

3.3.2 Electoral Area C (South Shuswap)

The South Shuswap, including Sorrento, is situated south of Shuswap Lake, and has good access to TCH #1. The region is comprised of a chain of communities extending from Sorrento and Blind Bay on Shuswap Lake, to Balmoral, White Lake, Tappen and Sunnybrae further south. The population is growing, and is primarily a mix of retirees, self-employed, farmers and commuters. With population growth has come increased demand for more community services, and more development, particularly in Sorrento and Blind Bay. A business organization in Sorrento has formulated a plan that embodies tourism development as one of its objectives. Other communities such as White Lake and Tappen are primarily farming communities with few services. Sorrento is presently the main service centre for the area, but a new "town centre" development is currently being proposed for Balmoral that would extend additional services to the south communities.

Because much of the shoreline in the South Shuswap is privately owned, there is minimal public access to and from the lake in this sub-region. This means that houseboaters cannot pull up in Sorrento, and are required to go to Blind Bay for services and shopping. The availability of tourism accommodation in the South Shuswap has declined during the past 20 years, as campgrounds and motels are converted into strata developments, and few new facilities are being built to replace them. Many residents of the South Shuswap believe that access to the lake needs to be opened up through the creation of parks at or near the shoreline.

Table 3.3-2: Tourism SWOT Summary of the South Shuswap

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STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good infrastructure and some tourism amenities -- e.g., small number of marinas at Sorrento and Blind Bay, golf course. • Growing population of residents that promote tourism. • Community support for development that would complement tourism -- e.g., proposed new town centre in Balmoral. • Access to TCH #1. • Bucolic, rural setting. • Plan by business community in Sorrento, and objective of promoting nautical theme. • Extensive old roads within forested setting.
WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of regional, coordinated approach to tourism development. • Strategy required to attract through traffic into community. • TCH #1 bisects Sorrento; limited parking availability for trucks. • Shoreline communities lack public wharves to accommodate a pocket cruise or shuttle. • Private properties along the shore restrict access to beach. • No public beaches with washrooms.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Public beach or wharf and park at Sorrento.
- Primary recreation opportunities include water based recreation at White Lake and Blind Bay, and trails at Bastion.
- Turtle Valley has attractive features including lakes and rocks.
- Tourism and retail potential through being the primary staging area for water linkages to the communities in this arm of Shuswap Lake.

CHALLENGES

- Lakefront property may need to be acquired to provide more public access to/from the water for use by houseboaters and other tourists.
- Political divisiveness between communities.
- Little access opportunities to the alpine/sub-alpine, which is traditionally on forestry roads