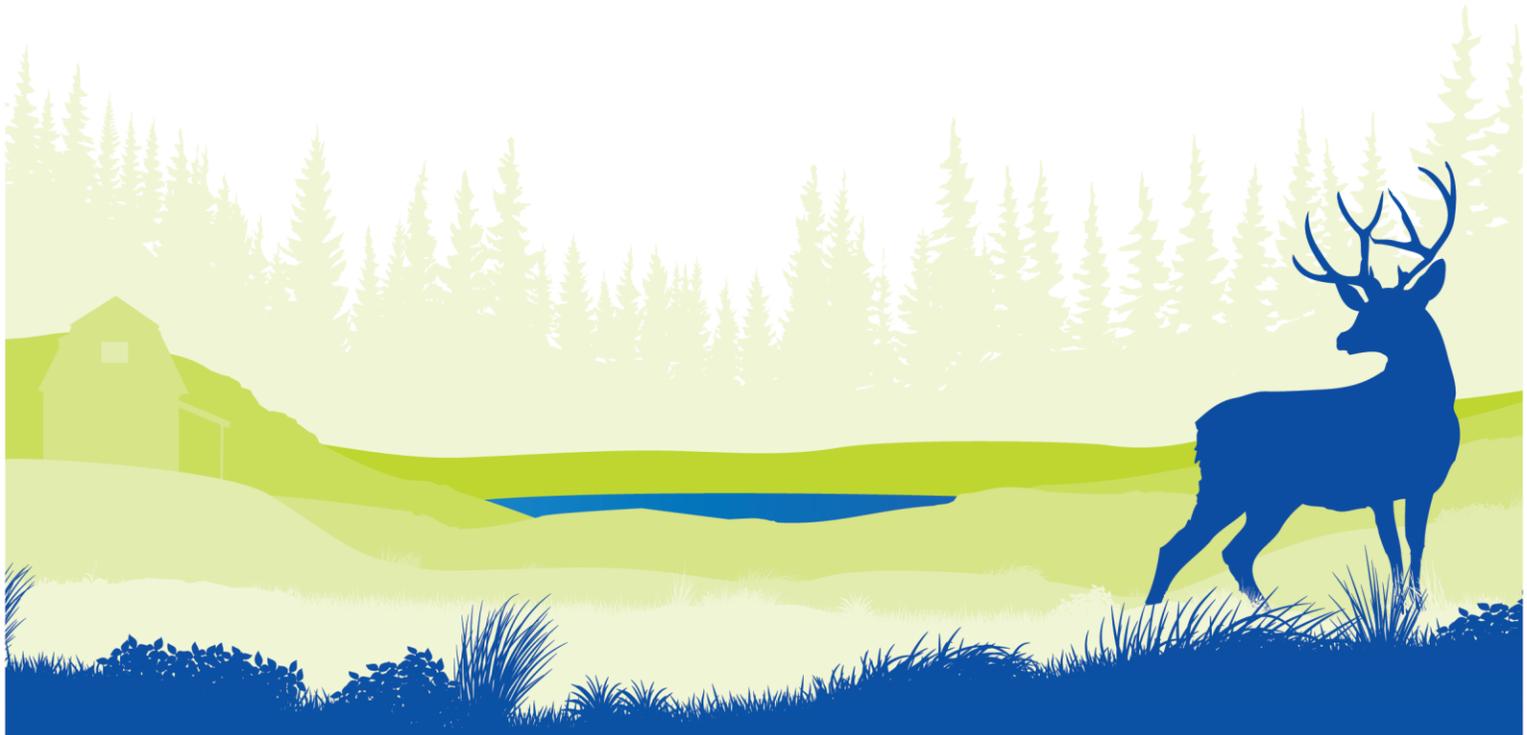


South Cariboo Area

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE



Technical Background Report

Summary of Findings

May 2016

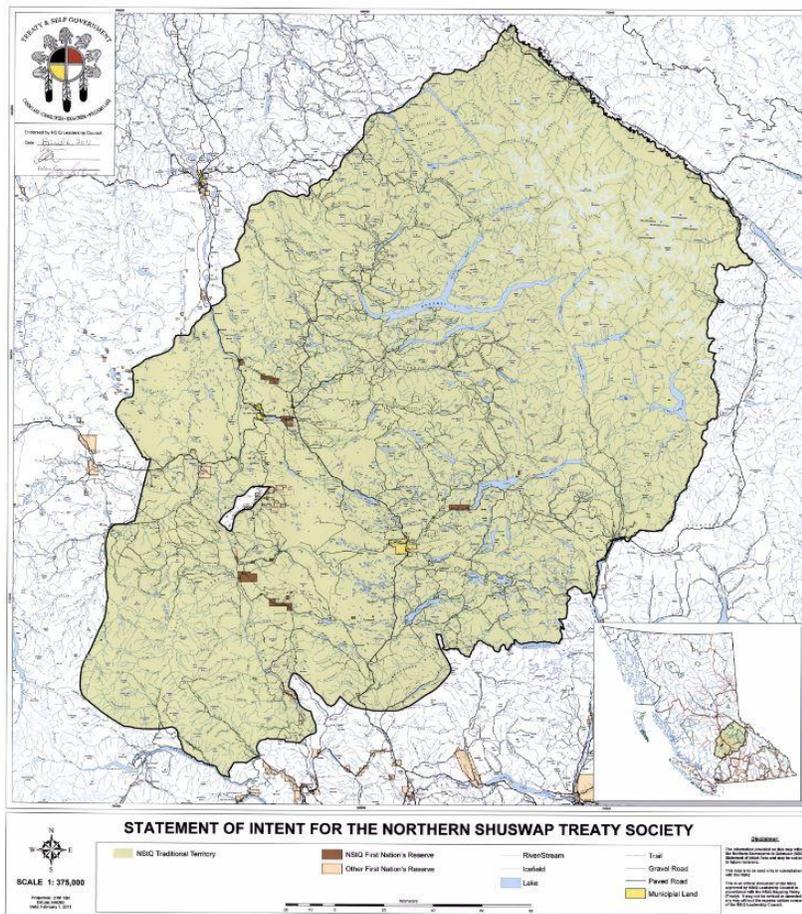
History

Indigenous people have lived in the South Cariboo Area for thousands of years prior to the arrival of settlers and gold seekers in the mid-1800s. The original people of the South Cariboo are the Secwepemc, or Shuswap Nation, an Interior Salish group whose larger traditional territory ranges from the eastern Chilcotin Plateau and the Cariboo Plateau southeast through the Thompson Country to Kamloops and beyond. Southern Secwepemc territory spans the Selkirk Mountains and includes the northern part of the Columbia Valley region. There are five principal Secwepemc communities with traditional territories in the South Cariboo Plan Area:

- Tsq'escenemc (Canim Lake)
- Stswecem'c Xgat'tem (Canoe Creek/Dog Creek)
- Xats'ull/Cmetem' (Soda Creek/Deep Creek)
- T'exelcemc (Williams Lake)
- Esk'etemc (Alkali)

Tsq'escenemc or the Canim Lake Band is the only First Nation with a populated reserve in the Plan Area.

Figure 1 – Statement of Intent (Traditional Territory) for the Northern Secwepemc Treaty Society



European exploration in the Cariboo took place in the 1790's and early 1800's, which led to fur trading. This gave way to ranching, which became established in the Cariboo during the Gold Rush in the 1860's. Roadhouses were established along the Gold Rush trail to serve the miners travelling to and from the gold fields in the North Cariboo. The roadhouses serviced the early demand for agricultural products and included mixed farms with dairy, poultry, livestock, equine and vegetable production. Ranch operations were subsequently established throughout the Cariboo, mainly in areas that offered grazing opportunities on Crown land. The enormous cost of this infrastructure and the unsustainable debt left over from the gold rush contributed to the creation of a single colony of British Columbia in 1866.

The agriculture industry expanded during the early 1900's after the building of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway (now part of CN Rail). This led to the building of a stockyard in Lone Butte to ship cattle by rail to the Lower Mainland and dairy production in Forest Grove and Canim Lake that was sent by rail to a creamery in Quesnel. While the mix of agricultural production has changed over time, agriculture remains a key economic driver. This includes forage, berry and vegetable crops as well as equine, beef, sheep, poultry and rabbit production. A majority of the land base in the South Cariboo Area is within the Agricultural Land Reserve, initially established by the Province of B.C. in 1973 to protect land with agricultural capability.

Core Communities

There are ten core communities within the South Cariboo Area. The neighbourhoods include 108 Mile Ranch, 103 Mile, Forest Grove, Horse Lake, Gateway/Buffalo Creek, Lone Butte, Canim Lake, 97/93 Mile, Ruth Lake, and Hawkins Lake. Each community is briefly summarized below, with detailed information provided in Appendix A.

108 Mile

Located 12 kilometres north of 100 Mile House, 108 Mile is an unincorporated community on the west side of Highway 97. Home to approximately 2,690 people, 108 Mile is the largest community in the South Cariboo Area OCP.

First established by Cariboo Gold Rush travellers and then a cattle ranch, 108 Mile Ranch is now a residential community. A feature of the 108 Mile area is 610 ha of community parklands including 108 and Sepa Lakes and Walker Valley. These provide outdoor recreational opportunities for both summer and winter. Other community amenities and services include an airport, golf course, elementary school, accommodation & dining opportunities, a spa & fitness centre, gas station, hardware and a grocery store. There is also a cluster of heritage buildings dating back its roadhouse function on the Cariboo Wagon Road.

103 Mile

Located directly north of 100 Mile House, 103 Mile is an unincorporated community of 520 people. The area had a significant population increase of 16% between 1991 and 2011.

Forest Grove

Located 20 minutes northeast of 100 Mile House, Forest Grove is an unincorporated community of 315. The Forest Grove crossroads includes an elementary school, general store, legion, community hall and post office. Forests Grove experienced a population decrease of almost 30% between 1991 and 2011.

Horse Lake

Situated 20 minutes south east of 100 Mile House, the community of Horse Lake consists of 1,980 people (including Anderson subdivision and Imperial Ranchettes) and has experienced a minor decrease of 0.5% of residents between 1991 and 2011. It is the second largest neighbourhood within the South Cariboo Area.

Gateway/Buffalo Creek

Located 10 and 15 minutes, respectively, north-east of 100 Mile House along Canim-Hendrix Lake Road. The two unincorporated communities have a combined population of 685 people and experienced a population decrease of 14% between 1991 and 2011.

Lone Butte

Located 25 kilometres southeast of 100 Mile House and south of Horse Lake, Lone Butte is an unincorporated community of 420 people. Community amenities are centred along Highway 24. Lone Butte experienced a resident increase of nearly 16% between 1991 and 2011.

Canim Lake

Located approximately an hour north-east of 100 Mile House along Canim-Hendrix Lake Road, Canim Lake is an unincorporated community of 530 people on the west side of Canim Lake, including the community of Hawkins Lake. The 1996 Official Community Plan did not include Canim Lake. The South Cariboo Area OCP has been expanded to include Canim Lake for the 2015/2016 update.

97/93 Mile

Found directly south of 100 Mile House along Highway 97, the two unincorporated communities have a combined population of 315 people. The communities have seen a resident decrease of nearly 30% between 1991 and 2011.

Ruth Lake

Located 30 minutes north-east of 100 Mile House along Canim-Hendrix Lake Road, the unincorporated community has a population of approximately 100 people.¹

Simon/Straight Lakes

Located 16 minutes north-east of 100 Mile House along Back Valley Road, the community of Simon/Straight Lakes has a population of under 100 people.

Statistics

Population and Demographics

As of the 2011 Census, the total population of the South Cariboo Area was 7,600. This represented

¹ The equivalent 1991 population estimate for Ruth Lake is not available.

approximately 12% of the total CRD population of 62,390. In comparison, the District of 100 Mile House, the largest service centre of the South Cariboo Area, has a much smaller population of 1,885.

The age group characteristics of neighbourhoods have planning implications to ensure appropriate services such as schools and parks are provided, and to ensure that sufficient amount of housing options is available. Overall, approximately 51.9% of the population is male, while 48.1% is female. In the Official Community Plan Area, the 50 – 69 age cohort makes up the most significant proportion of the population, particularly in comparison to the number of residents aged 20-39.

A sizeable share of children, youth, and seniors over 65 are likely to be socially and/or economically dependent on working-age people. The demographic dependency ratio measures the size of the “dependent” population to the “working age” population.

The dependent population includes the youth population 0 to 19 years and senior population 65 or older. The working-age population are 20 to 64 years. The Official Community Plan Area has a higher demographic dependency ratio compared to both the Cariboo Regional District and British Columbia. A ratio of 66.96 implies there are 67 dependents for each 100 workers in the South Cariboo Area. The CRD is slightly lower at 64.57 and BC is at 59.49.

Population projections

Current population projections by BC Stats indicate a slow but steady population decline of approximately 9% or 1,300 people over the next 25 years (2015 – 2040) for the Local Health Area 25. The geographic boundaries include the South Cariboo Area OCP as well as the District of 100 Mile House, Lac la Hache and 70 Mile House.

For the Cariboo Regional District as a whole, BC Statistics has projected an increase of approximately 3% or 2,500 people between 2015 and 2040.

Household Income

The Official Community Plan Area has a higher average household income than the CRD as a whole. The overall BC average is higher than both the Official Community Plan Area and the CRD averages.

Occupations

The most common occupations in the Official Community Plan Area are careers in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (27%). In the Cariboo Regional District, this also is the most common occupation category, but with a slightly lower percentage (22%).

Land Use and Development

This section provides an overview of the existing land use and development in the South Cariboo Area.

Forestry Industry

Mountain Pine Beetle Impact

According to BC Stats, in 2013 83% of jobs in the Cariboo region were related to the forest products manufacturing industry. This observation conveys the level of economic dependency that the region has on Forestry. With this in mind, the Cariboo and South Cariboo in particular have experienced substantial impacts as a result of the Mountain Pine Beetle outbreak that swept across the province beginning in 2000. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations relies on aerial surveys to identify overall stand and pine mortality for the BC interior. Although the spread of the beetle has subsided, it has left millions of hectares of standing dead pine on the landscape. Changes on the landscape are not only represented by economic changes but other impacts include changes in hydrology, increased fire risk and magnitude, and changes to Annual Allowable Cuts (AAC) throughout pine dominant regions in BC.

100 Mile House Timber Supply Area

The South Cariboo region falls into the 100 Mile House Timber Supply Area (TSA) which has seen substantial declines in living pine stands from 1999-2014. In the 100 Mile House TSA, 72% of pine stands were dead as of 2014. Considering pine species comprised more than 52% of the total TSA inventory, this meant that 38% of the total TSA was reported as dead. The total area of 100 Mile House Timber Supply Area (TSA) is about 1.24 million hectares.

Agriculture

Based on the inventory results, approximately 60% (29,997 ha) of the plan area is located within the ALR. Of the 29,997 ha of ALR land in the plan area, 22,319 ha or 74% is currently available for cultivation (once land uses and land covers incompatible with agriculture are taken into account) (MOA 2014). Of the 22,319 ha available for cultivation, 15,858 ha (53% of the ALR) are currently grazed as natural pasture or rangeland (MOA 2014). Natural pasture and rangeland is a critical component to the beef industry in the South Cariboo. The majority of all natural pasture and rangeland is in “treed closed” land cover (>60% vegetation cover is treed). Although much of this land could be brought into production, a significant portion of this land is limited by soil and/or climate conditions. The remaining areas are comprised of 2,858 ha (10% of the ALR) of actively farmed (primarily forage and hay) and 6,461 ha of land that is not farmed or grazed due to another existing land use or a land cover that limits agricultural use, such as forest (MoA 2014).

ALR parcel size analysis was conducted on a representative number of parcels to determine average parcel size. On privately owned ALR parcels, the average parcel size is 20.6 ha and the median parcel size is 4.0 ha. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the privately owned ALR parcels are less than 1 ha, 46% are less

than 4 ha, and 63% are less than 8 ha (MOA 2014). This suggests that a significant number of the total farms could be considered as small holdings or hobby farms.

A high percentage of ALR land is privately owned. There is potential for future farm development through irrigation, as shown in the 2015 Agriculture Water Demand Model.

Industrial

Within the South Cariboo study area there is approximately 188 hectares of land zoned for industrial purposes. Industrial designated areas are located primarily on Highway #97 between 97 Mile and 93 Mile, 105 Mile and Lone Butte. Most of the parcels designated for industrial activity are undeveloped. Lone Butte has four areas designated industrial, located in the core area. Forest Grove also has one area designated industrial.

Commercial

The District of 100 Mile House is clearly defined and established as the commercial heart of the South Cariboo. The fringe areas' commercial services either complement these services or supply a locally-oriented type of servicing. Almost each neighbourhood located within the South Cariboo study area contains a retail store of some sort, a gas station or a restaurant. Approximately 288 hectares is zoned for Commercial use.

Tourism

Tourism is one of the province's top industries following resource extraction and manufacturing. The Cariboo-Chilcotin tourism potential is linked to its outdoor recreation and wilderness setting which features a wide variety of fish and wildlife, extensive mountain ranges, grasslands, forests, and an abundance of lakes and rivers. Because of its close link to the land base, tourism can be successfully integrated with other land uses such as agriculture, recreation, forest harvesting, renewal, and settlement. An excellent example is the 108 Mile Ranch Resort and "The Hills" Resort. Ruth Lake, Horse Lake and Canim Lake are just a few examples of popular summer destinations for tourists from Alberta and other parts of BC.

Residential

Within the South Cariboo study area there is approximately 9,900 hectares of land zoned for residential purposes. Over two thirds of the residential land base is zoned Rural 1 (RR1). This comprises 6,479.09 ha (68%). The RR1 zone requires a minimum lot area of 4 ha and permits a single-family or two-family residential dwelling. The Rural 2 (RR2) and Rural 3 (RR3) zones permit the same land uses but have smaller minimum lot areas of 2 ha and 0.8 ha respectively. The RR2 land area is 1,366.23 ha (14% of the residential total) and the RR3 land area is 629.79 ha (6%).

The Residential 1 (R1) zone permits a single-family residential dwelling. The minimum lot size varies from 557 m² to 4 ha depending on the services provided. This zone occupies a land area of 911.34 ha (9%). The Residential 2 (R2) zone permits a single-family or two-family residential dwelling with the same variable minimum lot size requirements as the R1 zone. The R2 land area is 185.53 ha (2%). The

Residential 3 (R3) zone is similar to the R2 zone but also permits multi-family dwellings. A very small area is zoned R3 - 1.79 ha.

The R4 zone is for mobile home parks. This zone requires a minimum lot size of 2 ha or 1 ha, if served by a community sewer system. This zone occupies a land base of 6.48 ha.

There are two lakeshore residential zones - RL and RL2. Both zones permit single-family residential uses. The RL zone requires a minimum lot area of 0.4 ha and occupies a total land area of 46.85 ha. The RL 2 zone requires a larger minimum lot area of 0.8 ha but occupies a much smaller total land area of 2.89 ha.

Administrative & Institutional

Public Education Facilities

Schools and school facilities play a significant role in the OCP Area, not only for education but also for community recreation, cultural activities, and educational program opportunities during non-school hours.

School District No. 27 (Cariboo Chilcotin) is the public school district responsible for the administration of school facilities in the South Cariboo Area. The school district has elementary schools in each of the three electoral areas which comprise the OCP. In addition, the Canim Lake First Nation operates Eliza Archie Elementary School on Canim-Hendrix Lake Road. High school students are bused to 100 Mile House.

Health Services

Health services are provided to residents of the South Cariboo study area through a variety of facilities located in the District of 100 Mile House. These include the 100 Mile District General Hospital, medical and dental clinics, ambulance service, and health care programs administered through the Cariboo Health Unit.

Parks & Recreation

Recreational facilities and services in the South Cariboo include:

- South Cariboo Recreation Centre, located at 175 Airport Road
- 100 Mile & District Curling Rink at the Recreation centre
- Ball Fields at Lumberman's Park and Robinson Park
- Equestrian Grounds at the Recreation Centre
- Soccer Fields
- Martin Exeter Hall Complex
- Main Beach, West Beach and Stewart Beach at the 108 Mile Ranch.

Parks and Trails

Outdoor recreation sites such as parks and trails are fundamental to the health and wellness of residents within a community. Parks provide activities for recreation such as hiking and walking, as well as protection for wildlife habitat, sporting fields and play areas for children.

Two Provincial parks are located within the South Cariboo Area OCP – Ruth Lake Park and Canim Beach Provincial Park. In addition, there are three recreation sites under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations within the area – Lower Lake Recreation Site, Irish Lake and Greenlee Lake. The 108 Mile House Greenbelt has also been set aside for the use and enjoyment of the public.

Accessible Trails

The Cariboo Regional District has recently worked towards building recreation opportunities that allow users of all mobility levels to access trail networks. Within the regional district, sixteen wheelchair accessible trails have been completed, two of which are located in the South Cariboo Area, the 108 Greenbelt and 99 Mile Recreation Area. The 108 Lake and Sepa Lake Accessible Trails opened in June 2015 and November 2010

Ecological Resources

Vegetation

The South Cariboo study area mainly occurs within the Cariboo Basin Ecosession of the Central Interior, and the Cariboo Plateau Ecosession to the northeast. The study area is dominated by dry forests, interspersed with grassland openings on south facing slopes and wetlands.

Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat

Three large lakes dominate the study area, Ruth Lake in the north, Canim Lake to the east, and Horse Lake to the south; as well as several smaller lakes: Watson Lake, Straight Lake, 108 Mile Lake, 103 Mile Lake, Soda Lake, Simon Lake, Bobbs Lake, Hawkins Lake and Irish Lake and others. Many of these are stocked with sport fish, including rainbow trout, kokanee, brook trout, and lake trout. Within the South Cariboo study area, there is no waterbody that has not been impacted by some form of development. Aquatic habitats are affected by various factors, such as residential development, riparian habitat removal and impacts from land fertilization and sewage fields.

Infrastructure & Servicing

Water Services

The vast majority of the rural communities within the Cariboo Regional District are not serviced by a community water system. The low density of development and the availability of in-ground potable water supplies wards off the need to implement community water systems; thus, most individual parcels have their own private well. Within the South Cariboo study area, six communities are serviced by a community water system: 103 Mile, 108 Mile, Forest Grove, Horse Lake (Anderson Subdivision), Canim Lake and Gateway.

Fire Protection

The South Cariboo study area contains portions of six fire protection areas. However, not all properties within the study area fall within a fire protection area. These fire protection areas cover the main residential corridors and agglomerations within the South Cariboo area.

Liquid Waste

The most commonly used method of sewage disposal within the plan area is the septic tank and drainfield system.

Solid Waste Disposal

The Cariboo Regional District developed a Regional Solid Waste Management Plan with an implementation timeline of 2012 – 2021. The plan addresses specific issues of concern identified by the Cariboo Regional District and introduces new approaches and programs for increasing waste diversion to achieve 50% waste reduction goal by the end of the planning period in 2021. The end result of this planning process is a recommended action plan to responsibly manage and reduce solid waste, minimize the environmental impacts of solid waste, and optimize the cost of waste management.

The South Cariboo study area presently has two transfer sites; Lone Butte Transfer Station, Forest Grove Transfer Station, Eagle Creek Transfer Station and one landfill site near 100 Mile House.

Road Network

The study area contains two primary highways: Highway 24 and Highway 97, and two main collector routes: Canim Lake/Hendrix Road and Horse Lake Road. The most important highway, Highway 97, crosses the entire plan area on a North-South axis. Highway 97 is the main transportation corridor in the Cariboo and it serves as an inter-regional corridor from the Lower Mainland all the way to the Yukon border where it becomes Highway 1. Highway 24 starts at 93 Mile from Highway 97 and traverses the Interlakes area, west to east to Little Fort where it meets with Highway 5.

Public Transit

There are four kinds of transit services available to the South Cariboo area: fixed route providing scheduled service to major destinations and residential areas in 100 Mile House, 103 Mile House and 108 Mile Ranch, Transit provides service by request only on Thursdays from Lac La Hache to 100 Mile House, handyDART provides shared door-to-door, accessible transit for those unable to take regular transit, and Health Connections provides service to Williams Lake.

Energy, Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas emissions

As one of 182 local governments that are signatory to the B.C. Climate Action Charter, the Cariboo Regional District is committed to reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) and has agreed to take actions to achieve certain goals