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10-29

Kersley Officially Opens Accessible Trail

Sisters Creek Recreation site named inaugural Forest Capital of Canada Legacy Trail

North Cariboo – The community of Kersley, BC is the latest community in the Cariboo Chilcotin to develop a wheelchair accessible trail. It's called the Sisters Creek Recreation Site Accessible Trail and was built in partnership between the Cariboo Regional District (CRD), the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, and the Kersley Community Association.

"I am extremely pleased that we have now completed the Sisters Creek Accessible Trail," stated CRD Vice-Chair and Electoral Area A Director Ted Armstrong. "However, this was just the next step in making the Cariboo Chilcotin one of the most attractive wheelchair accessible tourism destinations in the world."

The trail is approximately 800 metres long, and takes visitors to a wheelchair friendly viewpoint over the Fraser River. The location was identified as a priority site in the CRD-commissioned regional Wheelchair Accessible Trails Inventory and Assessment Study completed by Kary Fell of CARE consulting in 2008. CARE is also providing ongoing consulting services on the project.

"Improving our recreation sites and trails is an important part of developing the Province's tourism infrastructure," said Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Kevin Krueger. "Partnering with the Regional District and the Kersley Community Association has helped us expand access to this site to those with limited mobility and I know it will be an outdoor attraction for both residents and tourists."

In celebration of the CRD's Forest Capital of Canada designation the Sisters Creek Recreation site Accessible Trail has also earned the distinction of being named the first trail on the newly created Forest Capital of Canada Legacy Trail Network. This legacy project was developed with hopes that future Forest Capital of Canada communities will continue to add trails to the network throughout their reign.

"This is a momentous day for the community of Kersley, and we are extremely proud of this new trail," says Wayne Charlton, President of the Kersley Community Association. "I feel that the Sisters Creek Recreation site and its accessible facilities will be a huge draw, bringing people of all abilities to a pristine area to enjoy our great outdoors."

Construction funding was provided by the provincial Towns for Tomorrow and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Tourism grant programs with substantial contributions of in-kind effort from the partners. Ongoing management of the site will be provided by the Kersley Community Association.

The Board passed a resolution in 2006 to work towards developing the Cariboo Chilcotin as a world leader in accessible outdoor recreation and tap into niche tourism markets for persons of low mobility. On August 9, 2008, the Tatlayoko Community Association developed and officially opened the first Wheelchair Accessible Trails in the Cariboo Regional District. The Association built two kilometres of accessible trail, along with an accessible washroom and a picnic area. Other priority wheelchair accessible sites currently in development are at Parkland on Ten Mile Lake, Cottonwood Historic Site, Horsefly salmon spawning grounds, and the 108 Greenbelt.

-30-