



# Working to Advance Rural Development in the Southern Interior

Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition  
September 2014

Since April 2011, SIBAC has focussed on developing, supporting and funding projects and initiatives that will stimulate and advance rural development in the southern interior. This document highlights some of SIBAC's major initiatives over the past three years.



## **ENCOURAGING NEW RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS**

SIBAC understands that there are underlying rural development problems facing many of the smaller communities in the southern interior. SIBAC believes it is imperative that BC's rural development challenges are formally acknowledged and addressed by all levels of government. Therefore, SIBAC has led and supported a variety of initiatives to promote greater understanding of rural development challenges and to develop new tools to address these challenges.

### **Encouraging New Provincial Government Rural Development Policies**

SIBAC has funded and led – in partnership with the other two regional Beetle Action Coalitions – a major initiative called the Rural BC Project. The purpose of the Rural BC Project is to provide recommendations to the provincial government on new policies and actions that will assist with rural development in BC. At the 2013 UBCM convention a resolution was passed that endorsed the recommendations of the Rural BC Project.

SIBAC was pleased when Premier Clark acted upon one of the key recommendations of the Rural BC Project and formally designated a Cabinet Minister - Minister Steve Thomson – with specific responsibility for rural development in BC. The three BACs continue to work collaboratively with Minister Thomson and Donna Barnett - Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development - to identify further government actions that will assist with rural development in the province.

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*“We strongly encourage the Province of BC to endorse and support the efforts of the Rural BC Project.”* Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

*“Chief and Council supports the work of the Rural BC project and we strongly encourage the Province of BC to endorse and support the efforts of the Rural BC Project...”* Canim Lake Band

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### **Providing a Rural Perspective to Government Consultation Processes**

SIBAC understands that many southern interior communities continue to be heavily reliant on the forest sector. SIBAC therefore has developed and presented several detailed submissions to government including:

- Presentation to the Federal Minister of Finance on MPB impacts
- Submission to the Legislative Special Committee on Timber Supply
- Submission to the Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations - Area Based Tenure public consultations
- Preparation and submission of a major Value-Added Wood Strategy to the provincial government on recommended actions to expand BC's value-added wood sector.

# SIBAC—Working to Advance Rural Development in the Southern Interior



## **BUILDING RURAL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY**

### **Some Communities Assisted thru Wood Waste to Rural Heat**

Lumby  
Lower Kootenay  
Indian Band  
Revelstoke  
Clearwater  
Westside Kelowna  
Nakusp  
Invermere  
Logan Lake  
Barriere  
Nelson

*“The business case WW2RH completed has provided us key information we need to make decisions to go forward. As a small rural community that struggles with capacity issues and costs, having WW2RH as a resource has been a critical part of propelling this project forward in a timely manner.”*

Mayor K. Acton, Lumby

*“The funding support provided to WW2RH has provided our community the benefit of the organization by being able to utilize their knowledge without cost to our community. If we did not have this available to us we would not be moving forward with developing a biomass heating system.”*

L. Groulx, CAO  
Clearwater

*WW2RH provides small, rural communities with the information and knowledge that is required to make informed decisions related to biomass heating projects.*

Alan Mason, Director,  
Community Economic  
Development  
City of Revelstoke

SIBAC recognizes that we must also enhance the ability of rural communities to undertake rural development projects - so that they have greater influence over the future of their communities. Rural communities often need access to specialized expertise, new tools or funding to help them implement their rural development projects. Therefore, SIBAC has led and partnered on the development of several major initiatives that provide direct assistance to small rural communities and increase rural development capacity.

### **Promoting Green Energy Development**

While rural BC is the location of most green energy project developments, local municipalities and First Nations do not always receive direct benefits from this development. In some cases green energy projects can provide a valuable new source of revenue for the community. To address this issue, SIBAC partnered and led the development of the Green Energy as a Rural Development Tool Project. This project developed a variety of new information resources and tools that help rural communities evaluate and develop their green energy project concepts.

### **Assisting Communities with Bioenergy Development**

Many rural communities and First Nations have expressed an interest in exploring the feasibility of installing bioenergy based heating systems in their communities. In order to provide rural communities with professional and objective advice and technical assistance, SIBAC partnered to develop and fund the Wood Waste to Rural Heat project (and its predecessor Green Heat Initiative). Through this project over 20 individual communities in the southern interior region have received assistance.

### **Developing Tools to Mobilize Local Capital in Rural Communities**

Increased access to capital is absolutely critical to rural economic revitalization. Therefore, SIBAC has undertaken several initiatives to help develop new tools for mobilizing local capital:

- SIBAC organized two regional conferences that brought in experts from Nova Scotia and Alberta to explain their successful rural local capital mobilization programs.
- Through the Rural BC Project, SIBAC and the other two regional Beetle Action Coalitions have recommended that the provincial government create a BC equivalent to Nova Scotia’s highly successful CEDIF program.
- SIBAC has supported and provided funding to assist with the creation of a new community-based Venture Capital Corporation in Christina Lake.
- SIBAC is the major BC funder and co-sponsor of a project to expand Alberta’s Unleashing Local Capital (ULC) initiative into BC. The ULC initiative has been extremely successful in raising investment capital from rural residents for business development in their own communities.

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*“SIBAC funding and support has been critical in helping us with our community economic development initiatives and with establishing our community venture capital corporation.”*  
Sandy Mark, Christina Lake Gateway Society

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# SIBAC—Working to Advance Rural Development in the Southern Interior



## **ASSISTING WITH MPB MITIGATION PROJECTS**

During SIBAC's public consultations significant concerns were raised about the hydrological and wildfire impacts the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic would have on watersheds, drinking water and public infrastructure. Early in its mandate, SIBAC responded by funding several projects in this area including:

- Regional Districts of Kootenay Boundary and Okanagan Similkameen to complete watershed plans and mitigation work.
- City of Kimberly to complete a watershed risk assessment.
- Coldwater Indian Band to organize a watershed ecosystem workshop.
- Provide funding to three projects with First Nations organizations to assist with fuel management and wildfire suppression training.



## **FACILITATING RURAL COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Partnering and Providing Funding for Economic Development Projects in Communities across the Southern Interior**

Through its project activity and funding, SIBAC – as demonstrated by the map on the next page – has helped communities in every sub-region of the southern interior. Since inception, SIBAC has supported over 91 community projects and provided over \$1.8 million in funding which has leveraged an additional \$14.2 million. In supporting projects in individual communities, SIBAC's major objective is to develop information, tools, and templates that can be used by other communities in the southern interior.

## **SIBAC and the Future**

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*"I believe SIBAC serves a unique and important role as a forum for local government and First Nations leaders to discuss our mutual concerns and aspirations for rural development."* Chief Judy Wilson

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SIBAC believes it has made a significant contribution to advancing rural development and will continue to do so. For the coming years, SIBAC will be strategically focussing the majority of its efforts and investments in three major areas:

1. Continue to advocate for new rural development policies and actions from the provincial government,
2. Continue to provide a southern interior rural perspective to provincial and federal government consultation processes, and
3. Continue to develop and fund strategic rural development projects that will have an impact across the southern interior.

For more information on SIBAC, its reports or projects please visit the SIBAC website [www.sibacs.com](http://www.sibacs.com) or e-mail: [admin@sibacs.com](mailto:admin@sibacs.com).

### **SIBAC Executive and Board of Directors**

**Chair:** Rhona Martin,  
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**Chief Judy Wilson,**  
Shuswap Nation Tribal Council

**Sally Watson,**  
Thompson Nicola Regional District

# SIBAC – Supporting Rural Communities & Economic Development Across the Southern Interior

## Thompson/Fraser Canyon

- Seton Band Heavy Equipment Training (WED-CEDII)
- Upper St'at'imc Cultural Heritage Tourism (WED-CEDII)
- Lillooet Tribal Council Pellet Plant Business Plan
- Nlaka'pamux Tribal Council Value Added/Bioenergy
- Lytton First Nations (TRU Tourism Project)
- Nicola Similkameen IFPA Salvage Strategy Viewer Tool
- Cayoose Creek Indian Band - Split Rock Wild Plant Nursery
- SLRD Ferguson Creek Hydropower Project

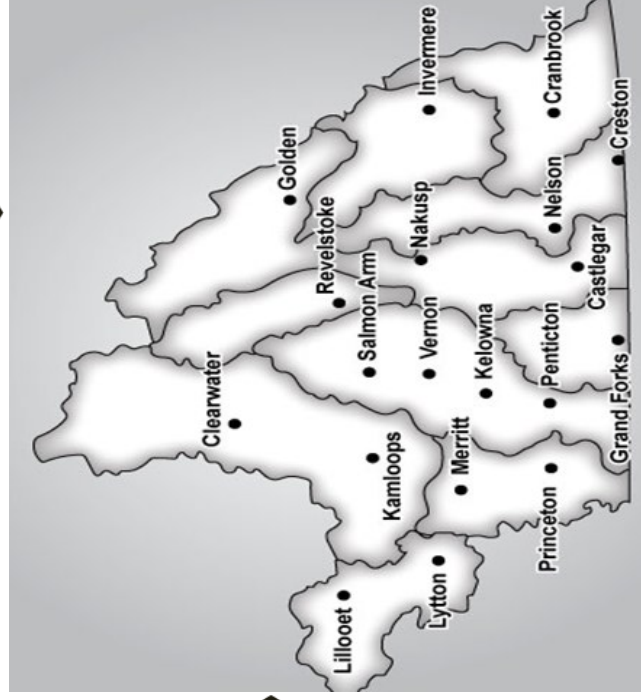
- LTC St'at'imc Silviculture Training Program
- First Nations Emergency Services Wildland Fire Suppression Training
- Cooks Ferry Band Memorial Project
- Gold Country GeoTourism
- Lower Nicola Indian Band - Pellet Manuf. Viability
- Merritt Walk of Stars - Training/Skills Development
- Coldwater Indian Band - Coldwater River Eco Health Workshop

## Okanagan/Shuswap

- Princeton Bioenergy & fiber supply
- Princeton (TRU Tourism Project)
- Coldwater Indian Band - Coldwater River Eco Health Workshop
- First Nations Agricultural Association - Grass-Fed Beef Marketing
- Adams Lake Band Commercial Park Feasibility St ONA Business Facilitation
- ONA Nursery Feasibility Study
- OSRD Economic Development
- Okanagan Falls Ec Dev/Tourism Strategy
- South Okanagan Similkameen Invasive Plant Partnership
- Eagle Valley Moving Forward Together Workshop
- OSRD Watershed Water Quality/Sustainability Plan
- City of Armstrong (Green Energy Project)
- Splotsin First Nation - Non-Timber Forest Resource Forum
- First Nations Agricultural Assoc. Grass-Fed Beef
- Grindrod Recreation Association Community Hall
- Economic Gardening Conference Sponsorship

## East Kootenay/Columbia Valley

- Kootenay Aboriginal Business Advocate Society Business Training
- Kootenay Rookies Regional Ec. Alliance Baseline Ec. Assessment
- Invest Kootenay Partnership
- East Kootenay Employment Lands Inventory
- KNC Fuel Management Project
- Nupqu Development Corp. Bioenergy Feasibility Study
- Kimberley Watershed Risk Assessment
- St. Mary's Band Biomass Heating
- Columbia Headwaters Community Forest Business Plan
- Economic Gardening Columbia Valley
- Columbia Tourism Strategy
- Canal Flats Discovery Centre
- Golden Area Regional Economic Development Assessment & Plan



## West Kootenay/Boundary

- Lardeau Valley Forest Inventory/Investors Package
- Nakusp (WW2RH & Bridges II)
- Kaslo (Bridges II)
- Kettle River Watershed Management
- Boundary Business Retention & Expansion
- Boundary Chamber of Commerce
- Kettle River Riparian Work
- Beaverdell Heritage Museum Feasibility Study
- Grand Forks Rural BC Summit 2012

- Christina Lake Gateway Tourism
- Christina Lake Venture Capital Corporation
- Kaslo Rural BC Summit 2014