Nechako Watershed Roundtable Submission to Budget 2020 Consultations

Margot Parkes, Acting Co-Chair
Core Committee Membership

Local Government
- Councillor, District of Vanderhoof
- Director, BNRD
- Councillor, City of Prince George

First Nations
- Cheslatta Carrier Nation
- Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
- Councillor, Nak’azdli Whut’en

NGO / Civil Society
- UNBC (Acting **CO-CHAIR**)
- Fraser Basin Council
- Nechako Environment and Water Stewardship Society (NEWSS)
- Youth Representative
Why does the Nechako watershed need a roundtable?

- Collective voice of communities across a watershed heavily impacted by industry and resource development
- Facilitates collaborative action identified in Nechako Watershed Strategy to ensure the long-term health of the watershed
- Works to strengthen community and ecosystem resilience to impacts from climate change, extreme events, resource development and other pressures
Opportunities for Improved Collaboration

1. Protection and enhancement of watersheds and water resources
2. Collaboration with First Nations, residents and community groups
3. Substantial progress toward reconciliation
4. Improved rural economic opportunities (reduce urban-rural disparities)
Water is a Budget Priority

- Inter-agency gaps in service are being filled by community and grass-roots organizations that lack capacity and funds to meet the identified needs.
- Government services not addressing the needs identified by communities, residents, living in and around the watershed, those relying on the health of the watershed.
- Funds directed to support local leadership necessary to reduce conflicts over water.
- Problems most often related to resource development, climate change, major natural events. Government processes/policies cannot respond as quickly as local communities, nor as directed.
- Support effective, non-regulatory approaches to water management.
• Urgent need for resources to support watershed-level leadership in the Nechako
  • Minimum $100k in Nechako watershed for coordination
  • Funds to support landscape and watershed level planning processes
  • Additional compensation for communities affected by Kenney Dam to support restoration and conservation efforts
  • Support for First Nations communities’ work as stewards and protectors of water resources (Yinke Dene ‘Uza’ne Surface Water Management Policy)