



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO  
RURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
AGENDA  
Thursday, February 12, 2026**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**February 12, 2026**

Approve

**MINUTES**

**Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - January 15, 2026**

Page 3-4

Approve

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Referrals**

**Cameron Kral, Planner - Recreation Referral No. REC272988 -  
Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)**

Page 5-11

Recommendation

**Danielle Patterson, Senior Planner - Crown Land Referral Application  
No. 410395 - Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural)**

Page 12-14

Recommendation

**REPORTS**

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -  
Economic Development Service Grants for Labour Market Research  
Plan Applications**

Page 15-21

Recommendation

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -  
Community Hall Engagement Update** Page 22-25

Receive

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services  
Healthcare Recruitment and Retention Efforts** Page 26

Receive

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -  
Passive Infrastructure Update** Page 27

Receive

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services -  
Rural Directors Survey Update** Page 28

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  
MINUTES  
Thursday, January 15, 2026**

Directors Present: Chair Michael Riis-Christianson  
Judy Greenaway  
Clint Lambert  
Shirley Moon  
Chris Newell  
Mark Parker  
Stoney Stoltenberg

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services  
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer  
Jason Blackwell, Regional Fire Chief  
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services  
Scott Zayac, Director of Protective Services

Others:

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m.

**AGENDA**

**January 15, 2026**

**2026-RSC-021**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Parker

That the Rural Services Committee Agenda for January 15, 2026 be approved.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Thursday, January 15, 2026

2 of 2

**MINUTES**

**Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - November 6, 2025**

**2026-RSC-022**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**IN-CAMERA MOTION**

**2026-RSC-023**

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Lambert

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.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**ADJOURNMENT**

**2026-RSC-024**

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the meeting be adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

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

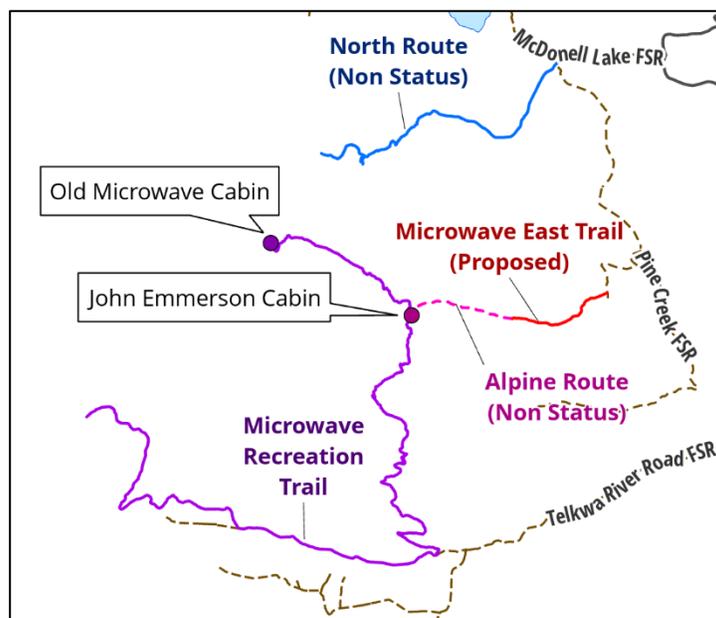
**To:** Chair and Committee  
**From:** Cameron Kral, Planner  
**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Recreation Referral No. REC272988 - Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)**

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

That the following comment sheet be provided to Recreation Sites and Trails BC as the RDBN's response to recreation referral No. REC272988.

### BACKGROUND

The RDBN has received a request to provide comment by Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) on an application by the Smithers Snowmobile Association (SSA) to construct a new snowmobile trail under Section 57 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA). The new trail known as the Microwave East Trail would provide an alternative access route to the existing Microwave Ridge Recreation Trail from the east via McDonnell Lake and Pine Creek FSRs. This route would improve safety by bypassing the existing North Route, which is a non-status trail that crosses a high-risk avalanche hazard area and more difficult terrain (see map below).

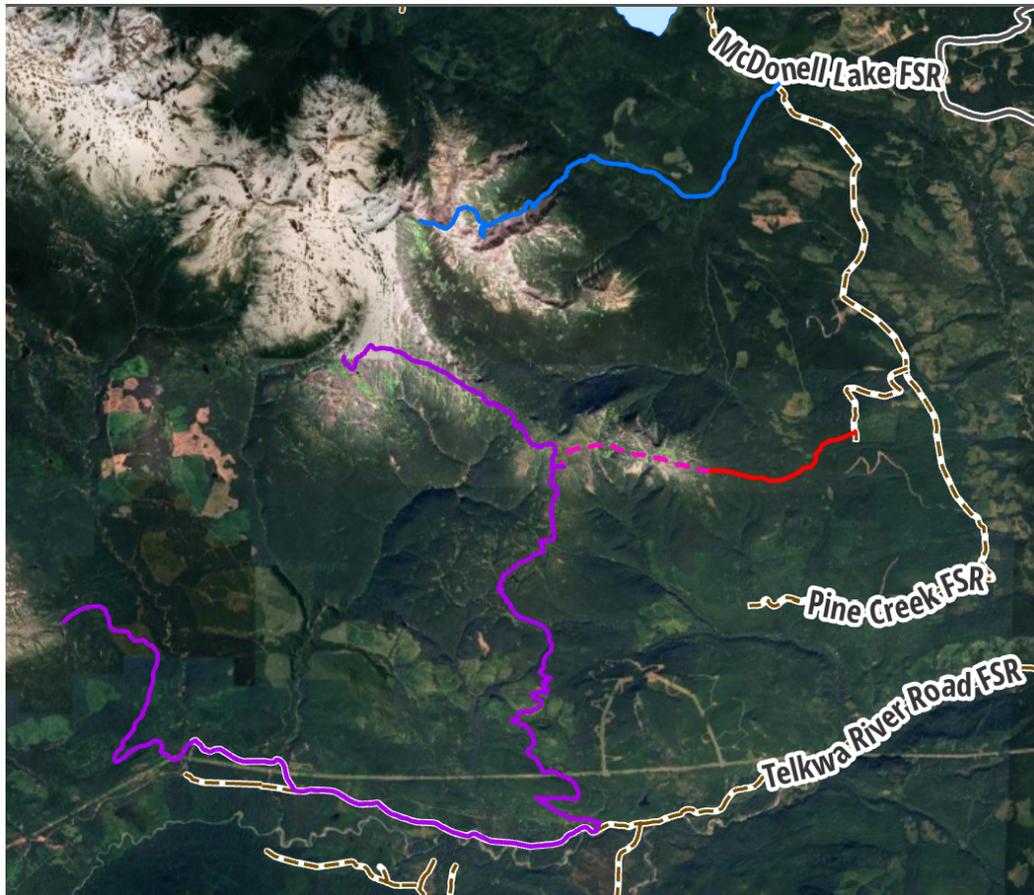


The Microwave Recreation Trail was established in 2011 and is managed and maintained by the SSA under an agreement with RSTBC. The trail system is highly used and includes two cabins,

groomed access, parking, and signage. The official trailhead and parking area is located at 19 km on the Telkwa River Road FSR.

The new trail shown in red on the map below would be approximately 7.5 m wide and 3.5 km long with an average slope of 12 per cent. There is existing parking at 3 km on McDonnell Lake FSR managed by SSA (see Attachments for construction and maintenance details).

RSTBC is supportive of the application and intends to legally establish the new trail under Section 56 of the FRPA if this application is successful.



**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Comment Sheet
- RSTBC Referral Documents

**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):

4.1 Learn the needs of the tourism sector and explore ways to support and advance tourism in the region.

**Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako****Comment Sheet on RSTBC Referral No. REC272988**

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<b>Electoral Area:</b>	Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)
<b>Applicant:</b>	Smithers Snowmobile Association
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	None
<b>Zoning:</b>	N/A
<b>OCP Designation:</b>	N/A
<b>Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:</b>	N/A
<b>Agricultural Land Reserve:</b>	No
<b>Access:</b>	Pine Creek FSR, off McDonell Lake FSR
<b>Building Inspection:</b>	No
<b>Fire Protection:</b>	No
<b>Other comments:</b>	None



Ministry of Environment  
and Parks

## INTERNAL PROPOSAL Recreation Trail Establishment and Construction

Date Received: January 8, 2026	Recreation District: Nadina-Skeena	File no (if applicable): <b>REC272988</b>
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Recreation Sites and Trails BC is requesting comments on the proposed recreation trail **establishment and construction** within **60 days** on March 8, 2026.

### Ministry Contact Information

Ministry of Environment and Parks  
Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC)  
Nadina-Skeena Recreation District

Contact Name: Brandy Hughes  
Number: [REDACTED] or 250-876-6849  
Email: [Brandy.Hughes@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Brandy.Hughes@gov.bc.ca)  
Mailing Address: Bag 6000, Smithers, BC, V0J 2N0  
Physical: 3333 Tatlow Road, Smithers, BC

### FRPA Section 56 Authority – Legal Establishment

Section 56 of the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) grants the government authority to formally establish areas as Recreation Sites or Recreation Trails, allowing for specific intentions and protection pursuant to the *Forest Recreation Regulation*, including regulation of industrial and commercial uses, setting rules for public use, and charging fees for service where applicable. Legal objectives can be established under FRPA section 56 to provide further guidance in forest planning and practices. Section 56 of FRPA enables RSTBC to enter into Partnership Agreements for operating and maintaining the site or trail.

Note: Establishment does not imply nor allow for exclusive use of the area.

### FRPA Section 57 – Authorization to Construct, Maintain or Rehabilitate a Recreation Trail or Facility

#### Project Description:

The Smithers Snowmobile Association (SSA) has submitted an application under [Section 57 of FRPA](#) (attached) to construct a new trail to the existing Microwave Ridge riding area from the east via the McDonnell Lake and Pine Creek FSRs. The new trail would provide a safer alternative to the existing route, referred to as the **North Route (solid purple line below)**, which crosses high-risk avalanche hazard and requires advanced skills to navigate the terrain.

The **Microwave Recreation Trail (dashed purple line below)**, REC168787, was legally established in February of 2011. The trail is managed and maintained year-round by the SSA under a partnership agreement with RSTBC since 2012. The trail system includes two cabins of which the SSA holds a Licence of Occupation for their existence. Use is high given the well-maintained infrastructure including groomed access, parking, signage and a variety of terrain for beginners to advanced riders.

The official (s.56) trailhead and parking area for the Microwave Recreation Trail is at 19 km on the Telkwa River FSR. The trail is made up of road permit road (at the start), followed by an old mine road, and therefore conducive to summer motorized use, including high clearance 4x4 vehicles. The SSA grooms the trail for winter use, storing the snowcat at the 19 km trailhead throughout the winter.

The proposed route, referred to as the **Microwave East Trail (red line below)**, would follow a timbered shoulder outside of avalanche risk. The route would be 7.5 m wide to accommodate the snowcat and overlain with slash from the construction activity to a 0.5 m depth to deter ATVs and side by sides.

Grooming the new trail would include the snowcat – parked at the Telkwa River FSR trailhead – following yellow line below (approximate) – in the alpine – to avoid having to trailer the snowcat between trailheads. In August of 2024, RSTBC staff inspected the yellow line (alpine) for evidence of summer motorized use. Summer motorized use was noted in just two spots as obvious four-wheeler tire tracks or ruts. Based on this, RSTBC estimates summer motorized use of the area to be minimal / undesirable. See attached photos.



Key points:

- Proposed route (red line in above map) is 3.5 km long. The average slope is 12%.
- There will be no soil disturbance.
- There will be no removal of merchantable timber off site. Timber and saplings will be hand felled and scattered on site. Merchantable timber volume is estimated at <500 m<sup>3</sup> – this is a generous estimate.
- The proposed trail has six stream crossing locations – five on the existing road permit road and one on the proposed trail. All are confirmed non-fish bearing other than one default S4. These crossings will be infilled with snow and packed accordingly to provide an adequate snowpack for crossing. This applies to during construction and long-term use of the trail.
- SSA has been in touch with the road permit holder (PIR). Verbal support has been provided and a plan in place for safety of riders and industrial users.
- A parking area exists at 3 km on McDonnell Lake Road and is managed and maintained by SSA.

RSTBC supports the proposal in consideration of the safety concern; the Microwave being an existing high use recreation facility; and the SSA capacity to construct and maintain the trail to standard. If the decision is made to approve the Section 57 application, based on the results of this Referral, RSTBC intends to legally establish the trail under Section 56 of FRPA.

### Part 3. Current Status

The current status of the trails mentioned above include:

- North Route – non-status; informally managed; constructed under approval by the Province in 2009 but not legally established due to the avalanche risk (the trail was built in the wrong location).
- Microwave Recreation Trail – established under s.56 of FRPA; formally managed under partnership by SSA.
- Microwave East Trail (proposed) – non-status; informally maintained; consisting of branches and saplings removed for a single sled to navigate through the timber.
- Alpine route – non-status; not maintained – there is nothing to maintain; no plans by SSA to modify in any way; groomer would simply follow higher, gently-sloping ground on an adequate snowpack.

#### Part 4. Proposed Work Timing

Proposed work start dates: August 1, 2026

Proposed work completion dates: September 30, 2026

In accordance with the least risk timing window for Dolly Varden fish species – there is one default S4 stream on the proposed trail – and outside of the published risk timing window of May 1 to July 31 for nesting birds.

**NOTE:** The information you provide will be subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have any questions regarding the treatment of your personal information, please contact the Manager, Privacy, Information Access and Records Management.



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

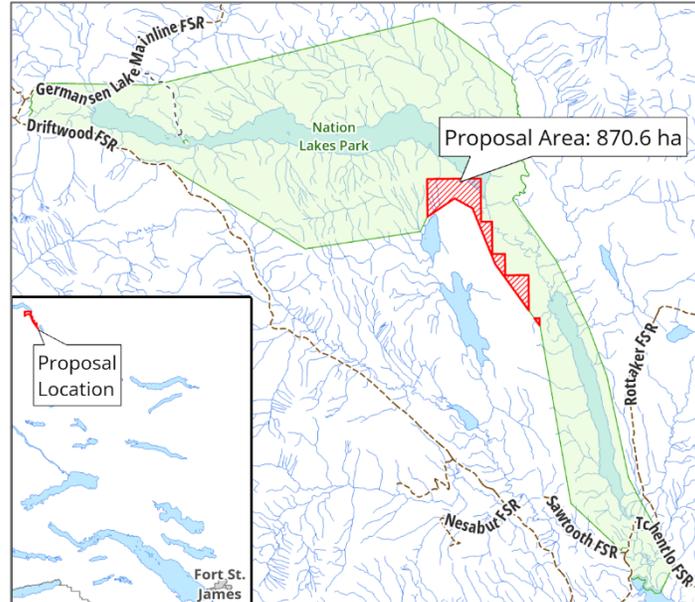
**To:** Chair and Committee  
**From:** Danielle Patterson, Senior Planner  
**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Crown Land Referral Application No. 410395 - Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural)**

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

That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application No. 410395 for a Section 16 Withdrawal of Disposition.

### BACKGROUND

The RDBN has received a request to provide a referral response to BC Parks' application for a 10-to-30-year withdrawal of disposition of 870.6 hectares of land under section 16 of the *Land Act*. The application is to ensure the lands are protected for a potential future expansion of Nations Lakes Park once the existing mineral tenures on these lands come to an end.



FrontCounter BC clarified that while this withdrawal would allow BC parks to apply to remove timber and vegetation or make improvements to the lands, BC Parks is only intending to set the land aside for parks expansion. Section 16 withdrawals are complete withdrawals of Crown land from further disposition when deemed to be in the public interest.

History

In 2004, Nation Lakes Park was established as a Class A Park under the *Protected Area of British Columbia Act* except for the 870.6 hectares subject to this application. BC Parks recently discovered that while the 870.6 hectares were identified for protection in the 1995 Omineca Peace Protected Areas Strategy Report and identified as Goal 1 for Protected Area in the 1999 *Fort St. James Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP)*, the lands were not formally proposed for future protection. This application is to resolve this past oversight.

The subject lands were designated as Parks and Recreation (P) in the Fort St. James Rural Official Community Plans since 2010. The Nations Lakes are a well-known outdoor recreation and tourism area, where there are opportunities for portaging between the lakes.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Comment sheet

**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):

4.1 Learn the needs of the tourism sector and explore ways to support and advance tourism in the region.

## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

### Comment Sheet on Crown Land Referral 7410395

<b>Electoral Area:</b>	Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural)
<b>Applicant:</b>	BC Parks
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	Mineral claims
<b>Zoning:</b>	Not applicable
<b>OCP Designation:</b>	Parks and Recreation (P) in the Fort St. James Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 2054, 2024 (the OCP)
<b>Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Agricultural Land Reserve:</b>	No
<b>Access:</b>	Backcountry. Nation Lakes Provincial Park access via various FSR road/water access.
<b>Building Inspection:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Fire Protection:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Other comments:</b>	

These lands have been designed Parks and Recreation (P) by the RDBN since 2010. Lands designated Parks and Recreation that are not provincial parks are recognized by the RDBN as having potential for development as parks and trails (see Policy 3.7.2.1). Further, the OCP recognizes “the economic and social benefits of outdoor recreation and public access to natural amenities” (see Section 3.7).



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee

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

**Date:** February 12, 2026

**Subject:** **Economic Development Service Grants for Labour Market Research Plan Applications to Northern Development Initiative Trust**

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

- 1) That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a grant of \$2,500 from the Electoral Area B (Burns Lake Rural) Economic Development Service to the Village of Burns Lake for the Village's application to the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by NDIT.
  - 2) That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a grant of \$2,500 from the Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural) Economic Development Service to the Village of Fraser Lake for the Village's application to the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by NDIT.
  - 3) That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a grant of \$2,500 from the Electoral Area F (Vanderhoof Rural) Economic Development Service to the District of Vanderhoof for the District's application to the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by NDIT.
  - 4) That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a grant of \$2,500 from the Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Economic Development Service to the District of Houston for the District's application to the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by NDIT.
- 

### **BACKGROUND**

As presented at the January 29, 2026, meeting, the District of Vanderhoof is leading an effort to include additional communities in the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by Northern Development Initiative Trust. The communities of Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake, Burns Lake, and Houston will be making applications to the program. The funding model for this program is a grant of up to \$50,000 to a maximum of 90% of the project budget. For each application, a 10%, or \$5,000, applicant contribution is required.

For each application, a shared applicant contribution model is proposed, with \$2,500 from each municipality, and \$2,500 from the surrounding rural area.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Unify Partners Regional Labour Market Research Proposal

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

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

Not Applicable



**Community  
Labour Market  
Research**

PROPOSAL

# Community Labour Market Research

Northern British Columbia stands at a critical economic crossroads, making a comprehensive regional labour market study not just timely, but essential for long-term stability. More specifically, the region of Bulkley-Nechako has dozens of First Nations and a growing community of newcomers to Canada, which brings new opportunities to drive growth in a region with a long history of being an economic driver for BC. The region is a global powerhouse for "nation-building" initiatives and investment opportunities, while it simultaneously faces unprecedented volatility from shifting global energy alliances, commodity swings, and a shrinking forestry sector. As tabulated below, there are several economic drivers impacting the region, among others.

Economic Driver	Impact on Northern BC Labour
Major Projects	Billions in investment (e.g., \$50B in proposed mining contract) require a steady pipeline of skilled trades and specialized technicians.
Geopolitical Shifts	Global trade tensions and 2026 tariff uncertainties necessitate a resilient, adaptable workforce that can pivot as markets shift.
AI & Automation	Generative AI is reshaping entry-level and clerical roles, requiring a regional strategy for "high-complementarity" skills training.
Demographics	With over 65% of future job openings in BC driven by retirements, the North must identify exactly where its aging workforce leaves the biggest gaps.

With the above context in mind, a pan-regional study is vital to bridge the gap between the thousands of new jobs being generated by major projects and a workforce that must be rapidly upskilled to navigate a tech-driven, geopolitically complex future. Key data points to inform the study will include:

- Job forecasts based on available data and direct engagement with industry leaders
- Demographic and socioeconomic profile of the region
- Skills mapping, including future-proofing the existing industry and welcoming new ones
- Concrete pathways to employment opportunities, including culturally sensitive training, wrap-around supports

In order to achieve the desired results, Unify will deliver a mirrored methodology (as detailed below) across communities in the region. These will provide detailed **community-level insights while enabling regional data aggregation to tell the broader picture.**

# Workplan

This study will follow an **iterative and collaborative process**, with regular check-ins and feedback loops throughout all four phases. Findings from each stage will inform the next, ensuring the final outputs are data-driven, community-informed, and aligned with client priorities. Upon completion of the research design phase, a more detailed workplan with engagement targets and timelines will be **designed in collaboration with each community**.

## Phase 1: Research Design

**Objective:** Establish the research framework, confirm objectives, and co-develop engagement tools and data collection strategy.

### Key Activities:

- Conduct project kickoff meeting and finalize administration details.
- Develop **Data Collection Matrix** mapping indicators, data sources, and collection methods.
- Co-design the **Community Engagement Toolkit** (guides, templates, and protocols).
- Refine research questions and confirm key sectors of focus with client.
- Engage with the community and partners to ensure alignment with the research approach.

### Deliverables:

- Project workplan and communication schedule
- Finalized **Research Design Framework**
- **Data Collection Matrix** and **Community Engagement Toolkit**

## Phase 2: Desk Research

**Objective:** Gather and analyze foundational secondary data to identify labour market trends and priority areas for engagement. More specifically, the research will answer the below key questions:

### Key Activities:

- Conduct **Desk Research**, including:
  - Review of qualitative sources (community strategies, reports, economic plans).
  - Compilation and analysis of quantitative datasets (Statistics Canada demographics, OaSIS, NOCS, NAICS, business registries).
- Conduct preliminary analysis and identify data gaps or validation needs during community engagement.

- Share early findings to refine focus for community engagement.

#### **Deliverables:**

- **Desk Research Summary Report** (key trends, gaps, and emerging themes) for review and comment from client.
- Updated **Data Collection Matrix** with validated sources and clear gaps identified for engagement

### **Phase 3: Community Engagement**

**Objective:** Gather on-the-ground perspectives from community, industry, and training stakeholders to complement and validate data findings. More specifically, engagement and desk research will combine to answer key questions such as those listed below.

Component	Focus Question
Demand	What skills do our industries need to survive and grow?
Supply	Who lives here, what can they do, and who is moving in?
Infrastructure	Do we have the housing, childcare, and transit to support these workers?
The Gap	Where is the mismatch, and how do we train/recruit to fix it?

The project team is open to conducting an online survey but recognizes the limitations in this approach. Past experiences suggest higher engagement and more nuanced data through interviews and on-the-ground engagement. Where possible, the project team will leverage existing events and relationships to maximize uptake of the research.

#### **Key Activities:**

- Conduct engagement sessions and interviews with key groups:
  - Indigenous community leaders and youth
  - Industry and major project representatives
  - Training, employment, and youth organizations
- Summarize insights and align them with quantitative trends.
- Iteratively refine findings based on stakeholder feedback.

#### **Deliverables:**

- **Community Engagement Summary Report** (key insights and validation outcomes)
- **Thematic Analysis** linking engagement findings with data trends
- Updated **Labour Market Findings Summary** for synthesis and reporting

## Phase 4: Analysis and Reporting

**Objective:** Integrate all findings into a comprehensive analysis and produce actionable recommendations and an implementation roadmap.

### Key Activities:

- Synthesize all data and engagement insights to identify workforce trends, skills gaps, and employment opportunities.
- Facilitate **Validation Workshop** with client and stakeholders to review and refine findings.
- Develop final recommendations and **Pathways to Employment Action Plan**.
- Prepare final documentation and presentations.

### Deliverables:

- **Draft Labour Market Analysis Report** for client review
- **Validation Workshop Materials** and summary of feedback
- **Final Report and Action Plan** (including recommendations and implementation roadmap)

## Project Timeline Overview

Month	Phase	Key Deliverables
<b>February</b>	Phase 1: Research Design	Research Design Framework, Data Collection Matrix, Engagement Toolkit
<b>March</b>	Phase 2: Data Collection	Desk Research Summary, Data Inventory,
<b>April-May</b>	Phase 3: Community Engagement	Engagement Summary, Thematic Analysis, Findings Summary
<b>June</b>	Phase 4: Analysis & Reporting	Draft Report, Validation Workshop, Final Report & Action Plan



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee  
**From:** Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services  
**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Community Hall Engagement Update**

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

Receive.

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### **BACKGROUND**

Action items following the fall 2025 Community Hall meeting are underway.

The first edition of the RDBN's e-Newsletter curated for Non-profit Societies, Non-profit Navigator, was distributed in early February 2026. The inaugural edition focused on the topic of Directors and Officers insurance.

Sign-up for the e-Newsletter is available on the RDBN website at

<https://www.rdbn.bc.ca/departments/economic-development/assistance-for-non-profit-societies/non-profit-navigator-quarterly-newsletter>

Thirteen halls in the region are participating in the Hall Appraisal project. Appraisers are expected to be in the region from February 16 –20 conducting appraisals.

Additionally, volunteer recruitment and retention was a common topic that will be explored further and discussed in upcoming editions of the e-Newsletter.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Non-Proft Navigator Issue 1 – Winter 2026

### **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](mailto: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!



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee  
**From:** Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services  
**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Healthcare Recruitment and Retention Efforts**

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

Receive.

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### BACKGROUND

In recent years, municipalities in the Northern Health service area have introduced in-house initiatives to increase the success of attraction and retention of medical professionals to communities.

In two cases within the RDBN, Burns Lake and Fort St. James, along with the Electoral Areas that rely on the community's medical services, have contributed funding towards these efforts. In both communities, a committee has been established to support the work of a contract position dedicated to the recruitment and retention of medical professionals. In Burns Lake the project is mid-way through its first 2-year term, and in Fort St. James the project is newly underway.

Northern Health advertises incentives for positions in the service area at <https://careers.northernhealth.ca/living-working-here/financial-supports/incentives>

At this time, the [District of Kitimat](#) is the only local government incentive advertised on the website. Other member municipalities are exploring incentive packages, either advertised through Northern Health or independently.

Other options for local government support are outlined in the [Community Healthcare System Support Playbook](#) produced by the Saunders Family Foundation and the MC Ministry of Health.

In some communities in BC, residents have picked up engagement efforts independently, as in Tod and Jocelyn Maffin's replicable [Canada's Healthcare Infusion](#) endeavors.

In recent news, the conversation about recruitment and retention has also been included at a neighboring Hospital District table. The link to the related newspaper article: <https://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/local-news/hospital-district-board-approves-27k-for-doctor-recruitment-11784312>.

**ATTACHMENTS:** None.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:** 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:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Passive Infrastructure Update**

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

Receive.

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### **BACKGROUND**

In October 2025 the Board sent a letter to the Minister of Citizens' Services advocating for accountability and transparency in the permitting process for passive infrastructure access that was delaying the construction of critical broadband infrastructure projects within the region.

In response, the Ministry arranged an update call with the Honourable Diana Gibson, Minister of Citizens' Services to gather more information on December 4, 2025. Additional staff follow-up calls to keep the RDBN apprised of the progress of pole access applications were scheduled, with the first call on January 14, 2026, and next one planned for February 18, 2026.

The Ministry has indicated that follow-up and tracking is occurring to ensure new permitting schedules are honoured, and that the CRTC now has timelines for responsiveness for infrastructure owners to get back to applicants.

### **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.



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee  
**From:** Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services  
**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Subject:** **Rural Directors Survey Update**

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

Receive.

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### **BACKGROUND**

In early 2025 Committee Chair Riis-Christianson and staff circulated a survey to identify priority topics for Rural Directors. Some priorities are complete or underway, and others require further exploration.

#### **Items complete or underway:**

- Opportunities for using Economic Development Service funds
- First Nations relationships
- Rural Fire Protection and legislative review
- Rural Government Service budget and Director attendance at events
- Water security
- Connectivity
- Healthcare/medical/ambulance needs of communities
- Fire Smart assistance
- Community Halls
- Parks and Trails

#### **Items for further exploration:**

- Cost of living and housing (especially for seniors)
- Collaboration with municipalities to support forestry sector
- Self-determination (what is good for one area isn't good for all areas)

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

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