

Community 
Futures

Growing communities one idea at a time.

2012 - 2013 Annual Report

Community Futures Central Kootenay
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What a difference a year can make.

In the Fall, we hosted the annual Community Futures (CF) BC conference *Productivity to Profit*. Over 100 people from CF offices throughout the province attended and the feedback from attendees was that we did a tremendous job. The staff should be commended for their hard work and commitment to ensuring that the event was a success.



Over the last few years, Western Diversification (WD) has been working with the CF network to develop a plan to revitalize CFs. These discussions continue and we may see changes in WD's delivery of the program in the coming year.

The biggest development of the year was that our General Manager, Paul Wiest decided to leave the organization after 23 years to start his own consulting company. Paul has carried us through years of challenges, changes and achievements and we can't thank him enough for his hard work and dedication.

We were fortunate enough to find a talented replacement for Paul. Andrea Wilkey brings over 10 years of management experience in the tourism, ski and restaurant industries. Andrea has provided business consulting to entrepreneurs throughout Western Canada and has built strategic partnerships to implement regional initiatives during her career. Most recently Andrea worked with Columbia Basin Trust. Andrea grew up just outside of Central Kootenay in Revelstoke, BC and returned to the Kootenays in 2010.

Andrea quickly settled into her new role and secured a contract for Community Futures Central Kootenay in partnership with Basin CFs to deliver the Basin Business Advisors (BBA) program in the Columbia Basin. This program will expand our ability to support new and existing businesses in our region. For more details on the BBA program visit our website.

I would like to take the time to once again thank the dedicated staff, volunteer board and committee members for their hard work and dedication to the organization.

Bob Wright,
Board Chair

Letter from the General Manager

In 2012/13 Community Futures Central Kootenay continued its efforts to enhance the economic well-being of our communities by supporting new and existing entrepreneurs and by partnering with our community to promote economic development.

Through our business loans program we were able help 21 entrepreneurs to invest \$1.3 million to help maintain, grow or expand their Central Kootenay-based businesses. Our self-employment program supported 50 entrepreneurs to develop business plans and get their businesses up and running. Our statistics tell us that



the combined impact of our business loans and self-employment programs resulted in creating or keeping 150 jobs in our region this year.

Our community economic development activities focus on bringing community partners together in order to facilitate investment and welcome new workers to our region. To support existing entrepreneurs, we focused on bringing peers together to learn from each other and also to provide tools to address businesses' productivity and innovation challenges.

We look forward in 2013/14 to continuing to support new and existing entrepreneurs in the region through our existing programs as well as through the Basin Business Advisors program. This program will provide additional support to existing small and medium businesses including social enterprises as well as offering support to individuals considering self-employment as a career option.

I'd like to thank the volunteer Board, committee members and staff of Community Futures Central Kootenay for their ongoing commitment to supporting entrepreneurs in our region.

Andrea Wilkey,
General Manager

Our Mission:

Our mission is to facilitate and/or promote activities which will enhance the economic environment of our communities through entrepreneurial development and the creation of small business initiatives.

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. In addition to providing access to financing, we assist entrepreneurs to prepare business plans, cash flow forecasts and management strategies.

The Central Kootenay loan program is one of the largest and most active in the province. Over the past 28 years we have assisted 744 businesses, with loans totalling \$29.5 million, creating or maintaining 2,425 jobs.

This past fiscal year our office approved 21 loans totalling \$1,369,037 resulting in the creation or maintenance of 111 jobs. Our loans portfolio was at \$5.2 million as of March 31, 2013.

We have been instrumental in the expansion of partnered loans with other Community Futures (CF) offices in the region. This has resulted in 9 loan participation agreements, with our office as lead lender in 8 of those loans. Since 2008 our office has sourced \$1.7 million in partnered loan dollars with 4 other CF offices.

Although the micro-lending program has been discontinued, we continue to focus on providing small business owners and new entrepreneurs with a reasonable source of funding for all of their financial needs.

Our approach to generating loans clients could be referred to as “soft marketing”. 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.

The Community Futures Central Kootenay region 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 that we lend.

As a result of its work in the region, Community Futures Central Kootenay has gained credibility and trust with the regional business community.



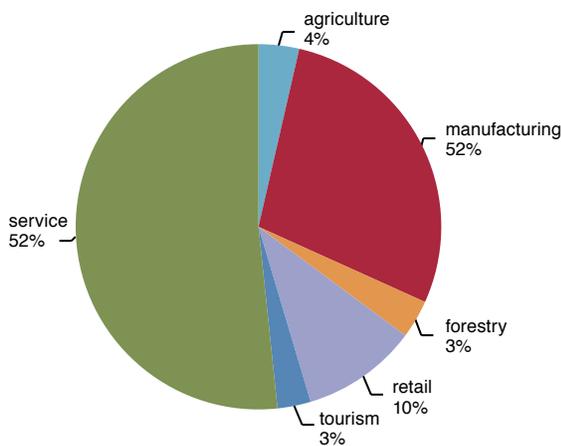
Self-Employment Program

The Self-Employment Program provides support to new entrepreneurs by providing access to business plan and business management training and counselling as well as (for qualified individuals) a bi-weekly living allowance. In 2012/13 we assisted 50 clients, creating or maintaining 44 jobs. Since inception over 1,500 entrepreneurs have been assisted in the Central Kootenay region, creating or maintaining over 2,000 jobs.

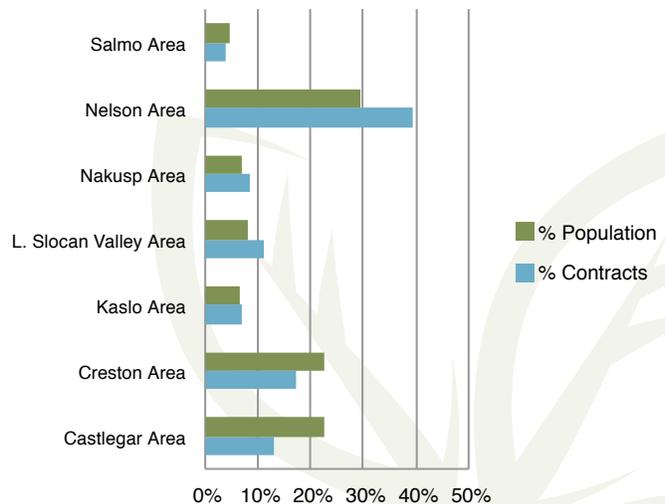
Community Futures has been the delivery agent of the Self-Employment Program since its inception in 1988. In 2012/13 the Self-Employment Program transitioned to the Employment Program of BC and as a result underwent some significant changes. The program's eligibility has expanded to include all of the following: people currently on employment insurance (EI), people whose EI claim ended in the previous 3-5 year window, people who have provincial PWD or PPMB status as well as people with disabilities who do not receive BC Benefits. To determine eligibility for the Self-Employment Program, interested individuals must first contact one of the regional Work BC Service Centres.

Community Futures Central Kootenay's Self-Employment Program is one of the most successful programs in the province. We boast an 85% success rate of our clients remaining in business over five years.

Businesses by Sector - Since Inception



% of Contracts compared to RDCK Population %



Productivity

The Kootenay Boundary Productivity Project was designed to address businesses' productivity and innovation challenges. The project involved researching business productivity strategies from other jurisdictions, creation of a productivity assessment tool and delivery of productivity enhancement strategies for local businesses. The goal was increased investment by small and medium enterprises in key productivity drivers such as physical capital, human capital and innovation.

Welcoming Communities and Workplaces Program

This program was developed in 2009 to encourage the settlement of migrant and immigrant workers and their families to the region. Four communities: Nelson, Trail, Grand Forks and Castlegar formed a cooperative to improve services to newcomers. In 2012 a new action plan was developed. Highlights included: a new WelcomeMap, relocation packages for newcomers, the hiring of a settlement support coordinator, a mentoring and volunteer program and training for individuals who are first points of contact with workers and their families.

Invest Kootenay

Invest Kootenay raises the profile of local businesses throughout the Kootenay region, with the aim of attracting, retaining and expanding investment. The website hosts an interactive database designed to connect investors with opportunity holders. The website also provides a one-stop shop for interested investors that includes community profiles, success stories, and local contact information. Learn more about Invest Kootenay at www.investkootenay.com.

The 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.

Nelson Welcome Wagon

Volunteers from the Nelson Welcome Wagon have been gathering information for the New Residents Survey since 1993. Newcomers are asked where they come from, what brought them to Nelson, what they like about the area and what would they change if they could. This information helps us determine what we can do to help boost economic development in the region.

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.

Board of Directors

Bob Wright,
Board Chair

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Larry Dzuris

Jim Holland

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Coordinator

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Business Loans Manager

Val Radcliffe,
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Tammy Jackman,
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Counsellor

Canada



Western Economic
Diversification Canada





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