



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

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**March 12, 2026**

Approve

**MINUTES**

**Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - February 12, 2026**

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Approve

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

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

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Recommendation

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

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Recommendation

**REPORTS**

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

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Recommendation

**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, February 12, 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  
Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - arrived at 2:27 p.m., left at 3:01 p.m.  
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 2:30 p.m.  
Amy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services- left at 2:30 p.m.  
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others: Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James  
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle - left at 3:10 p.m.  
Kevin Moutray, District of Vanderhoof - left at 3:06 p.m.  
Sarrah Storey, Village of Fraser Lake - left at 2:33 p.m.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 2:24 p.m.

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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## **AGENDA**

**February 12, 2026**

**2026-RSC-025**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Moon

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Agenda for February 12, 2026 be received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **MINUTES**

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

**2026-RSC-026**

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Newell

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes for January 15, 2026 be received

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Referrals**

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

**2026-RSC-027**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Newell

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

**2026-RSC-028**

Moved by Director Greenaway

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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Seconded by Director Moon

That the 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.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **REPORTS**

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

#### **2026-RSC-029**

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Newell

That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a grant of \$10,000 for Electoral Areas B (Burns Lake Rural), D (Fraser Lake Rural), F(Vanderhoof Rural) and G (Houston/Topley Rural) from Northern Capital Planning Grant (NCPG) to the Village of Burns Lake for the Village's application to the Labour Market Research Plan program facilitated by NDIT.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

#### **2026-RSC-030**

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services' Community Hall Engagement Update memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

#### **2026-RSC-031**

Moved by Director Parker

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services' Healthcare Recruitment and Retention Efforts memorandum.

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- Report is an overview of some of the initiatives underway
- Canada's Healthcare Infusion endeavor
  - Passionate community members that have started the endeavor
- Various approaches to in-house initiatives
- Burns Lake, Electoral Areas B (Burns Lake Rural) and E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural) Recruitment and Retention Committee
- Scope creep
  - Traditionally federal and provincial mandate
  - Local governments stepping into the breach
- Errol Winters, Executive Director, Northern Interior Rural Family Practice attended the Burns Lake Medical Professionals Recruitment and Retention Committee and spoke of provincial downloading
- Loss of anesthesiologist in Vanderhoof in June 2026
  - Services levels will be at risk with a reduction of anesthesiologists
- Working together and supporting a regional hub model for medical professionals
  - Regional approach
  - Forming a healthcare committee that includes all members of the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District to formulate a 5-year plan going forward
  - Hospital District mandate to fund capital projects
- District of Kitimat February 6, 2026 Report to the Kitimat Health Group regarding Kitimat Healthcare Professionals Retention & Recruitment - Health Recruitment and Retention Incentive Package
  - Challenges of communities offering additional incentives
  - Incentive amounts
  - Industrial pressures on healthcare in the community
- Northern Health incentives to medical practitioners
- Fort St. James Medical Professionals Recruitment and Retention Committee
  - Coordinator Position
    - Received applications
  - Challenges due to structure of Committee
  - Committee is investigating not for profit status
- Access to medical equipment assists in recruitment and retention of physicians and other medical professionals
- Inviting Errol Winters, Executive Director, Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice.

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**2026-RSC-032**

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Committee recommend that the Board invite Errol Winter, Executive Director, Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice to attend a future meeting to discuss recruitment and retention in healthcare.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Passive Infrastructure Update****2026-RSC-033**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services' Passive Infrastructure Update memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Rural Directors Survey Update****2026-RSC-034**

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services' Rural Directors Survey Update memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Rural Services Committee future discussion items were discussed:

- Rural culture and lifestyle
  - Pressures
  - Exploring ways to champion and guard the culture and lifestyle
  - Similar for farming and ranching
    - Increased regulation and requirements impede the ability to encourage and protect the lifestyle.

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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**NEW BUSINESS**

Agriculture Coordinator Update

- Interviews in progress.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**2026-RSC-035**

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the meeting be adjourned at 3:12 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:** Danielle Patterson, Senior Planner

**Date:** March 12, 2026

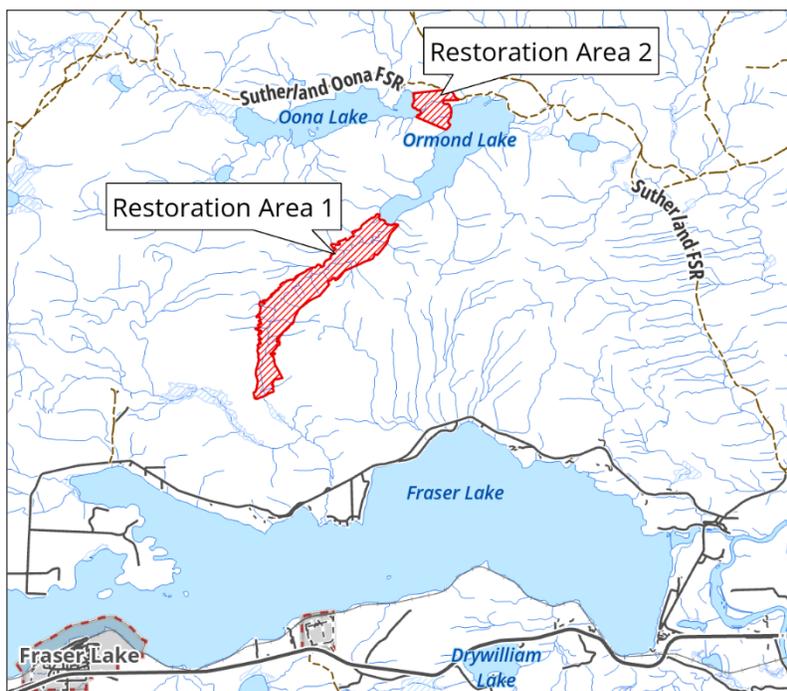
**Subject:** **Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410396 - Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)**

**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 Application Referral No. 7410396.

### BACKGROUND

Blackwater Gold Ltd. has applied to the Province for a Licence of Occupation for 10 to 30 years to conduct habitat restoration along Ormond Creek. Blackwater Gold Ltd. is required to complete fish habitat offsetting for the Blackwater Gold Mine, located approximately 100 km south of the District of Vanderhoof. To meet this offsetting requirement, they are requesting to restore habitat along Ormond Creek, covering an area 166.9 ha (412.4 ac) of Crown Land north of Fraser Lake (see Location Map below).



Restoration is focused on planting new vegetation. The project proposes two restoration areas. Restoration Area 1 extends 6 km south of Ormond Lake and covers the upper portion of Ormond Creek. Restoration Area 2 extends approximately 0.9 km and covers the part of Ormond Creek connecting Oona Lake and Ormond Lake.

The referral states these areas have been significantly impacted by the 2018 Shovel Lake wildfire and mountain pine beetle epidemic, which have resulted in the loss of riparian vegetation, and reduced channel stability. The former Ormond Creek recreation trail was located within the boundary of Restoration Area 1, and the physical state of this trail is not known.

The proposed restoration areas are outside of building inspection and are not within the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve. Approximately nine per cent of proposed Restoration Area 1 is designated Resource (RE) in the Endako, Fraser Lake and Fort Fraser Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 1865, 2019 and approximately 9 per cent is split-zoned between the Small Holdings Zone (H1) and the Rural Resource Zone (RR1). The Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw do not regulate land restoration.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Comment Sheet
- 7410396 Restoration Plan ([link](#))

**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**  
**Comment Sheet on Crown Land Referral 7410396**

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<b>Electoral Area:</b>	Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)
<b>Applicant:</b>	Blackwater Gold Ltd.
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	Undeveloped
<b>Zoning:</b>	<b>Restoration Area 1:</b> approximately 9% is zoned Small Holdings (H1) and Rural Resource (RR1)  <b>Restoration Area 2:</b> Not applicable
<b>OCP Designation:</b>	<b>Restoration Area 1:</b> approximately 9% is designated Resource (RE) in the Endako, Fraser Lake and For Fraser Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 1865, 2019  <b>Restoration Area 2:</b> None
<b>Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Agricultural Land Reserve:</b>	No
<b>Access:</b>	Sutherland Oona FSR and Sutherland FSR
<b>Building Inspection:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Fire Protection:</b>	None
<b>Other comments:</b>	

The former Ormond Creek recreation trail was located within the boundary of Restoration Area 1. The physical status of the trail is not known.



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee

**From:** Rowan Nagel, GIS/Planning Technician

**Date:** March 12, 2026

**Subject:** Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410400 - Electoral Area D  
(Fraser Lake Rural)

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

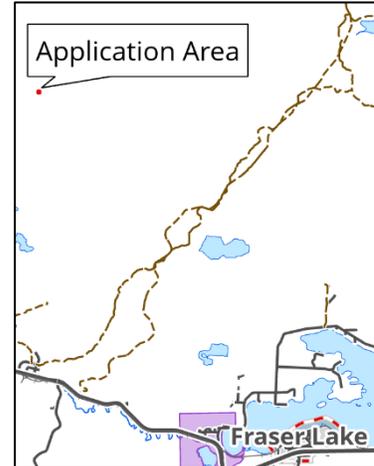
That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application No. 7410400.

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### BACKGROUND

This application is for a Notation of Interest under the Trapline Cabin policy to construct a cabin on Crown land for users of trapline #713T016. Previously, there were two cabins on this trapline, but both were burned in the 2018 Shovel Creek wildfire. Currently, there are no cabins on the trapline.

The area of interest is a 50 m by 50 m section of land on Ormond Creek, where they plan to construct a 17.8 m<sup>2</sup> (192 ft<sup>2</sup>) cabin. The site is approximately 18.5 km north-west of Fraser Lake in Electoral Area D. The location is remote, outside of building inspection and zoning services. There are no significant landmarks nearby, and there is no road access to the site.



### ATTACHMENTS:

- Comment Sheet

### 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**  
**Comment Sheet on Crown Land Referral No. 7410400**

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<b>Electoral Area:</b>	Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)
<b>Applicant:</b>	Unknown
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	Unsurveyed Crown land
<b>Zoning:</b>	Not zoned
<b>OCP Designation:</b>	Not designated
<b>Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:</b>	N/A
<b>Agricultural Land Reserve:</b>	No
<b>Access:</b>	No road access
<b>Building Inspection:</b>	No
<b>Fire Protection:</b>	No
<b>Other comments:</b>	N/A



## Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Committee

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

**Date:** March 12, 2026

**Subject:** **Rural Resident Survey Proposal**

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

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

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**BACKGROUND**

In early 2025, the Rural Services Committee Chair and staff facilitated a survey for all Rural Directors to gauge priority topics for the Committee to address. Many of those priority items have been addressed, and at the February 12, 2026, Rural Services meeting, conversation included preservation or support for the values and character of rural communities.

Staff and Chair Riis-Christianson are proposing the development of a rural resident survey to gather information about rural lifestyle priorities, while distinguishing service delivery needs from rural values and identity topics, including identifying both infrastructure and service needs as well as quality-of-life drivers.

Staff will continue to refine the survey structure with input from Rural Directors with a goal of launching the survey in the late fall of or early winter 2026 so that it can be included in strategic planning with the newly elected Board.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

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