



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
RURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
AGENDA
Thursday, April 16, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

April 16, 2026

Approve

MINUTES

Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - March 12, 2026

Page 3-7

Approve

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**Cameron Kral, Planner - Crown Land Referral No. 0267730 -
Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)**

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Recommendation

REPORTS

**Directors Greenaway and Moon - Report - Electoral Area
Directors Forum - March 10-11, 2026**

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Receive

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -
Volunteer of the Year Program Proposal**

Page 12

Recommendation

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -
Non-Profit Navigator Newsletter Issues 1 (Winter) and 2 (Spring)**

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Receive

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -
Passive Infrastructure Update**

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Receive

VERBAL DISCUSSION

Rural Residents Survey

Discussion

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

- 2022-2026 RDBN Board Strategic Plan**
- 1. Relationships with First Nations**
 - 2. Advocacy with the Province**
 - 3. Housing Supply**
 - 4. Community and Economic Sustainability**



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
RURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Directors Present: Chair Michael Riis-Christianson
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Mark Parker
Stoney Stoltenberg
Alternate Director Alex Kulchar

Directors Absent: Shirley Moon, Electoral Area F (Vanderhoof)
Chris Newell, Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 12:48 p.m.
Amy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 12:48 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others: Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle
Henry Wiebe, Village of Burns Lake

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 2026

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AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

March 12, 2026

2026-RSC-036

Moved by Alternate Director Kulchar

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Agenda for March 12, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - February 12, 2026

2026-RSC-037

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes for February 12, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Danielle Patterson, Senior Planner - Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410396 - Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)

2026-RSC-038

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako's response to Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410396.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Rowan Nagel, GIS/Planning Technician - Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410400 - Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)

2026-RSC-039

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application No. 7410400.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Rural Resident Survey Proposal

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Alternate Director Kulchar

That the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to bring back a draft Rural Resident Survey by May 2026 for consideration.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place including the following in the Rural Resident Survey Proposal:

- Information regarding existing services
- Rural aspects
- Understanding of the Regional District
- Referencing information shared in the tax notice
- Gathering a level of operational information through 4-5 questions.

NEW BUSINESS

BC Parks Foundation

Director Lambert brought forward BC Parks Foundation purchasing land in the ALR and converting it to parklands.

The Following was discussed:

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- Advocacy and potential resolution
- Purchase of a ranch in the Houston area
- Challenges for young ranchers/farmers to purchase available lands for agriculture
- BC Parks Foundation funds to purchase lands
- Inflation of value of farmland
- The need to maintain already existing parkland
- Crown land could be considered for parkland
- Potentially purchasing lands in Vanderhoof
- Nechako Valley Regional Cattlemen's Association has extended an invitation to attend a meeting
- RDBN invitation to attend a meeting as a delegation
- BC Park Foundations intentions for the purchase/use of the land.

2026-RSC-040

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Alternate Director Kulchar

That the Rural Services Committee recommend that the Board invite the BC Parks Foundation as a delegation to a future RDBN Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Telus and AST SpaceMobile Partner

Chair Riis-Christianson noted the recent announcement that Telus and AST SpaceMobile have partnered to provide space-based cellular broadband connectivity.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the meeting be adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Michael Riis-Christianson, Chair

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Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

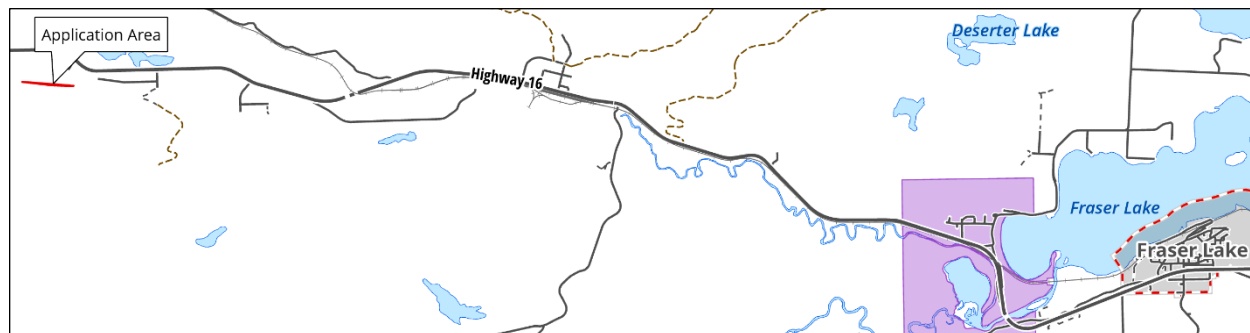
To: Chair and Committee
From: Cameron Kral, Planner
Date: April 16, 2026
Subject: **Crown Land Referral No. 0267730 - Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)**

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako's response to Crown Land Referral No. 0267730.

BACKGROUND

The RDBN has received a request to provide comment on BC Hydro's application to expand a portion of the existing BC Hydro transmission line corridor right-of-way to support the relocation of a portion of the existing transmission line. The application area covers 9816 m² (2.4 ac) and is located approximately 23 km west of the Village of Fraser Lake.



The application states the alignment of three transmission towers within the application area was affected by the relocation of another transmission tower during construction of the Coastal GasLink (CGL) pipeline. BC Hydro wishes to remove the three towers and replace them with new ones between 10.3 to 19.3 m south of their current locations to maintain adequate separation along this portion of the transmission line (see Site Map on next page). The application area overlaps a portion of the CGL pipeline. The application states BC Hydro is coordinating with CGL on the proposed works. Additional information and mapping is contained in the attached Crown Land Application Management Plan.

Site Map (BC Hydro Transmission Towers)



ATTACHMENTS:

- Comment Sheet
- [Crown Land Application Management Plan](#) (Link)

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This topic aligns with the following Strategic Focus Area(s) from the RDBN Strategic Plan:
Not Applicable

Electoral Areas:

Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

Comment Sheet on Crown Land Referral No. 0267730

Applicant:	BC Hydro
Existing Land Uses:	Utilities (electrical transmission line and pipeline)
Zoning:	
Unsurveyed Crown Land: Block B:	N/A Small Holdings Zone (H1) pursuant to RDBN Zoning Bylaw No. 1800, 2020
OCP Designations:	
Unsurveyed Crown Land: Block B:	N/A Rural Residential (RR) pursuant to Endako, Fraser Lake, Fort Fraser Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1865, 2019
Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:	Yes
Agricultural Land Reserve:	No
Access:	Sam Ross FSR
Building Inspection:	
Unsurveyed Crown Land: Block B:	No Yes
Fire Protection:	No
Other comments:	None

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

REPORT

To	Chair and Regional Board of Directors
From	Shirley Moon and Judy Greenaway
Date	17 March 2026
Re:	EA Forum in Richmond 10-11 March 2026

I attended the above-noted workshop
On 10-11 March 2026 In Richmond

The key topics / points of interest were:

Heritage Conservation Act Modernization
Body Worn Cameras
Emergency and Disaster Management Act and First Nations Consultation
Communication and media for EA Directors
Social media, trust and Representation in Electoral Areas
Code of Conduct Policy Development
Service Disputes
Service Area Reviews by Local Governments

Topic(s) of discussions that I particularly enjoyed or felt was relevant to the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako include:

Heritage Conservation Act Modernization
EDMA and First Nations
Communication and Media for EA Directors
Social Media, Trust, and Representation for EA Directors
Code of Conduct Policy Development

Action recommended by Directors:

Give a verbal report at the Board meeting.

No follow up required



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

To: Chair and Committee

From: Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services

Date: April 16, 2026

Subject: **Volunteer of the Year Program Proposal**

RECOMMENDATION: **(all/directors/majority)**

That the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to complete the development of an RDBN Volunteer of the Year Program for consideration.

BACKGROUND

As a priority action item coming from the Community Hall Engagement session, staff continue to work on identifying opportunities to increase volunteerism across the region.

Staff propose an annual RDBN Volunteer of the Year recognition program, including development of an advertised nomination period, selection criteria, and recognition mechanisms. The recommendation is that the Board award one Volunteer of the Year from each Electoral Area annually.

Volunteerism contributes not only economically, but also socially to our communities. In addition to conservative estimates of 50,000 volunteer hours valued at \$1.5M annually in our communities, volunteerism also contributes to reduced crime, improved mental health, increased employability, and strengthened community cohesion. Volunteers themselves also report increased quality of life and reduced social isolation. The hope is that highlighting the benefits through a recognition program will raise both awareness of and interest in volunteer opportunities regionally. Volunteer Canada indicates that recognition is an important component of strengthening volunteer engagement that fosters retention and emotional connection.

Purpose The RDBN Volunteer of the Year Program recognizes individuals who make exceptional contributions to the community through volunteer service. The program aims to:

- Celebrate outstanding volunteer contributions.
- Promote a culture of volunteerism.
- Increase public awareness of the value of volunteers.
- Strengthen relationships between local government and community organizations.

Objectives This program is intended to:

1. Recognize exemplary volunteer contributions in each Electoral Area annually.
2. Highlight the diversity of volunteer service across the region.
3. Promote volunteer engagement across all age groups.
4. Provide visible and meaningful public recognition.
5. Reinforce community pride and participation.

Award Categories The program could consider one or more core categories with different recognition mechanisms. These could include:

1. Volunteer of the Year (Adult) - Recognizes an individual aged 25+ who has made a significant volunteer contribution to the community.
2. Youth Volunteer of the Year - Recognizes an individual aged 12–24 demonstrating leadership and a commitment to volunteerism.
3. Lifetime Achievement Award - Recognizes an individual with long-term sustained volunteer impact (e.g., 15+ years).

Recognition Mechanisms Recognition could include any combination of the following:

- Standalone appreciation event/banquet
- Board meeting certificate presentation
- Engraved plaque or framed certificate
- Perpetual plaque at RDBN office
- Social media recognition posts
- Local media release/newspaper recognition
- Recognition in Annual Report

Budget Considerations:

Volunteer recognition programs can be low-cost but would require a small annual budget allocation. Depending on the decisions around recognition mechanisms, staff estimate approximately \$250 per Electoral Area Annually and would recommend this be included as an expense in the Regional Economic Development Budget for 2027. A more refined budget estimate will be included with the program proposal and will reflect more defined parameters.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This topic aligns with the following Strategic Focus Area(s) from the RDBN Strategic Plan:
Not Applicable



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

To: Chair and Committee
From: Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services
Date: April 16, 2026
Subject: **Non-Profit Navigator Newsletter Issues 1 (Winter) and 2 (Spring)**

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

Receive.

BACKGROUND

The first two issues of the Non-Profit Navigator e-newsletter have been delivered to subscribers.

The online registration form can be found at <https://www.rdbn.bc.ca/departments/economic-development/assistance-for-non-profit-societies/non-profit-navigator-quarterly-newsletter>.

ATTACHMENTS:

Non-Profit Navigator Issue 1 (Winter)

Non-Profit Navigator Issue 2 (Spring)

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This topic aligns with the following Strategic Focus Area(s) from the RDBN Strategic Plan:

Not Applicable

NON-PROFIT NAVIGATOR




Issue 1 - Winter 2026

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Non-Profit Navigator, the RDBN's new quarterly newsletter designed to provide information and connection for Not-for-Profit Societies (NFPs) in our region; we're happy you're here with us!

In 2025, dedicated meetings highlighted the common concerns and needs of NFPs. This newsletter is one way the RDBN is trying to support your efforts - by providing updates and regional connection about topics you are facing.

If you have any questions or ideas for topics you would like us to include in an upcoming edition, please reach out!

 250-692-3195

 economic.development@rdbn.bc.ca

TRENDING TOPIC - INSURANCE

Insurance was one of the most important topics at the recent gathering of community hall societies in the region. In this issue, we will discuss Director's and Officers (D&O) Insurance.

Why is it important?

- ✓ D&O insurance protects volunteer board members' personal assets (like their home or savings) if the organization is sued.
- ✓ It gives peace of mind to directors so they can focus on governance without fear of personal ruin.
- ✓ It protects board members, directors, and officers from personal financial liability when making decisions in good faith on behalf of the organization.
- ✓ D&O insurance can help the organization attract and retain

What does it generally cover?*

Legal Costs & Damages

Defense costs if directors are sued for decisions they made while acting in their role.
Settlements or judgments (if not excluded by law).

Allegations of Wrongful Acts

Mismanagement of funds or resources.
Breach of fiduciary duty (failure to act in the best interest of the organization).
Negligence in oversight or decision-making.

Employment Practices (often included or as an add-on)

Claims of wrongful termination, discrimination, or harassment related to management decisions.

Regulatory & Compliance Issues

Failure to comply with laws, bylaws, or regulations.
Misrepresentation or errors in reporting to members, funders, or government.

qualified volunteer board members.

*coverage may only be available when the actions are determined to be unintentional. Be sure to ask for clarification when choosing coverage.

Policies can vary, so boards should review limits, exclusions, and what kinds of liability are included. You should also be sure to ask your insurance provider for clarification on coverage included in your policy.

Insurance providers in your community:

Vanderhoof

Integrus Credit Union
201 Stuart St. W.
(250) 570-4710

Western Financial Group Inc.
179 Stuart St. W.
(250) 567-2255

HUB International
188 Stuart St. E.
(250) 567-2231

Fort St. James

HUB International
470 Stuart Dr. West
(250) 996-7141

Fraser Lake

Western Financial Group Inc.
250 McMillan Ave
(250) 699-6219

Burns Lake

AMC Insurance Services
330 Hwy 16 W.
(250) 800-8791

Bulkley Valley Insurance
117 Hwy 16 W. Lakeview Mall
(250) 692-1057

Houston and Granisle

Western Financial Group Inc.
3232 Hwy 16 W.
(250) 845-2454

Bulkley Valley Insurance
2367 Copeland Ave.
(250) 845-7511

Smithers and Telkwa

Western Financial Group Inc.
3895 1 Ave.
(250) 847-4233

Bulkley Valley Insurance
1139 Main St.
(250) 847-2405



Society Spotlight

The Wistaria Hall, operated by the Tweedsmuir Recreation Commission, celebrated its Centennial in June 2025. The Hall is located at 36674 Ootsa Nadina Road. The celebration to mark 100 years included a pig roast, kids games, and a dance.

GRANT IN AID**Do you have a project or event that needs funding support?**

Remember to check out the RDBN's Grant in Aid program. Click the logo to link to our online application form.

Give us a call at the office if you have any questions; we're happy to help!

NON-PROFIT NAVIGATOR



Issue 2 - Spring 2026

If you have any questions or ideas from this edition, or that you would like us to include in an upcoming edition, please reach out!

📞 250-692-3195 ✉️ economic.development@rdbn.bc.ca



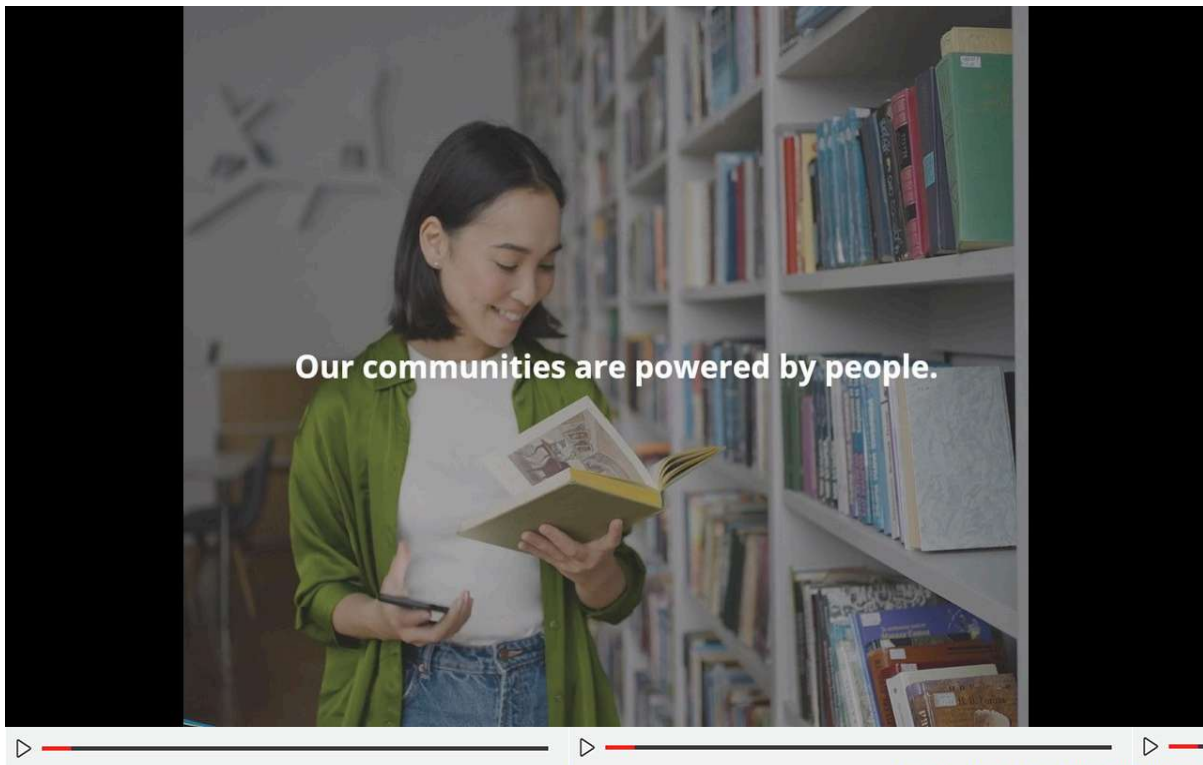
It appears winter has finally loosened its grip and spring projects are percolating. Maybe there are renovation or landscaping projects on your list, or some great community events. Either way, feel free to give us a call to see if there is a way we can support you in your efforts.

TRENDING TOPIC -VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Volunteer recruitment and retention is a challenge that we hear about regularly from community groups. This edition of the newsletter highlights some steps societies can take to make volunteering more appealing.

In addition to the materials below, we hope to take the conversation further. The RDBN is also looking at ways that we can help encourage volunteerism in all sectors. We would love to hear from you about materials or marketing that you would find useful.

We have added a few videos to our YouTube Channel that you are welcome to share and use to highlight the volunteer opportunities in your society. One is available to watch [here](#), and they can be accessed on our [YouTube Channel](#).



Tips to encourage new volunteers:

For Example:

✔ Create family-friendly volunteer opportunities.

- Many young families prioritize activities that the whole family can enjoy. Get kids running a lemonade booth at an event, or running contests and raffles to get everyone involved.

✔ Offer incremental opportunities to get people participating in small ways to start.

- Offer opportunities to get new volunteers involved in one event or activity at a time to get experience in small doses.
- Be sure to have non-executive members involved in planning and executing events.

✔ Maintain regular contact.

- Make sure you have consistent communication about what the society is up to.
- Share updates on how the work is having an impact.

✔ Recognize growth and skills.

- Offer letters of reference or training certificates.
- Provide pathways to leadership roles such as project leadership or Board positions.

✔ Create awareness through advertising.

- Include photos of the fun activities you offer on social media to advertise the great things you work on.
- Showcase completed projects or upcoming events to increase awareness of your organization in the community.

A critical factor in volunteer retention is **good governance**. Ensuring your meetings are efficient and productive, and

that you have tools in place to manage conflict, are vital to attracting dedicated members.

When meetings drag on, get off topic, or are uncomfortable, volunteers are less likely to return.

Good Governance Tools

Please feel free to give us a call if you would like help finding governance resources for your Board.

Rules of Order

Your meetings will be much more efficient and productive if you have made sure to train members on the rules of order for a meeting and everyone knows what to expect.

Rules of order can sound daunting, but a few simple processes can make meetings much more manageable and efficient. Simplified Roberts Rules of Order are common. A [2-page PDF version from Cornell University](#) is linked here for your convenience.

Strong Policies

Policies help provide direction and manage differing opinions on a range of matters. Some important policies for non-profit boards include:

- Harassment and Safety
- Code of Conduct/Ethics
- Non-discrimination
- Expense reimbursement
- Fundraising/ Grant Writing
- Document Retention
- Investment

Community Futures BC offers support to non-profits in BC through webinars and other tools.

You can find more information about the services they offer [on their website](#).



Society Spotlight

The Francois-Tchesinkut Lake Hall, operated by the Francois-Tchesinkut Recreation Commission, will mark the Hall's Centennial in May 2026.

Find more information about the May 30 celebration and history of the Hall in this [article submitted to the Lakes District News](#). The event will include a Maypole Dance and Strawberry Tea.

GRANT IN AID



Do you have a project or event that needs funding support?

Remember to check out the RDBN's Grant in Aid program. Click the logo to link to our online application form.

Give us a call at the office if you have any questions; we're happy to help!



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

To: Chair and Committee

From: Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services

Date: April 16, 2026

Subject: **Passive Infrastructure Update**

RECOMMENDATION: **(all/directors/majority)**

Receive.

BACKGROUND

In October 2025, the Board sent a letter to the Minister of Citizens' Services requesting urgent action regarding delays in the pole-access permitting process for two critical broadband projects; one in Burns Lake, and one in Fort St. James.

Follow-up from the Province included a call with the Honourable Diana Gibson, Minister of Citizens' Services in December 2025, and staff follow-up calls in early 2026.

The Ministry and RDBN staff have closed the communication loop on this topic with a final update that all funded P408s (infrastructure access permits) for Burns Lake are now complete and near completion for Fort St. James. Both projects are on the 2026 build list with tentative dates starting this summer.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This topic aligns with the following Strategic Focus Area(s) from the RDBN Strategic Plan:

4. Community and Economic Sustainability

Additionally, the recommendation supports the following objective(s) related to this Focus Area(s):

4.3 Continue advocacy efforts for high-speed internet service and explore innovative solutions for high-speed internet service in partnership with the Connectivity Committee and other partners.