



Working with communities, First Nations, local government and businesses to build a stronger North by investing in economic development in central and northern British Columbia, Canada

April/May 2016 - Newsletter

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Ancient Forest research will support conservation and tourism development

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The Ancient Forest will be the subject of biodiversity research this summer that will help protect the area and support its development as a significant tourist attraction, thanks to support from Northern Development Initiative Trust. At its April meeting, the Trust's board of directors approved a \$27,540 grant for the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) to conduct a detailed assessment of the biodiversity within the proposed Ancient Forest park area.

The research is an important first step in nominating the Ancient Forest as a UNESCO World Heritage site, which, if achieved, would boost the area's reputation as a premier tourist destination that supports local economic diversification. The Ancient Forest is located 120 kilometres east of Prince George and is part of the only known inland temperate rainforest in the world. In 2015, more than 20,000 visitors used its existing three kilometres of walking trails, which were built and are maintained by the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Society. In March, Premier Christy Clark announced its intent to protect the area as B.C.'s

newest Class A provincial park, renaming it the Ancient Forest/Chun T'oh Wudujut (pronounced Chun Toe Wood-yu-jud) Park. The park designation ensures the area's unique habitat will be excluded from timber harvesting and other commercial activity.

The primary objective of the project, which is a partnership between the Trust, UNBC and B.C. Parks, is to assess the biodiversity of vascular and non-vascular plants in the Ancient Forest. Preliminary sampling by UNBC's plant ecology laboratory suggests the Ancient Forest area contains many rare plant species, including some that, significantly, are likely new species for science. The research is expected to take a year to complete beginning this summer.

Quotes:

"The Ancient Forest is a truly unique and world-class attraction that, only now, is beginning to become more widely known. This innovative partnership will fund science that will be used to help transform the Ancient Forest into a protected, premier tourist attraction, supporting economic development in our region." says Evan Saugstad, Board Chair, Northern Development

"This funding is critically important as it allows us to begin biodiversity assessments in the ancient cedar stands. The information collected will be a critical part of future nomination for World Heritage Site status for the Ancient Forest." says Darwyn Coxson, Professor, College of Ecosystem Science and Management, UNBC

"Any day we get to see more work being done to protect this unique ecosystem is a good day," said Shirley Bond, MLA for Prince George-Valemount. "I'm thankful that the Northern Development Initiative Trust has come alongside the dedicated volunteers and community members that are working to ensure this historical natural wonder will be enjoyed

by visitors from throughout B.C. and around the world for years to come.”

Quick Facts:

- Northern Development combines smart thinking with financial resources to strengthen the economy in Northern B.C.
- Since 2005, the Trust has sustainably stewarded its capital base and invested more than \$140 million in communities throughout central and northern British Columbia, attracting more than \$1.2 billion in investment to the region spread across 2,000 projects
- The Ancient Forest biodiversity assessment project will support conservation and tourism-based economic development in the Prince George area
- The Ancient Forest is part of the only known inland temperate rainforest in the world
- In 2015, more than 20,000 visitors used the Ancient Forest’s existing three-kilometres of walking trails
- Additional funding to support the research has been provided by the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. Partnering Fund at UNBC, and UNBC.

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Board determines process for selecting a new CEO

In March, the Trust's founding CEO, Janine North, indicated her desire to retire in the fall. The board of directors has committed to working with her and Northern Development's executive team to ensure a smooth transition of leadership and ongoing collaboration with the board, staff and communities. The board is now accepting expressions of interest from potential candidates for the position, and thank Janine for the decade she has dedicated to building a stronger north.

[Read the full posting here](#)

Northern Development Board Thanks Independent five year
Review Committee for their Report

As part of the Trust's accountability framework, the Government of BC set up the Act which incorporated the Northern Development Initiative Trust, to be reviewed every 5 years by an independent panel. The board would like to thank Dr. Charles Jago, Ms. Dana Hayden and Mr. Ron Poole for taking the time to review the legislation and publish a report on their findings. You can find the report to the Trust's Board of directors and Minister Shirley Bond [here](#).

Communities in the region would support the committee's conclusion "that the Act was a visionary piece of legislation that , along with the funds provided to NDIT, has benefited the NDIT regions tremendously"

Burns Lake Tech North bounces back with the Competitiveness Consulting Rebate



The Trust's Competitiveness Consulting Rebate program has helped reinvent a major player in Burns Lake's tech sector – and they're busier than ever.

Tech North Solutions president Ron Zayac admits to some tough years for his business following the 2012 Babine Forest Products sawmill explosion, but it wasn't long before he recognized his company needed the expertise of a consultant to successfully redevelop his business.

"We knew we needed help to completely redevelop our strategic plan and a key part of that was our employee attraction and retention plan," said Zayac. With the help of Northern Development's Competitiveness Consulting Rebate program, Zayac was able to do just that! "Now, we're busier than we've ever been and more importantly, all our clients are busy working too."

Tech North Solutions accessed \$21,350 through the Competitiveness Consulting Rebate, learn more about the program [here](#).

[You can learn more about Tech North Solutions on their Love Northern BC profile.](#)

The 2015 Annual Report is now online

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



2015 marked the Trust's 10th year of operations and another record year of funding approvals, project investments and innovative approaches to strengthening our communities and economy. Read more in our recently published [2015 Annual Report!](#)

The new Cow Bay Marina off to an amazing start thanks to Northern Development's Economic Diversification Infrastructure program



Our CEO, Janine North, was thrilled to be a part of the Grand Opening of the Cow Bay Marina on April 9th in Prince Rupert. Community members gathered in the new public space to celebrate the grand opening of the breakwater with spectacular weather, live music and free

food.

Over the last 5 years, our residents have incrementally experienced being cut off from Prince Rupert's waterfront," said Mayor Lee Brain, "The new Cow Bay Marina and public breakwater is the City's response to provide new waterfront access for residents to enjoy Prince Rupert's beautiful harbour. We want to sincerely thank all our partners for making this a reality. Projects like this are just the beginning of a larger plan to repatriate our waterfront for public use so we can provide a quality of life that all Prince Rupert residents deserve."

"Community waterfront access is among the most important of our planning and investment activities, and the Cow Bay breakwater represents our continued commitment to creating spaces for residents to experience Prince Rupert's harbour," said Don Krusel, CEO of the Port of Prince Rupert.

The Cow Bay Marina received \$375,000 through Northern Development's Economic Diversification Infrastructure program, which you can read more about [here](#). This new public space is a stunning asset to the community and we are thrilled to have played a role in building a stronger north.

Fabulous Festivals



Proud to support these #fabfestivals!

Northern Development is proud to be supporting unique festivals and events throughout our region with the Fabulous Festivals and Events funding program.

The program provides non-profit organizations \$2500 to help build the sustainability and expansion of local events to attract tourism and build communities. Save the date and check out these events coming soon in Northern B.C.

- Lytton | Lytton Block Party | May 20
- Clinton | Clinton Annual Ball | May 21
- Fort St. John | Performing arts BC Provincial Festival | May 31 - June 4
- Chetwynd | International Chainsaw Carving Championship | June 9 - 12
- Rolla | Sweetwater 905 Arts and Music Festival | June 10 - 11
- Atlin | Atlin Arts and Music Festival | July 8 - 10
- Quesnel | Billy Barker Days | July 14 - 17
- Francois Lake | Grassy Plains Summer Festival | July 18 - 19
- Hazelton | Kispiox Valley Music Festival | July 22 - 24
- Bella Coola | Discovery Coast Music Festival | July 23 - 24

- Terrace | Terrace Riverboat Days | July 29 - August 7
- Haida Gwaii | Edge of the World Music Festival | August 5 - 7
- Wells | Moonrise Film Festival | August 19 - 21
- Barkerville | Mid-Autumn Moon Festival | August 20
- Lillooet, Clinton, Logan Lake, Loon Lake | Gold Country Geocache Event |
September 2 - 5
- Lytton | Lytton River Festival | September 2 - 3
- Chetwynd | Chetwynd Harvest Festival | September 10
- McBride | Fraser Heritage Festival | September 30 - Oct 2

Explore hundred of projects...

and connect with the people who are building their communities and a stronger regional economy in central and northern BC.

Share Your Story...

Do you have an update or personal story about a project undertaken in central and northern BC that has made a positive difference for you, your family, or organization?