



Southern Interior Land Trust

December 13, 2019

DL 492 Habitat Direction Statement

The Southern Interior Land Trust (SILT) is working with its conservation partners to acquire District Lot 492 east of Grand Forks, BC. This Habitat Direction Statement describes SILT's intentions for future management of the land should it be successfully acquired by SILT. A detailed property management plan will be written later.

DL 492 is 109 hectares (270 acres) of open, rolling bunchgrass grassland interspersed with patches of trembling aspen and rose thickets. There is some open ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forest by Morrissey Creek, near the property's eastern boundary. DL 492 is 3.5 kilometers (2.2 miles) from Grand Forks and has public access via Morrissey Creek Road.

DL 492 provides year-round habitat for a healthy population of 200-300 California bighorn sheep. The Grand Forks sheep herd (also called the Gilpin herd) has provided decades of hunting opportunity to resident and non-resident hunters, as well as excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. All bighorn sheep age and sex classes are commonly seen on DL 492. The property is also good quality winter/spring range for both mule deer and white-tailed deer and is habitat for at least five federally listed species-at-risk.

SILT (www.siltrust.ca) has been acquiring productive gems and jewels of wildlife habitat for over 30 years and has a proven track record for responsible management of its lands. SILT's properties are managed for conservation in perpetuity. SILT conserves land for all living things—including people!

SILT encourages and maintains public access for hunting, fishing, trapping and nature appreciation on all its properties, provided it is safe, legal and protects the land's integrity. SILT believes this helps reward those who contribute to wildlife and habitat conservation. SILT will welcome and encourage non-mechanized off-road public use of DL 492 provided it is safe, legal and protective of the land and its habitat values.

There have been years of trespass on DL 492 for ATV- and 4X4-use. This has caused some minor hillslope erosion and soil disturbance on parts of the property. To maintain the integrity of the land for conservation, if acquired, unregulated ATV use will need to be addressed. To be effective, this will require educational outreach; collaboration with organized ATV users; fencing; signage; and targeted enforcement. We anticipate working with local off-road and other interested groups to promote awareness and mitigate off-road damage. As necessary, SILT will escalate actions to achieve responsible management of the land.

The grasslands of DL 492 have had a long history of use by cattle. SILT acquires its properties for the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat in perpetuity. SILT has no agreements with any party to graze cattle or other livestock on any of its properties. SILT has no intention of allowing the grazing of cattle or other livestock on DL 492.

SILT will develop more detailed management objectives in time, in collaboration with its conservation partners. SILT will never abnegate or delegate its responsibility to conservation of the land and its wildlife and habitat values.

Ross Everatt
President