Study Overview

WHY WE ARE HERE?

This open house follows the 2024 pre-feasibility survey, where residents shared their concerns and questions about a possible community sewer system. The Cariboo Regional District is sharing the results of the detailed feasibility study to provide updated information and gather feedback on next steps.

WHAT THE STUDY LOOKED AT

Environmental Benefits

A community sewer system is estimated to address up to 15 percent of the phosphorus entering Bouchie Lake, assuming full system participation and proper operation. Other nutrient inputs are primarily associated with agricultural activity and natural lake processes, which would remain largely unaffected by a sewer system.

Proposed Service Area

The feasibility study identified a potential service area of about 182 parcels around Bouchie Lake. The boundary includes properties where septic systems are most likely to affect the lake and where a community sewer system could be technically feasible. The area and design shown are for study purposes only and would be refined through future planning and consultation if the project proceeds.

Cost per Household

Preliminary estimates indicate that yearly household costs for a community sewer system would range from approximately $3,000 to $7,000 with grant funding, depending on factors such as project scope, loan term, and reserve contributions. In the absence of grant funding, yearly costs are estimated between $7,000 and $,000 per household. These cost projections reflect the scale of the service area and the infrastructure required to implement and maintain the system.

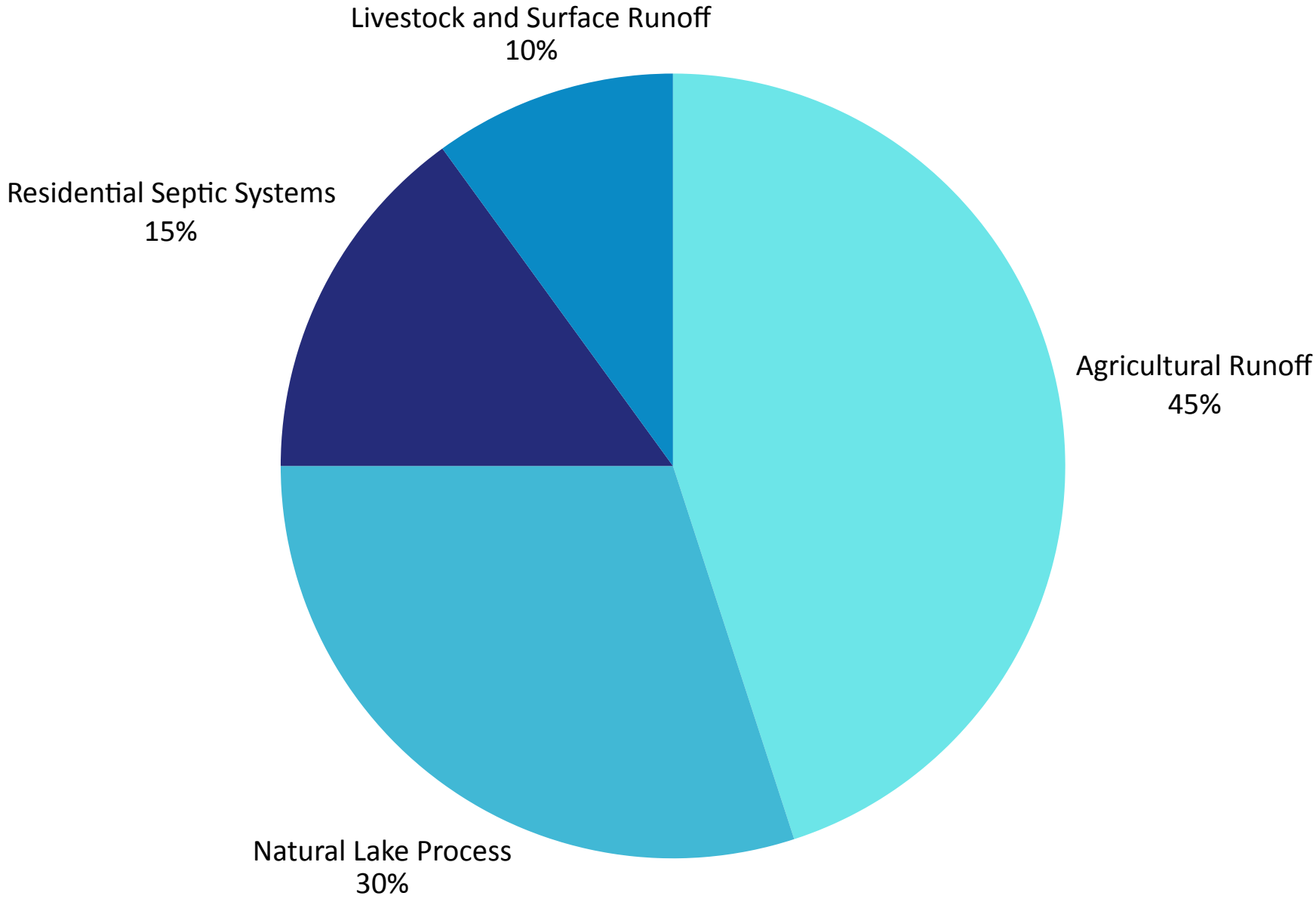
Risk of Gentrification and Inequity

High service costs could create affordability challenges for some households, particularly those on fixed or lower incomes. Over time, this may influence the community's demographic composition and overall housing affordability.

Total Impact on the Lake

What the Study Found About Water Quality Benefits

The feasibility study examined how much a community sewer system could reduce phosphorus levels and improve water quality in Bouchie Lake. While a new sewer system would remove some nutrient loading, the overall environmental benefit would be limited.



What this means

- A community sewer system would offer a small improvement to overall lake health but would not resolve the majority of nutrient issues.
- The study suggests that other actions—like maintaining and upgrading private septic systems, managing farm runoff, and protecting shoreline vegetation—would provide greater long-term benefit.
- Improving the lake's condition will likely require a mix of infrastructure, education, and land management measures.

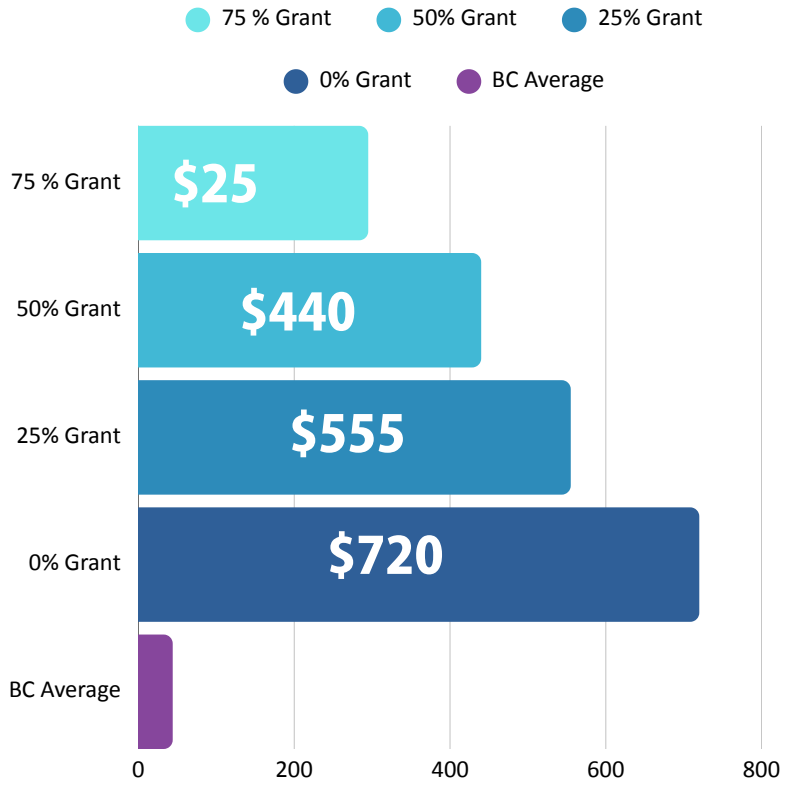
Understanding the Costs

The estimated cost of building the system is $18.6 Million
The estimated yearly operating cost is over $200,000

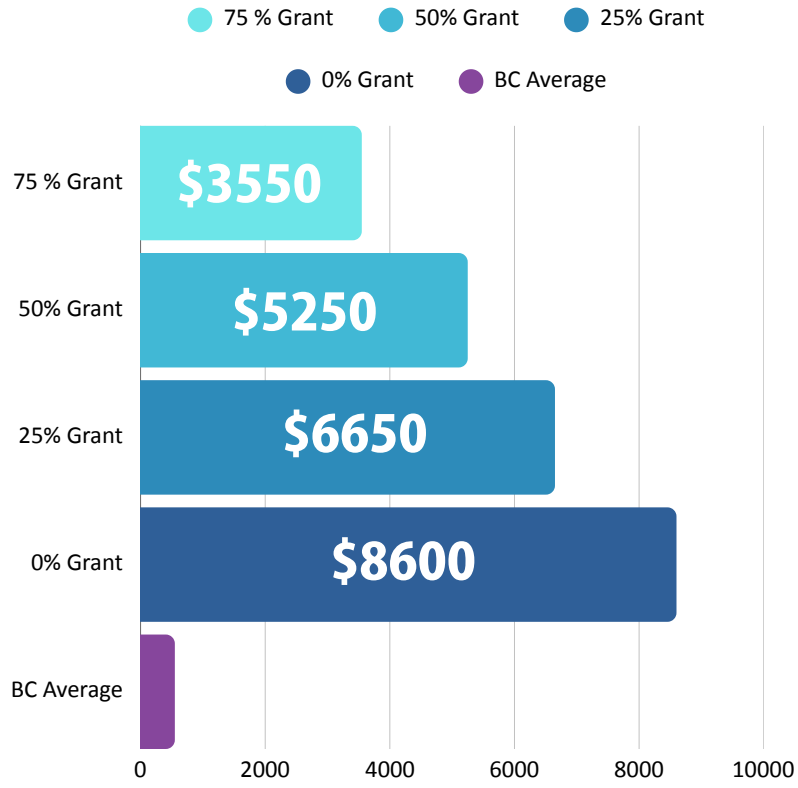
How the Project Is Funded

The feasibility study compared several funding scenarios for a potential community sewer system in Bouchie Lake. Each scenario includes the same proposed service area (approximately 182 parcels) and identical yearly operating and reserve costs. The main difference between the scenarios is how much of the construction cost would be covered by senior government grants—ranging from no grant support to 75% grant funding. Estimated costs are based on a 25-year loan term for capital repayment.

Estimated Monthly Costs

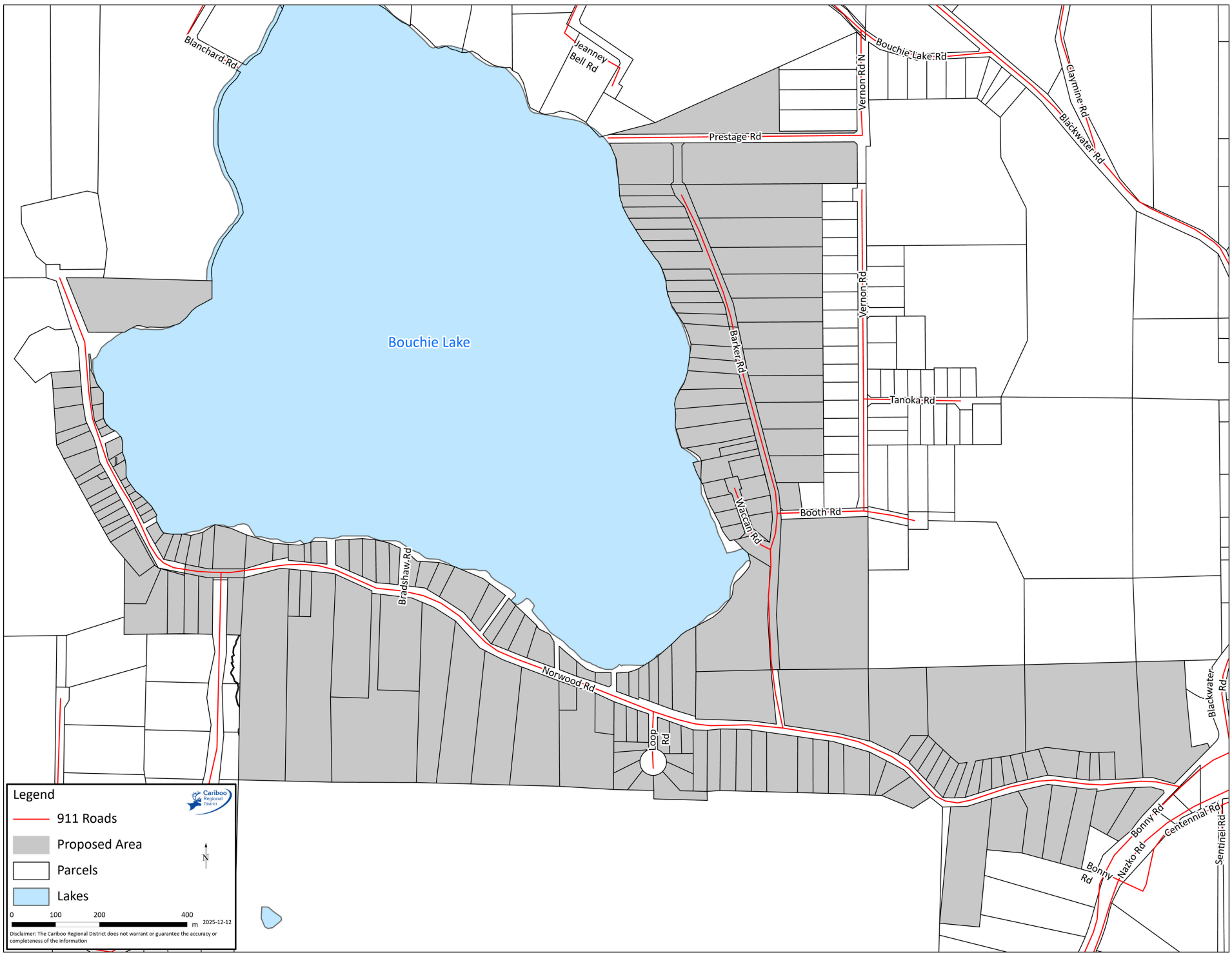


Estimated Yearly Costs



BC Average represents typical sewer service costs in comparable rural communities and is shown for context only.

Project Area Map



Proposed Service Area

The proposed service area includes approximately 182 parcels surrounding Bouchie Lake and was used to estimate costs and design requirements in the feasibility study. The boundary focuses on properties closest to the lake, where septic systems are most likely to affect water quality. The boundaries and infrastructure shown are illustrative only and would be refined through detailed engineering and community consultation if the project moves forward.

Why the Service Area Is Not Larger

Expanding the service area would require additional pipes, pump stations, and other infrastructure to reach more distant properties. These added costs would increase total construction and operating expenses faster than new users could offset them, resulting in higher—not lower—costs per household. Because properties farther from the lake contribute less directly to water quality impacts, a larger service area would add cost without providing significant additional environmental benefit.

Lagoon Location

A potential lagoon site was included in the study only for cost and design modeling purposes. A final location has not been selected, and no land has been purchased or designated for this use. Site selection would require future engineering, environmental review, and public consultation if the project moves forward.

Input from Residents

Purpose of Engagement

In 2024, the Cariboo Regional District conducted a pre-feasibility survey to understand residents' interest, priorities, and concerns about a potential community sewer system in the Bouchie Lake area. Feedback from that survey helped guide the scope and focus of this detailed feasibility study, which compares several funding and design scenarios to assess whether a system could be financially and environmentally viable.

The engagement process aimed to:

- Identify overall support or opposition to exploring a community sewer system.
- Learn what conditions would make residents more supportive (such as grant funding).
- Gather feedback on concerns related to cost, environmental benefit, and community impact.

Bouchie Lake Sewer Pre-Feasibility Survey & Engagement Summary

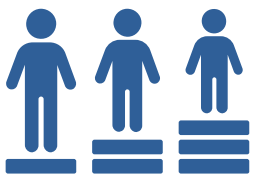
What Residents Said

Cost and Affordability

- Cost was the most significant concern identified.
- Many residents indicated they would only support the project if substantial grants (50% or more) were secured.
- There was very little support for the project if no grant funding were available.
- Comments frequently mentioned the risk of financial strain on fixed-income and long-term residents.

Environmental Benefit

- Respondents generally agreed that lake health is a community concern, but many were unsure a sewer system would provide enough improvement to justify the cost.
- People wanted more information on how much phosphorus a sewer system would actually remove compared to other actions.



Neighbourhood and Equity Concerns

- Several respondents worried that high user fees and parcel taxes could change the character of the community, leading to gentrification or residents being forced to move.
- Some noted that new services could increase property values and taxes even for those who did not connect right away.

Preferred Alternatives

- Many participants preferred maintenance and enforcement of existing septic systems over building a new community sewer.
- Suggestions included shoreline setbacks, agricultural runoff control, and public education to reduce nutrient loading.

Decision Ahead

What Happens Next

The Bouchie Lake Sewer Feasibility Study has been completed, and results are being shared with residents through this open house. The next step is to gather feedback from property owners within the proposed service area to help the Cariboo Regional District understand community interest and readiness before making any decisions about next steps.

SCAN ME

SCAN ME

SCAN ME

SCAN ME

SURVEY

Please complete the survey by March 9, 2026. www.cariboord.ca/bouchielake. Your input will help the CRD Board understand local perspectives on the sewer feasibility study, including cost, environmental benefit, and overall community interest.

Complete the survey or email written comments to kchatten@cariboord.ca to have your say.
www.cariboord.ca/bouchielake

Public Input Collection – Surveys and written feedback will be accepted following the open house.

Data Review – Staff will review all survey results and comments to identify trends and concerns.

Board Review – The CRD Board will consider the findings and determine whether further work is warranted.

Future Planning – Resident feedback will inform future plans for Bouchie Lake and wastewater management.