

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

PARKS AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Project Overview

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is developing a Parks and Trails Master Plan for Electoral Areas B (Burns Lake Rural) and E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural).

The Master Plan builds on the successes of existing outdoor recreation service providers, establishes the role of the Regional District in providing new and improved outdoor recreation services, and identifies projects and tasks to be undertaken to meet community recreation needs over the next 10 years.

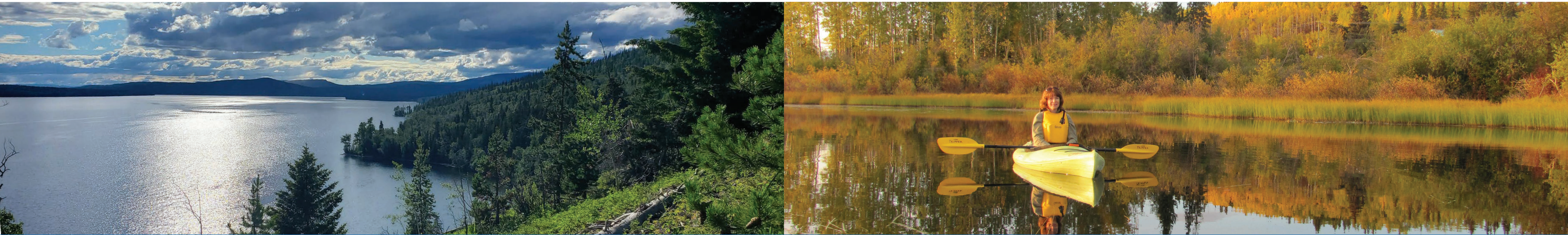
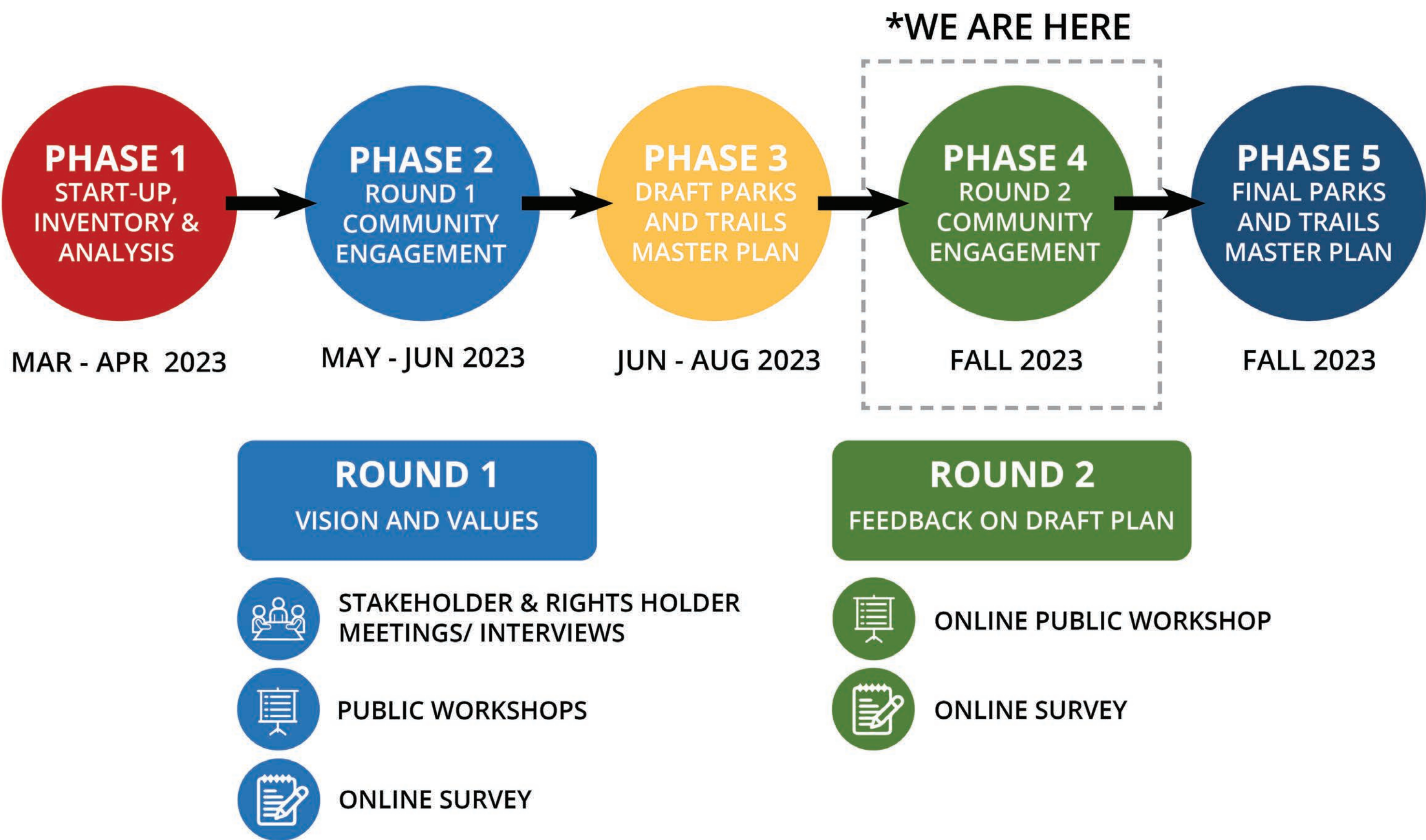
How to Get Involved

Your input is essential! We need your help to ensure that the Draft Parks and Trails Master Plan reflects the community's needs and aspirations for regional parks and trails.

Please share your thoughts on the draft vision, goals, and recommendations by participating in our online survey by September 30, 2023.

Join us for a public online workshop on September 28, 2023.

To take the survey or sign up for the workshop, please visit the project website:
<https://www.rdbn.bc.ca/masterplan>



Round 1 Engagement Summary

WHAT WE DID

- 2 in-person open houses
- 1 online survey
- 5 stakeholder interviews
- 2 stakeholder meetings
- 1 rightsholder meeting

PARTICIPATION

- 213 participants in the online survey
- 33 participants in the community open houses

COMMUNITY VALUES

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Importance of increased trail connectivity to create a larger accessible system that includes more multiuse trails.

ACCESS TO NATURE

Support for connecting to nature through parks, trails, and recreation sites.

ACCESS TO WATER

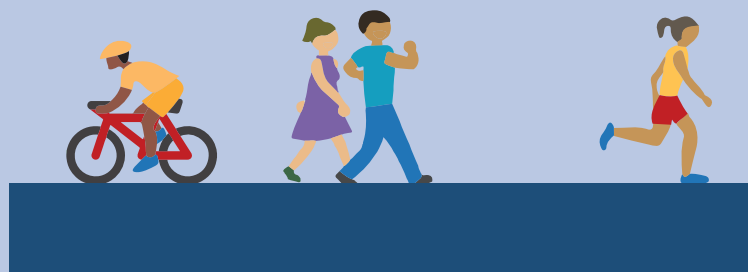
Access to the waterfront through public beach access is of significant value to the community.

RECREATION

Importance of access to a diversity of recreation opportunities.

MAINTENANCE

Support for prioritizing maintenance of existing trails and recreation sites to increase safety.



KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Support for multiuse trails to encourage active transportation and increase accessibility.

INDIGENOUS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Importance of Indigenous consultation and acknowledgment and suggested the integration of Indigenous names and stories associated with recreational sites and trails.

PROMOTION OF RECREATIONAL SITES AND TRAILS

Importance of promoting recreational sites and trails such as through increased signage.

Vision

The RDBN's Parks and Trails Service for Electoral Area B (Burns Lake Rural) and Area E (François Lake/Ootsa Lake) will:

- **Build on Community Strengths.** The RDBN seeks to build upon the strengths of the recreation services provided by other levels of government and members of the community. These partnerships will create a cohesive and synergistic system that enhances the overall recreational experience for all.
- **Connect People to Water and Nature.** The parks and trails system will facilitate access to lakes, and shorelines and connect users with nature.
- **Provide Diverse and Accessible Recreation Opportunities.** Whether seeking a thrilling hiking adventure, a tranquil camping experience, or a leisurely stroll along a picturesque shoreline, the parks and trails system will offer diverse and accessible recreation options for all ages and abilities.
- **Celebrate the Region's Natural Beauty.** The parks and trails system will protect and enhance the rich ecosystems of the Lakes District, preserving opportunities for wildlife viewing and appreciation of native flora and fauna for future generations.



PARKS AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** DEFINE THE APPROACH TO PARKS SERVICE DELIVERY IN AREA B AND E
- **GOAL 2:** STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY
- **GOAL 3:** INCREASE ACCESS TO LAKES AND SHORELINES
- **GOAL 4:** ENHANCE THE USER EXPERIENCE AT PARKS AND TRAILS
- **GOAL 5:** SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND A CONNECTED COMMUNITY



GOAL 1: DEFINE THE APPROACH TO PARKS SERVICE DELIVERY IN AREA B AND E

RECOMMENDATION 1.1:

Adopt the proposed Parkland Dedication Policy to guide decisions regarding acceptance of cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication.

RECOMMENDATION 1.2:

Develop park management plans for existing and future regional parks and update the plans every five years.

RECOMMENDATION 1.3:

Establish a level of service for regional parks and continue to conduct parks and trails inspections as described in the Parks and Trails Inspection and Maintenance Policy. This will ensure parks and trails are safe, well-maintained, and that appropriate resources and budget are allocated to maintenance.



PARKS AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY

RECOMMENDATION 2.1:

Continue with the implementation of the *Recreation Contribution Grant Program* that supports the RDBN in allocating multi-year funding to recreation organizations providing recreation services. Continue to monitor the success of the program and adjust criteria for funding and reporting requirements as needed.

RECOMMENDATION 2.2:

Hire a full-time employee (FTE) to implement the Recreation Contribution Grant Program and support parks and trails maintenance program. This region-wide position would involve assisting recreation organizations with the funding application process and providing coordination between non-profits, the Regional District and other government organizations.

RECOMMENDATION 2.3:

Continue to work with First Nations communities, other levels of government, and community groups to maintain and expand land use agreements and acquire additional parkland for recreation and conservation use.

RECOMMENDATION 2.4:

Work with Recreation Sites and Trails British Columbia (RSTBC) to identify priority sites for increased maintenance, management, or financial support from the RDBN. Priority sites will include sites that are regionally significant, provide significant recreation value to the community, or are considered a destination.



GOAL 3: INCREASE ACCESS TO LAKES AND SHORELINES

RECOMMENDATION 3.1:

Identify opportunities to increase access to lakeshores through the inclusion of boat launches at waterfront parks owned by the RDBN or on Crown Land. Potential partners include First Nations communities, RSTBC, MoTI, and Southside Economic Development Association (SEDA).



GOAL 4: ENHANCE THE USER EXPERIENCE AT PARKS AND TRAILS

RECOMMENDATION 4.1:

Follow accessibility standards, such as the Universal Design Guide by BC Parks, when establishing or upgrading regional park and trails.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2:

Update the RDBN’s website to provide more information about Regional Parks and Trails including information about accessible features at parks and trails on the Regional District’s website.

RECOMMENDATION 4.3:

Work with First Nation communities to develop a naming policy for parks and trails and to incorporate Indigenous stories and histories on interpretive signage in parks or trails where appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 4.4:

Ensure all regional parks and trails are identified with signage indicating the name of the park/ trail as well as safety/ wildlife/ accessibility information.

RECOMMENDATION 4.5:

Explore opportunities to include amenities at existing and future regional parks such as picnic shelters, washrooms, seasonal kayak rentals etc.



GOAL 5: SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

RECOMMENDATION 5.1:

Explore opportunities to connect communities and key recreation assets in the Regional District through the development of multiuse trails and pathways. For example, partnering with the Village of Burns Lake to develop a multi-use trail along Highway 35 connecting the Village with Hospital Point, as planned.



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AREA B RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 6.1:

Explore opportunities for future development of Burns Lake South. Engage Indigenous communities with traditional territories within the Burns Lake South Area early in the process.

RECOMMENDATION 6.2:

Continue to work with CN Rail to develop a level pedestrian crossing for Imeson's Beach to facilitate its future use as a regional park.

RECOMMENDATION 6.3:

Partner with the Village to explore the feasibility of connecting Boer Mountain to the Village core.



AREA E RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 7.1:

Complete a master plan for Hospital Point which includes community and rightsholder engagement to determine priorities for developing the site as a regional park. Day use with the potential for picnic tables, washrooms, flexible open, covered gathering area/ picnic shelter.

RECOMMENDATION 7.2:

Explore partnering with the Southside Economic Development Association (SEDA) to maintain the nature trail and beach adjacent to the SEDA office.

RECOMMENDATION 7.3:

Explore partnering with Cheslatta Carrier Nation to maintain the boat launch near the Southside ferry adjacent to SEDA beach on François Lake. Explore opportunities to add parking and a washroom.

