



2014 – 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the staff and board of Community Futures Central Kootenay (CFCK), we are pleased to report that 2014/15 has been another productive year of supporting entrepreneurs and communities in our region.

At our strategic planning session we refreshed our mission statement to capture what we believe to be the purpose of CFCK: ***We help businesses to be successful and communities to be economically healthy.*** We accomplish this through the delivery of a number of programs and services.

Our Business Loans program disbursed 31 loans totalling \$1,145,311 and continues to be one of the strongest performing loans programs in the province. The Self Employment Program numbers continue to grow with increasing referrals from our partners, and 52 clients accessed the program in 2014/15.

The Basin Business Advisors Program (which supports entrepreneurs and social enterprises throughout the Columbia Basin) supported 299 For-Profit and 34 Social Enterprise clients this year with satisfaction ratings of 4.3 out of 5 for For-Profits and 4.6 out of 5 for Social Enterprises. The BBA also offered its Me Inc. workshop 38 times and its Enterprising Non-Profits workshop 3 times.

CFCK hosted the Community Futures Community Economic Development Forum on behalf of Kootenay/Boundary Community Futures with approximately 70 attendees from around the Basin who came to be inspired, learn and identify opportunities to leverage broadband to drive our local economy. 100% of respondents agreed that this was achieved.

CFCK welcomed four new Directors to our Board who bring forestry and technology sector knowledge as well as human resource and financial management skills. Our loans committee welcomed new Directors as well as members-at-large that bring lending, business coaching and legal expertise.

This will be a year of change for our Board as several of our long-term Board members will be resigning at the end of June 2015. We would like to recognize the service and commitment of the following volunteers: Bob Wright (Chair), Bill Maslechko, Alec Dergousoff, Robert Schwieger (Vice Chair), Susan Snow, Larry Dzuris, Ron Ross and Terry Bambrick as well as Loans Committee members Bob Nuyens (Chair), Bryan Carmichael, and Ulli Mueller.

Looking to the future we expanded our staff team to include an Administrative Assistant to support delivery of our programs. We've also launched a new website and e-newsletter to enhance communication with people in the Central Kootenay.

We'd like to thank our volunteer Board members (past and present), staff, community partners and most importantly entrepreneurs for their efforts to continue to make Central Kootenay businesses successful and our region to be economically healthy.



Bob Wright
Board Chair



Andrea Wilkey
Executive Director

BUSINESS LOANS PROGRAM

The small business loan fund continues to be a core service of Community Futures Central Kootenay. The purpose of the fund is to assist Central Kootenay entrepreneurs to start, expand and, most importantly, succeed in business.

As well as providing access to financing, we assist entrepreneurs to prepare business plans, cash flow forecasts and management strategies.

This past fiscal year, April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015, our office approved 31 loans totaling \$1,335,888, disbursing \$1,145,311 during that period. These loans enabled businesses to create or maintain 90 jobs in the Central Kootenay Region. Our loans portfolio was at \$5.4 million as of March 31, 2015.

Our office continues to be instrumental in the expansion of partnered loans with other Community Futures (CF) offices in the region. This has resulted in 11 loan participation agreements, with our office as Lead Lender in 9 of those loans. Since 2008 our office has sourced \$2.1 million in partnered loan dollars with 5 other CF offices.

We continue to focus on providing small business owners and new entrepreneurs with a reasonable source of funding for all of their financial needs. One of our best sources of new business is through our existing clients. Word of mouth is also an effective tool in increasing local awareness of our services.

Community Futures Central Kootenay encompasses a large territory and as such we invest time to visit areas throughout our region. The level of service and knowledge that we are able to provide to our clients result in increased lending activities, both in terms of the total number of loans and the amount of capital we lend.

As a result of this work in the region, Community Futures Central Kootenay has gained credibility and trust with the businesses in the region.

For more information regarding our loans program, contact Don McCulloch, Business Loans Manager or Val Radcliffe, Business Loans Analyst.



Harrop-Procter Community Forest

SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Community Futures' Self-Employment Program (SEP) has helped almost 1600 small and home based businesses start up and run successfully in the Central Kootenay region – businesses that play a vital part in our rural economy.

The Self-Employment program is a strategic combination of one-on-one assistance, workshops, mentoring, and specialty counselling. The primary objective is to help people make a well-thought-out, lasting transition from unemployment or under-employment to self-employment. Through the 48 week program new entrepreneurs receive instruction and support while developing their business plan. They also receive ongoing training, support and business coaching while they start and run their business. If eligible, clients will receive financial support for the duration of the program. Businesses started through the Self Employment program have a higher success rate than the national average.

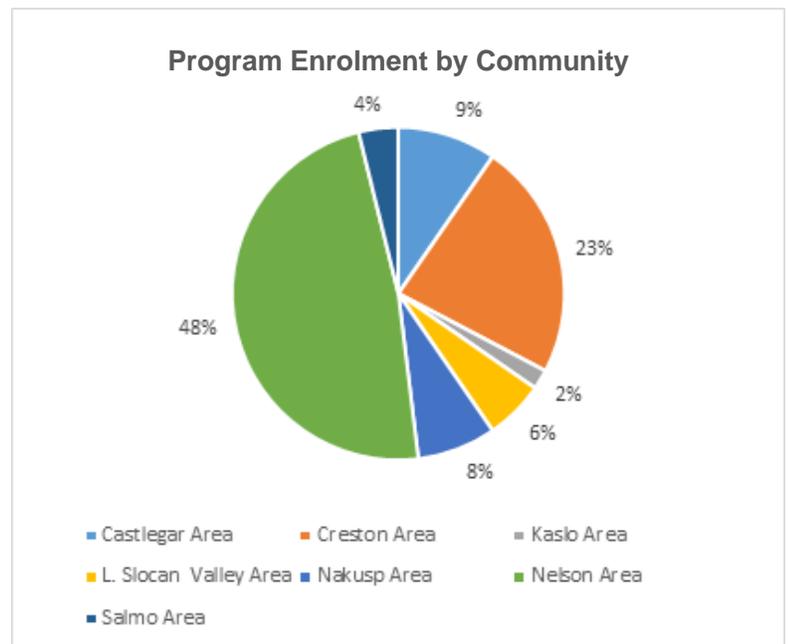
In 2014/15, we assisted 52 clients, and created or maintained 60 jobs. Since inception the program has created or maintained over 2,319 jobs.

Community Futures has been the delivery agent of the Self-Employment Program since its inception in 1988. In 2012/13 the Self-Employment Program transitioned to the Employment Program of BC and as a result underwent some significant changes.

The program's eligibility has expanded to include all of the following:

- Individuals currently receiving employment Insurance (EI), (or who've had an EI claim in the previous three years, or a maternity/parental claim in the past five years and have not successfully re-entered the workforce;
- Individuals currently receiving BC Benefits with a Persons with Disabilities (PWD) status, or Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) status;
- Individuals with a disability who may or may not be receiving any other forms of support.

To determine eligibility for the Self-Employment Program, interested individuals must first contact one of the regional Work BC Service Centres.



BASIN BUSINESS ADVISORS PROGRAM

Advisement Services

The Basin Business Advisors (BBA) Program supports small- and medium-sized businesses in the Columbia Basin by providing free, one-to-one, confidential business counselling and assessment services, and by arranging and cost-sharing specialized consulting services. These services are available to all business models, including social enterprises.

In its second year being delivered by Community Futures (2014-15), BBA served 299 For-Profit and 34 Social Enterprise clients, bringing the total number of clients served to 403 since 2013 when Community Futures took over delivery of the program. Our clients report a high level of satisfaction with the service we provide – on advisory services surveys participants rate their satisfaction level at an average of 4.3 For-Profits and 4.6 for Social Enterprises out of 5. They're also implementing recommendations from our advisors. By the end of Year 2, 83% of evaluated clients had implemented at least half of their advisement strategy, and more than 40% had implemented their full strategy.

Workshops

The BBA program continues to offer free “Me Inc” workshop in communities across the Basin. This one-and-a-half hour workshop provides pre-start-up entrepreneurial education to individuals or organizations exploring entrepreneurship or considering purchasing or starting a business. This past year, Me Inc ran 38 times with 125 participants.

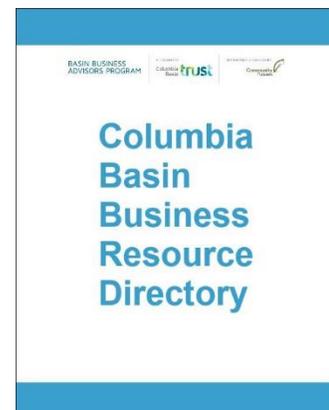
We also continued to offer our Enterprising Non-Profit (Social Enterprise) workshop, which is a 4.5 hour paid session that offers an overview of different models for making revenues as a non-profit. This workshop is a requirement for organizations that want to apply for an ENP grant. The workshop ran three times with 19 participants.

Columbia Basin Business Resource Directory

BBA maintains the Columbia Basin Business Resource Directory, which provides information on business support services available in the Columbia Basin. The directory is available online and in a printed format. This year 350 copies of the resource directory were printed and distributed across the Columbia Basin.

“We sought advice from a BBA advisor as our business was growing but not realising much profit. Will Nixon was extremely helpful! He reinforced what we already knew (but had not yet implemented) and gave expert advice on our sales, productivity and viability. After applying his advice, we had our more profitable year in business!”

Mark Chabot Trucking
& Columbia Valley Freight



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Futures Central Kootenay is committed to increasing community and regional capacity through community economic development. We aim to nurture partnerships, inspire innovative thinking, develop best practice initiatives and promote a healthy, vibrant economic future for our area. Our partnerships, initiatives and projects include:

Invest Kootenay

Invest Kootenay is a partnership of Kootenay-region communities who have joined forces to attract, retain, and expand business investment in the Kootenay region. Current community partners include: Castlegar, Nelson, Kootenay Lake, Lower Columbia (includes Trail, Rossland, Fruitvale, Montrose and RDKB Areas A & B), Revelstoke, Columbia Valley (includes Radium Hot Springs, Invermere, Canal Flats and RDEK Areas F&G), Kimberley, Sparwood, Fernie, Nakusp, Boundary and Golden. The www.investkootenay.com website connects investors with opportunity holders. Within the past five years, there have been 32 confirmed investments in Invest Kootenay listed opportunities, representing \$7.5M in direct investment to the region.

Junior Dragons' Den

The goal of Junior Dragons' Den is to promote entrepreneurship as a viable and exciting career choice amongst today's youth age 13-17 throughout the West Kootenay/Boundary region by supporting the development of: business skills in youth, a network of youth entrepreneurs, providing mentorship opportunities and increasing regional stakeholder involvement in developing the youth business community.

West Kootenay Economic Development Dialogue

The West Kootenay Economic Development Dialogues includes representatives of the communities of Castlegar, Nelson, Rossland and Trail. This group provides collaborative leadership in:

- identifying initiatives that enhance regional economic development;
- creating a unified voice for improving regional economic development;
- collaborating on joint opportunities and solutions to common issues; and
- learning from shared experiences.

Business Exchange

The Business Exchange assists local small business owners by providing a confidential environment for them to share ideas, give positive feedback and ongoing support for business issues. Members meet with each other once a month to act as one another's unofficial advisors with the goal of helping to solve each other's business problems. Business exchanges are in place in Castlegar and Nelson.

Nelson and Area Economic Development Partnership

The NAEDP is a partnership between the City of Nelson, Community Futures Central Kootenay, the Nelson & District Chamber of Commerce and RDCK Areas E and F. The partnership's goal is to take a unified approach to community economic development initiatives for the city and region. The NAEDP's major project for 2013/14 has been to bring broadband infrastructure to Nelson businesses.

ABOUT US

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bob Wright
Board Chair

Alec Dergousoff
Director

Jim Holland
Director

Dan Salekin
Director

Rob Schwieger
Vice Chair

Larry Dzuris
Director

Bill Maslechko
Director

Susan Snow
Director

Terry Bambrick
Director

Charlotte Ferreux
Director

Ron Ross
Director

Frances Swan
Director

Chris Bell
Director

STAFF

Andrea Wilkey
Executive Director

Tammy Jackman
Bookkeeper

Pamela Clausen
Self-Employment
Counsellor

Amber Hayes
BBA Program
Manager

Carmen Harrison
Manager of
Operations &
Finance

Lynn Lock
Administrative
Assistant

Alison Bjorkman
Creston Area
Business
Counsellor

Barb Williams
Central Basin
Business Advisor

Lisa Cannady
Community
Economic
Development

Gord Jefferson
Technical Support

**Kay Ryan-
Schweitzer**
Arrow & Slocan
Lakes Business
Counsellor

Roberta Ciolli
North Basin
Business Advisor

Don McCulloch
Business Loans
Manager

Sam Van Schie
Administrative
Assistant

Marilyn Rivers
Arrow & Slocan
Lakes Business
Counsellor

Wendy Morrison
Southwest Basin
Business Advisor

Val Radcliffe
Business Loans
Analyst

Wade Sather
Self-Employment
Program Manager

Will Nixon
Eastern Basin
Business Advisor



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