



# THE RURAL LINK

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YOUR CONNECTION TO THE CANADIAN RURAL PARTNERSHIP

## THIRD ROUND PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Announcing the new round of CRP Pilot Projects for 2000 - 2001

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The Canadian Rural Partnership Rural Team BC Newsletter

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Canada

As part of the framework for the Government of Canada's rural development strategy, the Canadian Rural Partnership Pilot Project initiative continues to build on the federal government's commitment to improve the quality of life in rural and remote communities. The Pilot Project initiative is one of the tools being used to address the eleven priority areas identified by rural Canadians, by providing funding to rural associations, organizations and residents for projects that demonstrate creative approaches to development in rural and remote communities.

This initiative is designed to work with and support Canadians as they pursue creative, community-based responses to promote sustainable community develop-

ment. In launching the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the multi-million dollar pilot project initiative for rural Canada, the Federal Government has funded the following ten pilot projects in British Columbia, for a total of \$263,933.

#### Tourism Transition Project

The Fernie Women's Resource and Drop-In Centre will develop and introduce a planning model to help the community decide on how best to move from a resource-based to a tourism-based community.

#### Marketing Plan Development

This project will develop a five-year marketing plan for the Alberni Valley Heritage Network that will attract 150,000 people in year five, and will help the Network be self-sustainable for funding by the same year. This will strengthen and diversify the economic base in the Alberni Valley, build capacity in the community and provide opportunities for youth through seasonal employment.

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## Rural Recognized in Throne Speech

The Government of Canada's commitment to rural Canada once again resonated in the Speech from the Throne. According to the latest speech, delivered by Governor General Adrienne Clarkson to open the 37th Parliament of Canada: "Canadian communities of all sizes – whether urban or rural, Aboriginal or multicultural – face diverse challenges and have unique needs. The Government of Canada will strive to ensure that, wherever possible, its actions and programs are co-ordinated to help build local solutions to local challenges."

The Throne Speech is consistent with the Federal Framework for Action in Rural Canada, promoting the application of the Rural Lens in the development of policies, programs and other initiatives. Further, the government commitments outlined in the Speech from the Throne speak to the concerns identified in the Rural Dialogue and build on the actions already begun through the Canadian Rural Partnership.

"From beginning to end, the speech declared the government's commitment to the strengthening of rural Canada," said Andy Mitchell, Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario). "The government will promote innovation, growth and development in all parts of our economy to ensure that Canadians in rural and remote communities maintain and enhance their quality of life and share in the benefits of world-leading economy."

For an electronic version of this speech visit:

[http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/sftddt\\_e.htm](http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/sftddt_e.htm)

### Women and Community Safety in BC

The purpose of this project is to promote the safety of women in rural and isolated communities in BC, by creating awareness and understanding of women's safety concerns and their implications in terms of social and economic well being.

### Youth Technology Development Project

This project is designed to assist youth in acquiring the skills, knowledge and training necessary to conduct analysis of the computer technology industry, and use the training gained to help start and develop business opportunities.

### Community of Horsefly: Tourism Plan for Economic Diversification

The main purpose of the Horsefly Tourism Plan is to take an existing economic plan and build upon it to develop new opportunities for business and employment.

### Cariboo-Chicoutin Preschool Partnership

This project will implement a child care, early learning, and parental support process for two remote communities in the Cariboo Region. Parents will receive training in the Early Learning Canada program and receive assistance in providing the best learning environment for

their pre-schoolers. It is expected that this process could be replicated in other communities in the area.

### Building Community Health & Strength

This project aims to improve access to health services and information for mid-life women in several northern British Columbia communities. Older women in this area have more health-related problems and a shorter life expectancy than in other areas. The project will identify key health issues, test locally-based solutions, enhance linkages to health services, test Tele-Health approaches, and undertake special measures for marginalized women such as Aboriginals and immigrants.

### Community Economic Development Initiative

This project will lay the foundation for effective community economic development by creating a partnership among economic development organizations and through the creation of a common vision, a common communications language, a common planning and operations methodology, and a common will to act in a cooperative way.

### Comox Valley Links Community

### Network - Baynes Sound Geo'Net

This project will develop a user friendly geographical information system on the environment, ecosystems, and community activities within the Baynes Sound area. This will allow citizens to have easy access to a wealth of information on the Sound area in order to plan environmentally sustainable economic development.

### Aquaculture Techniques for the Northern Abalone

Although there is significant demand in the Asian market for northern abalone, wild abalone fishing has been banned for 10 years. To allow for the domestic farming, processing, and sale of this valuable seafood, this project will implement a sustainable abalone farming process in the Powell River area of British Columbia's West Coast. By providing opportunities to explore new markets and test new alternatives for economic diversification, this pilot project will complement some of the previously funded Partnership projects.

For more information on local Pilot Projects, contact Brandon Hughes, Rural Secretariat, by telephone (250) 354-3178, e-mail [brandon.hughes@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca](mailto:brandon.hughes@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca), or visit [www.rural.gc.ca](http://www.rural.gc.ca)

## Community Initiatives at Work

### Successful Pilot Projects Making a Difference

One only needs to look at some of the outcomes from the Partnership's pilot projects funded in previous years to see how this initiative is making a difference in the lives of rural Canadians.

### Revelstoke Residents Benefiting from Distance Education Centre

In common with other small, isolated, rural communities, access to quality post-secondary education in Revelstoke, B.C. has been limited by the geographic location and by the size of the population. The high cost of relocating to larger centres to access vocational or technical programs presented a formidable barrier for people in this community who wish to retrain or upgrade their skills to enhance their employability.

With the improvement in both the quantity and the quality of educational opportunities available through distance education, a number of education partners in this community realized the potential in delivering more programs.

In September, 1999, with funding from a number of sources, the

Revelstoke Distance Education Centre opened its doors, a partnership initiative of the Revelstoke Community Skills Centre, Okanagan University College, and School District #19. The mission of the Centre is to assist community members to access and succeed in distance and distributed education courses and programs. The Centre provides study space, computer and internet access, a resource library, CD-Roms for self-study, and, most critically, an on-site facilitator to assist learners track down appropriate courses, facilitate the registration process, and assist students with learning.

Since beginning operations 18 months ago, Alan Mason, Manager of the Revelstoke Community Skills Centre, has seen a growing interest in the Centre: "Over 300 local residents have visited the Centre to inquire about programs and services. Of that number, approximately 33% have registered for courses, the majority of which are distance programs. This is a 300% increase in the number of people known

to have been enrolled in distance education programs prior to the opening of the Centre."

For further information contact Alan Mason, Revelstoke Community Skills Centre, at (250) 837-4239 or e-mail [amason@rclc.bc.ca](mailto:amason@rclc.bc.ca)

### At the Centre of it All

The Virtual Call Centre (VCC) project funded last year is a good example of how CRP pilot projects are demonstrating innovative, self-sustaining approaches to development in rural and remote communities. This unique project, launched in Nelson, BC, aims to promote and contribute to the development of a healthy, sustainable, and diversified economy in the Kootenay region.

The VCC originally created 23 new jobs in Nelson and each new employee received 6-8 weeks of training on how to use leading-edge computer technologies to conduct call centre activities. The call centre operates as a "distance" customer service centre - agents can receive any type of contact: telephone, Internet, e-mail, fax or voice mail. This set-up allows service agents to carry out a range of Call Centre activities, from

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telemarketing to catalogue and e-commerce sales, order processing technical support and services, and reservations.

This high tech pilot project has evolved into the **C4 Community Call Centre Corporation**. C4 is able to provide employment opportunities for rural residents that in the past would be associated with larger urban centres. Although there are other companies with similar technologies, C4 has found out that their high speed and integrated communication options have been a key factor for success. According to Brandon Hughes, a Policy Advisor for the Rural Secretariat and the BC Rural Team, "this is the first initiative of this kind in Canada...it demonstrates that these jobs belong to Nelson and other rural communities as much as they do to Calgary and Vancouver."

In its brief 6-month life span, C4 has completed projects for the BC Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Community Futures and an international auto manufacturer in Michigan. C4 is currently involved in the Live Assistance Pilot Project (LAPP) for the Service Canada Community Network in BC and the Yukon. Using web-based text chat, C4 agents provide live assistance to citizens seeking information on government programs and services at Service Canada locations. With the multimedia connection agents can "show and tell" by electronically forwarding web site addresses that may lead citizens to the information they are looking for. These new "Text Over IP" technologies are being tested in 14 existing Service Canada sites to see if this can provide 'virtual pathfinder' support to citizens seeking information.

According to Doreen Smecher, Chair of the Community Futures Board, the project is "breaking new ground by incorporating the use of new technologies to create jobs in the region." C4's employment of rural and remote Canadians as software based Communications Specialists shows how technology can work for any rural community as a means of reducing unemployment and diversifying the local economy. "The potential is extraordinary, both economically and technologically," said Smecher, "we are certain that other communities will benefit through replication." Once the pilot proves the technical application of this business model, the intention is to share the results with other rural communities that wish to replicate the project.

For more information on the C4 Community Call Centre Corporation contact Carrie Voysey, Assistant Manager,

C4 Contact Centre, by phone at (250) 352-1933 (ext. 115) or e-mail [cvoysey@futures.bc.ca](mailto:cvoysey@futures.bc.ca).

## Injecting Funding into Rural and Remote Health

In September 1998, the Government of Canada established an Office of Rural Health within Health Canada to ensure that the views and concerns of rural Canadians are better reflected in national health policy and health system renewal strategies. A three-year, \$50-million Innovations in Rural and Community Health Initiative was also established to address key issues around home and community care, access to and affordability of drugs, and the integration of service delivery. *Rural and Remote Health Innovations Initiative* places a special focus on the needs of rural Canadians as it looks to test new strategies and approaches to maximize beneficial health outcomes and promote availability and integration of health services.

Ten pilot projects have been approved for funding in BC and the Yukon under this new program, including: Clinton Community Health Centre Development Project (Clinton); Enhancing Women's Lives in Rural BC (Nelson); Rural Pre-Health Professional Program Pilot (Kamloops); Assessing and Enhancing the Aboriginal Liaison Program (Prince George); Bringing Our Communities Together for Health: An Integrated Health Service (Bella Bella); Provincial Network of CHC Development Project; Advancement of Primary Care for Rural Communities in the Thompson Region (Chase); City Survival Guide: Essential Service Information for the Rural Yukon Patient (Whitehorse); BC Co-operative Health Project: A New Approach for the Delivery of Rural Health Care (BC Region); and Development of a Chronic Disease Management Model for Primary Care Centres.

Rural Health projects are also being funded under various other Health Canada initiatives, such as the Canadian Diabetes Strategy, the National Health Research and Development Program, the Aids Community Action Program, Hepatitis C Community Support, the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and the Community Action Program for Children.

For information on Health Canada initiatives, contact Moffatt Clarke at (604) 666-1747, e-mail: [moffatt\\_clarke@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:moffatt_clarke@hc-sc.gc.ca) or visit <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>

## At Your Service, Canada

Service Canada (SC), a federal initiative featured in our last Newsletter, continues to provide Canadians with access to information on over 1000 programs and services offered by the federal government. Through its 'one-stop' approach to accessing government services and information, SC is helping Canadians get to the services they need quickly, easily and conveniently, whether in person, by telephone or electronically.

With sites located in over 100 communities across the country, SC has firmly established itself as a key player in providing information to citizens. The ten access centres in BC have seen volume steadily increasing. "Since opening in the spring, enquiries have risen from 200 in May to more than 700 in December," noted SC Coordinator Mike Stolte, "Each community has been involved in outreach activities ranging from open houses to displays in malls

to engage citizens, service providers and governmental staff in surveys."

The SC Community Network in BC and the Yukon is currently pilot testing a service enhancement initiative providing live assistance to clients accessing government information on the Internet at any of the SC sites in BC and the Yukon. Through a partnership with the C4 Community Call Centre

Corporation (see the article in this issue entitled "At the Centre of it All"), this project allows citizens to type in a question to a "virtual pathfinder" and have an immediate response typed back to them. Five Community Network sites in BC (in the communities of Nelson, Williams Lake, Prince Rupert, Vernon and Lumby) were initially chosen to take part in delivering the 'live assistance' pilot service. However, the service will soon be available throughout SC access centres in the BC and Yukon.

For more information on Service Canada, please call 1-800-O-CANADA, or visit [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)



# Aboriginal Youth Workshops

## Accessing Provincial and Federal Programs via Internet

Lisa Amantea, Project Coordinator with the Community Futures Development Association, recently delivered a workshop on Access to Technology at a number of the Visions for the Future conferences delivered by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture in several locations throughout the province. These conferences empowered Aboriginal youth by providing the tools that they needed to identify job training and education opportunities as well as advice on business creation. Speakers included representatives from First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, industry, advanced education and government.

The Access to Technology workshop was developed through a partnership



Youths are encouraged to learn about their career options at the Career Exhibits in Nanaimo

between the Canadian Rural Partnership and the Community Futures Development Association. Lisa Amantea traveled to conferences in Penticton, Nanaimo, Fort Nelson, and Lytton, delivering the workshop and demonstrating how Aboriginal youth could access provincial and federal programs of interest via the Government of Canada site <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

The Access to Technology workshop also provided locations of Community Access Sites and Service Canada sites where youth could access the Internet. Among other services, these sites provide Canadians one-stop access to government services, helping them to get the services they need quickly, easily and conveniently, whether in person, by telephone or electronically.

The Visions for the Future conferences also included workshops on the economic future of the respective regions, entrepreneurial and small business development, environment and resource management, tourism opportunities, opportunities in archaeology and historic preservation, and careers in science and technology.

Through their participation in such events, Aboriginal youth are better positioned to access career information and information on government programs and services through the Internet. This should have a direct and positive impact on the well being of their rural communities as well as to their own futures.

To learn more about the Community Futures Development Association please visit <http://www.communityfutures.ca/>

### CALLING ALL RURAL CANADIANS

#### Here is your chance to be a Rural Citizen Representative

Rural communities are filled with valuable information, stories, legends, quirks and characters. The Rural Times (a Quarterly National Newsletter publication provided to rural and remote citizens by the Rural Secretariat) is calling on rural Canadians from across the country to join their Newsletter Advisory Group. Membership is voluntary and will only require participation in one conference-call meeting per month.

For recent issues of The Rural Times or for more information on "joining the team" visit the Canadian Rural Partnership Internet site at [www.rural.gc.ca](http://www.rural.gc.ca) or call toll free 1-888-781-2222

## Youth Crime and Victimization

The *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention*, in 1998, made "youth crime and victimization" one of its four priorities for action.

Through the Strategy, and particularly its Community Mobilization Program, communities across Canada are creating safer environments and involving youth in those efforts.

Young people's behaviour is a mirror reflecting back to society the lessons they have learned. A caring society that sends the message that youth are valued sets the stage for their healthy development. The underlying philosophy of the *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention* is that the best way to prevent crime is to reduce the likelihood of people becoming offenders or victims. Providing supports and resources to youth, and their families, can significantly influence their outcomes.

In BC, there are over 200 projects that have received funding from the Community Mobilization Program to undertake activities that address the root causes of crime. Half of them address "youth". Activities include developing

videos on bullying, peer mentorship programs, leadership training camps, cultural rediscovery events, literacy drop-in sessions, parenting education, and skills building for conflict resolution.

One project, the Summerland Asset Development Initiative (SADI), has attracted the attention of other communities and will be highlighting its experiences at a National Conference for youth run by youth, April 26-29, 2001, in Summerland. The purpose is to learn about the essential qualities (or assets) that young people need in order to become healthy, caring, responsible adults. When Summerland youth were surveyed in 1999, a disturbing finding was that only 14% of them felt valued by the community. As a result of the survey, Summerland has established a youth asset office in the municipal hall and is supporting a program led by youth to help build relationships and increase self-esteem among youth. It has already made a tremendous difference to the youth involved, some of whom had dropped out of school, had problem behaviours, or difficulties at home.

The Conference is open to young people from grades 6 to 12, and for adults who are interested in assisting young people to succeed. There will be opportunities for youth to learn about creative ways to help their peers make positive life choices, to develop relationships that empower youth, to implement change in communities through an asset building approach, and to participate in workshops on communication, cooperation and leadership. For conference details visit [www.dist.summerland.bc.ca/sadi](http://www.dist.summerland.bc.ca/sadi) or call Ellen Lloyd at (250) 494-6451.

Further details about the *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention* can be found at: [www.crime-prevention.org](http://www.crime-prevention.org) for the National Crime Prevention Centre of Justice Canada. Or contact the BC Regional Office of the National Crime Prevention Centre at (604) 775-2293.

#### Interested in submitting a story or have comments about The Rural Link contact:

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