

News Release

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For immediate release

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Renovations and Upgrade Construction Underway for Sam Ketcham Pool

Williams Lake, B.C. – Today, the Cariboo Regional District (CRD), the City of Williams Lake, along with representatives from West Fraser, Northern Development Initiative Trust and senior levels of government, toured the media and elected officials through the construction site of the Sam Ketcham Pool (SKP) Upgrade Project at the West Fraser Aquatic Centre in the Cariboo Memorial Recreation Complex.

Construction and renovations, which are well underway, are being undertaken to facilitate a new leisure pool, a new tank for the existing pool, a new multi-purpose space and fitness centre. As part of the project, a parking improvement plan for the project will also be carried out during the construction phase. Completion of the SKP Upgrade Project is slated for the Fall of 2017.

To support the project, the Regional District and the City of Williams Lake continue to pursue funding from other sources and have confirmed \$250,000 from Northern Development Initiative Trust, \$500,000 from the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program, \$4,427,500 through the federal Gas Tax Fund, including \$427,500 in Regional District Community Works Funds for specific energy efficiency upgrades, and \$4 million from the Strategic Priorities Fund. This support is in addition to the \$500,000 donated by West Fraser to support the project in recognition of the long-standing connection between the facility, the company and the Ketcham family.

“Our Government is making unprecedented commitments to support public infrastructure across Canada,” declared the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. “Investments like the funds provided for the Sam Ketcham Pool upgrade project are vital to making Williams Lake a vibrant, healthy and livable community.”

“These upgrades to the Sam Ketcham Pool at the West Fraser Aquatic Centre will ensure that residents of Williams Lake, and visitors to the Cariboo Chilcotin, will have the ability to swim, train and work out in an up-to-date facility that will assist them in living a healthy and active lifestyle for years to come,” states Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA Donna Barnett.

“It's great to see this project get underway! The upgrades to Sam Ketcham Pool will support local efforts to retain and attract young families in the Cariboo, creating new recreation opportunities and ensuring this region continues to have the amenities it needs to attract and retain its workforce,” states Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development.

“We are pleased to contribute to generations’ enjoyment at the West Fraser Aquatic Centre and Sam Ketcham Pool,” says Dave Walgren, General Manager of West Fraser’s Williams Lake Plywood. Jordan Townsend, General Manager of West Fraser’s Williams Lake Sawmill agrees. “Our co-founder Sam Ketcham loved this area, and we’ve been a part of this community since 1955. We are delighted to continue to play a part in making this community a great place to live and work.”

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“Recreation centres are the lifeblood of our communities,” said Al Richmond, President of the Union of BC Municipalities and Cariboo Regional District Chair. “The support of so many funding partners demonstrates the importance of the Sam Ketcham Pool for our region. I am very pleased to see this upgrade moving ahead.”

“I am confident that these renovations will greatly improve the recreation and fitness opportunities for all residents of the Central Cariboo,” states CRD Electoral Area F Director and SKP Working Group Co-Chair Joan Sorley. “Through the gracious support of our funding partners, the SKP project will ensure residents and visitors will have access to a modern, safe and beautifully updated facility, now and well into our future.”

“The community has waited a long time for these significant renovations; putting it into perspective, Fall 2017 is really just around the corner, and it will definitely be worth the wait,” says Williams Lake Councillor and SKP Working Group Co-Chair Laurie Walters. “I would like to remind all patrons of the Complex that the aquatic facility is in operation. Swim lessons and all other programs in the pool will still run during construction.”

A Facebook page dedicated to helping provide information to residents and an opportunity for residents to ask questions can be found at facebook.com/SamKetchamPool. A Twitter feed can also be found at @SKPPProject. Project updates will also be posted on the Cariboo Regional District website at cariboord.ca and on the City of Williams Lake site at williamslake.ca.

For more information about Government of Canada investments in British Columbia, visit infrastructure.gc.ca/map-carte/bc-eng.html

To learn more about Budget 2016: budget.gc.ca/2016/docs/plan/ch2-en.html#_Toc446106678

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