



**THE BC  
JOBS PLAN**

## MCBRIDE TO BARRIERE CORRIDOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC INVESTMENT PILOT INITIATIVE

### Status Update – Key Highlights for the Fibre, Power and Tourism Themes

#### MCBRIDE AND AREA

##### Power Theme

*ecoTECH Energy Group Green Technology Industrial Park*

*Holmes Hydro Inc. Run of River Projects*

*Snowshoe Power Ltd. McIntosh Creek Run of River Project*

*Castle Mountain Hydro Ltd. Run of River Project*

- The Province and BC Hydro are considering the Robson Valley Task Force recommendations regarding construction of a new transmission line.
- Recent investments by BC Hydro (e.g., opening of a bio-diesel generation station in McBride and enhanced vegetation management) have improved power reliability in the area.
- Construction of a new 138 kV transmission line would further enhance power reliability and under favourable conditions could help stimulate regional economic development by potentially allowing construction and operation of the proposed run of river independent power projects (IPPs) and the ecoTech green technology park and biomass plant. If approved, a new transmission line would take up to 4-5 years to plan, permit and construct.
- ecoTECH is proposing a phased approach to their project. The first phase would see the construction of a 5 MW off-grid combined heat and power plant that would provide power to the green technology park and heat for operation of aquaponic and hydroponic facilities. ecoTech is investigating financing options for this initial phase and subsequent phases of the project.
- The Province is reviewing fibre supply in the region to assess opportunities to support regional economic development including the projects proposed at the forum.

##### Fibre Theme

*McBride Pellet Plant and Sawmill*

- Simpcw First Nation and Lhtako Dene First Nation (Red Bluff Indian Band) are jointly seeking timber tenure to support a pellet plant and sawmill operation in McBride.
- The Province is reviewing fibre supply in the region to assess opportunities to support regional economic development including the projects proposed at the forum.

## VALEMOUNT AND AREA

### **Tourism Theme**

<i>Valemount Glacier Destination Resort</i>
<i>Valemount Trails (Crystal Ridge, Swift Creek, Mountain Bike Park, Cranberry Marsh)</i>
<i>Alpine Coaster</i>

- The Valemount Glacier Resort proponent is working with the Resort Development Branch, FLNRO to secure an Interim Agreement, which will allow site investigations to gather baseline information for drafting a resort Master Plan (the next step in FNRO's All Seasons Resort application process). A formal proposal and Interim Agreement application are expected to be submitted in Spring 2012.
- The Village of Valemount has partnered with the Columbia Basin Trust and Valemount Ski Society to collect information to allow them to market the proposed Valemount Glacier Destination Resort to potential investors. Technical advisors and ski technicians from France toured the area in March as part of the effort to market and promote the proposed resort to investors.
- The Province is continuing to support Valemount in its efforts to diversify their tourism product through the Resort Municipality Initiative (\$250,000 over 5 years to support projects such as development of the Cranberry Marsh trail).
- Under the Recreation Sites and Trails BC Program, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) has approved the Crystal Ridge Sled Ski Area and the Swift Creek Trail and is in the process of legally establishing the trails.
- JTI, FLNRO and the Village of Valemount are working to determine the appropriate tenures for the Mountain Bike Park and Cranberry Marsh projects. Both projects require the proponent to undertake further background studies before tenure proposals can be processed further.
- There is an opportunity for JTI's International Trade and Investment Attraction Division to assist by connecting the Alpine Coaster project to potential investors should that be of interest.

### **Power Theme**

<i>GENEREX Hydro Inc. Small Creek Hydro Project</i>
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- The Province and BC Hydro are considering the Robson Valley Task Force recommendations regarding construction of a new transmission line.
- The Small Creek hydro project is a 3.5 MW run-of-river project located 35 km northwest of Valemount.

- Pre-feasibility work by the proponent is well advanced, but the project requires a BC Hydro EPA and connection rights to access the power grid.

## BLUE RIVER AND AREA

### **Tourism Theme**

<i>Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing/Saddle Mountain Ski Resort</i>
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- The Saddle Mountain Ski Resort is a proposed destination ski resort near Blue River.
- There is an opportunity for JTI's International Trade and Investment Attraction Division to assist by connecting the resort project to potential investors should that be of interest.

### **Power Theme**

<i>Clemina Creek Micro Hydro</i>
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<i>Serpentine Creek Micro Hydro</i>
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<i>Canoe Reach Geothermal</i>
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<i>Shannon Water Power</i>
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- The Canoe Reach Geothermal Project is a proposed 10 MW hydro thermal project located between Valemount and Blue River, and currently in the midst of exploration and assessment. The other three projects are proposed hydroelectric run-of-river facilities located between Valemount and Clearwater.
- BC Hydro is currently engaged in an area planning study and undertaking First Nations consultations on options for upgrading the North Thompson Transmission system.

## CLEARWATER AND AREA

### **Tourism Theme**

<i>Clearwater River and Trophy Mountain Roads</i>
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<i>Helmcken Falls Lodge</i>
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- Clearwater River Road and Trophy Mountain Road, two key backcountry access roads to Wells Grey Provincial Park, are frequently subject to washout or other forms of closure which negatively impacts local tour operators and supporting businesses during the short tourism season.
- Government is working to identify potential sources of funding to carry out improvements.

- There is an opportunity for JTI's International Trade and Investment Attraction Division to assist Helmcken Falls Lodge by linking potential investors with this opportunity should that be of interest.

### **Power Theme**

#### *North Thompson Transmission Line*

- North Thompson Area Transmission Study preliminary results have been completed and will be discussed with First Nations and other key stakeholders in June 2012. The final study is expected to be completed late June 2012.
- The North Thompson Area Transmission Project will determine what will be required to facilitate future load growth in the area including potential mines such as Harper Creek.
- BC Hydro has indicated a 4 year timeline from now to complete consultation and regulatory processes and construct a new transmission line (eta for completion: 2016).
- Not directly as a result of the pilot, but related to the power theme identified in the pilot, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation, the three regional Beetle Action Coalitions, Columbia Basin Trust and the Federal Government are undertaking a Green energy project which has or will soon complete the following:
  - A micro-hydro power feasibility study for Simpcw First Nations;
  - A micro-hydro feasibility study for District of Clearwater;
  - A green energy opportunity overview assessment for the North Thompson; and
  - Funding to the Village of Valemount to complete a business plan to potentially use waste heat from the Geothermal proposed project.

## BARRIERE AND AREA

### **Fibre Theme**

#### *Barriere Cant Mill and Biofuels Production*

- Simpcw First Nation is proposing opportunities related to cant production in Barriere, possibly in conjunction with either a pellet plant or a biocoal plant (or some combination).
- The Province is reviewing fibre supply in the region to assess opportunities to support regional economic development including the projects proposed at the forum.