



**Proposal for the Approval of a New Subdivision of the
Okanagan Valley Geographical Indication**

GOLDEN MILE SLOPES SUB-GI

July 8, 2019

Prepared by Lynn Bremmer on behalf of the stakeholders in the proposed sub GI

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to apply for approval of a Golden Mile Slopes Sub-Geographical Indication ("Sub-GI") as per Section 9 of the Wines of Marked Quality Regulation ("Regulation"). The proposed Sub-GI has been identified as a unique area with respect to landform, landscape position, meso-climate, air drainage and soil materials. The combination of these particular characteristics is unique to the Golden Mile Slopes area.

This report has been prepared for the growers and wineries of the proposed area with their full support. The scientific research relied upon in this report was prepared by Scott Smith (M.Sc.,P.Ag.), an independent soil scientist consultant (Eterra Consulting) and until recently a soil scientist with the Summerland Research and Development Centre in Summerland, and reviewed by Dr. Pat Bowen, a Viticulture Research Scientist at the Centre. Their report is attached to this application.

THE REGULATION

Section 9(3) of the Regulation states:

"(3) If the administrator intends to recommend to the minister new subdivisions of geographical indications for the purpose of section 56 (1) [geographical indications], the administrator must first ensure that all of the following criteria are met with respect to the geographical area represented by the proposed new subdivision:

(a) the area must be geographically distinct and have clearly defined boundaries;

(b) appropriate consultations must have taken place in the area and the region surrounding the area, with no credible objections made on the basis that the area is not geographically distinct;

(c) grape production in the area must be commercially viable;

(d) the administrator must hold a vote, by ballot, with respect to the proposal, and the proposal must be supported by at least 2/3 of the following:

(i) the practice standards certificate holders who process, in the area, at least 2/3 of the total wine processed from grapes grown in that area;

(ii) the registered grape growers who grow at least 2/3 of the total volume of grapes grown in that area by registered grape growers."

THE DEFINED AREA

The proposed Sub-GI is geographically distinct as required by Section 9(3)(a) of the Regulation. Scott Smith, in consultation with Dr. Pat Bowen of the Summerland Research and Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada, evaluated the area outlined by the stakeholders for the Golden Miles Slopes. A copy of the map for the proposed Golden Mile Slopes sub-GI's, defined boundaries as well as the justification for the boundaries, are contained in Scott Smith's report attached to this Application.

The northern-most boundaries of the sub-GI extend as a panhandle northward to Fairview Road and bounded by a coincident boundary with the Golden Mile Bench sub-GI to the west and Sumac Street to the east. The boundary runs along Road 7 to Hwy 97 then jogs eastward to Haynes Road. In this way the northern portion of the sub-GI is constrained to the gentle foot slopes of the alluvial fans emanating from the Tinhorn Creek canyon system of Mount Kobau. Haynes Road has been used to locate the boundary between footslopes and the floodplain of the Okanagan River. The concept of the Golden Mile Slopes sub-GI excludes the floodplain of the Okanagan River which is poorly suited to viticultural production due to high water table and shoulder season frosts. The sub-GI extends south to Fruitvale Way to encompass the landscape west of the Okanagan River floodplain and up to the bedrock-controlled topography of the valley wall in its southern portion.

The concept for the Golden Mile Slopes sub-GI is to encompass the alluvial fan foot slopes and glaciofluvial landforms that exist between the western valley wall of Mount Kobau and the floodplain of the Okanagan River. As with the delineation of other sub-GIs in the Okanagan Valley, we have used wherever possible natural features to place boundaries. For the Golden Mile Slopes we used several different natural features to define the extent of the sub-GI. In some locations we used cadastral features to approximate the landform boundary so as not to cross individual property lots. The extent of the proposed sub-GI covers an area of approximately 600 ha. Glaciofluvial sands and gravels, and alluvial fan deposits provide the parent materials upon which the soils of the sub-GI are formed. Vineyards are located on a range of coarse-textured stony soil types and are generally alkaline and of mixed mineralogy.

The Golden Mile region has a warm, semi-arid climate with less than 350 mm of precipitation per year and often less than 300 mm per year. Summertime daily maximum temperatures average 30°C and maximum daytime highs of >35°C are not uncommon. Wintertime daily minimum temperatures of just below freezing and fewer than 10 days per year reach -10°C (Figure 6). Extreme minimum temperatures have reached as low as -30°C but no new minimum temperature records have been set for over 50 years (Environment and Climate Change Canada 2019). Within the proposed sub-GI, east-facing slopes predominate and provide for warm morning temperatures but may be shaded by Mount Kobau during the maximum heat of the day.

COMMERCIAL VIABILITY

Viticulture is the dominant land use within the sub-GI followed by various tree fruits and annual vegetable production on low-lying areas and wetter soils. There are currently 163 ha (408 acres) of *Vitis vinifera* wine grapes produced by 37 growers and 9 wineries.

Climatic conditions in the sub-GI allow for production of a range of noble red and white wine grape cultivars. Red wine cultivars currently occupy ca. 60% of the grape acreage. Long-season red wine cultivars, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah, are well suited to the warm climate and gently sloping topography of the sub-GI. Merlot, which is widely grown in the Okanagan Valley, performs well in the sub-GI and leads the area occupied by red wine cultivars. The dominant western aspect and position east of Mount Kobau expose fruit clusters to sunlight mostly during morning hours when daytime ambient temperatures are coolest, and limit afternoon exposure during the heat of the day. Cool katabatic wind flows nightly from Mount Kobau, cooling clusters and preserving fruit acidity. With careful management of vine canopies, cluster temperatures are kept at near optimum to achieve the fruit composition required for producing superior quality red wines with good balance, deep color, ripe fruit flavors and aroma, and ample body.

Pinot Gris leads the white wine grape cultivars grown in the sub-GI, followed by a nearly equal combined area of Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc and Gewurztraminer.

CONSULTATIONS & VOTING BY BALLOT

The stakeholders in the proposed Sub-GI have been consulted throughout this process and have participated freely. All have had an opportunity to express any concerns or questions related to the proposal.

It is understood that the British Columbia Wine Authority ("BCWA") will conduct a vote by ballot of the practice standards certificate holders within the proposed Sub-GI. All wineries and growers in the proposed Sub-GI have indicated their support for the application. With the manner in which the Act is written we believe we have the 2/3 majority required of stakeholders comprising 2/3 of the volume of grapes and wine.

It is hoped there will be a vote as soon as possible with the BCWA tabulating the votes and informing us of the results. If the majority of the voters accept the proposal it is hoped the BCWA would submit this application for a Golden Mile Slopes Sub-GI to the Minister of Agriculture for amendment into the Act.

CONCLUSION

As noted in the report prepared by Scott Smith, the proposed *Golden Mile Slopes* Sub-GI is a unique and distinctive region within the Okanagan Valley and the classification of this region as a Sub-GI will help better market the wines from this unique area to consumers. It is respectfully requested that this application be approved.

A letter is also attached to this proposal supporting the name '*Golden Mile*' name for our area from the Oliver & District Heritage Society.

