

# The Nechako Watershed Roundtable

## **What is the Nechako Watershed Roundtable (NWR)?**

The Nechako Watershed Roundtable (NWR) is a collaborative initiative launched in October 2015 to help protect and improve the health of the Nechako Watershed for future generations. The Roundtable brings together public sector, private sector, and community organizations having responsibilities and interests in this watershed.

## **What does the NWR do and why is this important?**

The NWR convenes conversations and facilitates collaborative action to help achieve its mission “to protect and improve the health of the Nechako watershed and its communities”. The NWR is a collective voice across the region working to strengthen community and ecosystem resilience, and to understand the impacts of climate change, extreme events, resource development, and other pressures on the watershed.

## **Who is involved in the NWR?**

The NWR includes individuals bringing perspectives from BC First Nations, the Province of BC, local governments, and other agencies and organizations having responsibilities and interests in the watershed.

## **How do you become a member of the Roundtable, and what is expected?**

Membership in the NWR is open to organizations, agencies, and individuals. The Roundtable meets 1-2 times a year as a whole, and smaller groups (Core Committee and specific working groups) meet 4 or more times a year on an as-needed basis. All NWR members are welcome to contact the NWR Coordinator about ways to become involved with the Core Committee and Working Groups.



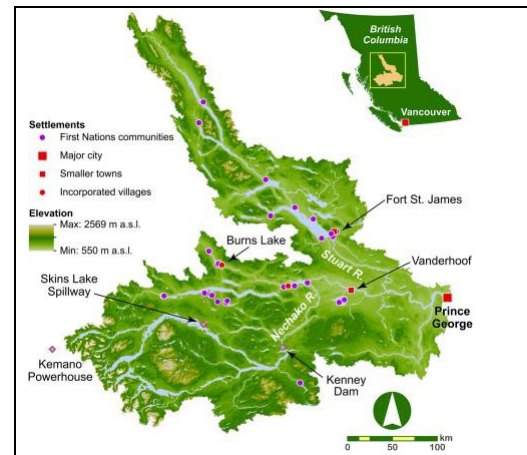
For more information, contact the NWR Secretariat or visit [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Nechako Watershed Roundtable.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Nechako_Watershed_Roundtable.html)

## The Nechako Watershed

### How big is the watershed?

The Nechako Watershed is a roughly 47,200 km<sup>2</sup>, which is over 1.5 times the area of Vancouver Island (31,285 km<sup>2</sup>). The watershed combines areas drained by the Nechako River (originating in the Coast Mountains of BC) and the Stuart River (including Takla and Stuart Lake) prior to joining the Fraser River at Prince George.

Image: Figure 1, in Picketts et al (2016). "Climate change and resource development impacts in watersheds: Insights from the Nechako River Basin, Canada". *The Canadian Geographer*. 61 (2)196-211



### Which First Nations territories overlap with the Nechako Watershed?

The Nechako Watershed encompasses the traditional territories of 15 First Nations, including the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council (and its member First Nations: Nadleh-Whut'en, Saik'uz, Stelat'en, Takla Lake, Tl'azt'en, Ts'il Kaz Koh [Burns Lake] and Wet'suwet'en) as well as Binche Whut'en, Cheslatta Carrier Nation, Lake Babine Nation, Lheidli T'enneh, Nak'azdli Whut'en, Nee-Tahi-Buhn Indian Band, Skin Tye Band, and Yekooche First Nation. Many First Nation communities of these nations lie within the watershed.

### What other communities fall within this watershed?

In addition to the First Nations communities, the Nechako Watershed encompasses two regional districts – the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako and part of the Fraser-Fort George Regional District– and five municipalities: Prince George, Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, and Burns Lake.

### What are the big issues for the watershed?

Our 2015 Nechako Watershed Health Report found that:

- The adequacy and timing of water flows on the Nechako River impacts the health of aquatic species, and creates challenges water security, quality and quantity for other water users.
- The loss of forest cover can also adversely impact water quality and biodiversity.
- The loss of forest cover as a result of Mountain Pine Beetle and associated salvage logging can result in increased runoff, spring flooding and erosion, and late summer/early fall low flows and warm water temperatures.
- The changing climate is going to impact the water cycle, so it is important to adequately plan for future water availability for multiple needs and values such as industry, agriculture, domestic use, fish, and overall ecosystem health.