability for fish; and
  - d) current and potential use of the fish resources by Indigenous, sport or commercial fisheries.

### **3.4.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe and assess the potential impacts to fish, fish habitat, and other aquatic resources (e.g., instream flow needs, stream alterations and changes to substrate conditions, water quality and quantity).
- [B] Discuss the design, construction and operational factors including specific diversion and reservoir operations that will be incorporated into the Project to minimize impacts to fish and fish habitat and protect aquatic resources.

## **3.5 Vegetation**

### **3.5.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Describe and map vegetation communities for each ecosite phase. Identify the occurrence, relative abundance and distribution and also identify any species that are:

- e) listed as “at Risk, May be at Risk and Sensitive” in the *General Status of Alberta Wild Species* (Alberta Environment and Parks);
- f) listed in the federal *Species at Risk Act*;
- g) listed by COSEWIC; and
- h) traditional use species.

[B] Describe the regional relevance of landscape units that are identified as rare.

### **3.5.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe and assess the potential impacts of the Project on vegetation communities, considering:
- i) both temporary (include timeframe) and permanent impacts;
  - j) the potential for introduction and colonization of weeds and non-native invasive species;
  - k) potential increased fragmentation; and
  - l) implications of vegetation changes for other environmental resources (e.g., terrestrial and aquatic habitat diversity and quantity, water quality and quantity, erosion potential).

## **3.6 Wildlife**

### **3.6.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Describe and map existing wildlife resources (amphibians, reptiles, birds and terrestrial and aquatic mammals) and their use and potential use of habitats.
- [B] Identify key indicator species and discuss the rationale for their selection. Identify composition, distribution, relative abundance, seasonal movements, movement corridors, habitat requirements, key habitat areas (including sandbars and alkaline shorelines on the shores of streams and water bodies, and the native prairie), and general life history. Address those species:
- a) listed as “at Risk, May be at Risk and Sensitive” in the *General Status of Alberta Wild Species* (Alberta Environment and Parks);
  - b) listed in the federal *Species at Risk Act*;
  - c) listed by COSEWIC; and
  - d) traditionally used species.

[C] Describe, quantify and map all existing habitat disturbance.

### **3.6.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe Project components and activities that may negatively or positively affect wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- [B] Describe and assess the potential impacts of the Project on key indicator species and relate those impacts to wildlife populations and wildlife habitats, addressing:
- a) how the Project will affect wildlife relative abundance, movement patterns, distribution and recruitment into regional populations for all stages of the Project;
  - b) how improved or altered access may affect wildlife including potential obstruction of daily and seasonal movements, increased vehicle-wildlife collisions, and increased hunting pressures;

- c) how increased habitat fragmentation may affect wildlife considering edge effects, the availability of core habitat, and the influence of linear features and infrastructure on wildlife movements and other population parameters;
  - d) the spatial and temporal changes to habitat availability and habitat effectiveness (types, quality, quantity, diversity and distribution); and
  - e) the resilience and recovery capabilities of wildlife populations and habitats to disturbance.
- [C] Provide a strategy and mitigation plan to avoid or minimize impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat for all stages of the Project considering:
- a) consistency of the plan with applicable regional, provincial and federal wildlife habitat objectives and policies;
  - b) a schedule for the return of habitat capability to areas temporarily affected by the Project;
  - c) the use of setbacks to protect riparian habitats and habitats for species at risk, interconnectivity of such habitat and the unimpeded movement by wildlife species using that habitat;
  - d) anticipated access controls or other management strategies to protect wildlife during construction and operation;
  - e) measures to prevent habituation of wildlife to minimize the potential for human-wildlife encounters and consequent destruction of wildlife; and
  - f) habitat fragmentation and habitat connectivity resulting from linear features (e.g., above ground canals, roads etc.) and other Project infrastructure and activities.
- [D] Identify any opportunities for habitat creation or enhancement which may occur as a result of the Project.

### **3.7 Terrain and Soils**

#### **3.7.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Provide descriptions and maps of the terrain and soil resources in the Project Area, including:
- a) surficial geology and topography;
  - b) soil types and their distribution;
  - c) soils that could be affected by the Project; and
  - d) specific locations of erosion sensitive and saline-sodic soils;

#### **3.7.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe Project activities and other related issues that could affect soil quality. Outline:
- a) the amount (ha) of surface disturbance from the Project;
  - b) the impact of the Project on soil types and reclamation suitability and the approximate volume of soil materials for reclamation;
  - c) changes to the potential for soil erosion; and
  - d) potential changes to slope instability, wind erosion and other geohazards.

### **3.8 Land Use and Management**

#### **3.8.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Identify and map the ownership status of the subject lands in the Project Area, including lands owned by the Crown and local municipalities.
- [B] Identify and map unique sites or special features such as Parks and Protected Areas, Heritage Rivers, Historic Sites, Environmentally Significant Areas, culturally significant sites and other designations (World Heritage Sites, Ramsar Sites, Internationally Important Bird Areas, etc).
- [C] Identify any land use policies and resource management initiatives that pertain to the Project, and discuss how the Project will be consistent with the intent of these initiatives.

#### **3.8.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Identify the potential impact of the Project on land uses, including:
  - a) impacts to unique sites or special features such as Parks and Protected Areas. Where impacts are predicted, provide the results of the assessments and clearly identify the impacts to the special protected area; and
  - b) impacts caused by changes in public access arising from linear development, including secondary effects related to increased hunter, angler and other recreational access, decreased access to traditional use sites and facilitated predator movement;

## **4 HISTORIC RESOURCES**

### **4.1 Baseline Information**

- [B] Provide a brief overview of the regional historical resources setting including a discussion of the relevant archaeological, historic and paleontological records.
- [C] Describe and map known historic resources sites in the Project Area, considering:
  - c) site type and assigned Historic Resources Values; and
  - d) existing site specific *Historical Resources Act* requirements.
- [D] Provide an overview of previous Historical Resources Impact Assessments that have been conducted within the Project Area, including:
  - e) a description of the spatial extent of previous assessment relative to the Project Area, noting any assessment gap areas; and
  - f) a summary of *Historical Resources Act* requirements and/or clearances that have been issued for the Project to date.
- [E] Identify locations within the Project Area that are likely to contain previously unrecorded historic resources. Describe the methods used to identify these areas.

### **4.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] A Historic Resources Impact Assessment or a Statement of Justification is required for the Project and a summary of the results of the Historic Resources Impact Assessment or Statement of Justification must be included.
- [B] Describe all project components and activities, including all ancillary activities that have the potential to affect historic resources at all stages of the Project.

- [C] Describe the nature and magnitude of the potential project impacts on historical resources, considering:
- a) effects on historic resource site integrity;
  - b) implications for the interpretation of the archaeological, historic and paleontological records; and
  - c) provide management recommendations for all historic resources that may be impacted by the Project.

## **5 TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND LAND USE**

- [A] Provide:
- a) a map and description of traditional land use areas including fishing, hunting, trapping and nutritional, medicinal or cultural plant harvesting by affected Indigenous peoples (if the Indigenous community or group is willing to have these locations disclosed);
  - b) a map of cabin sites, spiritual sites, cultural sites, graves and other traditional use sites considered historic resources under the *Historical Resources Act* (if the Indigenous community or group is willing to have these locations disclosed), as well as traditional trails and resource activity patterns; and
  - c) a discussion of:
    - i) the availability of vegetation, fish and wildlife species for food, traditional, medicinal and cultural purposes in the identified traditional land use areas considering all project related impacts, and
    - ii) access to traditional lands in the Project Area during all stages of the Project.
- [B] Determine the impacts of the Project on traditional, medicinal and cultural purposes and identify possible mitigation strategies.

## **6 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **6.1 Public Health**

- [A] Describe aspects of the Project that may have implications for public health and provide a quantitative estimate of those impacts to public health.
- [B] Document any health concerns regarding the Project raised by stakeholders during consultation.
- [C] Document any health concerns identified by Indigenous communities or groups regarding the Project, specifically on their traditional lifestyle. Include an Indigenous receptor type in the assessment.

### **6.2 Public Safety**

- [A] Describe aspects of the Project that may have implications for public safety. Specifically:
- a) describe the emergency response plan including public notification protocol and safety procedures to minimize adverse environmental effects;
  - b) document any safety concerns raised by stakeholders during consultation on the Project;
  - c) describe how local residents will be contacted during an emergency and the type of information that will be communicated to them; and
  - d) describe the potential safety impacts resulting from higher regional traffic volumes.

## **7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Baseline Information**

- [A] Describe the existing socio-economic conditions in the region and in the communities in the region.
- [B] Describe factors that may affect existing socio-economic conditions including:
  - a) population changes;
  - b) workforce requirements for all stages of the Project, including a description of when peak activity periods will occur; and
  - c) the project schedule and the overall engineering and contracting plan for the Project.

### **7.2 Impact Assessment**

- [A] Describe the effects of construction and operation of the Project on:
  - a) local and regional economies;
  - b) tourism and recreational activities; and
  - c) hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering.
- [B] Provide the estimated total project cost, including a breakdown for engineering and project management, relocation of infrastructure, acquisition of land, maintenance, equipment and materials, and labour for both construction and operation stages. Indicate the percentage of expenditures expected to occur in the region, Alberta, Canada outside of Alberta, and outside of Canada.

## **8 MITIGATION MEASURES**

- [A] Summarize the environmental protection, mitigation and enhancement measures to be incorporated into the project.

## **9 RESIDUAL IMPACTS**

- [A] Describe the residual impacts of the Project following implementation of Stone Creek's mitigation measures and Stone Creek's plans to manage those residual impacts.

## **10 MONITORING**

- [A] Describe the Stone Creek's current and proposed monitoring programs.
- [B] Describe the monitoring programs proposed verify the accuracy of the environmental assessment to assess any Project impacts and to measure the effectiveness of mitigation plans.
- [C] Discuss:
  - a) Stone Creek's plans for addressing and mitigating any environmental impacts identified in the monitoring program;
  - b) how monitoring data will be disseminated to the public or other interested parties; and
  - c) how the results of monitoring programs and publicly available monitoring information will be integrated with Stone Creek's environmental management system.