



In partnership with Fraser Basin Council

CONTACT BC RURAL NETWORK

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Objective

Identify, build and share community based knowledge and evidence about innovative strategies that enable youth to stay in or move back to their rural hometowns.

Description

Project Comeback is a four part strategy to strengthen rural youth retention through youth engagement. Communities learn about best practices from other jurisdictions and other pilot communities, gather baseline information on what drives the decision to locate in rural communities, create action plans to engage, retain, and attract youth.

Many rural communities face the twin demographic trends of youth out migration and an aging baby boomer population. Succession is becoming a major issue in many rural communities, as aging baby boomers approach retirement with little in the way of a succession plan or successor. If these trends are not proactively addressed many rural communities will suffer from the closure of their small businesses and the continued out migration of their youth.

In an interconnected world, people can live and work almost anywhere. As a result communities across BC are in a global competition for local talent. Communities that are able to retain and attract a vibrant work force will likely be able to take advantage of the opportunities created by broadband internet access and more knowledge based job opportunities. To do communities must become places that are attractive to their younger citizens. Through an extensive baseline survey, workshops, and five pilot projects, Project Comeback will help rural communities in BC understand how they can respond to the needs of their younger citizens and become places that people want to come back to.

Length: December 1, 2012 to November 31, 2014.



Confirmed Project Partners

- City of Williams Lake
- Smithers District Chamber of Commerce
- Regional District of Mount Waddington
- Village of Chase
- Village of Kaslo

In addition to these confirmed partners other appropriate partners will be identified and approached as the project proceeds.

Outcomes

Short Term:

- Participating communities develop an understanding of why youth decide to stay, locate or move from their rural community.
- Community stakeholders develop and implement collaborative solutions to youth out-migration.
- Partner communities are equipped with the tools to develop youth retention and attraction strategies.

Long Term:

- Rural communities have the tools to retain and attract youth.
- Rural youth view their hometowns as a place to stay or comeback to.

FUNDERS:

Human Resource and Skills Development Canada
BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training.