

Economic Profile of the Northwest



Here are a few facts about our Northwest economy...

Forestry

- Northwest BC's forestry industry has continued to struggle as a result of pine beetle spread, drop in lumber prices, and a lack of access to International markets.
- The closure of the Eurocan mill in Kitimat is the latest in a series of mill closures affecting communities across the province.
- Proposals for innovative new wood product uses including bioenergy and building materials could help to revive the industry.

Fishing

- Fishing-related activities accounted for 0.17% of Canada's GDP in 2007 as compared with 0.61% in 1990.
- This year saw one of the worst salmon runs in BC's history and the industry continues to struggle to adapt to the crisis.
- Various groups have come together to protect the Skeena Watershed and our fisheries. See <http://skeenawatershed.com>.
- With one of the richest fisheries in the world, the Northwest is looking to integrated-local management to provide for future generations.

Mining

- By late 2008, a 50-70% reduction in the price of some metals caused a sharp drop in mining. Although mineral exploration expenditures are down from the record high set in 2007, they still represent \$140 million in the region.
- Upcoming regional mining projects include Red Chris, Mt. Milligan, and Galore Creek.

Tourism

- Employment in the accommodation and food services industry in Northwest BC grew in the summer of 2008 employing 4,600 people.
- 2008 was a great year for the Port of Prince Rupert's cruise business, which brought in more than 10 million.
- The economic downturn negatively impacted tourism numbers for 2009 but the industry maintains great potential to contribute to a diversified and resilient economy.

Alternative Energy

- The Northwest is developing its extensive potential for alternative energy production.
- Xeitl, a Tlingit-owned power company, recently built a run-of-river, two-megawatt hydro power project on Pine Creek near Atlin.
- Terrace will soon have a 500,000 metric tonne per year wood pellet facility that will make industrial wood pellets from local hemlock fibre sources harvested from sustainably managed forests.
- The Naikun Wind project off Haida Gwaii received environmental approval in December of 2009. The 396 MW project will create 200 construction jobs and employ 50 people permanently.
- A \$25 million partnership deal between the Suskwa Chiefs and Pacific Northwest BioMass Corporation was recently signed for a biomass power generation facility in the Gitksan Territory. The co-gen plant is expected to create 125 jobs for the Gitksan.

RENEWAL NORTHWEST

Renewal Northwest brings together First Nations leaders, environmental activists, businesses and non-profits to talk about a future economy, a greener economy, for our region. The objectives are to:

- develop a vision about how communities should look a generation from now and what kinds of development would be needed.
- develop ways to evaluate whether proposed activities would be consistent with this vision.

Renewal Northwest reflects seriously about how economic development can meet the standards and values of the peoples, places and cultures of the region.

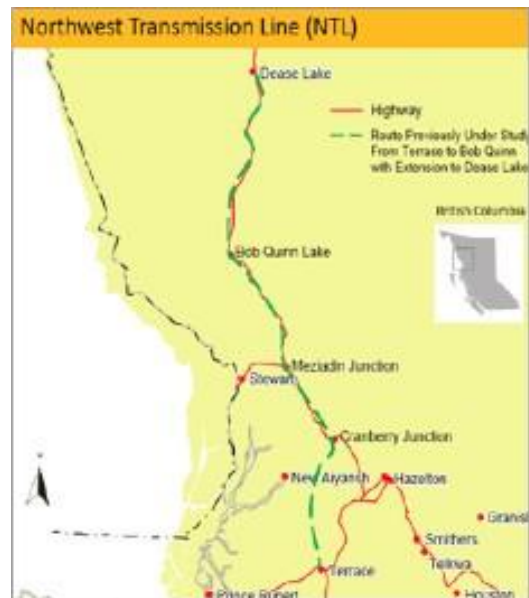
Watch for updates at http://nathancullen.com/news/article/renewal_northwest/.

Nathan Cullen, Member of Parliament, Skeena-Bulkley Valley
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Prospective Northwestern Economic Projects

Northwest Transmission Line (NTL)

The proposed Transmission Line is a 335 km, 287 kV transmission line between Skeena Substation (near Terrace) and a new substation to be built near Bob Quinn Lake. The NTL would provide a reliable supply of clean power to residents and for further mining and industrial developments in the area. For more information, visit <http://www.bctc.com/projects/ntl/> and <http://www.highway37.com/s/Home.asp>.



Prince Rupert Fairview Container Terminal

The proposed terminal expansion would nearly triple the size of the current facility to accommodate the continued growth in regional export traffic anticipated to develop over the next decade. The second phase expansion of this high-speed, congestion-free trade corridor between Asia and North America is dependent upon the concluding of the environmental assessment currently under review by federal regulatory agencies. For more information, see <http://www.rupertport.com/> and <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/document-eng.cfm?document=39345>.

Enbridge Northern Gateway

This pipeline project proposes to build twin pipelines 1,170 kilometres from Alberta's Tar Sands to B.C.'s coast at Kitimat. If approved, the pipelines will travel through the salmon-bearing Upper Fraser and Skeena watersheds and will open our northern coastal waters to oil supertanker traffic. While this project promises economic benefits, serious risks are also involved. Read more about it at <http://www.oilsandswatch.org/> and <http://www.northerngateway.ca/>

Want to do your own research? Check out the following sources:

The Creation of Sustainable Wealth: An Economic Strategy of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations is a research and development project to create a comprehensive northern region economic strategy – <http://www.nwtgroup.com/economic.html>.

Northern BC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Project (UNBC): This community driven project explores community and economic development in northwestern BC – <http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/nev2.html>.

Omineca Beetle Action Coalition includes the region between Prince George and Smithers, led by a Board of the region's Mayors and Regional District Chairs – www.ominaccoalition.ca.

Regional Employment Projections: BC stats on labour force data and employment projections – <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/DATA/lss/repmp.asp>.

Terrace Economic Development Authority is a public-private partnership promoting the growth and diversification of Terrace's economy – <http://www.teda.ca>.