

# The Regional News

## 2015 Meeting Dates:

### Board Meetings:

- June 25th
- July 23rd
- August 20th
- September 17th
- October 22nd
- November 19th
- December 10th

### Committee Meetings:

- June 11th
- July 23rd
- August 20th
- September 3rd
- October 8th
- November 5th
- December 10th

## Got Weeds?



Report Invasive Plants  
1-866-44-WEEDS  
(1-866-449-3337)

A non-profit society working to prevent and control the spread of invasive plants.

## Spring is upon us!

**Please ensure you are prepared should flooding occur.**

- Water courses may become dangerous as water levels rise; high water flows can cause bank erosion and instability.
- Use caution when working or recreating on or near bodies of water.
- Residents and business owners in low-lying areas which have experienced flooding in the past are strongly encouraged to take steps to flood-proof structures, including moving any indoor/outdoor items to higher ground;
- Relocate hazardous materials, such as cleaners and pesticides, to higher ground to prevent water contamination.
- Be prepared to unplug and disconnect any electrical items;
- Gather important papers in water-tight containers and keep a record of valuables in a safe place.

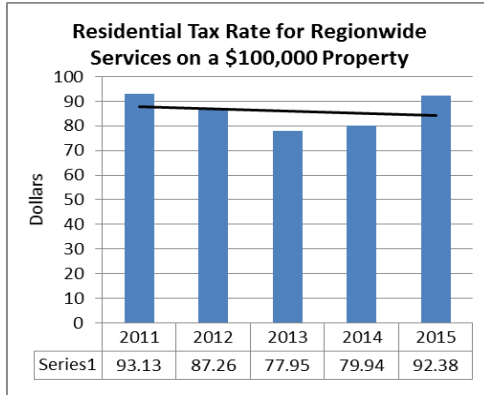


The Regional District Board of Directors were sworn in at the December 11th, 2014 Inaugural Meeting. Bill Miller was appointed as Chair.

## 2015 Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Budget

At its meeting on March 26, 2015, the Regional District Board of Directors approved the Financial Plan for the years 2015 to 2019. Included in the Financial Plan is the Budget for 2015, which shows a tax increase for regional services of \$812,746 and a tax increase for local services of \$102,483. The table below compares the taxation budget for 2015 with 2014.

The residential tax rate for services affecting all rural taxpayers, increases from \$103.29 for a \$100,000 property in 2014 to \$122.60 in 2015, primarily due to a decrease in the surplus carried forward from the prior year as well as higher costs for emergency preparedness. For municipal taxpayers, the residential tax rate for region-wide services increases from \$79.94 for a \$100,000 property in 2014 to \$92.38 in 2015, primarily due to a lower surplus from the prior year.



The graph shown here indicates that the trend-line of the residential tax rate for regional services has shown a slight decrease over the last five years.

	Taxation		Increase	%
	2013	2014	(Decrease)	Change
<b>Regional Services</b>				
Environmental Services	2,453,788	3,045,932	592,144	24.1%
Regional Government	1,128,673	1,311,002	182,329	16.2%
Planning and Related Services	559,915	660,933	101,018	18.0%
Emergency Preparedness	111,611	182,180	70,569	63.2%
Regional Economic Development	189,126	294,550	105,424	55.7%
9-1-1 Emergency Telephone Response	257,006	237,235	(19,771)	-7.7%
	4,700,119	5,731,831	1,031,712	22.0%
<b>Local Services</b>				
Recreation and Culture	1,724,809	1,855,069	130,260	7.6%
Fire Protection & Emergency Response	696,456	770,523	74,067	10.6%
Street Lighting and Transportation	99,050	125,861	26,811	27.1%
Sewer and Water	82,821	94,373	11,552	13.9%
Local Economic Development	172,901	160,357	(12,544)	-7.3%
Other	10,611	9,892	(719)	-6.8%
	2,786,648	3,016,075	229,427	8.2%
	7,486,767	8,747,907	1,261,140	16.8%

## 2015 Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Budget

On March 26, 2015, the Board of the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District (SNRHD) approved its 2015 budget. The total amount of taxes raised will increase from \$1,742,600 in 2014 to \$1,790,000 in 2015. Higher property assessments will enable the residential tax rate to remain the same as last year at \$54 for a \$100,000 property.

The construction of the Burns Lake Hospital is now complete and demolition of the old hospital as well as landscaping will be completed by the fall of 2015. The 2015 budget includes \$1.9 million for the remainder of the SNRHD's share of the cost of this project. The 2015 budget also includes \$795,000 for final payment of the SNRHD share of the costs of the outpatient renovations at the Vanderhoof Hospital, which are now complete. In addition, the 2015 budget includes \$400,000 for a sprinkler system and \$90,000 for a new telephone system at the Fort St. James Hospital, \$128,000 to replace the heating system at the Fraser Lake Health Centre, minor equipment grants of \$180,000 and building repairs of \$24,000, as well as contributions of \$131,000 toward Northern Health's Integrated Community Clinical Information System and \$65,000 toward its Emergency Department Information System.

In 2016, the SNRHD will once again start building a capital reserve to accumulate funds for its share of the costs of the proposed new hospital in Fort St. James. Further details on the 2015 budget can be found in the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District section of our website at [www.rdbn.bc.ca](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca).



## Initiatives for 2015 include:

Northwest BC Regional Benefits Alliance	Manson Creek Landfill Upgrades
Legacy Funding Strategy	Landfill Weigh Scale Upgrades
Infrastructure Assessment Funding	Initiate Review of Solid Waste Mgmt. Plan
Electronic Regional Newsletter	Local Recycling for Packaging & Printed Paper – Assist with Expanding Services
New Financial Policies Capital Reserve Policy Debt Policy	Take Over Landfill Operations Purchase Equipment & hire Staff Grant Application to Assist with Costs
Chinook Community Forest	Zoning Bylaw Review
Round Lake Rural Fire Protection	Regional Planning Strategy
Capital Asset Management Plan	Investigate Possible Planning Services for Municipalities
More Engaging Budget Process	Participate in Implementation of Regional Skills Gap Analysis
Rural Fire Dept. Fire Fighter Courses	Regional Agriculture Marketing Project
Emergency Management MOU with Fort St. James	Planning for 2016 Business Forum
Hosting Emergency Meetings & Workshops Rail Disaster Response Seasonal Preparedness Emergency Preparedness Workshop Northern Emergency Social Services Training	Regional Marketing – Promote the Region to Tourists, Potential Residents and Employees, Potential New Businesses Serving Tourism, Mining, LNG, Agriculture

## Knockholt Western Sub-Regional Landfill - Wetland Upgrade Project

Part of the landfill leachate collection and treatment system at the Knockholt Western Sub-Regional Landfill (located just outside Houston, BC), is an engineered wetland system that was originally constructed in 2007. The cattails that have been planted in the wetland, are a key component in the successful treatment of landfill/septage leachate and in 2012, the wetland experienced a significant challenge...keeping marauding moose from eating the cattails!

In 2013, the Regional District completed significant upgrades to the wetland system, including the installation of a game fence around the facility to keep the moose out. Other work included the planting of a type of bulrush in the areas that the cattails were destroyed in 2012 that will, over the long term, provide additional treatment capacity in the wetland. In addition, an aeration tower was constructed out of a culvert, plastic piping and plastic water bottles. The purpose of this tower is to introduce oxygen into the liquid which provides for additional treatment of the leachate.



## Initiation of RDBN Landfill Operations

In early 2015, the RDBN Board of Directors made a decision to transition the operations of the Knockholt and Clearview Sub-Regional Landfills from contractor based to internal RDBN operations. This decision was made following the



completion of a detailed financial analysis comparing RDBN internal costs to those of contractor bids obtained in December 2014. Historically, the RDBN has successfully (less cost to the taxpayer) transitioned solid waste services such as transfer station operations and waste haul services to internal RDBN operations.

The current contract for the Knockholt Landfill expires at the end of August 2015, while the contract for the Clearview Landfill expires in November 2015. RDBN operation of the two facilities will commence once the existing contracts expire.

Capital equipment will be purchased for use at the two landfill sites, including two landfill compactors, two excavators, two crawler dozers, a dump truck and a roll-off truck. A grant application has been submitted to the Federal Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund in an attempt to have some of the capital costs recovered.

## Manson Creek Landfill Upgrades

The Manson Creek Landfill site is located on crown land approximately 6 kilometres north-northwest of Manson Creek, British Columbia at kilometer 65.5 on the Finlay-Manson Forest Service Road. The site has been operated as an unattended landfill since 1987 and landfilling is conducted in excavated trenches. The site contractor is required to compact and cover the disposed garbage from June through October. As the site is unattended, there is no fencing at the facility, although there are separate piles for wood and metal wastes.



In 2014, the RDBN worked closely with the

Ministry of Environment to develop a plan and strategy to address bear access issues at the Manson Creek Landfill. In 2015, upgrades to the facility will include installing an electric fence and cattle guard as well as establishing an adequate fire guard and surface water drainage improvements.



Chair Bill Miller in front of the Parliament Building in Victoria, B.C. in March, 2015.



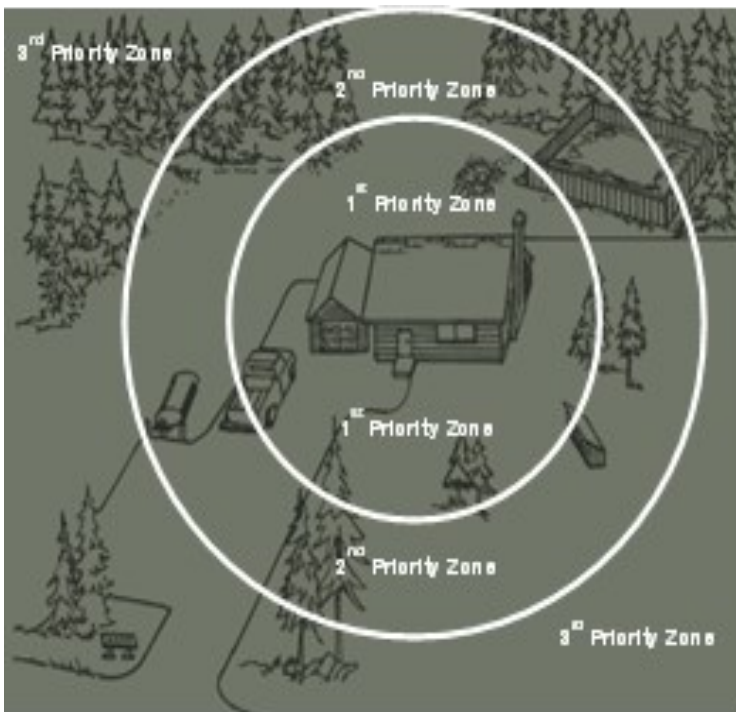
## SPRING CLEAN UP TIME AGAIN

### Spring is here and it's time to FireSmart your Property

#### First Priority Zone

The First Priority Zone includes all buildings on your property and the surrounding 10 metres. FireSmart these areas:

- ◆ ensure roofing, eave and siding materials are fire rated and clean;
- ◆ seal all eave openings;
- ◆ close in deck openings;
- ◆ remove any shrubs, trees, or deadfall;
- ◆ move woodpiles to the Second Priority Zone; and
- ◆ keep your grass mowed and watered.



#### Second priority Zone

You can reduce fuels by thinning and pruning vegetation in the area 10 to 30 metres surrounding your buildings, so combustion cannot be supported;

- ◆ Remove trees and debris that can spread fire upwards to become a fast spreading crown fire;
- ◆ Space trees so that the crowns of individual trees are 3 - 6 metres apart;
- ◆ Remove or reduce the number of evergreen trees in the area, evergreens such as pine and spruce are much more combustible than deciduous trees, aspen, poplar and birch. Do not use a stool or chair for climbing;
- ◆ Remove deadfall, thick shrubbery and mature trees that might provide the opportunity for a ground fire to climb up into the forest canopy; and
- ◆ Extend the second priority zone precautions further on downhill slopes and on windward exposures as fires spread more quickly on upward slopes.

#### Third Priority Zone

Thin the area 30 - 100 metres surrounding your buildings so fires will be of low intensity and more easily extinguished;

- ◆ Remove all ladder fuels; and
- ◆ Cut down dry grasses

## 2015 Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Budget

*(Continued from page 2)*

The boundaries of the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District include the municipalities of Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, Burns Lake and Granisle as well as Electoral Areas B (Burns Lake Rural), C (Fort St. James Rural), D (Fraser Lake Rural), E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural), and F (Vanderhoof Rural).

## Money in the Region

### Topley Volunteer Fire Department Receives Grant Funding

With the help of RDBN grant writing assistance, the Topley Volunteer Fire Department was awarded \$63,000 for operational expenses and fire protection equipment through a Provincial Community Gaming Grant. Grant money will be used to off set operational expenses and to purchase equipment required to provide Fire Protection, Motor Vehicle Accident and First Responder Services.

Finding funding for operational expenses is challenging and Community Gaming Grants are among the only funding streams available. There are four categories of funding available through Community Gaming Grants:

**Arts & Culture**-eg Museums, Music Festivals

**Human & Social Services**-eg. Food Banks, Community Services

**Public Safety**-eg. Fire Departments, Search and Rescue

**Sport**-eg. Soccer, Hockey, Biking Clubs

The next Community Gaming Grant intake is for Public Safety. Application period is from Jul 1 - Aug 31

**“Topley now has what it needs to provide Fire Protection, Motor Vehicle Accident and First Responder Services. Thank you for the help in reaching our goal.”**  
**Byron Sketchley, Fire Chief**

The RDBN provides community groups across the region with grant writing assistance. To find out how we can help you, fill out the [Request for Assistance Form](#). Available on the RDBN website.

### Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors

#### Municipalities

- Town of Smithers**  
- Mayor Taylor Bachrach
- Village of Telkwa**  
- Mayor Darcy Repen
- District of Houston**  
- Mayor Shane Brienen
- Village of Granisle**  
- Councillor Thomas Liversidge
- Village of Burns Lake**  
- Mayor Luke Strimbald
- Village of Fraser Lake**  
- Mayor Dwayne Lindstrom
- District of Fort St. James**  
- Mayor Rob MacDougall
- District of Vanderhoof**  
- Mayor Gerry Thiessen

#### Electoral Areas

- A - Smithers Rural**  
- Director Mark Fisher
- B - Burns Lake Rural**  
- Director Bill Miller (Chair)
- C - Fort St. James Rural**  
- Director Tom Greenaway
- D - Fraser Lake Rural**  
- Director Mark Parker
- E - Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural**  
- Director Eileen Benedict
- F - Vanderhoof Rural**  
- Director Jerry Petersen
- G - Houston Rural**  
- Director Rob Newell

### Questions or Comments:

**Mail:** P.O. Box 820  
Burns Lake, B.C. V0J 1E0

**Phone:** 250-692-3195

**Toll Free:** 1-800-320-3339

**Fax:** 250-692-3305

**Email:** [inquiries@rdbn.bc.ca](mailto:inquiries@rdbn.bc.ca)

**Websites:** [www.rdbn.bc.ca](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca)  
[www.mining.rdbn.bc.ca](http://www.mining.rdbn.bc.ca)

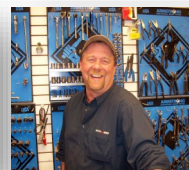
### The Regional News

If you wish to be included in the distribution list to receive the “Regional News” please send an email to [inquires@rdbn.bc.ca](mailto:inquires@rdbn.bc.ca) or phone the Regional District Office at: (250) 692-3195 or 1-800-320-3339

## “Give Us Your Best Shot” Photo Contest

Over \$2,500 in CASH Prizes!  
Photos & Video Vignettes

Coming Soon



Find us on Facebook at [Give Us Your Best Shot](#)

Or Visit

[www.rdbn.bc.ca/regionalphotocontest](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca/regionalphotocontest)

## Connecting Consumers and Producers

2015 projects will include:

Updated RDBN Agriculture Brochure



To be listed in the directory or for more information on hosting a community event

visit

[www.rdbn.bc.ca/agriculture](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca/agriculture)