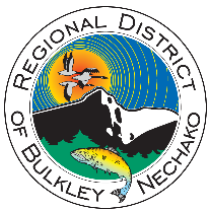




RDBN Electoral Areas C and G **Parks and Trails Master Plans**

RDBN Regional Board Presentation
July 9, 2026



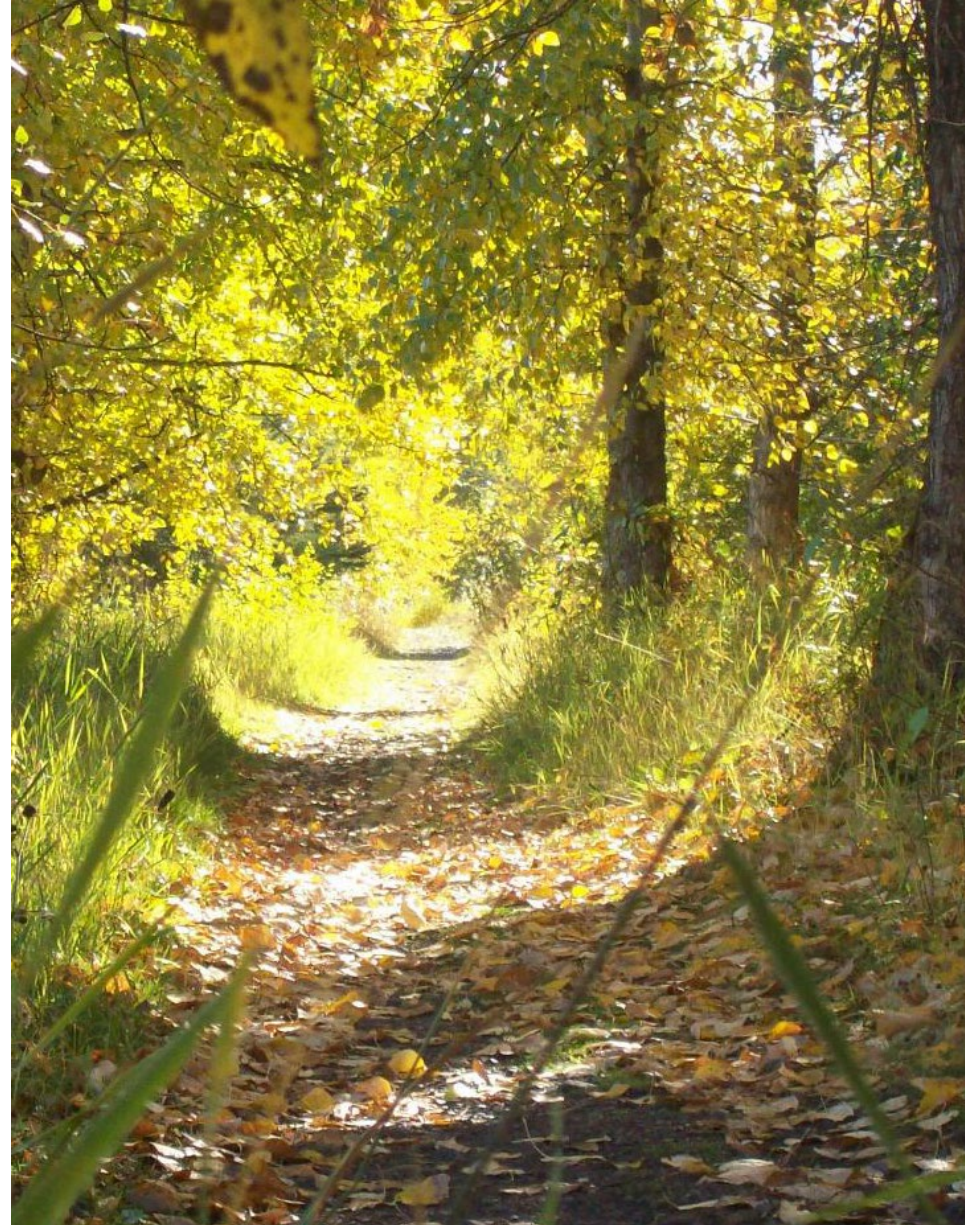
Land Acknowledgement

The RDBN is located within the traditional territory of nearly 30 First Nations. These communities represent Dakelh, Nedut'en, Tse'khene and Wet'suwet'en people.



Agenda

- Project Overview
- Timeline
- Role of the RDBN
- Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)
- Area C (Fort St. James Rural)
- Implementation



Overview

RDBN's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Study identified the need for a regional parks and trails service and created four Parks and Trails Service Areas. To support the delivery of these services, the Regional District is developing a Parks and Trails Master Plan for each service area, including Electoral Areas C (Fort St. James Rural) and G (Houston/Granisle Rural).

The Plans:

- Build on the accomplishments of outdoor service providers
- Share a community vision and goals for parks and trails
- Provide cost-effective recommendations
- Outline key projects to address recreation needs



Project Timeline



Role of the RDBN

The purpose of the Parks and Trails Service is to create, operate, and support parks and trails within the participating Electoral Areas. Funding is primarily through property taxes and grant funding for capital projects.

RDBN can support parks and trails by:

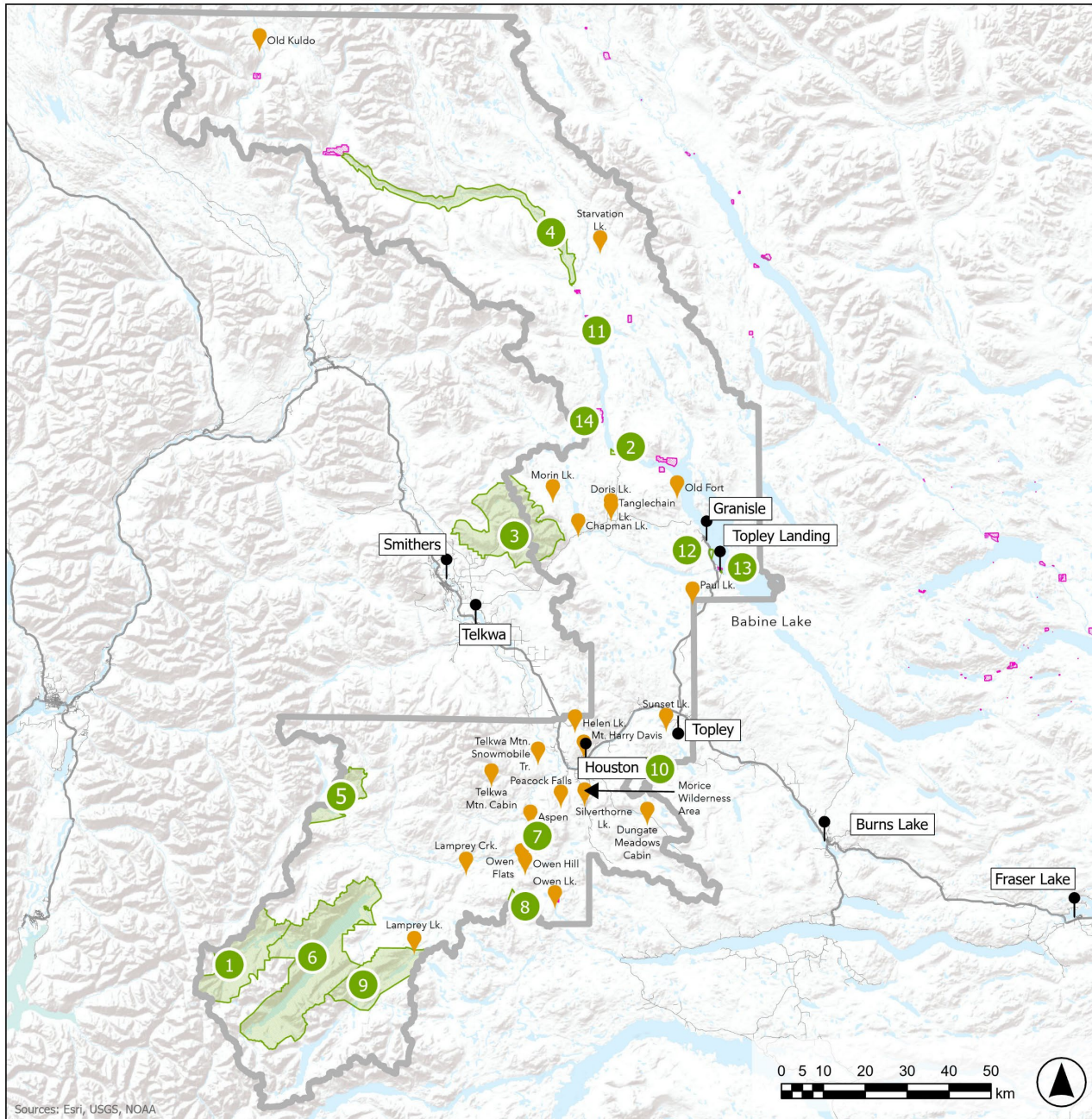
- Continuing grant support for outdoor recreation organizations
- Collaborating with organizations and other levels of government
- Leading or collaborating on trail and active transportation initiatives
- Acquiring tenure for trails, parks, or lake access points

RDBN Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)
Parks and Trails Master Plan

Demographics

- **836** people in Electoral Area G
- **3,052** people in the District of Houston
- **337** people in the Village of Granisle
- First Nations communities total ~1,000
- Rural population relatively stable
- Slightly older population compared to the RDBN and BC overall
- Smaller percentage of children and youth under 19 than RDBN and BC





RDBN Parks & Trails Master Plan Electoral Area G

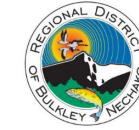
Parks and Recreation Sites Inventory

Final
June 2026

Client:

Consultant:

Scale: 1:1,000,000
(on 11x17 Inch Sheet)



LEES
ASSOCIATES

Legend

- RDBN Electoral Area G
- Reserves
- Recreation Sites - Electoral Area G
- G BC Provincial Parks - Electoral Area G
- Lakes
- Rivers & Streams
- Municipality
- Major road
- Minor road

Note: There were no RDBN owned or managed parks, trails, or outdoor recreation amenities in Electoral Area G at the time of this plan.

BC Provincial Parks in Electoral Area G

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | ATNA RIVER PARK |
| 2 | BABINE LAKE MARINE PARK - SMITHERS LANDING SITE |
| 3 | BABINE MOUNTAINS PARK |
| 4 | BABINE RIVER CORRIDOR PARK |
| 5 | BURNIE-SHEA PARK |
| 6 | MORICE LAKE PARK |
| 7 | MORICE RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE |
| 8 | NADINA MOUNTAIN PARK |
| 9 | NENEIKEKH/NANIKA-KIDPRICE PARK |
| 10 | OLD MAN LAKE PARK |
| 11 | RAINBOW ALLEY PARK |
| 12 | RED BLUFF PARK |
| 13 | TOPLEY PARK |
| 14 | TORKELSEN LAKE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE |

Service Providers

District Municipality of Houston

11 parks, community forest, and trails

Village of Granisle

Granisle Marina, Memorial Park, New Beach, community forest

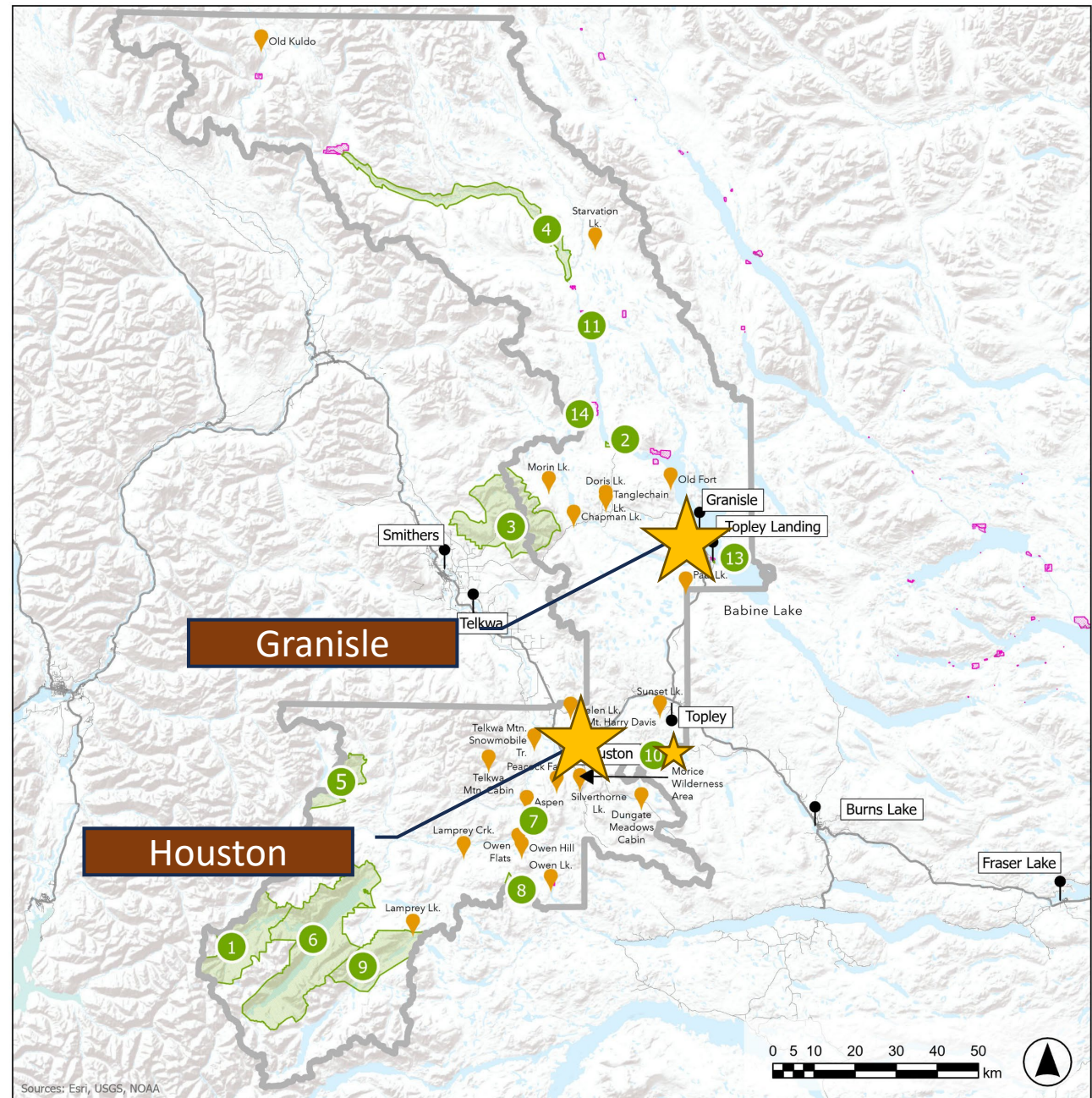
BC Provincial Parks

14 Sites

RSTBC

529 km of trails; 19 rec sites

First Nations



Outdoor Recreation Organizations

Examples

Houston Snowmobile Club

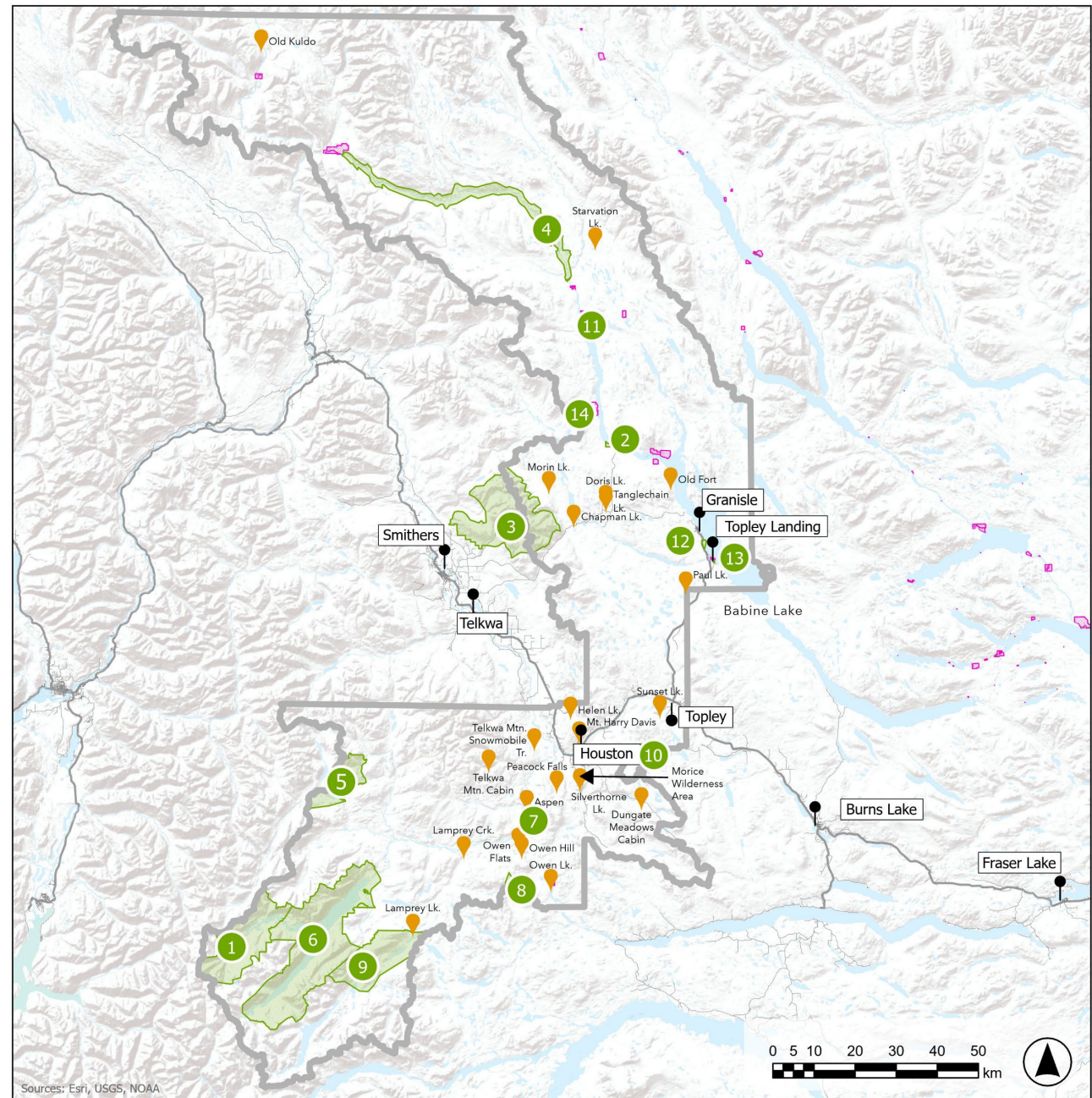
Morice Outdoor Recreation Society

Nadina Offroad Society

Pleasant Valley Horse Club

Houston Hikers Society

Houston Mountain Bike Association



Other Land Managers

Examples

Ministry of Forests

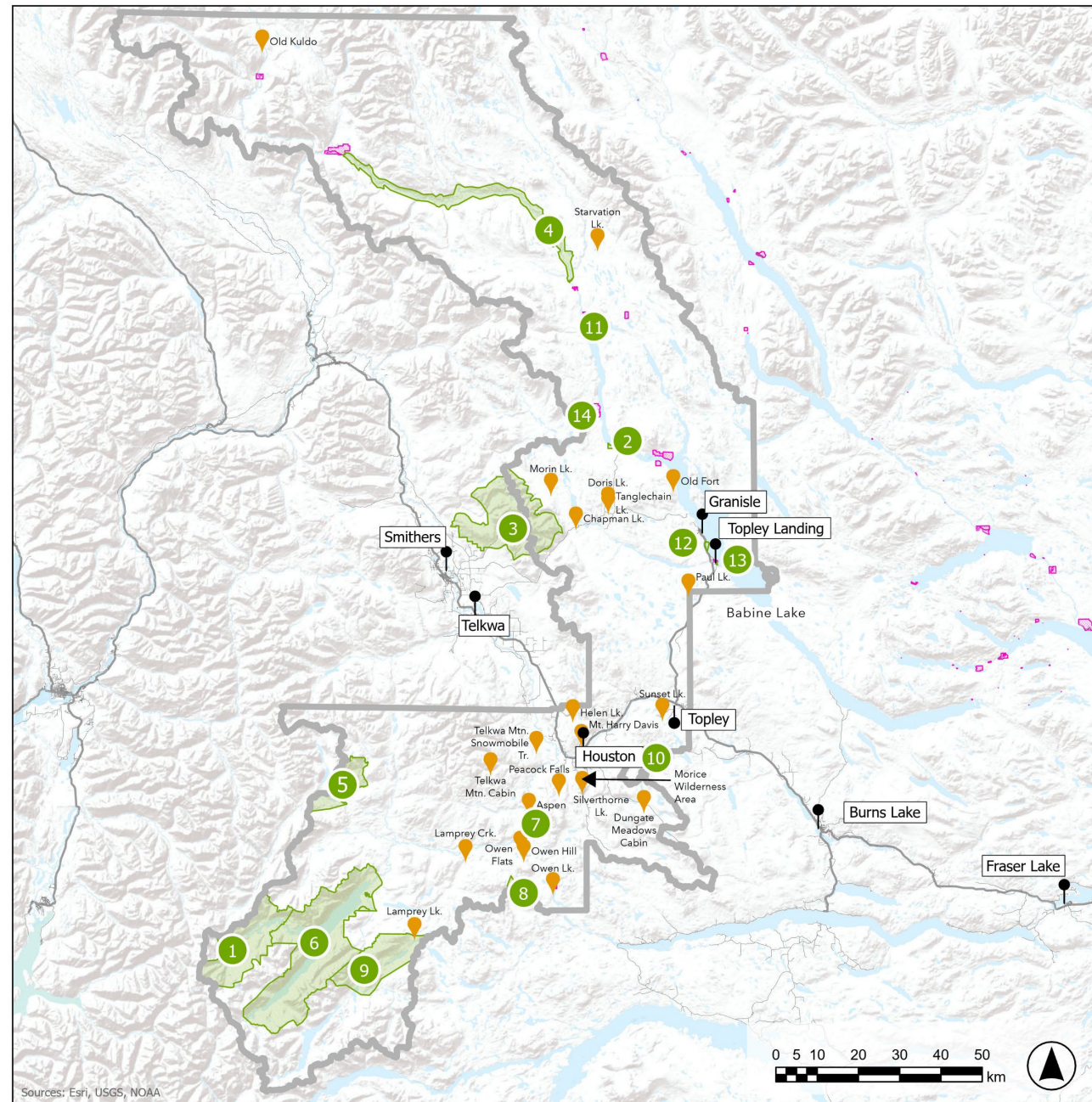
Dungate Community Forest

Babine Lake Community Forest

Skeena Wild Conservation Trust

School Districts #54 (Houston) and #91 (Topley, Granisle)

Private Industry



Community Engagement

Engagement by the Numbers

125 survey respondents

5 participants in the community workshops

1 pop-up at the Houston Farmer's Market

6 participants in the open house

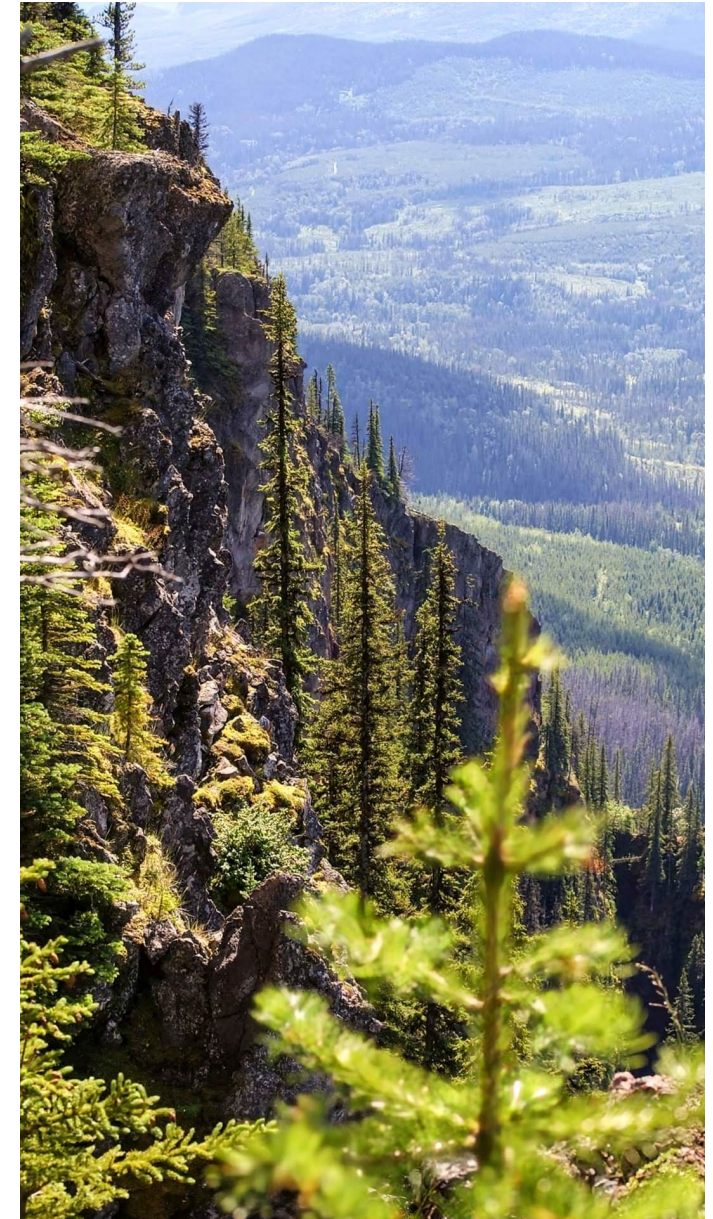
First Nations

The RDBN reached out to 16 First Nations with reserve communities and/or Aboriginal rights or title within Electoral Area G to invite participation.

As input is received it will be integrated into the decision-making process.

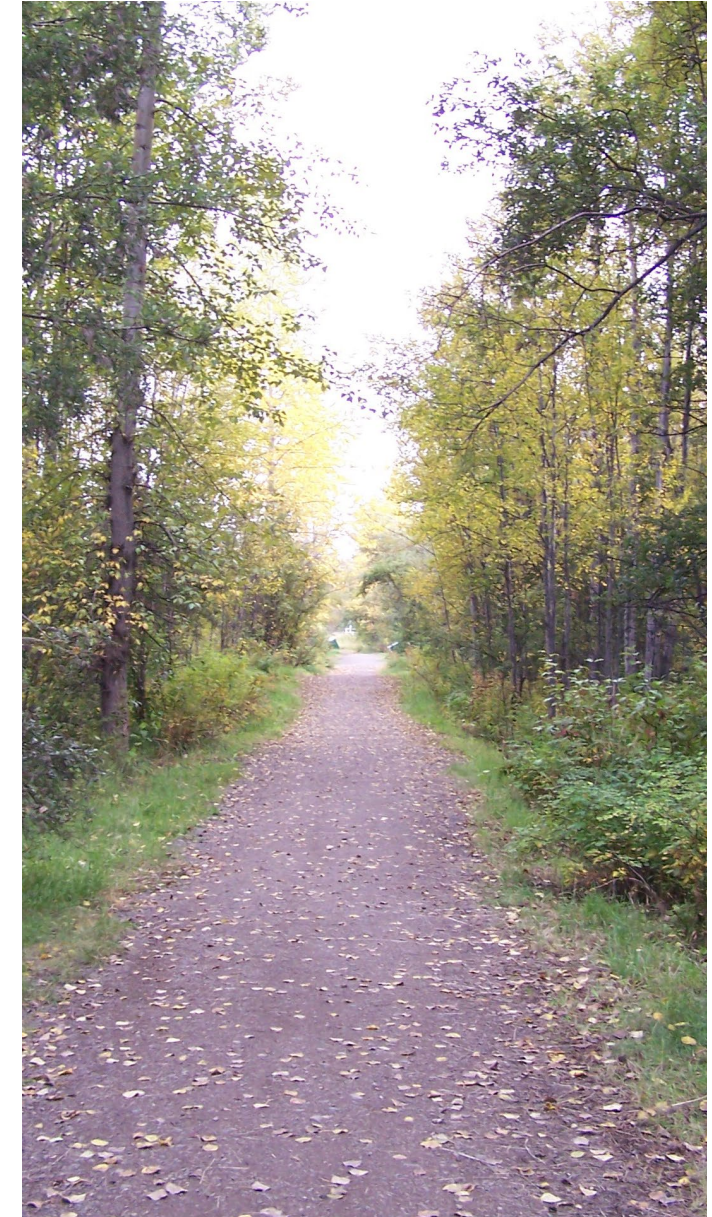
Community Values

- **Most residents who responded to the survey use trails weekly.**
- **Top priority destinations**
 - Morice Mountain
 - Nordic Ski Club
 - Equity Falls
- **Opportunities**
 - Strong interest to expand and improve trails networks
- **Park and trail priorities:**
 - Campgrounds
 - Environmental protection
 - Opportunities to be active
 - Connect with nature
 - Improved signage
 - Better trail connections
- Many respondents support **funding increases**



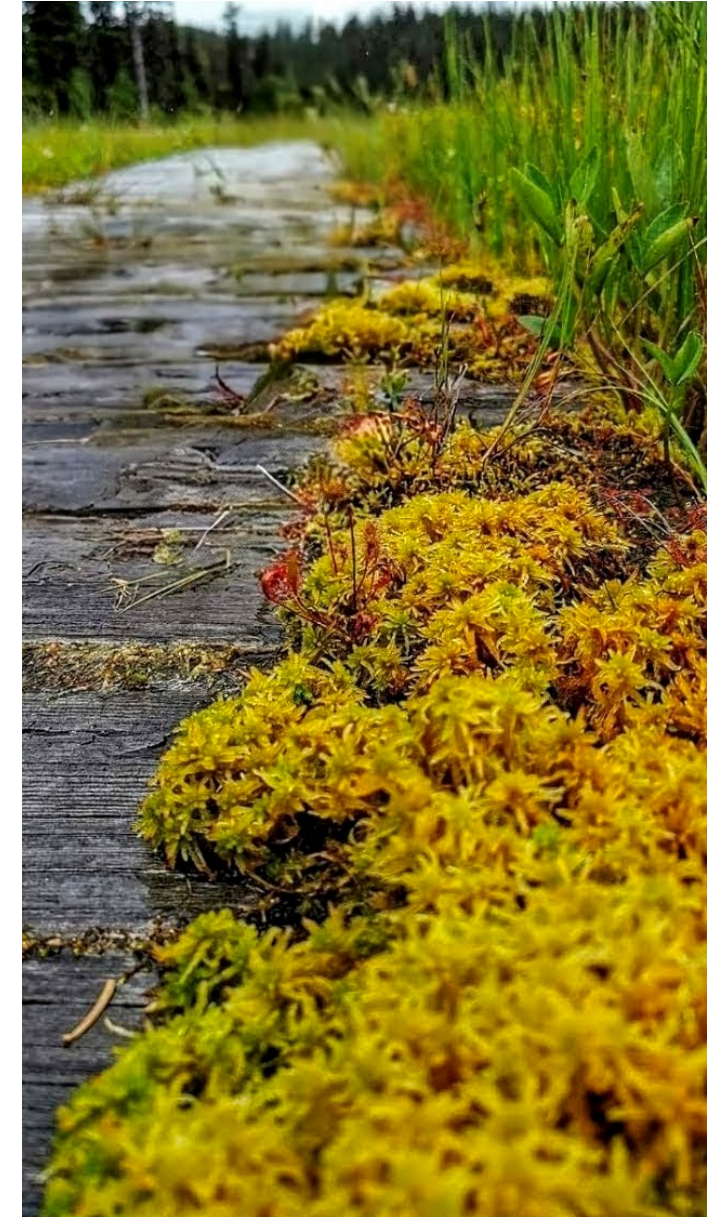
Key Challenges

- **Maintaining consistent volunteer capacity and funding**
- **Loss of access**
 - Resource roads
 - Recreation sites occupied by First Nations
- **Lake access is challenging** due to unmaintained and unsanctioned boat launches
- Concerns about the level of **maintenance**
- Consistent **quality** of trails and amenities
- **Key barriers**
 - Wildlife concerns
 - Poor maintenance
 - Lack of information and signage
 - Lack of time



Key Opportunities

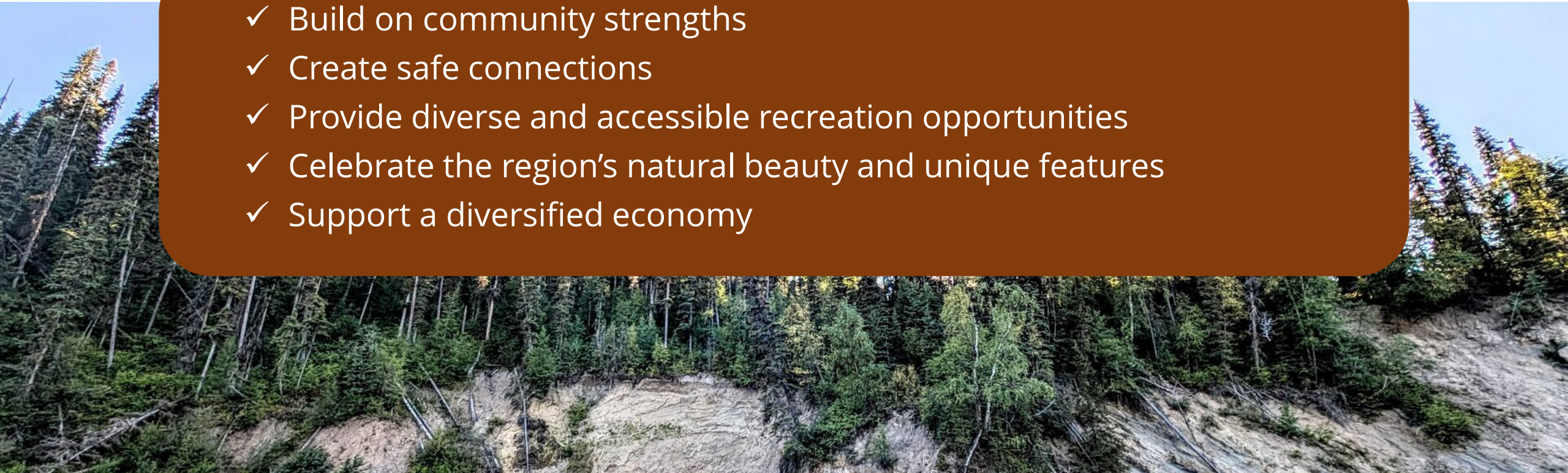
- Grow and enhance the **trail network**
- Establish **funding pathways** to improve trail maintenance and management
- Improve **trail information, wayfinding, and education**
- Link the **Morice Mountain cabin** with the **Owen Lookout Cabin**
- Formalize **boat launches and lake access**
- **Improve partnerships and collaboration** between community organizations and the RDBN



VISION

The RDBN's Parks and Trails Service for Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) will:

- ✓ Build on community strengths
- ✓ Create safe connections
- ✓ Provide diverse and accessible recreation opportunities
- ✓ Celebrate the region's natural beauty and unique features
- ✓ Support a diversified economy



GOALS



Goal 1: Establish tools and processes to support the delivery of parks and trails service in Electoral Area G



Goal 2: Strengthen partnerships and build community capacity



Goal 3: Increase access to outdoor recreation



Goal 4: Enhance the user experience at parks and trails

Goal 1 – Establish tools and processes to support the delivery of parks and trails service

Recommendations:



1.1 - Prioritize opportunities to provide parks and trails through partnership, direct acquisition, and management.

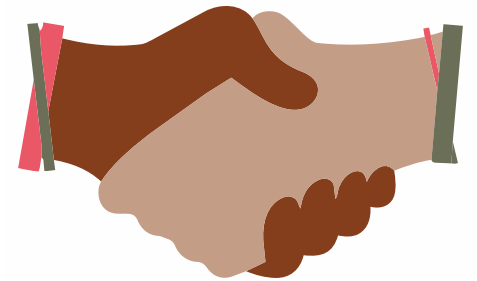
1.2 - Establish service levels and management plans for parks and trails, in line with the standards for other service areas.

1.3 - Consider adding staff to support parks and trails projects across the RDBN's four service areas.

1.4 – Maintain and expand land use agreements for recreation and conservation.

Goal 2 – Strengthen partnerships and build capacity

Recommendations



2.1 - Build relationships with First Nations to protect and enhance cultural and ecological values.

2.2 - Continue the Recreation Contribution Grant Program.

2.3 - Continue to increase awareness of the RDBN's capacity to support outdoor recreation organizations.

2.4 - Facilitate collaboration between outdoor recreation groups engaged in maintaining parks and trail features.

Goal 3 – Increase access to outdoor recreation

Recommendations:

3.1 - Work with the Village of Granisle to explore development of a multi-use trail to Topley Landing.

3.2 - Explore a canoe route in Old Man Lake Park with partner organizations.

3.3 – Explore development of a trail from Nadina Mountain Park to the Owen Lake Recreation Site in collaboration with BC Parks and RSTBC.

3.4 - Secure long-term access to recreation and tourism areas through priority resource roads.



Goal 4 – Enhance the user experience at parks and trails

Recommendations:



4.1 - Apply accessibility standards to trail development and upgrades.

4.2 - Collaborate with the Houston Mountain Bike Association to develop a campground near Mount Harry Davis trails.

4.3 - Develop a trail naming policy and incorporate Indigenous stories where appropriate.

4.4 - Support the Houston Hikers to enhance and promote high-use hiking trails.

4.5 - Support the Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club and Houston Hikers to improve the Silverthorne Lake and the Morice Wilderness Area.

Goal 4 – Enhance the user experience at parks and trails

Recommendations (continued):



4.6 - Work with RSTBC to identify priority recreation sites for increased maintenance and management.

4.7 - Update the RDBN's website to provide more information about outdoor recreation destinations, parks, trails, and campgrounds.

4.8 - Explore opportunities to develop a trail along the route of the historic Dominion Telegraph Line that falls within Electoral Area G.



RDBN Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) **Parks and Trails Master Plan**



Demographics

- **1,266** residents (2021) in Area C with a decrease of 12% since 2016
- **1,386** residents in the District of Fort St. James
- First Nations on-reserve populations total **1,379**
- Slightly higher proportion of seniors (22%) than the RDBN and BC
- Lower proportion of youth ages 14 or younger (13%) than the RDBN
- 18% identify as having Indigenous identity
- 35 residents identify as visible minorities



RDBN Parks & Trails Master Plan
Electoral Area C

Parks and Recreation Sites Inventory

Final
June 2026

Client:

Consultant:

Scale: 1:1,000,000
(on 11x17 Inch Sheet)



LEES
ASSOCIATES

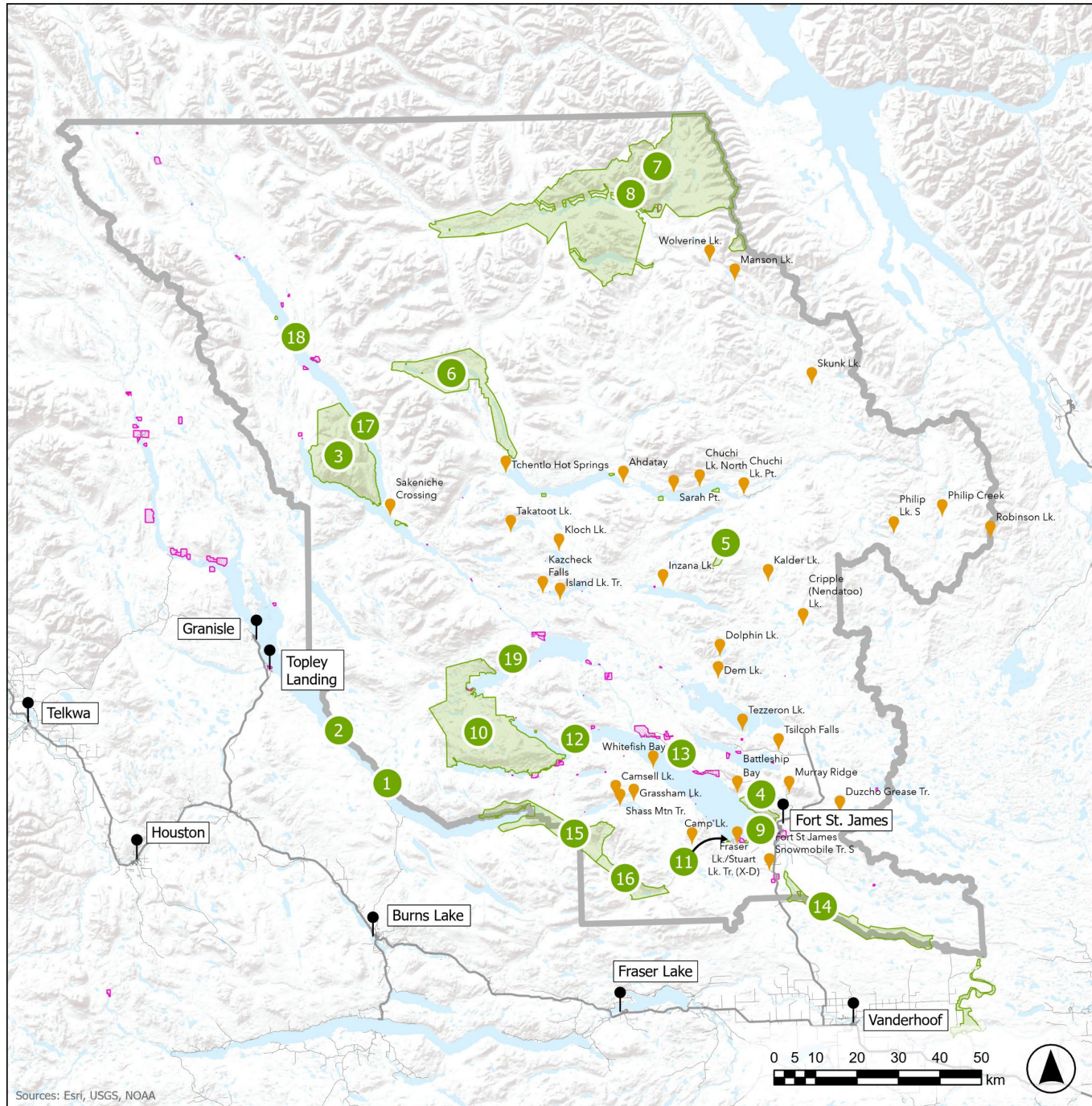
Legend

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| RDBN Electoral Area C | Lakes |
| Reserves | Rivers & Streams |
| Recreation Sites - Electoral Area C | Municipality |
| BC Provincial Parks - Electoral Area C | Major road |
| | Minor road |

Note: There were no RDBN owned or managed parks, trails, or outdoor recreation amenities in Electoral Area C at the time of this plan.

BC Provincial Parks in Electoral Area C

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | BABINE LAKE MARINE PARK - HOOK (DEEP BAY) SITE |
| 2 | BABINE LAKE MARINE PARK - SANDPOINT SITE |
| 3 | MOUNT BLANCHET PARK |
| 4 | MOUNT POPE PARK |
| 5 | MUDZENCHOOT PARK |
| 6 | NATION LAKES PARK |
| 7 | OMINECA PARK |
| 8 | OMINECA PROTECTED AREA |
| 9 | PAARENS BEACH PARK |
| 10 | RUBYROCK LAKE PARK |
| 11 | SOWCHEA BAY PARK |
| 12 | STUART LAKE MARINE PARK |
| 13 | STUART LAKE PARK |
| 14 | STUART RIVER PARK - LOWER SITE |
| 15 | SUTHERLAND RIVER PARK |
| 16 | SUTHERLAND RIVER PROTECTED AREA |
| 17 | TAKLA LAKE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE |
| 18 | TAKLA MARINE PARK - TAKLA WEST |
| 19 | TREMBLEUR LAKE PARK |



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

Service Providers

Parks Canada

Fort St. James National Historic Site

First Nations

District of Fort St. James

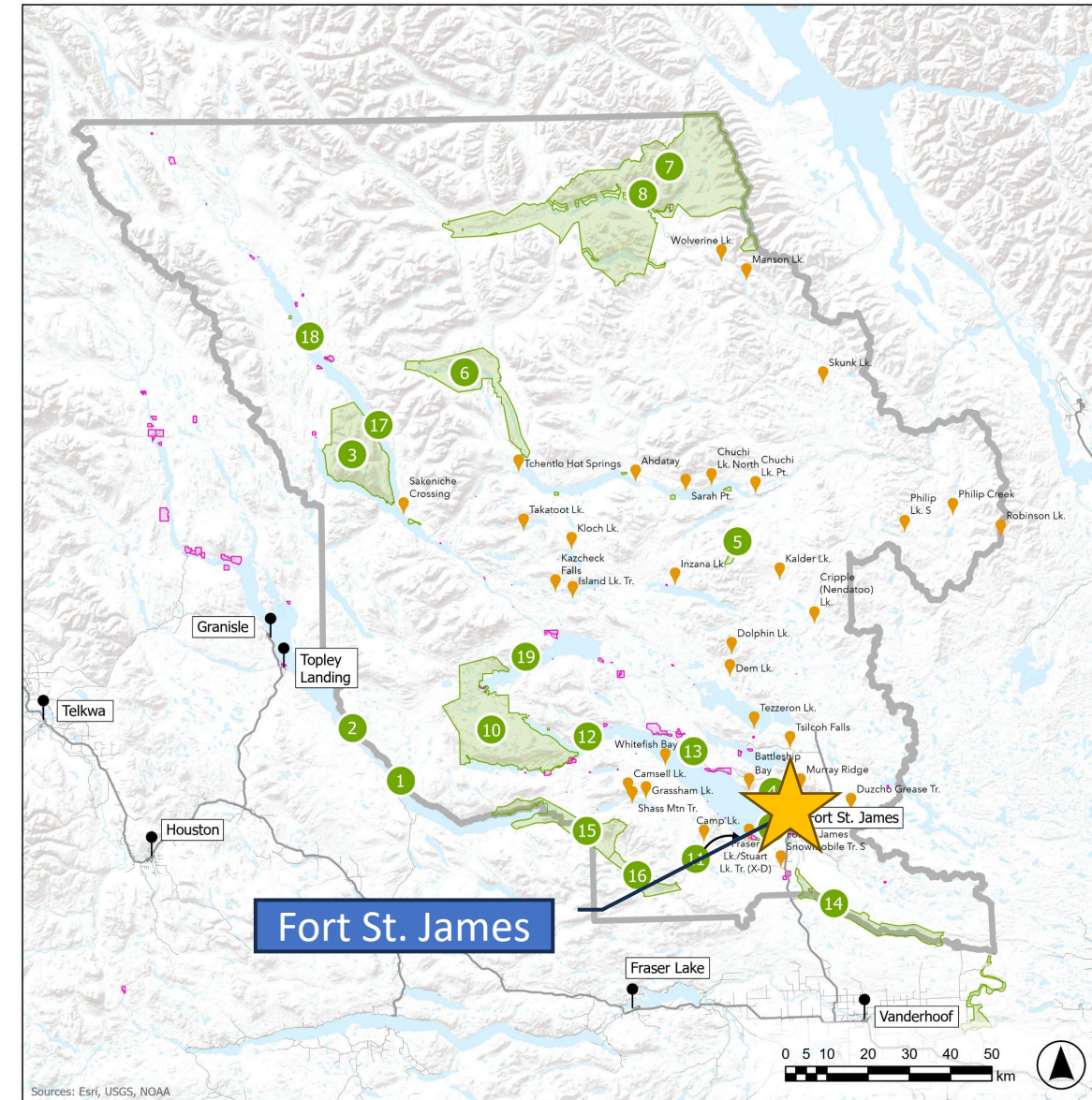
Godwin Park, Cottonwood Park, and Spirit Square, the walking loop, Mount Dickenson

BC Provincial Parks

Including Mount Pope - Nak'al Dzulh Park, Paarens Beach Park, Sowchea Bay Park

RSTBC Trails and Rec Sites

Many trails and campsites on Crown lands are maintained by RSTBC or user groups



Outdoor Recreation Organizations

Examples:

Fort St. James Ski Club (Murray Ridge Ski Area)

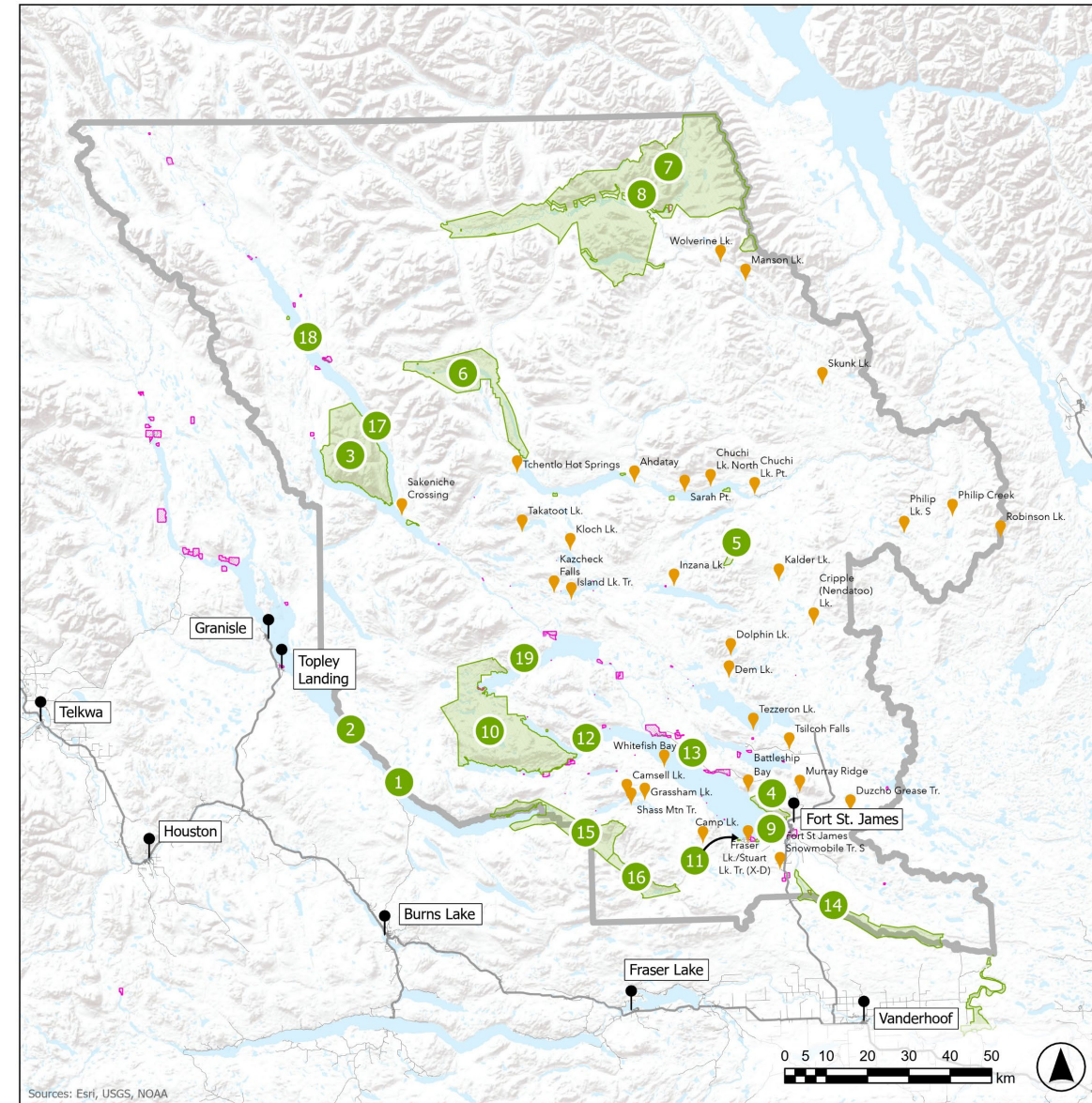
Fort St. James Snowmobile Club

Fort St. James Sled Dog Association

Stuart Lake Nordic Society

Private Campground Operators

Stuart Lake Golf Club



Other Land Managers

Examples:

Ministry of Forests

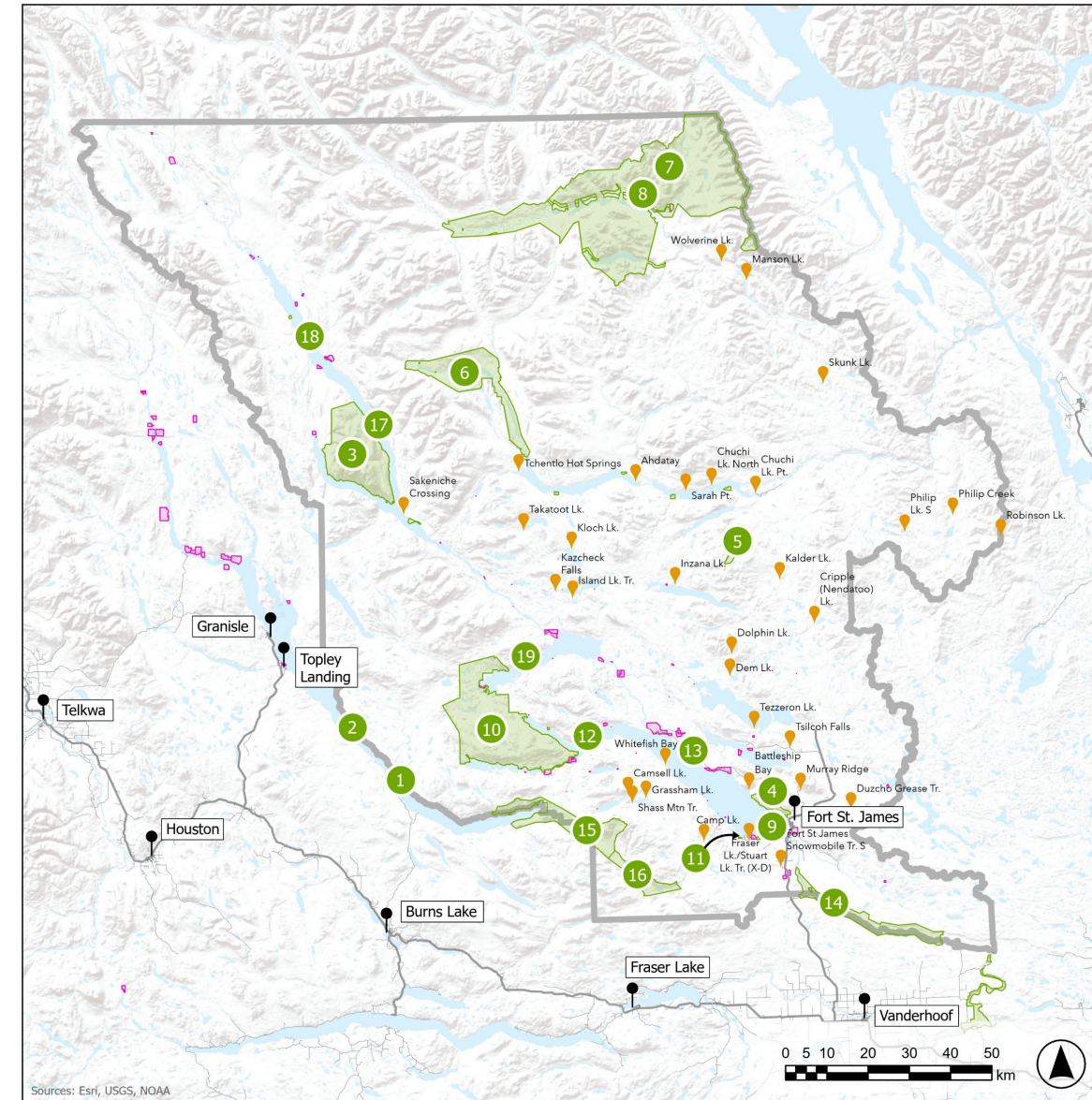
Fort St. James Community Forest

Ministry of Transportation and Transit

Nak'azdli Youth and Recreation

School District #91

Private Industry



Community Engagement

Engagement by the Numbers

- 183** survey respondents
- 9** participants in community workshops
- 1** pop-up at the Fort St. James Night Market
- 4** participants in a virtual open house

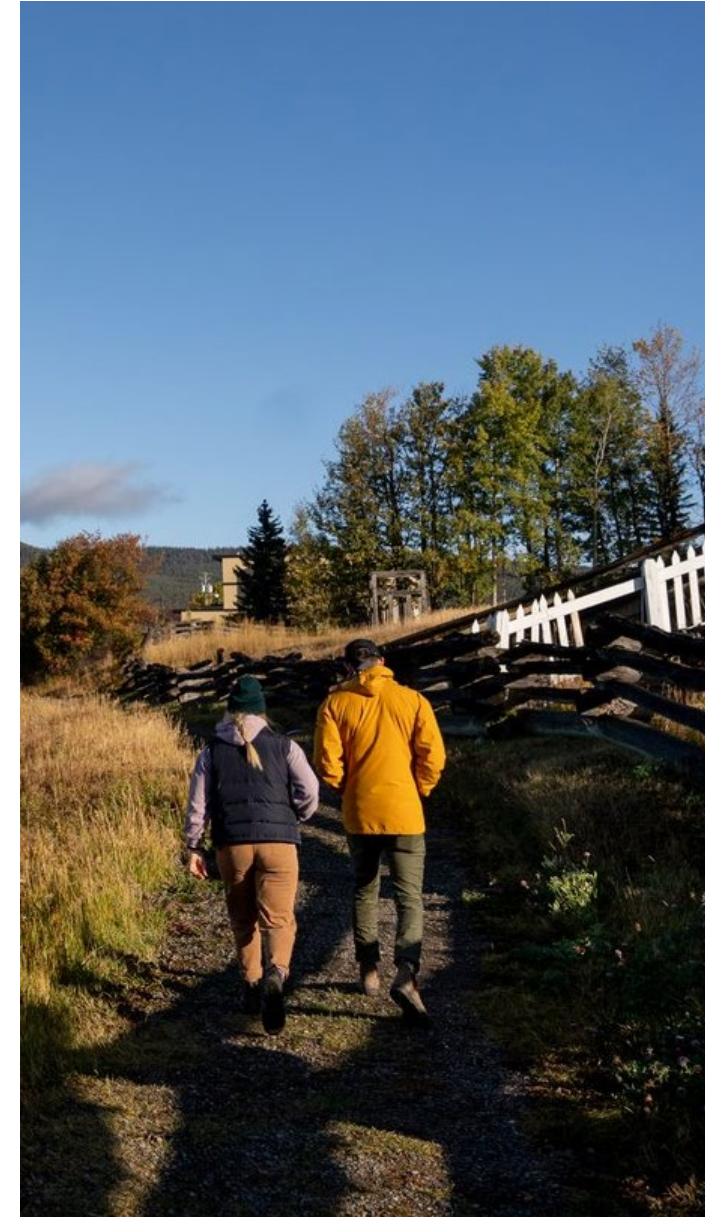
First Nations

The RDBN reached out to 15 First Nations with reserve communities and/or Aboriginal rights or title within Electoral Area C to invite participation.

As input is received it will be integrated into the decision-making process.

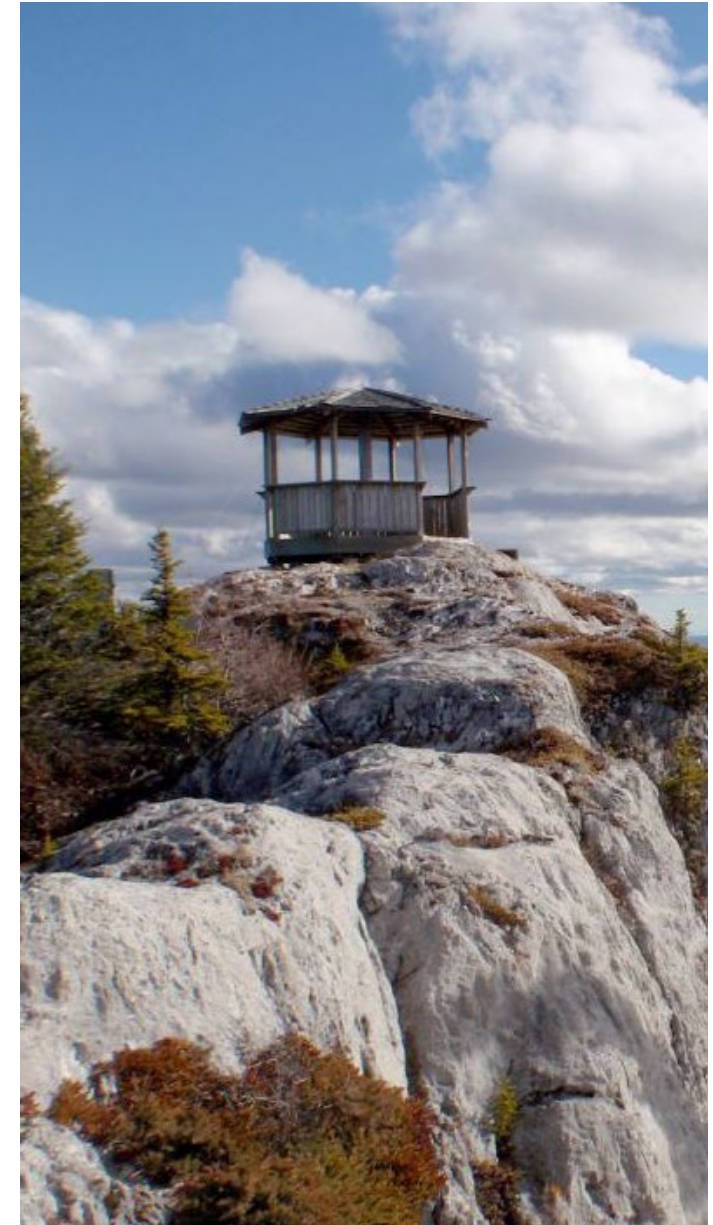
Community Values

- Strong community support for building **new trails**
- **Popular activities**
 - Camping
 - Hiking and walking
 - Water-based recreation
 - Festivals, markets, events
 - Downhill skiing
- **Top locations**
 - Stuart River
 - Murray Ridge
 - Sowchea Bay
 - Paarens Beach
- Many respondents support **increased funding**



Key Challenges

- Limited **volunteer capacity**
- Lack of safe and accessible **walking and cycling connections** around Fort St. James
- Difficulties accessing **funding resources** from other levels of government
- Growing **wildfire risk**



Key Opportunities

- Support collaboration to formalize the **Graveyard Trails**
- Provide additional **winter recreation opportunities**
- **Increase lake access** by improving boat launches and parking
- Secure **funding** for local recreation organizations
- Improve **trail signage and wayfinding**
- Support the formation of a **local hiking or biking organization**
- Establish a **Parks and Trails working group**



VISION

The RDBN's Parks and Trails Service for Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) will:

- ✓ Build on community strengths
- ✓ Support the creation of safe connections
- ✓ Provide diverse and accessible recreation opportunities
- ✓ Celebrate the region's natural beauty



GOALS for parks & trails



Goal 1: Establish tools and processes to support the delivery of the Parks and Trails Service



Goal 2: Strengthen partnerships and build community capacity



Goal 3: Increase access to outdoor recreation



Goal 4: Enhance the user experience at parks and trails



Goal 5: Support active transportation and a connected community

Goal 1 – Establish tools and processes to support the delivery of the Parks and Trails Service in Electoral Area C



1.1 - Prioritize opportunities for the RDBN to provide parks and trails through partnerships, direct acquisition, and management.

1.2 - Establish service levels and management plans for parks and trails in line with standards for other service areas.

1.3 - Consider adding staff to support projects across the RDBN's four service areas.

1.4 - Maintain and expand land use agreements with First Nations, governments, and community groups.

Goal 2 – Strengthen partnerships and build capacity



2.1 - Engage and build relationships with First Nations to protect and enhance cultural and ecological values.

2.2 – Continue the Recreation Contribution Grant Program.

2.3 - Increase awareness of the RDBN's capacity to support outdoor recreation organizations.

2.4 - Facilitate collaboration between outdoor recreation groups engaged in maintaining parks and trails.

Goal 3 – Increase access to outdoor recreation



3.1 - Support BC Parks in improving access to Mount Pope trails and improve amenities.

3.2 - Improve year-round access to Stuart Lake along Stones Bay Road.

3.3 - Explore developing a campsite on the north shore of Stuart Lake.

3.4 - Coordinate with the District of Fort St. James to develop Mount Dickenson Trail.

3.5 - Formalize and improve the Graveyard Trails network.

3.6 - Create a long-term, shared vision for the Grease Trail network.

3.7 - Secure access to recreation areas by working with the community to identify priority roads.

Goal 4 – Enhance the user experience at parks and trails



4.1 - Follow accessibility standards when establishing or upgrading parks and trails.

4.2 - Develop a cohesive mapping and information system for trails. Update the RDBN's website to provide more information about trails.

4.3 - Develop a naming policy for trails and look for opportunities to incorporate Indigenous stories where appropriate.

4.4 - Support enhancements to the RSTBC trails southwest of town.

4.5 - Work with RSTBC to identify priority recreation sites for increased maintenance.

Goal 5 – Support active transportation and a connected community

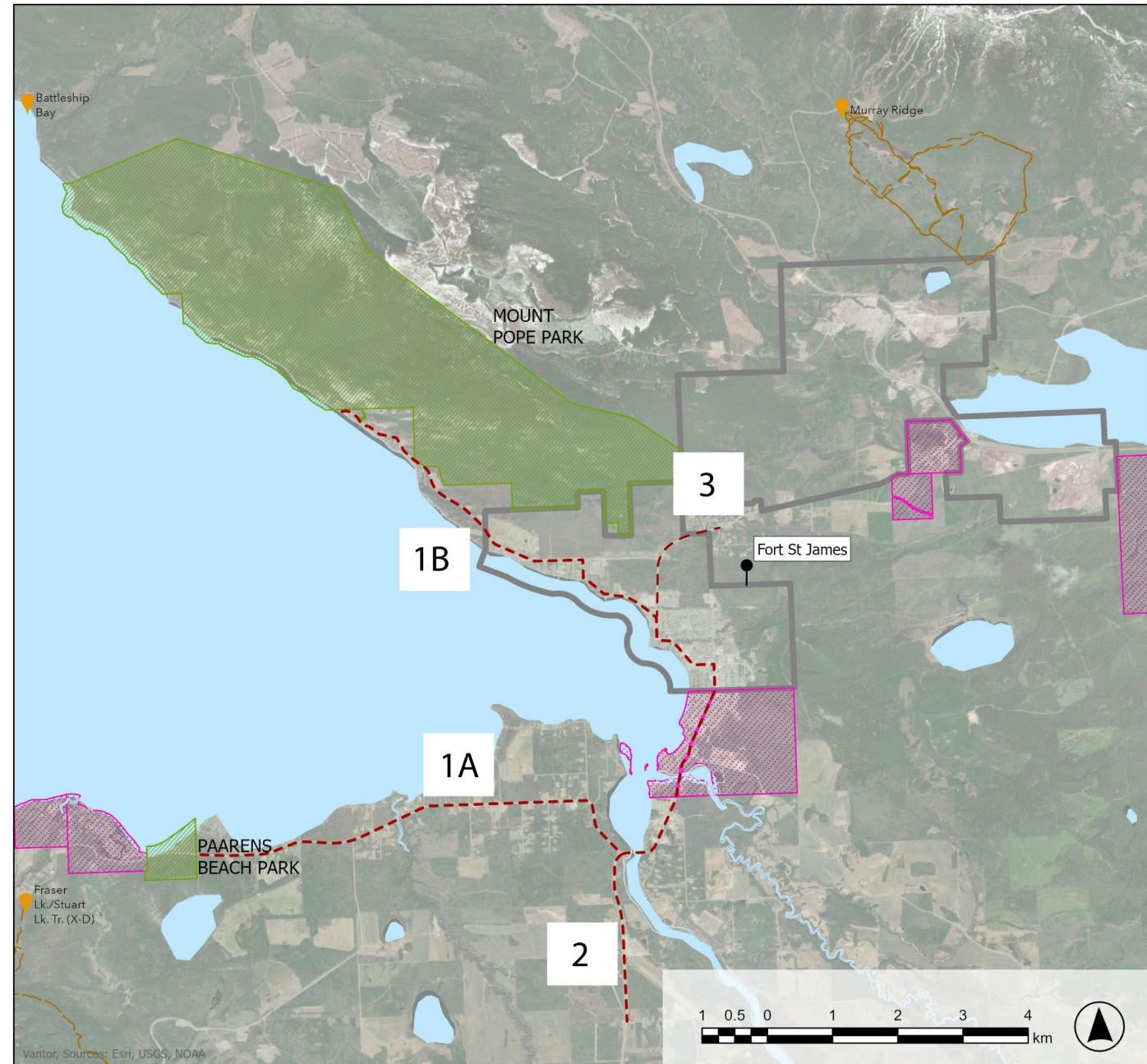
5.1 - Advocate to the province to explore opportunities to connect communities and key recreation assets through the development of multi-use trails and pathways.

Proposed routes:

1A: Paarens Beach Provincial Park along Sowchea Road into Fort St. James and 1B continuing to Mount Pope

2: Highway 27 from Fort St. James to Airport Road and continuing in future phases.

3. Highway 27 to Mowbay Road to downtown Fort St. James, continuing northeast of Stones Bay Road.



Implementation

- The recommendations cover the period from 2026 to 2036.
- The implementation plan assigns timelines, priorities, and resources for each recommendation.
- Many projects are dependent on, or intertwined with, other levels of government and community partners.
- Board endorsement indicates preliminary agreement, but specific funding decisions will be made as part of the financial planning process.
- Project timelines may change based on funding opportunities, operational capacity, and the regulatory context.





LEES



Thank you!