



More Affordable Housing for First Nations

First Nations in the Columbia Basin have developed new and improved affordable housing options in their communities with \$2.9 million in support from Columbia Basin Trust to develop 43 new affordable housing units and undertake energy retrofits and repairs on 88 existing units...[full story](#)



It's Official!

Last week, Minister Katrine Conroy viewed new owner signage at the Waneta Expansion Generating Station. The deal to purchase Fortis Inc.'s original 51% interest in the project closed on April 16, 2019 restoring ownership to the originally mandated 50/50 Columbia Basin Trust and Columbia Power partnership...[full story](#)



Training for Tourism Jobs

From skiing and snowmobiling to mountain biking and hiking, Revelstoke is attractive to visitors for many reasons and tourism is important to the community's economic health. The Trust is supporting the Okanagan College, Revelstoke campus where students in a new two-year Tourism Management Diploma will learn through a high-tech lab...[full story](#)



Brewing up Business and Local Jobs

When Angry Hen Brewing started up, their plans to employ locals and fix up a 100-year-old building made the business an excellent fit for the Trust's Impact Investment Fund, delivered by Community Futures. This little "roost" in Kaslo has some fun names for its beers...[full story](#)



A Trail for Everyone

A new eight-kilometre, half-inclusive/half-adaptive loop began construction last year in Fernie. This year, the goal is to have it in tip-top shape so even more people—of all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities—can get fresh air, get exercise and enjoy the stunning mountainside views...[full story](#)



We're Hiring

Interested in joining our team and making a difference in the Basin? We're hiring a Manager, Human Resources and Manager, Environment...[apply now!](#)

Events & Deadlines

June 5

[Environment Grants Open](#)

June 12

[Child Care Capital Grants Information Session](#)

Deadline: June 14

[Community Outdoor Revitalization Capital Grants](#)

Deadline: July 30

[Environment Small Grants Close](#)

July 19

[Board of Directors Meeting in Valemount](#)

Deadline: July 31

[Child Care Capital Grants](#)

Deadline: Last Day of Each Month

[Basin PLAYS Training Grants](#)

September 26-28, 2019

[Columbia River Basin Transboundary Conference](#)

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More Affordable Housing Options for First Nations

News: May 30, 2019



The Trust provides \$2.9M to build 43 new units, improve 88 existing ones

First Nations in the Columbia Basin have developed new and improved affordable housing options in their communities with \$2.9 million in support from Columbia Basin Trust to develop [43 new affordable housing units](#) and undertake energy retrofits and repairs on 88 existing units.

“We’re working with First Nations communities every step of the way—from planning to construction—to help them meet their affordable housing needs,” said Johnny Strilaeff, President and CEO at Columbia Basin Trust. “We look forward to continuing to support the efforts of these communities as they increase well-being amongst their citizens.”

The Trust’s \$5.5-million [First Nations Housing Sustainability Initiative](#) has three components. First, the initiative helps First Nations communities build new affordable housing units, from planning to construction. Second, it funds energy retrofits and health and safety repairs on existing units. Third, it helps them with managing their affordable housing assets, whether this means buying specialized software or training dedicated staff or community members.

The asset management component is being delivered in large part through a unique partnership between the ʔakisq̓nuk, ʔaq̓am, Shuswap and ʔakinkʷm̓asnuq̓iʔit (Tobacco Plains) communities, supported by the Trust, BC Housing and Indigenous Services Canada. When it comes to managing First Nations affordable housing, this collaborative model is the first of its kind in Canada.

The Trust’s First Nation Housing Sustainability Initiative has helped attract an additional \$15 million from other sources toward the sustainability of First Nations housing in the Basin.

In 2019, ʔaq̓am received Trust funding to do energy retrofits and health and safety upgrades on several units in the community. This is the latest step in the community’s efforts to improve housing for the approximately 230 citizens living in ʔaq̓am, part of its community strategic plan called Ka Kniʔwitiyaʔa – Our Thinking. In 2017, the Trust supported repairs in a home and helped replace another home that was not safe for residents. In 2018, the community received Trust support to implement asset management technologies and complete energy and condition assessments on all housing to identify needed repairs. Now the community is undertaking these repairs, which will include outside building improvements like siding and roofing, and inside improvements like insulation, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and health and safety.

“Other than the replacement of the home in 2017, no new housing has been built in the ʔaq̓am community since 1995, resulting in a need for new housing and upgrades to the existing housing,” said Nasuʔkin Joe Pierre. In addition to the immediate repairs, the community will take advantage of the above-mentioned partnership. Director of Operations Michelle Shortridge said, “It is now our intention to build capacity within the community for long-term asset management and basic housing maintenance and repairs.”

The community of ʔakinkʷm̓asnuq̓iʔit (Tobacco Plains) also has older housing stock, with some in need of repair, and little construction in the last 30 years. Some homes are overcrowded, and an affordable housing shortage has made it difficult for some citizens to stay in the community or comfortably return home. Starting in 2018 and continuing in 2019, the community is constructing nine new affordable housing units, of various sizes, which are being built with Trust support. These will be rented to members with low to moderate incomes.

“This will give the opportunity to bring community members home and provide properly sized dwellings for families,” said Ryan Sarfeld, Housing and Infrastructure Manager. Also, some of the units will be fully accessible. “Along with our new health facility, this will enable elders to stay within the community longer. We are always aiming to better serve the community and membership.”

Learn more about the Trust’s work in housing at ourtrust.org/housing.

Read the backgrounder [here](#).

It's Official!

News: May 28, 2019



Aerial view of the Waneta Expansion facility in the foreground with the Waneta Dam in the background.

Last week, Minister Katrine Conroy viewed new owner signage at the Waneta Expansion Generating Station. The deal to purchase Fortis Inc.'s original 51% interest in the project closed on April 16, 2019 restoring ownership to the originally mandated 50/50 Columbia Basin Trust and Columbia Power partnership. Local ownership will inject more of the facility's revenues back into the region and to the Province. Located on the Pend d'Oreille River south of Trail, construction on the project lasted from 2010 to 2015 and employed over 1,400 people with regional spending on goods and services exceeding \$220 million.



On hand with the Minister were (left to right): Columbia Power Board Chair Tim Stanley; Columbia Basin Trust President & CEO and acting Columbia Power President & CEO Johnny Strilaeff; and Trust Board Chair Rick Jensen.

View the original announcement regarding the purchase of the Waneta Expansion Generating Facility [here](#).

Training for Tourism Jobs to Meet Local Demand

News: May 15, 2019



With \$40,000 funding from Columbia Basin Trust, the Okanagan College campus in Revelstoke will establish a high-tech learning lab as part of a new two-year Tourism Management Diploma to help address workforce needs of local tourism-based businesses.

From skiing and snowmobiling to mountain biking and hiking, Revelstoke is attractive to visitors for many reasons and tourism is important to the community's economic health. To support this industry and people seeking careers in it, Okanagan College in Revelstoke is launching a new two-year [Tourism Management Diploma](#) and is receiving \$40,000 in support from Columbia Basin Trust for a virtual classroom.

“This mobile lab is part of a new program that will help address the shortage of trained staff in the tourism industry, a sector that we heard is a priority for Revelstoke,” said Aimee Ambrosone, Columbia Basin Trust Director, Delivery of Benefits. “Kudos to the College for creating an innovative, collaborative learning environment that will provide access to training locally to help meet the workforce needs of local tourism-based businesses while supporting the economic well-being of the community as a whole.”

The funding will go toward setting up a high-tech lab equipped with digital equipment that will enable students to access blended-learning resources like online content and videoconferencing. Instruction will be flexible and up-to-date, will draw from the best resources and instructors, and will better represent today's technology-based work environment.

The lab will also be mobile, meaning it can be set up at off-campus locations to meet a variety of training needs. Students will be able to learn at different job sites, while employers and community organizations will be able to receive on-site training customized to their needs.

“Launching this full-time program in Revelstoke will answer significant industry demand for managers in the tourism and hospitality industries,” said Joan Ragsdale, Okanagan College's Regional Dean for Shuswap Revelstoke. “Together with a donation from the Revelstoke Credit Union, the Trust's contribution has made this mobile lab possible.”

Launching in fall 2019, the program will allow students to attend school in the tourism sector's shoulder seasons and build work experience during the busier winter and summer months. Learn more about the College and its programs at okanagan.bc.ca/revelstoke.

Brewing up Business and Local Jobs

KASLO, EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS,

On the main strip in downtown Kaslo, near the pharmacy and a short stretch from the historic S.S. Moyie sternwheeler and beach, a chicken holding a cleaver hangs from a sign. Inside the building, a chalkboard menu offers a variety of made-on-the-premises beers, with names like Fowl Play and Struttin' Stout. If you want a locally made brew in Kaslo, this is the place to come.

The chicken is the logo of Angry Hen Brewing. This seven-barrel microbrewery has been welcoming Kaslo and area residents and visitors since December 2017. There are up to eight beers on tap at a time. There's a lounge and seasonal patio. Customers can bring the brew home in cans called Growlers or Crollers. And the beers are available on tap in about 20 bars and restaurants in the province. It's a small-town business that has grown from idea to reality with the help of a Trust loan through the Impact Investment Fund.

Former Montrealers Andy LeCouffe and his wife Manon Gagnon have lived in Kaslo since 2008. "I was a home brew hack," LeCouffe says, "and always thought it would be fun to have a brewery. But I knew I didn't have the technical skills that are required for a commercial brewery."

That's when they decided to enlist the Angry Hen herself—the nickname for an experienced brewer from Vancouver named Shirley Warne, who has family in Kaslo. "Shirley had the technical skills to make great beer, but didn't have the marketing/business experience," says LeCouffe, who has a business background. "And so we were connected by her sister-in-law, and one thing led to another."

Now LeCouffe, Gagnon, Warne and her partner Frances Fry are co-owners of the brewhouse. To get it off the ground, though, they needed financial help. LeCouffe approached Community Futures, the Trust's delivery partner for the Impact Investment Fund. This program, delivered by Community Futures and Heritage Credit Union, supports businesses that can't secure conventional financing but may benefit Columbia Basin residents in other ways.

In the Angry Hen's case, the benefits are multiple. The business provides employment to 12 full- and part-time employees, in addition to the owners. The partners purchased an underused, 100-year-old building and renovated it extensively, prioritizing local contractors and suppliers. "We tried to keep the money in the area," says LeCouffe. The lounge creates an attraction for visitors, plus gives residents an additional option for a fun time out and another reason to love their community.

LeCouffe says they're grateful for the Trust and Community Futures financing. "We liked the idea because it was local, regional financing. And that was sort of a philosophy of ours throughout the whole build, that we wanted to try and keep the money as local as possible."

Cassie Gerretsen has worked at the Angry Hen for over a year, in a role that ranges from serving the beer, to ordering merchandise, to doing the big monthly cooking sessions that provide the brewery with the pre-made foods it offers to customers.

She's grateful for the Angry Hen in several ways. First, it helped reinforce her and her boyfriend's decision to leave Nelson and buy a house in Kaslo—a community that "just felt like home," she says—about one and a half years ago. "It was definitely a factor in moving: They have a brewery coming soon! We really like craft beer so that's really cool for us."

Second, it gave her the opportunity to quit her job in Nelson and work locally. "The commute was getting long," she says. Third, it's providing her with the experience and contacts she needs to pursue her next dream: starting a small catering business of her own.

Plus, she says, she simply enjoys being there. "I like their beer. I enjoy working there. It's really fun. It's a bit of a community hub, so if you ever sit in the brewery, you can always find somebody to talk to."

LeCouffe confirms that business has been "great." Even though they knew winters were going to be slow in such a small community, "we've exceeded our sales expectations in the two winters we've been operating."

Now the goal is to get the beer into more bars and restaurants elsewhere. LeCouffe encourages people to "ask for a beer at a tap near them—that's actually very useful." And of course, now that the days are getting longer and the benches on the patio are warming, make sure to come taste a Roostertail or Kluckin' Kolsch in Kaslo in person.