

THE REGIONAL REPORT

ISSUE 7 • SPRING 2014

IN THIS EDITION, WE WILL RECAP SOME OF THE PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON WITHIN THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF FRASER-FORT GEORGE. ▲

WELCOME TO THE REGIONAL REPORT,

a regular newsletter designed to keep residents aware of programs, initiatives and events underway in the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. If you have comments, feedback or ideas for articles to be featured in future editions of Regional Report, please email us at district@rdffg.bc.ca, call 1-800-667-1959 or write to us at: Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, 155 George St., Prince George, B.C., V2L 1P8 ▲

NEW LOOK for the Regional District Website



The Regional District has redesigned its website to make it more user-friendly, especially for mobile devices.

Visit www.rdffg.bc.ca to learn more about the region and our services.

Telus ADDS SERVICE on Highway 16 East

Cellular phone service has improved on Highway 16 East. TELUS has completed two sites bringing new wireless coverage to 26 kilometers of Highway 16 between Prince George and McBride. The first of two sites, located west of McBride near Goat River, provides coverage to Crescent Spur and over 10 kilometers of Highway 16. The second site provides coverage to the community of Dome Creek and over 16 kilometers of Highway 16 between Penny and Dome Mountain. Motorists now have more access to 911 emergency services, making highway travel safer in the area.

The project is part of the 10-year Connecting British Columbia agreement signed with the Province of B.C. in 2011. Under the terms of the agreement TELUS will invest to connect more than 1,700 kilometres of unconnected highways with wireless service.

NDIT Grant Leads to SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

The Regional District received a \$7,500 grant through the Northern Development Initiative Trust Grant Writer Funding Program. The grant helped increase staff hours dedicated to investigating grant opportunities and preparing grant applications which led to the success of several community projects throughout the year. Projects that received funding through the Provincial Community Recreation Program include the Fraser River Regional Boat Launch in McBride completed in July 2013 and the Otway Nordic Centre upgrades for the 2015 Winter Games. ▲

Tips to Prepare for EXTENDED POWER OUTAGES

Winter can bring on weather events such as heavy snow fall, ice storms or high winds that can lead to extended power outages in many areas in the region. If you live in an area prone to power outages, the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George encourages you to take some steps to prepare your family and home.

- Turn off all tools, appliances and electronic equipment, and turn the thermostat(s) for the home heating system down to minimum to prevent damage from a power surge when power is restored. Also, power can be restored more easily when there is not a heavy load on the electrical system.
- Turn off all lights, except one inside and one outside, so that both you and hydro crews outside know that power has been restored.
- Don't open your freezer or fridge unless it is absolutely necessary. A full freezer will keep food frozen for 24 to 36 hours if the door remains closed.
- Never use charcoal or gas barbecues, camping heating equipment, or home generators indoors. They give off carbon monoxide. Because you can't smell or see it, carbon monoxide can cause health problems and is life-threatening.
- Use proper candle holders. Never leave lit candles unattended and keep out of reach of children. Always extinguish candles before going to bed.
- Listen to your battery-powered or wind-up radio for information on the outage and advice from authorities.
- Make sure your home has a working carbon monoxide detector. If it is hard-wired to the house's electrical supply, ensure it has a battery-powered back-up.
- Protect sensitive electrical appliances such as TVs, computer, and DVD players with a surge-protecting power bar.

If the outage is prolonged or if the house must be evacuated, protect it by taking the following precautions:

- Turn off the main breaker or switch of the circuit-breaker panel or power-supply box.
- Turn off the water main where it enters the house. Protect the valve, inlet pipe, and meter or pump with blankets or insulation material.
- Drain the water from your plumbing system. Starting at the top of the house, open all taps, and flush toilets several times. Go to the basement and open the drain valve. Drain your hot water tank by attaching a hose to the tank drain valve and running it to the basement floor drain.
- Note: If you drain a gas-fired water tank, the pilot light should be turned out – call the local gas supplier to re-light it.
- Unhook washing machine hoses and drain.
- Do not worry about small amounts of water trapped in horizontal pipes. Add a small amount of glycol or antifreeze to water left in the toilet bowl, and the sink and bathtub traps.
- If your house is protected from groundwater by a sump pump, clear valuables from the basement floor in case of flooding. ▲

For more information on preparing for power outages, please visit the following websites:

BC Hydro:
http://www.bchydro.com/safety-outages/power-outages/home_outages.html

Government of Canada:
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/pwrtgs-drng-eng.aspx>

www.rdffg.bc.ca

Funding Maximizes Impact of CANADA GAMES in Prince George



The Regional District was successful in obtaining a \$400,000 provincial grant for upgrades to the Otway Nordic Centre including a new biathlon range. As part of its support for the 2015 Canada Winter Games, the provincial government has also provided over \$125,000 for test events for the 2015 Games through Hosting BC and \$150,000 for the northern Sport Strategy, a program designed to further develop sport in the north. ▲

SPOTLIGHT on Area D, Tabor Lake – Stone Creek



Located southeast of Prince George, Electoral Area D occupies 655 square kilometers and contains the rural communities of Tabor Lake, Pineview, Buckhorn, Red Rock and Stoner. It is home to 4175 residents and is represented by Director Bill Empey. Region-wide services provided include solid waste management, 9-1-1 emergency response, fire services coordination, regional parks, land use planning, building inspection and heritage conservation.

COMPOST for the Valley

No matter where you live in the Regional District you may be faced with a number challenges when it comes to maintaining your lawn or growing a garden. The predominant soils that exist in our Region are either clay or sand and varying combinations of both. This makes for some interesting growing conditions.

There are several landscaping and gardening projects that have benefited from the addition of bulk compost that is produced at the Foothills Boulevard Regional Landfill in Prince George.

The Tete Jaune community hall had to install a new septic field last year. After the installation was completed, the area was seeded and a layer of compost was applied. The compost improves the structure and texture of the soil enabling it to better retain nutrients, moisture, and air allowing for optimum growth.

ABOUT US

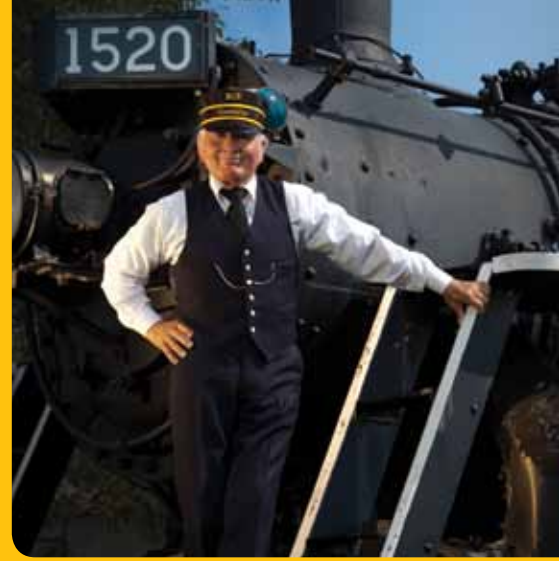
The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George is home to over 93,000 residents and covers 52,000 square kilometers in central British Columbia – an area almost as large as the province of Nova Scotia. It extends from the Pine Pass in the north to Hixon in the south, and from Bednesti Lake west of Prince

100 YEARS of Rail in Prince George

The Railway and Forestry Museum will mark the 100th anniversary of the arrival of rail in Prince George with an exhibit and a number of events later this year. The steel arrived in Fort George on January 27, 1914 (Prince George was not incorporated until March 1915). Prior to the railway people traveled by canoe, by sternwheelers, on foot or on horseback. Freight was carried by pack trains, wagons or stagecoaches. Although automobiles had arrived in Fort George by 1912 there were not many roads. The Grand Truck Pacific Railway opened up the pristine wilderness of the Central Interior and connected Winnipeg and points east all the way to Prince Rupert.

By March 1914 there were nine railway staff stationed in Fort George; today CN has over 600 employees based in Prince George.

You can learn more at the Railway and Forestry Museum – home to steam locomotive #1520, built in Canada in 1906. It is similar to the first locomotives that arrived at



Fort George 100 years ago. And in the summer, take a ride on the Fort George Railway next to The Exploration Place Science Centre and Museum in Fort George Park. The train is pulled by the 'Little Prince' steam engine, which turned 100 in 2012. It was among dozens of 'dinky' engines that ran on narrow gauge rail and were used to construct the Grand Truck Pacific Railway. ▲

The Regional District also operates the Blackburn water system and the Bendixon Road, Buckhorn and Tabor Lake community sewer systems. Street lighting is provided in communities where residents have opted to pay for the service. Volunteer fire departments are established in Buckhorn, Ferndale/Tabor, Pineview, Red Rock/Stoner and Shell-Glen.

The annual Pineview SnowFrolic event takes place Feb. 22 to March 2. Events include loggers sports, a snopitch tournament, an adult dance Feb. 22, a family dance March 1, a crib tournament, snowshoe volleyball and pancake breakfasts March 1 and 2. For more information call 250 963-8214. ▲



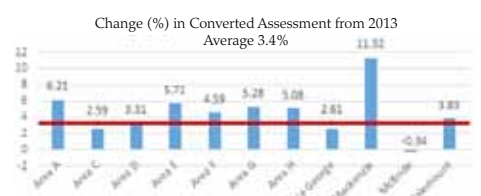
The Roll of ASSESSMENTS in Regional District Taxation



Property taxes are calculated on the basis of the market value, or "assessment", of land, improvements or both (i.e. house, barn, garage, yard). Assessments are conducted by the BC Assessment Authority, an independent, provincial Crown corporation. If a property assessment value increases, the amount of tax to be paid for that property may increase even if there was no increase to that service budget.

The Regional District takes in assessment changes for all areas of the region and determines the overall average. Areas that see their assessment change above the average will take on a greater share of Regional District taxes. If areas fall below the average, they may see a decrease.

For example, in 2014 the average assessment increase across the region is estimated to be 3.4%. This means if assessments in a particular Electoral Area or municipality increased above 3.4% property owners will see an increase in the amount they pay for Regional District services. Subsequently, if the assessment is below the 3.4% increase, they will pay less.



Heavens Edge Bed & Breakfast Near Valemount

George to the Alberta border. As a local government, the Regional District is accountable to the residents of the region. Services provided include fire protection, 9-1-1 emergency services, solid waste management, community sewer and water systems, land use planning, cultural and recreational services and parks. Total operating expenditures in 2012 were \$29.3 million.

The governing board of the Regional District has fourteen directors: four appointed by the City of Prince George from its council, one appointed by each of the councils of the District of Mackenzie, Village of McBride and Village of Valemount, and seven directors elected from within each of the seven electoral areas covering the unincorporated portions of the Regional District. ▲