



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO  
RURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
AGENDA  
Thursday, September 04, 2025**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**AGENDA**

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**MINUTES**

**Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - June 5, 2025**

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Approve

**REPORTS**

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -  
Rural Grant Service Update**

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Receive

**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**

**Thursday, June 5, 2025**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Chair	Michael Riis-Christianson
	Directors	Judy Greenaway Clint Lambert – via Zoom Shirley Moon Chris Newell Mark Parker Stoney Stoltenberg
	Staff	Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services Jason Blackwell, Regional Fire Chief Megan D’Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator – via Zoom – arrived at 10:16 a.m. John Illes, Chief Financial Officer Amy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services Scott Zayac, Director of Protective Services – arrived at 10:57 a.m.
	Others	Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle – via Zoom Kevin Moutray, District of Vanderhoof – arrived at 9:56 a.m. Jason Olmsted, RPF, P.Eng., Northern Engineering Group Leader, Integrated Resource Operations Division, Engineering Branch, Ministry of Forests – via Zoom – left at 10:11 a.m. Sarrah Storey, Village of Fraser Lake – via Zoom – arrived at 9:50 a.m., left at 9:55 a.m., returned at 9:57 a.m. Henry Wiebe, Village of Burns Lake
	Media	Jake Wray, LD News – via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

**AGENDA**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg  
Seconded by Director Parker

RSC.2025-6-1

“That the Rural Services Committee Agenda for June 5, 2025 be approved as amended.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **MINUTES**

Rural Services Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
-May 8, 2025

Moved by Director Stoltenberg  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RSC.2025-6-2

"That the minutes of the Rural Services Committee meeting of  
May 8, 2025 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **DELEGATION**

### **MINISTRY OF FORESTS – Jason Olmsted, RPF, P.Eng. Northern Engineering Group Leader.** **Integrated Resource Operations Division, Engineering Branch Re: Resource Roads – via Zoom**

Chair Riis-Christianson welcomed Jason Olmsted, RPF, P.Eng., Northern Engineering Group Leader, Integrated Resource Operations Division, Engineering Branch, Ministry of Forests.

Mr. Olmsted noted that the Engineering Group provides support to all Forest Districts in the north in relation to forestry roads and networks. They provide three support roles:

- Funding source
  - Operational funding for road maintenance
  - Capital funding
    - Build new bridges and road construction (only applied to capital Forest Service Roads (FSRs))
  - Liability fund to deactivate roads
- Provides professional oversight practices and services for roads and bridges
- Policy and standards division
  - Sets policy, legislation and guidelines for use of funding.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Use of FSRs for recreational purposes
- Recent decrease in forestry activity impacting maintenance
- Annual budget for capital and operational road works
- Morice-Owen FSR
  - Competing users
    - High recreational use
    - Morice River
    - Coastal GasLink
    - Forestry companies
    - Mining and Exploration companies
  - Sharing road costs is inequitable
- User groups have different maintenance standards
- Highway access to an FSR requires the Ministry of Transportation and Transit to maintain road
- Possible solutions in the province to address the inequities of shared costs for road users
- Road user groups

### **DELEGATION (CONT'D)**

- When a main contractor is no longer utilizing an FSR the Province can take over the care and maintenance outlined in their policies and standards
- Mr. Olmstead indicated he could meet individuals regarding specific areas along with the Forest District Manager
- Closures of historical FSRs traversing through private property
  - o Antimony FSR
  - o Extensively utilized by cabin owners and other users in the area
  - o Consultation with the public and road users when closure of an FSR is considered
- Changes in provincial regulations approximately 5 years ago wherein the Ministry of Forest or Transportation used taxpayers' dollars to fund a road, they would then be responsible for that road and that no longer occurs
- Director Newell will follow up with the Nadina District Manager
- Chair Riis-Christianson spoke of following up with Land Tenures department of the Ministry of Forests.

Chair Riis-Christianson thanked Mr. Olmstead for attending the meeting.

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Crown Land Referral  
No. 7410358 – Electoral Area  
C (Fort St. James Rural)

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Parker

RSC.2025-6-3

"That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application No. 7410358."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Crown Land Referral No.  
6409543 – Electoral Area E  
(Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

RSC.2025-6-4

"That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application No. 6409543."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Peace River Regional District  
Referral Regional Growth  
Strategy Bylaw No. 2571

Removed from Rural Services Committee Agenda and moved to Board Agenda.

## **REPORTS**

### Resource Roads

Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Moon

### RSC.2025-6-5

"That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Service's Resource Roads memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### Rural Community Hall Support

Moved by Director Moon  
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

### RSC.2025-6-6

"That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Service's Rural Community Hall Support memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Director Lambert commented that he has considered creating a service to support rural community halls. He also spoke of encouraging the installation of commercial kitchens to assist farmers markets and other producers. Director Lambert noted the use of Community Halls for seniors' gatherings and community social activities.

The following was discussed:

- Utilizing industrial and utilities taxation to support Community Halls
- Volunteerism
  - Volunteer Canada
- Inviting all the Community Hall representatives from across the region to attend a brainstorming session to discuss possible solutions and ideas
  - Provide pros and cons for various ideas
- Challenges for Community Halls to obtain insurance due to costs
- Investigating the options for Insurance Buyers Groups.

### Rural Community Hall Support

Moved by Director Moon  
Seconded by Director Lambert

### RDC.2025-6-7

"That the Committee recommend that the Board invite the leaders of the region's Community Halls to a brainstorming session to discuss ideas and possible support for the halls."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**IN-CAMERA MOTION**

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Newell

RSC.2025-6-8

"That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(c) of the *Community Charter* for the Board to deal with matters relating to Labour Relations."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Newell

RSC.2025-6-9

"That the meeting be adjourned 10:30 a.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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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:** Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services  
**Date:** September 4, 2025  
**Subject:** Rural Grant Service Update

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

Receive.

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### BACKGROUND

#### Regional Grant in Aid Service:

In the 2025 Budget, Grant in Aid is collected through the Regional Grant in Aid service to the maximum amount of \$724,000. This limit is determined by a legislatively set annual spending limit of \$0.10/\$1,000 in assessed value. This allows for a \$724,000 contribution from Community Works Funds (CWF) to the annual capital budget with a net-zero shift in region-wide taxation.

The balance of Regional Grant in Aid is tracked to mirror the allocation of CWF based on a population formula. To date, Regional Grant in Aid balances are tracked as:

Electoral Area	Starting Balance 2025	Aug 22, 2025, Balance
Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)	\$ 252,322	\$ 78,103
Area B (Burns Lake Rural)	\$ 77,048	\$ 49,361
Area C (Fort St. James Rural)	\$ 57,176	\$ 37,476
Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)	\$ 72,576	\$ 57,626
Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)	\$ 68,286	\$ 45,918
Area F (Vanderhoof Rural)	\$ 158,836	\$ 140,857
Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)	\$ 37,756	\$ 29,411
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 724,000</b>	<b>\$ 434,251</b>

To maximize the opportunity for the same CWF contribution to the annual capital budget in 2026, Regional Grant in Aid funds should be fully expended by the end of the current budget year.

At the end of 2025, any unspent Regional Grant in Aid can be moved to a regional operational reserve. The Board will have an opportunity to provide this direction during the 2026 budget process. While the use of these funds will be at the discretion of the Board, the reserve contributions will be tracked according to the contributing electoral area(s). This will ensure that

future Board decisions consider the intentions of the Electoral Area Directors in utilizing these funds within the region.

### **Economic Development Services:**

In 2025 Rural Directors individually set taxation rates for their EA's Economic Development Service to accrue funds that can be granted for projects that support economic development initiatives in their area.

<b>Electoral Area</b>	<b>Starting Balance 2025</b>	<b>Aug 22, 2025 Balance</b>
Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)	\$ 57,902	\$ 52,902
Area B (Burns Lake Rural)	\$ 20,000	\$ 12,500
Area C (Fort St. James Rural)	\$ 50,000	\$ 48,500
Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)	\$ 125,000	\$ 117,000
Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)	\$ 100,000	\$ 77,500
Area F (Vanderhoof Rural)	\$ 68,370	\$ 68,370
Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)	\$ 28,313	\$ 28,313

Economic Development Service funds have no spending deadline, and any unspent funds can be carried into the same service the following year.

Approved Grant in Aid and Economic Development Service grants are reported in the Administration section of the Quarterly Report.

### **Community Works Funds:**

Each Electoral Area has a balance of unspent/uncommitted Community Works Funds (CWF). These funds are largely carried over from previous years and have an allocation deadline of July 2029. These funds are only eligible for CWF project categories of infrastructure that is government owned (RDBN or member municipality).

Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)	\$ 960,451
Area B (Burns Lake Rural)	\$ 491,086
Area C (Fort St. James Rural)	\$ 184,282
Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)	\$ 260,026
Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)	\$ 228,650
Area F (Vanderhoof Rural)	\$ 298,584
Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)	\$ 602,907
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,025,988</b>

Staff are interested in supporting Rural Directors to advertise the availability of Grant in Aid funds to ensure they are spent in 2025. Options include newspaper advertising, social media advertising, or direct mail campaigns to previous applicants. Directors are invited to follow up with staff to make a plan for what advertising they would like to see in their Electoral Area.



There will also be an opportunity to explore the use of Grant in Aid or other funds to support Community Hall projects at the Community Hall meeting planned for September 11, 2025, in Burns Lake.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

RDBN Funding Supports Information Sheet

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

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

Not Applicable

# RDBN Project Funding

any questions - give staff a call!

## Infrastructure and Programs

1

### Grant in Aid

Grant in Aid supports cultural, charitable, sporting, or recreational services and special events for the purpose of benefitting the community.

**Eligible groups:** Non-profit Societies, Charities

**Eligible projects:** Events, programs, or capital projects that provide a benefit to residents.

**Not eligible:** Operating expenses like insurance/utilities, wages, services with an existing bylaw.

2

### Economic Development Service Grants

Ec Dev service grants support projects that are incremental to an organization's regular activities and improve economic potential, revenue generation, or support resident attraction and retention.

**Eligible groups:** Municipalities, Organizations that provide economic development or business support services.

**Eligible projects:** Events, programs, or capital projects support economic development.

**Not eligible:** Projects that do not justifiably support economic development.

3

### Community Works Funds

CWF supports recreational, cultural, tourism, water system, energy system, or fire hall infrastructure.

**Eligible groups:** Local Government or Indigenous Government owned Projects.

**Eligible projects:** Infrastructure projects in eligible categories.

**Not eligible:** infrastructure owned by a society, ineligible categories.

4

### RBA

RBA supports recreational, cultural, tourism, water system, energy system, or emergency management and public safety infrastructure.

**Eligible groups:** Local Government or Indigenous Government owned Projects.

**Eligible projects:** Infrastructure projects in eligible categories.

**Not eligible:** infrastructure owned by a society, ineligible categories.

## Infrastructure Only



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