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Cascade Skyline Gondola Project proposed Traditional Use Areas for Stó:lō Communities.

ROSEDALE, B.C. – As part of the vision for the Cascade Skyline Gondola Project (CSGP) and through the planning process over the last four years, key areas of Traditional Use by local First Nations have been identified. The CSGP and their partners, Cheam First Nation, have proposed that some of these critically important cultural values and traditional use areas, be managed and protected from incursion and ongoing impacts. The continued access and sustainability of these areas are vital to the Stó:lō way of life.

Through the Traditional Use Study (TUS) that Ayelstexw Consulting completed in 2020, areas of particular importance and higher density use have been identified that should be considered outside of the current framework of tenure application and uses. Traditional uses include both cultural and spiritual practices such as regalia storage, ceremonial use, gathering and other activities. “These identified areas could be of profound importance for our culture and its future if identified and protected as part of a larger land-planning and land-management process which the CSGP is unique in its ability to provide”, said Ernie Victor, project lead for Cheam First Nation. The TUS identified several zones adjacent to and within the larger tenure area that was being contemplated. These special areas of concern comprise up to 1000hc in total size.

This project aligns with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal #15 to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems” and balances environmental and land use responsibilities. Unlike most Crown Land industrial uses like clear cut logging, industrial ski resorts, etc., this model can achieve success on a range of issues. The restoration of the traditional use and access provided by the CSGP and Cheam First Nation would be a unique opportunity and an creative approach.

The Cascade Skyline Gondola is an eco and cultural tourism project started in 2016 proposed for the Bridal Falls area comprised of a sightseeing gondola accessing up to 1250m in elevation above the spectacular Fraser Valley in the Cascade Mountains of the Chilliwack area. Investment is expected to approach \$70 Million for their project. It is a partnership with the Cheam First Nation and other First Nations in the Fraser Valley region.

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