

**Report to Western Economic Diversification Canada**

**“Northern BC  
Tourism and Development Foundation Project”**

Submitted by  
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20 December 2005

# Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project

## **Introduction:**

The 'Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project' builds upon the research experience developed within UNBC's Community Development Institute through the Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project. That earlier work identified tourism (in its various forms) to be an important but poorly understood part of northern BC's economy. The current Project made use of our extensive network of community contacts to further explore the opportunities and challenges for the tourism sector across northern BC. The purpose of the Project was to create a foundation of knowledge and connections to support new community economic development work and create opportunities to leverage future research/development funds.

The Project timeline was from April 2005 to December 2005. The research plan involved interviews and data collection with economic development and tourism industry actors across northern BC. The interviews were conducted from April to October 2005 in communities from 100 Mile House to Atlin, and from the Alberta border to the Queen Charlotte Islands. The purpose was to identify core issues supporting and challenging economic development opportunities in the tourism sector. The goal was to provide a foundation to support more detailed research on creating economic development across the region.

## **Partners:**

Core Project partners included:

- UNBC's Community Development Institute and
- faculty members of UNBC's Resource Recreation and Tourism Program.

Additional interested parties included:

- the regional tourism associations,
- local visitor information centres,
- Tourism BC, and
- the BC Parks Branch.

Contributions from Project partners included that the Community Development Institute (CDI) provided a logistical and research support home for the Project. Given that the earlier Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project was designed as a community driven process under the auspices of the CDI, this Tourism and Development Foundation Project helped renew and extend links developed with individuals, groups, and organizations involved with economic development across

northern BC. Specifically, it allowed us to build new connections within the tourism sector. We consider this to be a significant outcome that is already bearing fruit. Included here for the CDI is a deeper working relationship with the Northern Rockies - Alaska Highway Tourism Association (NRAHTA) and the project they are running with the federal Rural Secretariat/Brandon University in terms of developing enhanced regional coordination and capacity along the lines envisioned by our Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project.

Faculty members from UNBC's Resource Recreation and Tourism (RRT) Program provided advice on the Project as it developed, as well as contacts with regional tourism associations, Tourism BC, and the BC Parks Branch. In terms of immediate outcomes from our deeper connections within the tourism sector, the RRT faculty have established a number of research and development relationships. As a result of Project work, Dr. Anne Hardy was able to develop substantial new research projects in the Bella Coola area supported by a range of stakeholders. These stakeholders included the Central Coast Regional District economic development office, the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association, BC Ferries (who, in conjunction with the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association assisted with the research project costs), UNBC (who assisted with the research project costs), and the BC Real Estate Partnering Fund (who were also able to provide research project costs). Letters and materials in support of the Bella Coola study are attached as Appendix A.

Dr. Hardy was also able to develop a 'drive tourism' project, together with Prince George partners, looking at recreational vehicle travellers who overnight in shopping mall parking lots. This is a growing issue of interest across northern BC which the CDI research highlighted a number of years ago. Letters and materials in support of the drive tourism project are attached as Appendix B.

The RRT faculty has also entered into discussions with both the Cariboo Coast Chilcotin Tourism association around forward planning for community and economic development. The proposed objectives for this research are contained in Appendix C.

The Project was also able to receive considerable assistance from a number of other interested parties. Regional tourism associations, for example, provided information on local tourism operators and other key public and private sector contacts across northern BC. Tourism BC helped by providing Visitor Information Centre contacts and expanded this through interactions with their Director of Research (Richard Porges). The BC Parks Branch provided early support and information to the Project. One problem for the Project, however, was that BC Parks was not able to push through their 'permission' process fast enough to allow our field team to interview Parks employees in the various campgrounds around northern BC. This section of the Project could not, therefore, be completed.

## Notes On Deliverables From Project Activity:

The Project specified eight items under the “timeline of Project activity” section that detail the Project deliverables. Details on each of the eight items are included below.

- Consultations and interviews with Provincial Park Operators in northern British Columbia.

As noted above, the BC Parks Branch provided early support to the Project but was unable to push through their ‘permission’ process fast enough to allow our field team to interview Parks employees in the various campgrounds around northern BC. This section of the Project could not be completed. Appendix D contains the Interview Schedule which we developed for use with the BC Parks Operators.

- Consultations and interviews with Municipal Campground Operators in northern British Columbia.

Approximately 23 meetings were held with municipal campground operators (including municipal administrators responsible for this ‘civic’ facility) across northern BC. As with the earlier findings on provincial park campgrounds from the Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project, there were 1) a number of tensions identified between the different campground supply sectors and 2) much of this tension was rooted in an incomplete understanding of the various camping sub-markets. Between the provincial parks, municipal campgrounds, and private sector campground owners, there was considerable debate about their roles and competitive impacts upon one another. Each of these supplier sectors is, however, quite different from the other two. This is especially notable given that the municipal campgrounds are generally free, with a limited set of services, and close to the centres of many small towns. Assumptions underlying much of the tension are built upon the view that there is only 1 ‘camper’ market and that if the competitors were eliminated from the field, all of the business would automatically flow to the remaining supplier. As earlier work suggested, and preliminary results from Anne Hardy’s research are showing, there is a very diverse and highly segmented set of sub-markets that make up the self-drive tourism industry. These sub-markets have very different social, demographic, economic, and even philosophical characteristics. They appear to participate in the various camping supply sectors for particular reasons and with particular features/attributes in mind. It is not at all clear that eliminating one type of supplier would translate into a move by the various camper sub-markets into the remaining local supplier. In fact, evidence at this point suggests that some of these camper sub-markets would simply by-pass the local area and proceed to the next area where

they can encounter the type of supplier and amenity with which their activities and plans are suited.

These preliminary findings have suggested a number of areas in which future research is required in order to clarify opportunities and challenges. The first area, reflecting that identified above, focuses upon delineating a much clearer sense of the sub-markets within the camping population. In this case, needed work must specifically explore the sub-markets within that population which are interested in various types of camping experiences and then link this demand side data to available information on the supply side. Results from this type of research could then be applied to identifying the volume of business currently being lost by not supplying an appropriate product for particular sub-markets passing through northern BC's various communities. Additional research developing from this background could also look at specific ways of targeting individual camping sub-markets as well as ways to target investments or improvements by local suppliers that might capture more of the potential economic rent from passing camper sub-markets. Given the scale of the tourism industry in BC, and the potential local value of capturing more of the drive tourism market through various camper populations, our interviewees urged continued support of the tourism industry through research exploring these important questions.

- Consultations and interviews with Visitor Information Centres (VICs) in northern British Columbia.

The Project held meetings with approximately 12 representatives from various Visitor Information Centres across northern British Columbia. The preliminary contact list from which this visitor information centre group was selected is included in Appendix E.

Key findings from these meetings focussed upon three general topic areas. The first topic area included questions of funding support. Many of the VICs commented that funding organizations (such as the provincial government or HRSDC) do not have a timeline which allows the VICs to effectively hire top quality students or staff at the beginning of the summer. When notice of funding comes too late, available employees may already be engaged elsewhere and the early portion of the summer tourism traffic may already have passed. In addition, the uncertainty inherent with year to year funding was also seen as limiting product development and the skills/training of students/staff. Without some form of ongoing certainty, limitations on developing high quality human resources skills was seen as a limitation to providing a better tourism product that will assist in capturing more of the available tourism economy.

A second topic of concern focussed upon the relationship between services offered at VICs and those offered by local businesses. This could especially be a concern for communities where a local Chamber of Commerce manages and operates the local VIC. One community which has moved to reconcile some of the challenges embodied by these first two topics is Fort St. John. In this case, the municipality now funds and operates the VIC in order to both stabilize funding certainty to assist with human resources development, as well as to allow for an expansion of the number of services offered at the VIC as a point of attraction to having the travelling public stop and pursue local activities. More professional staff, and a better refined product for the various sub-markets of the tourism economy, were described to the Project as ways to generate a larger economic impact from tourism in the local economy and with local businesses.

A third topic of concern focussed upon the types, and standards, of services being provided through the VIC. Many operators referred to the more coordinated networking done among VICs in the Yukon-Alaska Corridor where specific efforts are made to ensure travellers stay longer and spend more with local businesses across that region. In addition, there were specific observations made about the need to expand the availability of email services in VICs. Email was seen as a key attractive feature to bringing long-distance travellers into the facility for a longer period of time so as to increase the opportunities to identify and share local tourism products of interest. Services comments also focussed upon the need to reconcile the hours of operation with the hours most appropriate to the travelling public. For example, a VIC staffed from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday to Friday (as a result of the limitations of funding) will simply miss a great deal of the economic opportunity embodied by tourism traffic.

- Consultations and interviews with key economic development stakeholders

The Project had an opportunity to meet with approximately 76 economic development stakeholders across northern BC. The scale and scope of the communities visited is outlined in the Project travel schedule, which is attached as Appendix F.

The meetings highlighted potential research needs under three general areas. The first of these concerned a better delineation of the local residents who participate in the community's/area's tourism economy. Many people commented upon how local residents are a big part of the user community at local campgrounds, how many local residents also own recreational property and participate in year-round 'cottaging' activities in the immediate area, and how many local residents also take part in events, activities, and visit facilities that are often enumerated under the tourism economy. The research literature often identifies these types of short-

distance local resident ‘tourism’ activities as ‘daily visits’. More research is needed in order to better gauge these local resident impacts on the tourism economy and ways to add their demand information to create a more sustainable economic foundation for local suppliers.

A second general area of future research needs spoke to the limitations on local economic development planning which have been created by a lack of comprehensive market intelligence on the various markets and sub-markets of the tourism industry. The complexity of the tourism market/sub-markets has been noted several times above, and the people we spoke with supported more research in order to provide the information necessary to ground local and regional economic development planning.

A third general research area concerned a more detailed and critical evaluation of future trends within the tourism economy. Many people we spoke with identified issues around the aging baby boomer population; who will not only be the largest, the healthiest, but also the best educated population cohort ever to approach retirement in North America. What will they want from their tourism and visiting experiences? How will the pending relaxation of travel regulations permitting Chinese citizens to more easily come to Canada affect levels of demands and product needs across northern BC? Clearly, research is needed not only on future tourism trends and opportunities, but also on global competitive threats and economic opportunities, as well as an evaluation of the market elasticity of tourism under a range of issues including US homeland security regulation, energy costs, and a range of other issues.

- Meeting/Conference Participation:

- Participation in BC Community Forest AGM in Creston, BC.

Don Manson from UNBC’s CDI was able to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual BC Community Forest General Meeting in Creston. The CDI also participated in the poster displays portion of the meeting by setting up both the “Community Development Institute” and the “Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project” posters. A copy of the meeting program, from the conference website, is found in Appendix G.

- Participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rural Summit in Merritt, BC.

Greg Halseth was the keynote speaker at the opening of the Merritt Rural Summit meetings. The CDI also participated in the poster displays portion of the meeting by setting up both the “Community Development Institute” and the “Northern BC Economic

Development Vision and Strategy Project” posters. A copy of the meeting report is attached from the conference website in Appendix H.

- Creation of a Future Research Partnership Report
  - Appendix I
- Creation of a Parks Campground Users Survey Report
  - Appendix J
- Posting of Project reports to the CDI website
  - posted
  - <http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/>

**Impact:**

This Project has built upon an investment by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WEDC) in a community driven process to assist in creating a northern economic development vision and strategic framework. The Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project is another step towards creating a more robust research and knowledge base that links northern BC’s tourism sector with research and support organizations like UNBC and WEDC’s Community Futures offices, and with other initiatives such as the Northern Development Initiative.

The key piece of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project is the creation of a broader understanding of tourism issues and tourism research needs in northern BC. Communications was a cornerstone of the Project. This included direct communication with industry and economic development actors through our community visits, linkages made between community groups and researchers with expertise in topics of local and regional interest, and the production of Project reports made available through UNBC’s Community Development Institute website and electronic newsletter. These broader connections will link this information with participants in the Northern Development Initiative and other community and economic development organizations with an interest in northern BC.

As noted through this report, there is no end of interest with information and research issues to support the tourism economy of northern BC. As many communities are working towards a more diversified economic foundation, they are looking for ways to include tourism opportunities. At the same time, however, these same communities and economic development practitioners are aware that the tourism industry is subject to the same types of booms and busts, opportunities and challenges, and trends as found in the other economic sectors of northern BC. Therefore, they are looking for better intelligence



in order to inform local debates about how to best capitalize upon a tourism economy that fits with local assets and aspirations.

The demand for more information and better intelligence grounds a tremendous number of potential research opportunities and collaborations. There is a role throughout this information development process for universities, public agencies, and private sector industry operators to participate, share, lead, partner, and contribute. In terms of Western Economic Diversification Canada, the local knowledge base and linkages captured by individual Community Futures offices provides an excellent foundation for taking international and general tourism trend information and supporting local research exploring opportunities for developing improved products based on that information. Most of BC's universities and colleges also have research units with a direct interest in community tourism development and these can be brought to bear on the tremendous range of research needs. The Community Development Institute at UNBC is certainly one of these research support organizations that can play a role in future research.

**Appendix A**  
**Dr. Anne Hardy**  
**Bella Coola Tourism Study**

This research proposal was the result of a new collaborative relationship between Bella Coola Valley Tourism (BCVT), BC Ferries, the BC Real Estate Partnering Fund and UNBC. Financial contributions to the project were made by BC Ferries, the BC Real Estate Partnering Fund and UNBC. The research sought to achieve two major objectives:

- 1) This research sought to gain an understanding of the drive tourism market in Bella Coola and particularly visitors' characteristics, length of stay and behavior whilst in the valley. This was done by developing and implementing a quantitative self completed survey instrument.
- 2) The second objective was to trial a qualitative research tool which sought to explore the psychographic profiles of the RV market. This research tool consisted of 40 in-depth, open ended interviews and five focus groups. The qualitative research elicited in-depth insights into drive travelers motivations, decision making process (including destination choices) and their interaction with other drive travelers.

The results of this research are now being analyzed and report will be delivered to the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association, BC Ferries and the BC Real Estate Partnering Fund in January.

# Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association, CCRD, and UNBC partner for new tourism study

By Caitlin Thompson

This summer, University of Northern British Columbia professor Anne Hardy and Masters' student Jovan Simic have partnered with the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association and the Central Coast Regional District to conduct a unique study on "drive tourism" in the Bella Coola Valley.

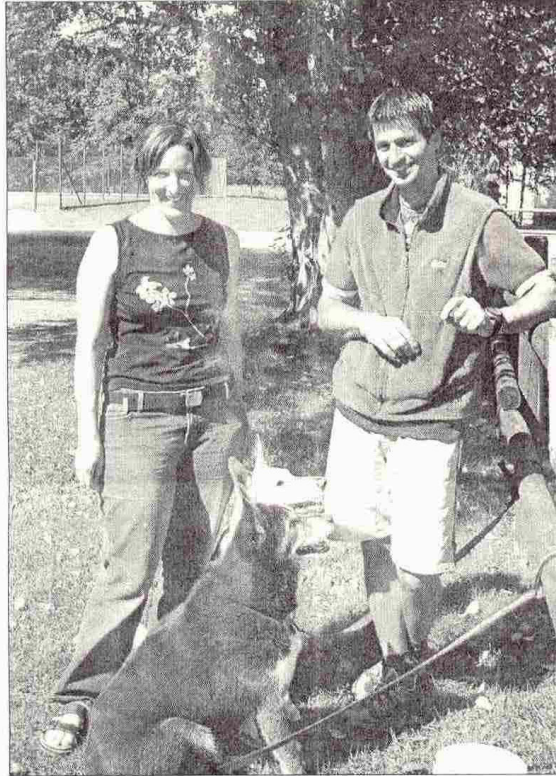
Professor Hardy, a former faculty member of the University of Tasmania, moved to Prince George last year to take a faculty position in the Resource Recreation and Tourism Program at UNBC. She received her PhD from the University of Queensland, and has conducted similar studies in her native Australia.

The study has two main objectives. The first is to gain an understanding of the drive tourism market in the Bella Coola Valley and particularly visitors' characteristics, length of stay, and behaviour. The second objective will seek to explore the "psychographic profiles" of the drive tourism market.

"Drive Tourism" is a relatively new buzzword these days, and as professor Hardy explains, "There has been an explosion of drive tourism in the west in past few years, and we are interested in understanding the psychographic profiles of these travelers in order to recognize their needs, attributes, and motivations for their travel."

A "psychographic profile" aims to understand the desires, demographics, and motivation behind a persons' decision to take a trip on the road, and how they spend their time when they're not behind the wheel. Professor Hardy divides them into three main categories: the drivers who stay at B&B's or hotels along the way, the drivers who camp out in tents, and those who own or rent an RV, camper, or fifth wheel for the trip.

The study plans to examine all three of these groups in order to determine if these visitors have dif-



UNBC Resource Recreation and Tourism Program professor Anne Hardy with graduate student Jovan Simic and their two faithful companions.

ferent objectives for their trip. "What do they want to do while they're in Bella Coola? Where do they come from? What are the motivations for their trip?" Professor Hardy asks,

"This is what we're interested in discovering."

The partnership came about mainly due to mutual needs and good timing. Professor Hardy was giving a

speech at the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourist Association's Annual General Meeting in April 2005 when she met David Anderson, Economic Development Officer for the CCRD. Anderson asked Hardy to peer review a document on tourism in Bella Coola, and Hardy mentioned that she was looking to do a case study on drive tourism.

After meeting with the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Association, a study was co-designed to meet the needs of both Hardy's research objectives and the BCVTA's.

Professor Hardy and Simic have spent considerable time conducting in-depth interviews at a number of sites, including the Atnarko campground, the Gnomes Home Campsite, and the Rip Rap Campsite.

In the next few days, the pair will conduct more interviews at various locations, while Simic will be taking the tour on BC Ferries to conduct some additional interviews next week.

David Anderson, Economic Development Officer for the CCRD, explains, "This is a great opportunity for Bella Coola. We are very fortunate to have access to this type of highly qualitative, rich data."

The study is going to be well-utilized in Bella Coola, and puts the Valley in an exceptional position in regards to tourism marketing and strategic development.

The data is due in December, and the majority of the work will take place from January to March in 2006.

The CCRD and the BCVTA are currently incorporating the data into a three year plan which will be used to develop a very strategic marketing strategy and development plan that will be tailored to meet Bella Coola's needs.

As Anderson reiterates, "This is the first study of its kind done in Canada, so it puts Bella Coola in a really great position for the next three years."



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**Appendix B**  
**Dr. Anne Hardy**  
**Drive Tourism Project in Prince George**

**Understanding Boondocking in Prince George: A Preliminary Study.”**

The objective of this research was to trial a qualitative research tool which would explore the motivational, behavioral and psychographic profiles of the recreational vehicle users (RVers) who free camp at Wal-Mart in Prince George. These types of RV users are commonly referred to as “Boondockers” within the RV industry and the activity has recently been banned in Prince George.

The project was an extension of research that was conducted in Bella Coola. It was also combined with a class project for RRT 410 Research and Analysis, where students assessed stakeholders’ perceptions (decision makers, residents and RV park owners) of boondocking in Prince George.

The project was funded by Anne Hardy, but was designed following discussions with Tourism Prince George. A final report, consisting of both the results of the RRT 410 class project and the interviews of boondockers, will be delivered to Tourism Prince George in March 2005.

## Boondocking from the Perspective of Prince George Stakeholders



RRT 410  
Research and Analysis in  
Recreation and Tourism  
December 12, 2005

Project Members:  
Diana Kutzner  
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Ritsuko Shishido

Course Coordinator: Dr. Anne Hardy

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## Executive Summary

The research project presented in this report was performed by a group of students as part of their course work in a course titled "Research and Analysis in Recreation and Tourism" (RRT 410) at the University of Northern British Columbia. The project is geographically focused on the city of Prince George, located in British Columbia, Canada. The purpose of the research is to determine the perspectives of the different perceptions of residents, RV park operators, and decision makers of the City of Prince George in regards to the issue of 'free' overnight camping (also called 'boondocking') in the Wal-Mart parking lot. The issue of free camping in commercial parking lots has been the subject of heated discussions among Prince George stakeholders because the City has a bylaw which prohibits overnight camping in the city in areas that are not designated.

The research to learn about stakeholders' perceptions was technically guided by survey questionnaires designed by the students in assistance of the course coordinator. The approach to the survey design was based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. The research paradigm incorporated in this study was the interpretive social sciences paradigm. As a result of the project being subject to course timelines, the process of data collection was limited to a survey period of up to three weeks. In addition, it must be noted that the survey was performed during the off-season of the RV tourism in Prince George.

Despite limitations, the students were able to survey a substantial percentage of Prince George stakeholders. Overall, 72 residents, 7 RV park operators and 7 decision makers were surveyed. Upon the completion of the data collection, the responses were coded and then analyzed for common themes.

The results of the research project indicated that there is a wide variety of perceptions among residents, decision makers and RV park operators on the issue of boondocking. In addition, the study outcomes reflect that there is a great need for further research into the issue of boondocking and into boondockers as a market. The findings presented in this report may be used as a starting point for such further research in the City of Prince George.

## **Appendix C**

### **Dr Anne Hardy and Dr Patrick Maher, RRT Program at UNBC Submission for research to the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association**

This project is at the proposal stages and was developed following a request from the CCCTA for collaborative research to be conducted which would benefit both UNBC and the CCTA. Please note: this project is at the proposal stage only. It is hoped that this collaboration can be extended to the Northern BC Tourism Association.

This research proposal is based upon the assumption that the CCCTA may provide the majority of funds for the project and that UNBC faculty, in close consultation with the CCCTA, will design and manage a number of research projects within the region. It is also based upon the assumption that this proposal will result in a five year project of research and collaboration between the CCCTA and UNBC.

The proposed research will seek to achieve objectives based upon discussions with the CEO of the CCCTA, Mark Nichiporuk:

- 1) The first objective will be to gain an understanding of visitors' experiences whilst at Barkerville. This will include visitors' demographic characteristics, behavior and experiences whilst at Barkerville. This will be done by developing and implementing both qualitative and quantitative self completed research instruments.
- 2) The second objective will be to appraise current and future use of the Gold Rush Trail. This will include gaining an understanding of the use of the Gold Rush Trail, visitor experiences and the current presentation of the product.
- 3) The third objective will seek to gain an understanding of the touring/rubber tire market in the CCC region and particularly visitors' characteristics, including length of stay, behavior and experiences whilst in the valley. This will be done by developing and implementing both qualitative and quantitative self completed research instruments.
- 4) The fourth objective will be to gain an understanding of the adventure market in the CCC region and particularly visitors' characteristics, including length of stay, behavior and experiences whilst in the valley. This will be done by developing and implementing both qualitative and quantitative self completed research instruments.
- 5) The final objective will be to gain an understanding of the fishing market in the CCC region and particularly visitors' characteristics, including length of stay, behavior and experiences whilst in the valley. This will be done by developing and implementing both qualitative and quantitative self completed research instruments.



CARIBOO CHILCOTIN COAST  
T O U R I S M   A S S O C I A T I O N

April 7, 2005

Anne Hardy PhD  
Assistant Professor  
Resource Recreation & Tourism Program  
University of Northern BC  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

Re: Research Letter of Support

Dear Anne

Please accept this letter of support from the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association for your research project this summer.

The Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association is more than happy to support you and your group to undertake this tourism research project. We are willing to provide you with in-kind support, as per your request, in the form of identifying key tourism operators you should be contacting and helping you establish credible relationships with those operators. You can expect full cooperation from our organization.

We also strongly urge Western Economic Diversification Canada to support this initiative, as tourism research of this kind is extremely vital to growing tourism in the central and northern parts of British Columbia. With a challenge by the Premier to double tourism generated revenue in the province in the next ten years we require up-to-date regional tourism research information if we want to achieve those goals. At this point in time we are very short on good research information for the area.

If there is anything else that we can do to help please do not hesitate to ask, as we feel research is very important to the tourism industry in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region. We are willing to provide as much support as you require.

Sincerely,

Mark Nichiporuk  
Executive Director

*"A land without limits"*

Phone:(250)392-2226 Fax:(250)392-2838 www.landwithoutlimits.com  
118A North First Avenue, Williams Lake, B. C. V2G 1Y8

# NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

SUPER, NATURAL



BRITISH COLUMBIA™

Anne Hardy Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Resource Recreation & Tourism Program  
University of Northern BC  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, BC  
V2N 4Z9

April 14, 2005

Re: Research Letter of Support

Dear Anne

The Northern British Columbia Tourism Association is pleased to support the University of Northern British Columbia and the Community Development Institute's research project in the summer of 2005.

Our Association will provide the in-kind support requested and identify the Tourism Associations, Visitor Information Centres and Tourism Operators that should be contacted in the research process.

We urge the Western Canada Development Agency to support this initiative. We believe the results of the research will be very useful to help achieve tourism growth in Northern BC. This is especially important as The Premier has set the challenge to double tourism generated revenue in the next ten years. The research will help to provide up to date information needed to achieve these goals.

The Northern British Columbia Tourism Association also supports this project because we recognize the lack of good research for our region. There is a need for regional research results. Our Association will provide further in-kind support as required to complete the project.

Sincerely,

Per: Dawn-lisa Sethen  
Chief Executive Officer

## NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA TOURISM ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 2373, #303-1268 5th Avenue, Prince George, British Columbia CANADA V2N 2S6 • Tel: 250-561-0432 • Fax: 250-561-0450  
[info@nbctourism.com](mailto:info@nbctourism.com) • [www.NorthernBCtravel.com](http://www.NorthernBCtravel.com)

**Appendix D**  
**Interview Schedule**  
**BC Parks Operators**

## Park Operator In-depth Interview Schedule

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Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview for the Tourism Foundation and Development Project. To help us prepare our report, we would like some advice from you about the topics addressed below.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Park: \_\_\_\_\_

-----

1) Are visitors to your park looking for information about the park?

Yes

No

2) What kind of information are visitors looking for (e.g. information about what to do in the park, trails, information about park management)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) Are visitors to your park looking for information about other travel information or resources?

Yes

No

4) If yes, what kind of information are they looking for (e.g. information about natural/cultural resources, travel/tourism information for other parts of their trip)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Are you usually able to provide them with the information that they need?

Yes

No

6) If no to question 5, where do you send them for other information?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7) In your experience, are there differences between what travelers of different age groups are looking to experience?

- Yes
- No

8) If you feel they are different, how do they differ?

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9) Are there differences between what travelers of different family units are looking to experience?

- Yes
- No

10) If you feel they are different, how do they differ?

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11) Are there differences between what overseas, American, Canadian and local travelers are looking to experience?

- Yes
- No

12) If you feel they are different, how do they differ?

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13) Are there differences between what RV and car travelers are looking to experience?

- Yes
- No

14) If you feel they are different, how do they differ?

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15) Are there any points which we have not touched upon but which you feel are important?

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16) Would you like to be contacted with further information on this Project?

- Yes
- No

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you again for agreeing to help.**



**Appendix E**  
**Preliminary Contact List**  
**Northern BC Visitor Information Centre Contacts**

## Northern BC Visitor Information Centre Contacts

<b>Location</b>	<b>Manager &amp; Location</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Burns Lake	Kate Drake 540 Yellowhead Hwy 16	Burns Lake	(250) 692-3773
Chetwynd	Leah Nixon 5217 North Access Rd	Chetwynd	(250) 788-1943
Dawson Creek	Debbie Chaffee 900 Alaska Ave	Dawson Creek	(250) 782-9595
Fort Nelson	Heather Sellers 5500 - 50 Ave N	Fort Nelson	(250) 774-6400
Fort St. James	Carol Magnus 115 Douglas Ave	Fort St. James	(250) 996-7023
Fort St. John	Deanna Hill 9523 - 100 St.	Fort St. John	(250) 785-3033
Granisle	Edie Hargrove Hagan St	Granisle	(250) 697-2428
Houston	Brandy Westerhout 3289 Hwy 16	Houston	(250) 845-7640
Hudson's Hope	Michelle Beam 9555 Beattie Dr	Hudson's Hope	(250) 783-9154
Kitimat	Lilliana Santos 2109 Forest Ave	Kitimat	(250) 632-6294
McBride	Sue Demaine 1000 - 1st Ave, CN Station	McBride	(250) 569-3366
New Hazelton	Diane Ford Junction of Hwys 16 and 62, 4070-9th Ave	New Hazelton	(250) 842-6071
Prince George	Deborah Kulchiski 1300 - 1st Ave	Prince George	(250) 562-3700
Prince Rupert	Lonnie Belsey Suite 100, 215 Cow Bay Road	Prince Rupert	(250) 624-5637
Queen Charlotte	Carolyn Hesseltine 3220 Wharf Street	Queen Charlotte City	(250) 559-8316

Sandspit	Carol Wagner Sandspit Airport	Sandspit	(250) 637-5362
Smithers	Brian Burrill 1411 Court St	Smithers	(250) 847-5072
Stewart	Gwen McKay 222 5th Ave	Stewart	(250) 636-9224
Taylor	Natalie Poole-Moffatt 10316-100th St.	Taylor	(250) 789-9015
Terrace	Debbie Simons 4511 Keith Ave	Terrace	(250) 635-2063
Vanderhoof	Anita Bailey 2353 Burrard Ave	Vanderhoof	(250) 567-2124

**Appendix F**  
**Project Travel Schedule**  
**Spring-Summer-Fall 2005**

**Project Travel Schedule  
Spring-Summer-Fall 2005**

NWTT Special Assembly April 07 & 08  
**Don Manson & Greg Halseth attended**

Creston, April 20 – April 25,  
**Don Manson attended**

May 31 – June 18, Cariboo

Tuesday, May 31 -> **Travel to Quesnel , Ten Mile Lake Provincial Park**

Wednesday, June 01 -> **Wells, Barkerville Provincial Park, Lowhee campground**

Thursday, June 02 -> **Quesnel, Williams Lake, Lac La Hache Provincial Park**

Friday, June 03 -> **Williams Lake , Cedar Point Provincial Park**

Saturday, June 04 -> **Likely, Cedar Point Provincial Park**

Sunday, June 05 -> **Likely, Cedar Point Provincial Park**

Monday, June 06 -> **Horsefly**

Tuesday, June 07 -> **100 Mile House**

Wednesday, June 08 -> **100 Mile House, Return to Prince George**

June 12 - June 15, Clearwater

Sunday, June 12 -> **Travel to Clearwater, North Thompson River Provincial Park**

Monday, June 13 -> **Clearwater area, North Thompson River Provincial Park**

Tuesday, June 14 -> **Clearwater area, North Thompson River Provincial Park**

Wednesday, June 15 -> **Clearwater area, North Thompson River Provincial Park**

SPARC Conference June 16 – June 18

Thursday, June 16 -> **Travel to Vancouver**

Friday, June 17 -> **SPARC Conference, Don Manson attended**

Saturday, June 18 -> **SPARC Conference**

Sunday, June 19 -> **Travel to Prince George**

Rural Summit, Merritt, June 16 – June 18

**Greg Halseth attended**

June 26 – June 30, Houston/Smithers

Sunday, June 26 -> **Travel to Houston, Tyhee Lake Provincial Park**

Monday, June 27 -> **Houston and Telkwa, Tyhee Lake Provincial Park**

June 28 – June 30, Planning Conference, Smithers

Tuesday, June 28 -> **Tourism/Amenity Conference, Smithers, Tyhee Lake Prov Park**

Wednesday, June 29 -> **Tourism/Amenity Conference, Smithers, Tyhee Lake Prov Pk**

Thursday, June 30 -> **Tourism/Amenity Conference, Travel to Prince George**

July 06 – July 14, Bella Coola and Chilcotin: with Sean Markey, SFU

Wednesday, July 06 -> **Travel to Vancouver**  
Thursday, July 07 -> **Vancouver**  
Friday, July 08 -> **Vancouver**  
Saturday, July 09 -> **Travel to Port Hardy, *Discovery Coast Ferry***  
Sunday, July 10 -> **Klemtu, *Discovery Coast Ferry***  
Monday, July 11 -> **Bella Coola, *Arnarko campground, Tweedsmuir Provincial Park***  
Tuesday, July 12 -> **Bella Coola, *Arnarko campground, Tweedsmuir Provincial Park***  
Wednesday, July 13 -> **Anahim Lake, Tatlayoko Lake, *Tatlayoko Lake Forest Camp***  
Thursday, July 14 -> **Alexis Creek Travel to Prince George**

July 18 – July 22, Peace River: with Jessica Rayner, UNBC

Monday, July 18 -> **Chetwynd, Moberly Lake, *Moberly Lake Provincial Park***  
Tuesday, July 19 -> **Moberly Lake, Hudson's Hope, Ft. St. John, *Beaton Prov Park***  
Wednesday, July 20 -> **Ft. St. John, Dawson Creek, *Kiskatiaw Provincial Park***  
Thursday, July 21 -> **Dawson Creek, *Swan Lake Provincial Park***  
Friday, July 22 -> **Chetwynd, Travel to Prince George**

August 01 – August 05, 16 West

Monday, August 01 -> **Travel to Ft. St. James, *Paarens Beach Provincial Park***  
Tuesday, August 02 -> **Ft. St. James, *Vanderhoof***  
Wednesday, August 03 -> **Burns Lake**  
Thursday, August 04 -> **Burns Lake, *Southside***  
Friday, August 05 -> **Southside, Return to Prince George**

August 15 – August 28, 16 West/Queen Charlottes

Monday, August 15 -> **Travel to Hazeltons, *Seeley Lake Provincial Park***  
Tuesday, August 16 -> **Hazeltons, *Lakelse Lake Provincial Park***  
Wednesday, August 17 -> **Kitimat, *Lakelse Lake Provincial Park***  
Thursday, August 18 -> **Terrace**  
Friday, August 19 -> **Prince Rupert and Area**  
Saturday, August 20 -> **Ferry to Queen Charlottes *Naikoon Prov Park, Misty Meadows***  
Sunday, August 21 -> **Tlell, *Naikoon Provincial Park, Misty Meadows***  
Monday, August 22 -> **Sandspit, Port Clements, *Naikoon Prov Park, Misty Meadows***  
Tuesday, August 23 -> **Port Clements, *Naikoon Provincial Park, Misty Meadows***  
Wednesday, August 24 -> **Masset, *Naikoon Provincial Park, Misty Meadows***  
Thursday, August 25 -> **Old Massett, *Naikoon Provincial Park, Misty Meadows***  
Friday, August 26 -> **Queen Charlotte City (*Prince Rupert Ferry, Leave 11:00 pm*)**  
Saturday, August 27 -> **Arrive Prince Rupert 7:30 am, Travel to Prince George**

September 11– September 21, Northern Loop

Sunday, September 11 -> **Travel to Meziadin Lake, *Meziadin Lake Provincial Park***  
Monday, September 12 -> **Stewart, *Kinaskan Lake Provincial Park***  
Tuesday, September 13 -> **Iskut and Dease Lake, *Squanga Lake Territorial Park***  
Wednesday, September 14 -> **Travel to Whitehorse**  
Thursday, September 15 -> **Atlin, *Atlin Municipal Campground***  
Friday, September 16 -> **Whitehorse, *Lake Lebarge***

Saturday, September 17 -> **Whitehorse, *Lake Lebarge***  
Sunday, September 18 -> **Watson Lake, *Watson Lake Campground Territorial Park***  
Monday, September 19 -> **Watson Lake, Travel to Fort Nelson**  
Tuesday, September 20 -> **Fort Nelson, *Buckinghorse River Provincial Park***  
Wednesday, September 21 -> **Ft. St. John, Dawson Creek, Travel to Prince George**

October 5 - 6, Richard Porges, Tourism BC

**Wednesday, October 05 -> Prince George**  
**Thursday, October 06 -> Williams Lake**  
**Friday, October 07 -> Return to Prince George**

**Appendix G**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual BC Community Forest General Meeting in Creston, BC.**





British Columbia  
Community Forest  
Association

[www.bccfa.ca](http://www.bccfa.ca)

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**BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMUNITY FOREST ASSOCIATION  
2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM**

**Community Forestry: Building the Road to Viability**

**April 22-24, 2005**

Creston and District Recreation Complex  
312 19th Ave. North, Creston, BC

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**THE BCCFA WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS  
FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THIS EVENT**

*Western Economic Diversification  
Town of Creston  
Creston and District Chamber of Commerce  
Creston Community Forest Corporation  
Columbia Brewery*

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**CONFERENCE AGENDA**

***Thursday April 21***

1:00 - 5:00 Pre-Conference Field Tour of Harrop-Procter Community Forest

***Friday April 22***

9:00 - 12:00 Tour of Creston Value-Added Facilities

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30 - 4:30 Tour of Creston Community Forest

5:00 - 6:00 Tour of Columbia Brewery

6:00 - 9:30 Conference Registration

No-host bar and hors d'oeuvres buffet

Products and Information Display

7:30 - 9:00 Welcome to BCCFA 2nd Annual Conference

Show & Tell - Presentations by 3 Community Forests

***Saturday April 23***

7:30 - 8:30 Continental Breakfast

8:30 - 9:00 Welcome and Introductions

9:00 - 10:00 Update on the Expansion of the Community Forest (CFA) Program

10:00 - 10:30 Break

10:30 - 12:30 The Road to Viability: Navigating the Bumps and Pot Holes

Panel presentations:

- Current Stumpage System and the Impact on CFAs
- CFA Innovation and Market Development
- CFAs and Forest Health

- Securing Long Term Tenure - Evaluation of CFAs
- 12:30 - 1:30 Lunch - provided
- 1:30 - 5:30 Concurrent Workshops (Workshops 1-3 will be held 3 times)
1. Exploring Alternatives to Stumpage
  2. Expanding CFA Marketing Opportunities
  3. CFAs and Forest Health
  4. Writing a CFA proposal (specifically for communities who have received invitations to apply for a CFA)
  5. Securing Long Term Tenure - Evaluation of CFAs
- 6:30 - 9:30 Banquet with guest speakers - No host bar
- A Look at BC Community Forestry from the Global Perspective
  - Spokesperson from each of the Liberal, NDP and Green parties to speak on their provincial platform for community forests.

### ***Sunday April 24***

- 7:00 - 8:00 Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 - 9:00 Moving Forward: Summary of Key Issues and Actions Identified in Saturday Workshops,
- 9:30 - 12:30 BCCFA AGM
- 12:30 Lunch and depart (Lunches to go provided)

**Appendix H**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rural Communities Summit in Merritt, BC.**

# Rural Communities Summit

BC's Strength: Rural People

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Agenda](#) | [Summit History](#) | [Sponsors](#) | [Registration](#) | [Contact](#)

## Report on the Rural Communities Summit in Merritt

The 3rd Annual Rural Communities Summit took place in Merritt June 16-18, 2005. Our final tally was 78 registrants and 30 speakers (plus about 9 spouses). Although overall numbers were lower than hoped for, we did have very good representation from across the province. The following communities sent representation:

Armstrong	Keremeos	Sparwood
Barriere	Lillooet Logan Lake	Tumbler Ridge
Cache Creek	Lytton	Valemount
Chase	Mackenzie	Regional Districts
Clinton	Merritt	Non Government Agencies
Creston	Nelson	Upper Nicola Band
Elkford	Princeton	Lower Nicola Band
Fernie	Rosland	Provincial ministries
Houston	Sicamous	Western Economic Diversification
Invermere	Spallumcheen	Federal government
Kaslo		

Small communities have very limited budgets for sending delegates to conferences so it was gratifying to see so many communities represented. Somewhat disappointing was provincial government representation being limited to one MLA from Bulkley-Stikine. Unfortunately the Provincial swearing in ceremonies coincided with the conference and so the Premier and others sent regrets. We did, however, have good representation from the Federal government with the Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Communities (who came all the way from PEI), WED reps and a member from Industry Canada (northern region). Mr. Easter gave a very inspirational address regarding the importance of rural communities and our need to band together to make our voice heard. An interesting note from Mr. Easter was that Ottawa defines "rural" as any population under 250,000!

We were very fortunate with sponsorships to help cover the costs of the conference. Our sincere thanks to WED, Terasen, BC Hydro, BC Transmission Corp, TNRD, MFA, Princeton, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women Services and the Canadian Rural Partnership. Local sponsors provided some door prizes and smaller amounts. Epcor and Nestle provided copious amounts of bottled water, and Hester Creek Estate Winery sponsored a wine tasting on our opening reception.

Maureen LeBourdais facilitated the sessions on the future of the Rural Communities Summit. She offers the following report:

"I could not help but be impressed by the strong sense of ownership participants have for the BC Rural Summits. Whether listening to the lively discussions talking place in the workshops, or talking one-on-one with individual Summit participants, I repeatedly heard two perspectives that provides us with direction for the future of the BC Rural Summit:

- There is strength in bringing forward a collective rural voice: Participants greatly value the BC Rural Summit for providing an opportunity to meet and dialogue face to face with others from communities like our own - with people who "get it" when it comes to issues of concern to rural citizens.
- There is strength in bringing forward a continuous rural voice: There is recognition that we need to effectively continue the dialogue between Summits.

Keynote speaker Greg Halseth's "Top 10 Tips for Rural BC" resonated with participants, and his first tip - "scale up" - speaks to a desire by participants to expand the BC Rural Summit and bring a wider rural audience to the discussions. The advent of the BC Rural Network is timely, and will take direction through 5 regional forums held around rural BC over the next few months on how communication between Summits can best help us in the work we do, back in our communities. Partnering with Canadian Rural Partnerships, the BC Rural Team, and the BC Rural Network, on the 4th BC Rural Summit, to be held in Osoyoos in 2006, will combine the audiences of each of these organizations and expand the scope of the our "collective voice" at the next Summit.

In the closing plenary, Janice Lacko with the Rural Artisans Community - Kingfisher, brought forward three key guiding principles that were endorsed unanimously by attendees. These value statements will be carried forward as organizing principles for the 4th Annual BC Rural Summit in 2006.

We meet because of the values we have in common:

- We value sustainable rural communities that our children and grandchildren could chose to live in,
- We value healthy dialogue with policy makers; we want to strengthen the link between healthy dialogue and healthy communities,
- We take responsibility for doing our part to ensure rural economic development, based on community interests."

The Merritt organizing committee thanks all who participated and we hope that you had a good and productive time. We trust that your visit gave you a small taste of the many things that Merritt and the Nicola Valley has to offer and that you will return for some fun time.

The Rural Communities Summit is gathering strength and the next one in Osoyoos will be a strong amalgamation of groups supporting rural communities. Keep your eye on this website for upcoming details, and don't forget to spread the word.

Osoyoos is pleased to host the Summit in 2006!

**Appendix I**  
**Future Research Partnership Report**

## **Future Research Partnership Report Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project**

### **Introduction**

A key element of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project was to create a foundation of information and linkages to support future economic development research. This report highlights some of the linkages and opportunities that have been created through the Project which have the potential for supporting future economic development research collaborations. The timeliness of this research Project, combined with the Community Development Institute's track record of community engagement across northern BC, help to accelerate the formation of these forms of linkages. As a result, some of the future research possibilities identified below are already actively being pursued.

### **Potential Partners**

Through the Project, we were able to identify a range of organizations interested in tourism research. The list below is by no means exhaustive but was developed to highlight the breadth of places from which partners may bring expertise or resources to future tourism research.

#### *Universities:*

##### Simon Fraser University

- Centre for Tourism Policy and Research
- Cooperative Resource Management Institute
- Centre for Coastal Studies
- Centre for Sustainable Community Development
- Department of Resource and Environmental Management
- Department of Geography

##### University of British Columbia:

- Sustainable Development Research Institute
- Centre for Human Settlements
- Faculty of Forestry
- School of Community and Regional Planning
- Department of Geography
- Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability

##### University of Northern British Columbia:

- Community Development Institute
- Institute of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies

- Resource Recreation and Tourism Program
- Geography Program
- School of Planning
- Environmental Studies Program

University of Victoria

- B.C. Institute for Cooperative Studies
- Department of Environmental Studies
- Department of Geography

*BC Provincial Government:*

- Tourism BC
- BC Parks Branch
- Ministry of Economic Development
- Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
- Ministry of Community Services, especially the Community Transition Branch
- Ministry of Economic Development
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Forests and Range
- Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and the Arts
- Ministry of Small Business and Revenue

*Federal Government:*

- Western Economic Diversification
  - Community Futures Network
- Rural Secretariat
  - BC Rural Team
- Indian and Northern Affairs
- Canadian Forest Service

*Others:*

- regional tourism associations
- BC Progress Board
- individual Chambers of Commerce
- BC Chambers of Commerce Association
- individual Visitor Information Centres
- Union of British Columbia Municipalities
- individual municipalities and regional districts
- Northern Development Initiative
- the various provincial trusts now in place
- Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition
- Omineca Beetle Action Coalition

## **Emerging Partnerships From Project:**

As noted above, the timeliness of the Project helped to accelerate the formation of research linkages. This section outlines some of the research opportunities now being actively pursued.

- The Community Development Institute at UNBC is in the midst of developing a deeper working relationship with the Northern Rockies - Alaska Highway Tourism Association (NRAHTA) and the project they are running with Brandon University. The focus of the project is to develop enhanced regional coordination and capacity. The CDI's interest with NRAHTA is several years old and builds upon relationships created through the Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project. Brandon University's support is coming from the federal Rural Secretariat and is being mobilized through their Rural Development Institute. The NRAHTA project represents one of several pilots underway across western Canada to support and develop collaborative rural and regional development approaches.
- Dr. Anne Hardy from UNBC's Resource Recreation and Tourism (RRT) Program is developing substantial new research projects in the Bella Coola area supported by a range of stakeholders. These stakeholders included the Central Coast Regional District, the Bella Coola Tourism Association, as well as BC Ferries. All three of these stakeholders are assisting with the research project costs. The research builds upon an interest in developing a better sense of the tourism market and opportunities for the Bella Coola valley.
- Dr. Anne Hardy from UNBC's RRT Program is also developing and executing a 'drive tourism' project in the Prince George area together with a number of local partners. The focus of the project is recreational vehicle travelers who overnight in shopping mall parking lots. As highlighted a number of years ago by CDI research, this is a growing issue of interest across northern BC. The findings from our current Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project have highlighted many times the need to differentiate the tourism sector into increasingly fine sub-markets in order to effectively develop products that can benefit from potential economic opportunities now being missed. The drive tourism work started this past summer and will continue.
- More generally, the RRT Program at UNBC has entered into discussions with both the Northern BC Tourism Association and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association around forward planning for a better incorporation of tourism industry issues and opportunities into community and economic development. This has the potential to include both regional strategic level planning processes, as well as research on specific community needs or the needs of specific tourism sub-markets. Current discussions with the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association have the potential to develop into a long term research partnership.



- The CDI at UNBC and Tourism BC are both interested in developing a collaborative research partnership. As first steps in developing this partnership, the CDI met with Richard Porges, Director of Research at Tourism BC, to talk about opportunities and needs. Mr. Porges also came to northern BC to participate as the featured speaker in the Community Development Institute's Fall Speaker series.

## **Key Research Partnership Opportunities**

In addition to the research partnerships and projects that have already developed through the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project, a number of important areas for future research work were identified. This section outlines some of these opportunities. In each case, pursuit of these research opportunities opens the door to a wide range of partnership possibilities. Similarly, many of these opportunities link research needs from the local, to the regional, and to the provincial levels.

### *Provincial Parks*

- The BC Parks Branch provided good early support to the Project. The park observations report, as well as interviews with economic development stakeholders, highlighted a number of research topics that will require more work. Included among these topics is:
  - the role of local residents in campground use,
  - the information and interpretive needs of campers,
  - links between the provincial park user sub-market of the camping traffic and the rest of the sub-markets in the drive tourism area,
  - ways to more effectively market BC's tourism opportunities and products to this sub-market,
  - as well as the specific services needs of provincial parks campers.

### *Municipal and Private Campground Operators*

- The Project clearly identified a lack of information about how the drive tourism sector of BC's tourism economy is structured. This reiterates earlier findings from the Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project. The lack of information about the sub-market structure, and the needs and wants of various component travelers within each of those sub-markets, is limiting effective product development. More importantly, it means that potential economic revenue from some of these drive tourism sub-markets may be passing both communities and regions by for lack of attractions. Potential research topics in this area include:
  - a more comprehensive inventory of the facilities, and services, available through the different campground supply sectors (provincial parks,

municipal campgrounds, and private sector campgrounds) across northern BC,

- a more clear delineation of the drive tourism sub-markets and what they are searching for in terms of accommodations, attractions, and other tourism products,
- a better sense of the different social, demographic, economic, and even philosophical characteristics of these drive tourism sub-markets and how to effectively target information and advertising campaigns to maximize on potential economic opportunity,
- a better understanding of travel behaviours with these individual drive tourism sub-markets in order to understand local and regional impacts if the preferred type of accommodation/attraction/product supplier is not available (could be combined with economic leakage studies), and
- a gap analysis comparing evidence on the facilities and services available through the different campground supply sectors with the demand side needs/wants of the various drive tourism sub-markets

#### *Visitor Information Centres*

- A considerable range of research topics were identified through the Project in terms of how to better support the on-going development of northern BC's Visitor Information Centres. These key research areas include:
  - the topic of funding support, funding options, the timing of funding announcements by various support agencies, and implications of annual versus long-term funding arrangements,
  - the topic of human resources and both the hiring of top quality students or staff, as well as the needs/opportunities to increase staff expertise and professionalism through skills/training,
  - the structure of the VICs themselves and can include studies of best practices on how to organize and manage their operations, as well as build linkages with other local economic development organizations,
  - the need to look at best practices information about how to operate (including hours of operation, length of season, and the use of Internet communications technologies to assist with marketing) the VICs in order to maximize local and regional impacts,
  - the need to explore and suggest models for enhanced coordination or networking among VICs in order to ensure that travelers are better

serviced, and northern BC retains more of the potential revenues available through the tourism economy,

- types and standards of services being provided through VICs and how these meet the needs of those using these facilities (including how this also needs to be more clearly linked to the wants/needs of the various drive tourism sub-markets),
- a gap analysis for comparing evidence on the demand side needs/wants of the various drive tourism sub-markets with the products and services made available through the VICs, and
- a related gap analysis comparing evidence on the wants/needs of the various drive tourism sub-markets with the ways by which BC tourism operators markets and communicated information about their products and attractions.

#### *Other Suggestions from Economic Stakeholders*

- The Project met with a wide range of economic development stakeholders across northern BC. These meetings highlighted potential research needs under three general areas:
  - The first of these concerned a better delineation of the local residents who participate in the community's/area's tourism economy through
    - their use of local/regional campgrounds,
    - their ownership of local/regional recreational property, and
    - their year-round local/regional 'tourism' or 'cottaging' type activities.
  - There was also identified the need to differentiate between short-distance and long-distance travelers for both marketing and product development.
  - There is a related need for research that helps to differentiate between short-visit and long-term stay travelers for both marketing and product development.
- A second general area of future research needs spoke to the limitations on local and regional economic development planning which have been created by a lack of comprehensive market intelligence on the various markets and sub-markets of the tourism industry. This topic of complexity within and among the various tourism market/sub-markets has been noted several times above.

- A third general area of emerging research needs concerned a more detailed and critical evaluation of future trends within the tourism economy. This included:
  - a better understanding of tourism product and marketing implications around the pending retirement of the aging baby boomer population as they will not only be the largest, the healthiest, the wealthiest, but also the best educated population cohort ever to approach retirement in North America,
  - forecasting research in order to explore how the pending relaxation of travel regulations by the Chinese government so as to permit its citizens to more easily come to Canada will affect levels of demands and product needs across northern BC,
  - forecasting focused upon India (a state which already possesses the largest middle class in the world) and how changing levels of affluence may create opportunities for tourism activities and products across northern BC,
  - a more general set of research needs under this topic concern taking a global perspective on evaluating future tourism trends, opportunities, and competitive threats, and
  - research across a global marketplace around an evaluation of the market elasticity of tourism under a range of issues (including but not limited to areas like changing US homeland security regulations, energy costs, SARS/Bird Flu and other health issues, publicity from events such as the 2003 wildfires, and a range of other issues).

## **Summary**

As noted in the introduction, a key element of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project was to create a foundation of information and linkages to support future economic development research. This report highlights some of the linkages that have already been created as well as a host of needed research topics and potential partners who may be interested in supporting future economic development research collaborations. The scale of the demand for more information and better research intelligence also highlights that there are roles and opportunities for a wide range of BC's universities, public agencies, and private sector industry operators to participate, share, lead, partner, and contribute. The interest in the Project and the numbers of suggested topic areas for further research highlight again the timeliness of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project.

**Appendix J**  
**Parks Campground Users Survey Report**

## **Parks Campground Users Survey Report**

### **Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project**

#### **Introduction**

BC's provincial parks are a key feature within our tourism economy. Since the 1950s, the provincial park network has been considered one of BC's signature welcoming cards for visitors and an 'ambassador' for *Super Natural BC*. The provincial park system has experienced a number of changes over the past two decades in response to a range of pressures. In addition, it is anticipated that the coming two decades will also generate changes which will impact the way in which the provincial parks operate and the way that they contribute within our tourism economy. As part of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project, the research team had an opportunity to visit many provincial parks across the region. From these visits, a series of observations were made which suggest the potential for additional research work in the future. This report summarizes some of the core results from those observations and suggestions.

The provincial parks observations exercise was developed as a convenience product of the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project. As such, it is based on observations made on the dates, and at the times, when the research team was present in the individual provincial parks. It reflects how one 'travel party' encountered northern BC's provincial parks facilities. It is not meant as a comprehensive study. Neither is it a research study in that the research design has several pitfalls. Key among these is that no form of sampling framework was applied by type of park and period over which the observations were made.

## Observations Summary

During the course of this project, the research team visited 22 BC Provincial Parks:

Barkerville, Beatton, Beaumont, Boya Lake, Buckinghorse River, Bull Canyon, Cedar Point, Horsefly Lake, Juniper Beach, Kiskatinaw, Lac La Hache, Lakelse Lake, Liard River Hot Springs, Meziadin Lake, Moberly Lake, Naikoon - Misty Meadows campground, North Thompson River, Paarens Beach, Swan Lake, Ten Mile Lake, Tweedsmuir – Atnarko Campground, Tyhee Lake

In each of these Parks, a simple observations report card was filled out to gauge service levels.

- Is there a Park Host?

Yes (2)

No (20)

Only two of the provincial parks had a Park Host present when the observations were done. It should be noted that these are voluntary positions and many are only available on weekends and during the “peak” occupation periods. However, given that our intention was to record how one travel party encountered the host program ‘on the ground’, this particular amenity was quite thin.

- Is the Park Facility Operator identified; and where are they located?

Twenty-one of the 22 provincial parks visited had Park Facility Operators clearly identified. In some parks, however, the Park Facility Operators were not present during the time period when the observations were done. In one park, operations were by ‘self registration’.

Sixteen of the provincial parks visited had the Park Facility Operator located within the park itself, while an additional 5 had the Park Facility Operator located immediately adjacent to the park. One of the provincial parks visited had the Park Facility Operator located in a neighbouring park about 20 km away.

- Is there park information available?

All 22 of the provincial parks visited had displays and/or handouts for communicating information about the park and the surrounding area. In most cases, this information combined materials on both the human and physical landscapes of the park/area. This information also included campground maps and instructions on the operations and rules of the park. In one of the provincial parks visited, interpretation services were provided by an on-site person.

- Types of Vehicles and Primary Accommodations in campground

Accomm'n Vehicle	Tent	Tent trailer (pop up)	Camper (top of truck)	Trailer	Motor-home	5 <sup>th</sup> Wheel	Van conversion
Motor bikes							
Bicycles							
Car	(6)	(1)					
Truck	(5)		(3)	(43)		(45)	
Motor Home					(36)		
Van Conversion							(3)

In the 22 provincial parks visited, the research team noted approximately 142 occupied campsites during the nights we were in the parks. This camper traffic is dominated by trucks towing either a travel trailer (~30%) or a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer (~32%). Camping parties driving motor homes accounted for the third most common units (~25%). There were relatively few of the other types of camping units tracked found in the visited provincial parks across northern BC.

- Place of origin of vehicles?

Canada	Count	USA	Count
BC	(98)	Washington	(5)
Alberta	(15)	Oregon	(3)
		California	(1)
		Idaho	(1)
		Alaska	(4)
		Vermont	(1)



Using vehicle license plates as identification, the observation project made note of the ‘places of origins’ of vehicles in provincial parks campsites. The places of origin are at the scale of Canadian provinces and US states. In the 22 provincial parks visited, the research team was able to identify the place of origin for approximately 128 vehicles during the nights that we were staying in the respective parks. This camper traffic is dominated by vehicles registered in British Columbia (~77%) with the next largest share coming from neighbouring Alberta (~12%). Camping parties from the United States accounted for the remainder of the license plates recorded, with most of these coming from Washington State (~4%), Oregon (~2%), and Alaska (~3%). The only other US states to show up included California, Idaho, and Vermont. That more ‘local’ users showed up in the vehicle license plate scan is not surprising (as it follows a number of economic and tourism research assumptions), but it does raise the question of how the long-distance travelers are routinely being accommodated as they travel through northern BC.

- Park facilities?

The research team also used the observations project to record the availability of a number of fairly standard amenities. For example, in the 22 provincial parks visited, the research team noted that all had pit toilets and that 6 also had some form of flush toilet facilities.

The availability of plumbing/septic disposal systems for flush toilets extended to the availability of shower facilities. Again, only 6 the 22 provincial parks visited had showers available for campers. In 2 of these provincial parks, the showers were coin operated with a fee of approximately \$1 per 4 minutes use.

Another plumbing/septic disposal systems investment extended to the availability of sani-dump facilities for the holding tanks of campers, travel trailers, 5th wheel trailers, and motor homes. These are usually stand alone facilities located away from the camping sites themselves, often along the entrance or exit ways into/out of the park. In this case, 12 of the 22 provincial parks visited had sani-dump facilities available. This is important given the dominance noted above of these types of camping units within the parks. In all cases where the parks had a sani-dump facility, a flat fee of \$2 per use was charged.

A final plumbing/septic disposal systems investment extended to the availability of drinking water taps within the parks. In this case, all 22 of the provincial parks visited made fresh water available to campers through standpipes with taps.

Other amenities explored included the availability of children’s play areas. Of the 22 provincial parks visited, 16 had special areas set aside for a children’s playground. Each of these areas had a range of play structures for children to use.

Another amenity enjoyed by campers in BC’s provincial parks is the ability to have a small fire in the campsites. These fire pits are generally constrained within small iron containers about half covered with bars to form a top grill. Of the 22 provincial parks visited, all 22 made firewood available to campers for use in the fire pits. In one case, the firewood was provided free of charge while for the other 21 parks the firewood was made available at the rate of \$5 per bundle.

Picnic sites were provided and maintained in 18 of the 22 provincial parks visited.

In terms of extra, or ‘user’ fees, only one of the parks we visited charged a day use fee while two others charged a group camping fee (for use of a group camping area that was set aside from the rest of the campground.

- Other Amenities?

A number of other types of campground amenities were tracked through the observations project for the 22 provincial parks visited:

Group Shelter	(5)
Changing Rooms	(4)
Recycling	(5)
Dog Beaches	(1)
Equipment Rental	(5)
Trails	(19)
Interpretive Trails	(2)
Boat Launch	(11)
Docks	(4)

- Number and Type of Sites

For the 22 provincial parks visited, the observations project counted approximately 1,236 individual camp sites.

Many of the 22 provincial parks also provided special types of camping sites:

<b>Camp site types</b>	<b>Number of parks available in</b>
Wheelchair	15
Group Camping	4
Lake Front	6
Tenting Sites	15
Pull Through	1

- General Cleanliness

For the 22 provincial parks visited, the observations project made a general evaluation of the cleanliness of the facility as encountered by a ‘traveling party’. This included the campsites themselves, the washrooms, the picnic or playground areas, the sani-dump area, together with the range of other amenities available at the individual parks. A 10 point scale was used with 1 = ‘extremely dirty’ and 10 = ‘extremely clean’.

Average score for all 22 provincial parks visited was 7.1. The lowest rating was 3 (for one provincial park) while the highest rating was 10 (for three provincial parks).

### **Parks Observations on Future Research**

A number of recommendations for future research work come from the parks observations project. These recommendations build upon other findings from the Northern BC Tourism and Development Foundation Project.

In parks close to small towns and urban centres, many of the users are from the local community. While research work is needed to estimate the general economic impact of provincial parks on the local economies of these small towns and urban centres, more focussed work is also needed on the composition of this benefit as contributed by local, regional, provincial, Canadian, and American campsite users. According to one park operator, local users comprise up to one-third of the park’s campground users. Future research should also include the economic impact of these ‘local tourists’ on communities adjacent to a provincial park.

When questioned in conversation, park visitors identified security, and proximity to nature, as key among the motivators for staying in a provincial park. Future research work could include an in-depth survey of park visitors to identify key motivators for staying in a provincial park. A secondary set of research questions could focus upon identifying differences in motivations, if they exist, between different types of park visitors (vehicle type, socio-demographic type, local compared to distant visitors, short-term compared to long-term stays, and American compared to Canadian visitors).

Many park visitors identified the desire for more professional park staff who could provide an additional learning dimension to the visitors' stay. These professionals included park rangers, guides, naturalists, and interpretation staff. Future research could include an in-depth study of park visitors to identify the range of educational opportunities they would like to have included in their park experience. These may range from self guided interpretive trails to evening "campfire" talks by local experts. This desire by tourists, especially the 'baby boomer' generation, to include a learning dimension to their leisure experience was identified in the Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project.