



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2023

<u>PAGE NO.</u>	<u>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)</u>	
3-4	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Referral Comments ALR Application 1248 Non-Farm Use-Soil Removal Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) Board Agenda Pgs. 38-45	Receive
5-6	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Referral Comments ALR Application 1250 Non-Farm Use-Soil Removal Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) Board Agenda Pgs. 46-52	Receive
	<u>Addition to Park Referral</u>	
7-8	Written Comments BC Parks Mount Pope Park Additions Referral – Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) Board Agenda Pgs. 71-76	Receive
	<u>REPORT</u>	
9-17	John Illes, Chief Financial Officer – Growing Communities Fund	Discussion/Receive

<u>PAGE NO.</u>	<u>ADMINISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
18	Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness – Response Letter RE: Emergency Support Services (ESS) Program Guide released in December 2022	Receive
19-20	Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills – StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan	Receive

NEW BUSINESS

IN-CAMERA MOTION

That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(c), (1)(l) and (2)(b) of the *Community Charter* for the Board to deal with matters relating to the following:

- Labour relations
- Strategic Planning
- Tenas Coal Project

ADJOURNMENT



April 26, 2023

Local government file: ALR 1248
ALC ID: 67515

Deneve Vanderwolf
Planning Technician
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
VIA EMAIL: Deneve.Vanderwolf@rdbn.bc.ca

Re: Agricultural Land Commission Non-Farm Use Referral at 23082 Highway 16 West (PID: 011-569-883) – The Subject Property

Dear Deneve,

Thank you for providing Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Ministry) staff with the opportunity to comment on the Agricultural Land Commission Non-Farm Use (NFU) application that proposes a gravel extraction operation over a 4.7 ha portion of the Subject Property. From an agricultural planning perspective, Ministry staff offer the following comments:

- Approximately 30 ha of the 40.6 ha Subject Property is currently used for forage crop production with the remainder consisting of forest and brush land.
- The purpose of the proposed extraction operation is to lower an elevated seam of gravel down to the same level as the adjacent forage fields that exist on both sides of the seam. Once completed, the extraction area will be reclaimed for agricultural production and will connect the existing forage fields.
- Ministry staff note that the report completed by Jessy Chaplin, P.Ag., (the 'Report') that accompanied the NFU application adequately addresses many components of a gravel extraction site including, but not limited to: a description about topsoil salvaging, a detailed analysis of how the pit will be reclaimed to a suitable agricultural standard once extraction activity has ceased and how invasive species will be managed.
- Ministry staff note however, that the Report does not propose any measures to help mitigate potential noise and dust arising from the operation, which may also

impact existing and future agricultural activities, both on and adjacent to the property.

- Please note that the parcel immediately north of the Subject Property is part of the Skeena Region Conservation Lands File that is managed by the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship (WLRS). Special management considerations pertain to parcels within this conservation area and as such, it is expected that individuals undertaking significant land development on adjacent parcels contact WLRS staff to notify them of any proposed works. Ministry staff would appreciate it if RDBN staff could provide the applicant with WLRS staff contact information:
 - Jennifer Atkins (Jennifer.Atkins@gov.bc.ca) and Chris Schell (Chris.Schell@gov.bc.ca) or (250) 876-7075).
- Ultimately, if the proponent carefully follows all aspects of the Report, the proposed project will likely provide a long-term benefit to agriculture in the Doughty area.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at the phone number or email address below.

Sincerely,

Reed Bailey, Land Use Planner
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Phone: (778) 695-3455
Email: Reed.Bailey@gov.bc.ca

Email copy: Agricultural Land Commission – ALC.Referrals@gov.bc.ca



May 2, 2023

Local government file: ALR 1250
ALC ID: 67668

Deneve Vanderwolf
Planning Technician
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
VIA EMAIL: Deneve.Vanderwolf@rdbn.bc.ca

Re: Agricultural Land Commission Non-Farm Use Referral on Four Properties near Telkwa (PIDs: 006-002-081; 005-373-760; 005-373-794; 005-373-841) – The Subject Properties

Dear Deneve,

Thank you for providing Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Ministry) staff with the opportunity to comment on the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Non-Farm Use (NFU) application that proposes to continue operating a gravel extraction operation over a 33.8 ha portion of the Subject Properties. From an agricultural planning perspective, Ministry staff offer the following comments:

- Gravel extraction has occurred on the Subject Properties for over 40 years without authorization from the ALC. To date, a 1.8 ha area has been reclaimed.
- Ministry staff note that the report completed by Daniel McAllister, P.Ag., dated January 22, 2023 (the 'Report') that accompanied the NFU application adequately addresses many components of a gravel extraction site including, but not limited to: a description about topsoil salvaging, a detailed analysis of how the pit will be reclaimed to a suitable agricultural standard once extraction activity has ceased and how invasive species will be managed.
- Ministry staff note however, that the Report does not propose any measures to help mitigate potential noise and dust arising from the operation, which may also impact existing and future agricultural activities, both on and adjacent to the property. Specifically, Ministry staff note that a nursery operation is located directly north-northwest of the Subject Properties.

- Ultimately, if the proponent carefully follows all aspects of the Report, the proposed project has the potential to provide a long-term benefit to agriculture in the Telkwa area.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at the phone number or email address below.

Sincerely,

Reed Bailey, Land Use Planner
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Phone: (778) 695-3455
Email: Reed.Bailey@gov.bc.ca

Email copy: Agricultural Land Commission – ALC.Referrals@gov.bc.ca

May 1, 2023

Jason Llewellyn, MSc., RPP

Director of Planning

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako / www.rdbn.bc.ca

jason.llewellyn@rdbn.bc.ca / Direct Line: 250-692-1225

37 3rd Avenue / PO Box 820, Burns Lake, BC, V0J 1E0

Office Phone: 250-692-3195 / 1-800-320-3339

Re: Proposed parking lot addition to Mount Pope Provincial Park

Hello Jason,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding this proposed project.

When the property on this portion of Stones Bay Road came on the market in 1977, they were water access lots. In a letter to us BC Parks wrote, "The road is narrow with no vehicle turn around area." We agree and would add that the road is in fact as you pointed out a "driveway" on a steep slope.

BC Parks also wrote that they have been, "working to resolve the parking concerns for the past few years." We have never been consulted and have never made any complaints until this past summer, when a trailer was driven to the end of the road and tipped on its side. We believe members of the climbing community who feel the main trail head is too far away, initiated the project. It may also have been initiated by others who have a personal interest in the project.

We have listed our concerns under the headings below:

Safety

- Narrow driveway with unstable slope and nowhere to turn around.
- We fear area may be unable to support increased human presence and vehicle traffic.
- No buffer between the parking lot and people's private property.
- Main trail was rerouted because of rocks rolling down at the lodge and this location would create the same situation.
- Public could access the parking lot and beach after hours. The proposed project is in an isolated area on a dead-end driveway, which could be used for unlawful activity.
- We foresee increased visitors due to mobile apps which promote the area. When the lot is full, overflow will most likely park on the road and the issues will continue.

- Thorough consultation and planning regarding the gate has not occurred.
- BC Parks did not respond when asked how emergency vehicles will access the residents.

Environmental

- No plan to assess the environmental impact or the impact on wildlife and habitat.
- There is a bear's den in the area.

Property Value

- Potential effect on property value of lake side residential lots, due to a parking lot, public beach and outhouse.

Conflict of interest

- BC Park employee is a member of the Fort St James, Rock Climbing Facebook group and may have a personal interest in this project.

For these reasons, we believe a feasibility study of the proposed project to determine its merits and viability is necessary. An independent assessment that would examine all aspects of the proposed project, including technical, economic, financial, legal, and environmental considerations.

It is our understanding that you have been asked to comment on the project. Please consider our concerns and contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



Kurt and Liz Raubach





Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors Supplementary

To: Chair and Board
From: John Illes, CFO
Date: May 4, 2023
Subject: Growing Communities Fund

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

Receive and Discussion.

BACKGROUND

Additional information, including a list of answers to frequently asked questions has been provided by the province.

The province has used population estimates from January 27, 2023 to calculate the grant. The grant amount is:

Base:	500,000
Total Population	676,838
Rural Population	586,770
Total (rounded up)	1,764,000

Two items are of particular importance in the frequently asked questions:

Can the GCF funding be allocated to electoral areas based on the Provincial formula used to determine the grant amounts for each Regional District?

No. The grant calculation for each Regional District took into consideration a base amount and several other key variables. The GCF was intended to assist the board in addressing regional priorities for actual infrastructure and other eligible costs. It is not meant to be reallocated back to electoral areas based on the Ministry allocation formula.

Can local governments provide contributions to third parties from GCF?

No, with the exceptions of:

- municipal contributions to housing projects and infrastructure owned by a regional district when the municipality is a participant in that service.

- First Nations infrastructure when it is a shared service or there is a service relationship.

ATTACHMENTS

Growing Communities Fund – Frequently Asked Questions



GROWING COMMUNITIES FUND (GCF) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) - Regional Districts	
Program Description	
Question	Answer
What is the purpose of the Growing Communities Fund for local governments?	The GCF will provide a one-time grant to all 188 of B.C.'s municipalities and regional districts, which they can use to address their community's unique infrastructure and amenity demands.
What is the formula-based model used to allocate funding?	For all regional districts, allocations are the sum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A flat funding amount of \$500,000; • A funding amount based on the regional districts <u>overall</u> population; • A funding amount based on the regional district's <u>rural</u> population; and • A funding amount based on the growth of the regional district's <u>rural</u> population between 2016-2021. See more detail in the Appendix.
Why is there additional funding for residents in rural (unincorporated) areas?	The additional funding recognizes that rural regions face a particular challenge in the form of relatively high costs of service delivery due to a number of factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower density population • Larger distances that have to be travel by service users and providers • Small number of people in any location that preclude economies of scale.
Why is growth of residents in the unincorporated areas used as one of the measures?	The growth within municipalities is already captured within the municipal grant allocations. The growth of the population in rural (unincorporated areas) is required to capture all areas of population growth within the province.
What is the source of the population data?	The source of the population data is from the BC population estimates (as of January 27, 2023). BC Stats population estimates are based on the Census, they also incorporate other information including provincial health records and tax records from CRA, and accordingly they have historically, on average, been higher than the Census baseline. Because of these reasons the



	federal and provincial governments have viewed population estimates as the more accurate of the two (e.g., population estimates are used to determine provincial health transfers from the federal government).
Use of Funds	
Question	Answer
What are the eligible use of funds?	<p>Eligible infrastructure projects are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public drinking water supply, treatment facilities and water distribution; • Development finance portions of infrastructure costs that support affordable/attainable housing. These may include DCCs or subdivision servicing charges payable or similar costs. • Childcare facilities; • Municipal or regional capital projects that service, directly or indirectly, neighbouring First Nation communities, • Wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities; • Storm water management; • Solid waste management infrastructure; • Public safety/emergency management equipment and facilities not funded by senior level government; • Local road improvements and upgrades; • Sidewalks, curbing and lighting; • Active transportation amenities not funded by senior level government; • Improvements that facilitate transit service • Natural hazard mitigation; • Park additions/maintenance/upgrades including washrooms/meeting space and other amenities; and • Recreation related amenities.
Can the funds be used for costs other than capital?	Yes. Other eligible one-off costs include: costs of feasibility studies (including infrastructure capacity assessment); other early-stage development work (including climate resilience assessments); costs of designing, tendering, and



	acquiring land (where it is wholly required for eligible infrastructure projects); constructing eligible infrastructure projects; and in limited situations, non-capital administrative costs where these are necessary, for example adding staff capacity related to development or to establish complementary financing for local government owned infrastructure or amenities
Are expenditures on natural assets eligible?	Yes, provided the natural asset is providing, or part of providing, one of the services described in the eligible categories above.
Will receipt of the GCF affect our eligibility for other infrastructure grant programs?	No. The GCF will not affect decisions on eligibility for infrastructure grant funding. For local governments with approved projects the GCF funding cannot be used as their match as an incremental spend is required. The GCF could be used to offset cost overruns that exceed the grant amount and the local share
Can local governments provide contributions to third parties from GCF?	No, with the exceptions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • municipal contributions to housing projects and infrastructure owned by a regional district when the municipality is a participant in that service. • First Nations infrastructure when it is a shared service or there is a service relationship.
Can we claim staff time on projects?	Permitted in limited situations. Specifically for non-capital administrative costs where these are necessary, for example adding staff capacity related to development or to establish complementary financing for local government owned infrastructure or amenities
Can a local government use GCF funding for multi-year project that has already started?	Yes. The GCF can be used for any capital project that has not yet been completed. Projects completed prior to March 1st, 2023 are not eligible for GCF funding. GCF is designed to enable incremental additional expenditures for local governments and not to replace existing capital commitments.
Can GCF be used for related planning projects?	Yes. Feasibility studies (including infrastructure capacity assessment); other early-stage development work are eligible costs. This includes



	conducting a climate lens assessment to determine GHG implications and resilience to future climate.
What happens if funds are ineligibly allocated, if reporting requirements are not met or if funds remain unspent after five years?	The ministry may reclaim any grant funds that are not used for the intended purposes or meet the accountability requirements of the Growing Communities Fund. However, the ministry will work with the local government to determine methods of expending it within eligible categories.
Can the funds be invested while being held in reserve?	The funds may be invested in any of the instruments permissible for local governments under section 183 of the <i>Community Charter</i> .
Allocation of Funds	
Question	Answer
Can the GCF funding be allocated to electoral areas based on the Provincial formula used to determine the grant amounts for each Regional District?	No. The grant calculation for each Regional District took into consideration a base amount and several other key variables. The GCF was intended to assist the board in addressing regional priorities for actual infrastructure and other eligible costs. It is not meant to be reallocated back to electoral areas based on the Ministry allocation formula
Will the Province specify to Regional Boards how to allocate the GCF funding?	No. It is the Regional Boards responsibility to determine the regional priorities and ensure that all the GCF funding is allocated to eligible regional services prior to the end of the 2023 calendar year. However, if requested, the ministry staff can assist regional staff on possible methods of allocation. That said, the final decision will rest with the Board.
How will these grants impact DCCs and other development finance charges?	The intent of the Growing Communities Fund grant is to support the delivery of projects that are incremental to currently planned infrastructure. As such, the projects may not have been included in the current DCC program. However, if the DCC program contains a project to which GCF funds will be allocated, the DCC bylaw must be amended so that the charges take the grant into account. Similar treatment should



	be used to adjust other development finance charges.
Timing	
Question	Answer
When will the grants be disbursed?	The grant will be directly transferred to local governments by March 31, 2023.
What is the timeline over which these grant funds must be expended?	The Provincial Government requests that the funds be expended within five years of receipt.
Reporting	
Question	Answer
What are the reporting requirements?	<p>The RD must provide an initial separate report (schedule) outlining how the funds were allocated to eligible costs for various services. This report would be a schedule to the 2023 annual audited financial statements. (as required under S.377(1)(a) of the <i>Local Government Act</i>). Further to the financial reporting, an annual report that identifies work related to Housing Needs Reports and pre-zoning requirements as applicable, is required.</p> <p>The province also encourages highlighting projects that align with provincial priorities such as CleanBC and childcare; as well as those that align with the province's Environmental, Social and Governance framework for capital projects. The Province also encourages conducting a preliminary climate lens assessment on Growing Communities Fund investments (GHGs and resilience to future climate) similar to the ones used for the CleanBC Communities Fund.</p> <p>Templates for reporting will be posted on line at a later date</p>
Are Regional Districts required to annually report on GCF?	Yes. To ensure full transparency regarding the use of funds, your local government will be required to annually report on how it spends this grant. This will be part of the annual financial reporting required under section 377 (1)(a) of the <i>Local Government Act</i> . Your local government will provide a schedule to the audited financial statements respecting the amount of funding



	received, the use of those funds, and the year-end balance of unused funds. Your local government must continue to annually report on the use of grant money until the funds are fully drawn down.
Will the schedule to the annual audited financial statements be left to the discretion of the Regional District? Does the Ministry have authority to request additional information?	Yes, and yes. The form of the schedule to the annual audited financial statements will be left to the discretion of the Regional District. The Ministry retains the right to request additional information from Regional Districts as required.
Is a separate auditors' report required for this schedule?	No. The Province does not require a separate auditor's report.
Am I required to acknowledge the provincial financial contribution towards funded projects?	Yes. Fund requirements will include parameters for public recognition of the funding related to capital projects.
Reserve Funds	
Questions	Answers
Do Regional Districts need to segregate GCF funding from other funding sources?	No. GCF funds need only be transferred to existing (or new) capital reserve funds that have been established for each of the services that will be allocated GCF funding.
Does interest earned on the GCF need to be tracked and added to the GCF amounts once the funds are allocated to reserve?	Yes. Interest earned in the GCF fund must be tracked and allocated back to the fund and may only be used for eligible purposes related to the GCF program. This is in accordance with S. 189(1) of the <i>Community Charter</i> .

Appendix: Detailed Calculation of Grants

Example Calculation for a Regional District with 65,000 People, 30,000 in Rural Areas

If the Regional District rural population (unincorporated areas) grew by 2,000 people between 2016-2021, the total grant amount is calculated as follows:

Component	Calculation	Result
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Flat Funding	500,000	\$500,000
Total Population	= 65,000 x 17	\$1,105,000
Rural Population	= 30,000 x 30	\$900,000
Rural Population Growth	= 2,000 x 1,000	\$2,000,000
Total Grant		\$4,505,000



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

May 3rd, 2023

Reference: 638235

Mark Parker
Chair, Board of Directors
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
Email: mark.parker@rdbn.bc.ca

Dear Chair Parker:

Thank you for your correspondence dated January 18th, 2023, regarding the Emergency Support Services (ESS) Program Guide released in December 2022. I welcome your feedback and appreciate that you've taken the time to raise your concerns with me.

The intent of the updated ESS Program Guide was not to place additional responsibility on local authorities or First Nation governments, but rather to better reflect current practice, thereby supporting ESS teams through access to accurate, current information. The Program Guide is considered a living document and will continue to be updated to reflect the evolution of ESS service delivery and wise practice. Feedback from partners like you is an important part of this continuous work.

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) staff are currently working through questions, concerns, and comments received since the December 2022 release and will consider the feedback provided by Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) as part of the current review. Additional updates are expected to be initiated in May and October of this year.

Thank you for offering further engagement on this matter. I have asked ministry staff to reach out to the subject matter experts from the RDBN who provided the report to the Board. A meeting would provide an opportunity for dialogue on the issues identified and support continued collaboration moving forward.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention and allowing us to connect on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Bowinn Ma
Minister of Emergency Management
and Climate Readiness

CC: Curtis Helgesen, CAO, RDBN
Jen Ford, President, Union of BC Municipalities
Deborah Jones-Middleton, Director of Protective Services, RDBN



May 2, 2023
Our Ref. 129004

I am pleased to share with you information about the provincial government's StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan designed to meet the challenges of today, to make sure people in British Columbia are ready to succeed and grow our inclusive and sustainable economy now and into the future.

The Future Ready Action Plan will develop trained, skilled and talented people to fill the jobs of today and tomorrow. It is the BC government's commitment to ensuring everyone in the province can access the post-secondary skills and training they need to build good lives, while developing the talent and skills that businesses and employers need so we can drive our economy forward and deliver the services we all rely on.

As a key pillar of the StrongerBC Economic Plan launched in February 2022, the Future Ready Action Plan invests an additional \$480 million dollars over the next three years in targeted supports to a broad range of British Columbians.

The action plan is focussed on five pillars:

- Making post-secondary more affordable, accessible and relevant;
- Providing the innovation and skills needed to fill the jobs of tomorrow faster;
- Breaking down barriers so everyone can find a job that works for them;
- Addressing Indigenous People's workforce priorities; and
- Making it easier for people new to Canada to find a job in which they are trained.

I am grateful to those who shared feedback and insights during the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan engagement sessions in May 2022. As a result of this collaborative process, I am confident the Action Plan will support British Columbians to acquire the skills they need to succeed in British Columbia's diverse and innovative economy. I am also confident that it will become easier for employers to find the talent and skills they need to sustain and grow their enterprises.

If you would like more information about the Action Plan and how it can benefit you, I encourage you to reach out to my office or participate in one of the roundtables we will be holding over the next few months.

... /2

The Future Ready Action Plan is an historic investment in people—because what helps people succeed in our economy, makes our economy succeed for people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SR', is positioned above the typed name.

Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister