

2014 State of the Basin SNAPSHOT REPORT

**86% of residents say they
love where they live.**

What else do we know about our region?

STATE OF THE BASIN AT A GLANCE

PILLAR	THEME	HIGHLIGHT
	Business Climate & Sectors	Consumer confidence is on the rise throughout the region
	Workforce	The Kootenay Development Region saw the most job growth of all BC regions last year
	Infrastructure	Our landfills receive an average of 647 kg of waste per person per year
	Housing	The median residential property value is \$261,000
	Demographics	18% of the population is over 65
	Education & Learning	54.2% of residents have completed post-secondary education
	Health & Wellness	More children are experiencing challenges related to early childhood development
	Civic Engagement & Safety	The majority of poll respondents donated to charity last year
	Arts	Most households spend up to \$500/year on arts, heritage and/or cultural activities
	Culture	There are over 100 festivals across our region each year
	Heritage	Our region has at least 95 museums or historical societies
	Recreation	70% of poll respondents say they have adequate leisure time
	Air & Climate	Fine particulate matter readings (a key air quality determinant) were higher in 2013
	Water	Late summer stream flow volume is declining in 97% of streams
	Land & Food	71% of poll respondents grow some of their own food
	Biodiversity	100 bears are destroyed annually due to conflict with humans

The State of the Basin is a Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) initiative that monitors and reports on information relating to the well-being of the Columbia Basin-Boundary Region. The 2014 Snapshot Report provides current highlights of ongoing State of the Basin research.

For more information visit www.cbrdi.ca/state-of-the-basin.



COLUMBIA BASIN
RDI
RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

USING RESEARCH TO IMPROVE REGIONAL WELL-BEING

Every day, Basin-Boundary communities make decisions that influence our region's development path. Local governments plan for future demand for services. Non-profit initiatives establish programs to serve the needs of local residents and the environment. Entrepreneurs determine where to locate their small business. In order to ensure these decisions are sound, we need research on economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions and trends. The primary goal of the State of the Basin project is to provide access to the data communities need to make decisions that lead to greater regional well-being.

THE BASIN-BOUNDARY REGION

The Basin-Boundary region, with a population of over 161,000, encompasses more than 8.6 million hectares of land in southeastern British Columbia. It includes the Regional Districts of Kootenay Boundary, Central Kootenay, and East Kootenay, as well as the Village of Valemount and a portion of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Three development regions are also included in whole or in part.

DATA SOURCES

State of the Basin research draws on data from a variety of sources including federal, provincial, and local governments, not-for-profit initiatives, and other research organizations. To download data and view the source, visit the [Digital Basin](#).

Some information in the Snapshot Report was collected by the RDI or partner researchers, either through an August 2014 poll of 400 Basin-Boundary residents, or a survey of over 600 businesses across the region. These poll-based statistics are marked with a **P** symbol.



LEARN MORE

The digital version of this report includes links to in-depth data and analysis on the RDI website. [Click on the page headings or individual facts to go online.](#)



State of the Basin findings have been developed by a team of qualified researchers. A variety of data sets were used to develop indicator findings and as such community groupings may vary from indicator to indicator. In some cases community-specific data is not available. State of the Basin research should not be considered to be a complete analysis and we make no warranty as to the quality, accuracy or completeness of the data. The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, Selkirk College and Columbia Basin Trust will not be liable for any direct or indirect loss resulting from the use of or reliance on this data.



BUSINESS CLIMATE & SECTORS

P CONSUMER CONFIDENCE is on the rise, with 34% of poll respondents reporting they are better off financially as compared to 6 months ago (up from 27% last year).



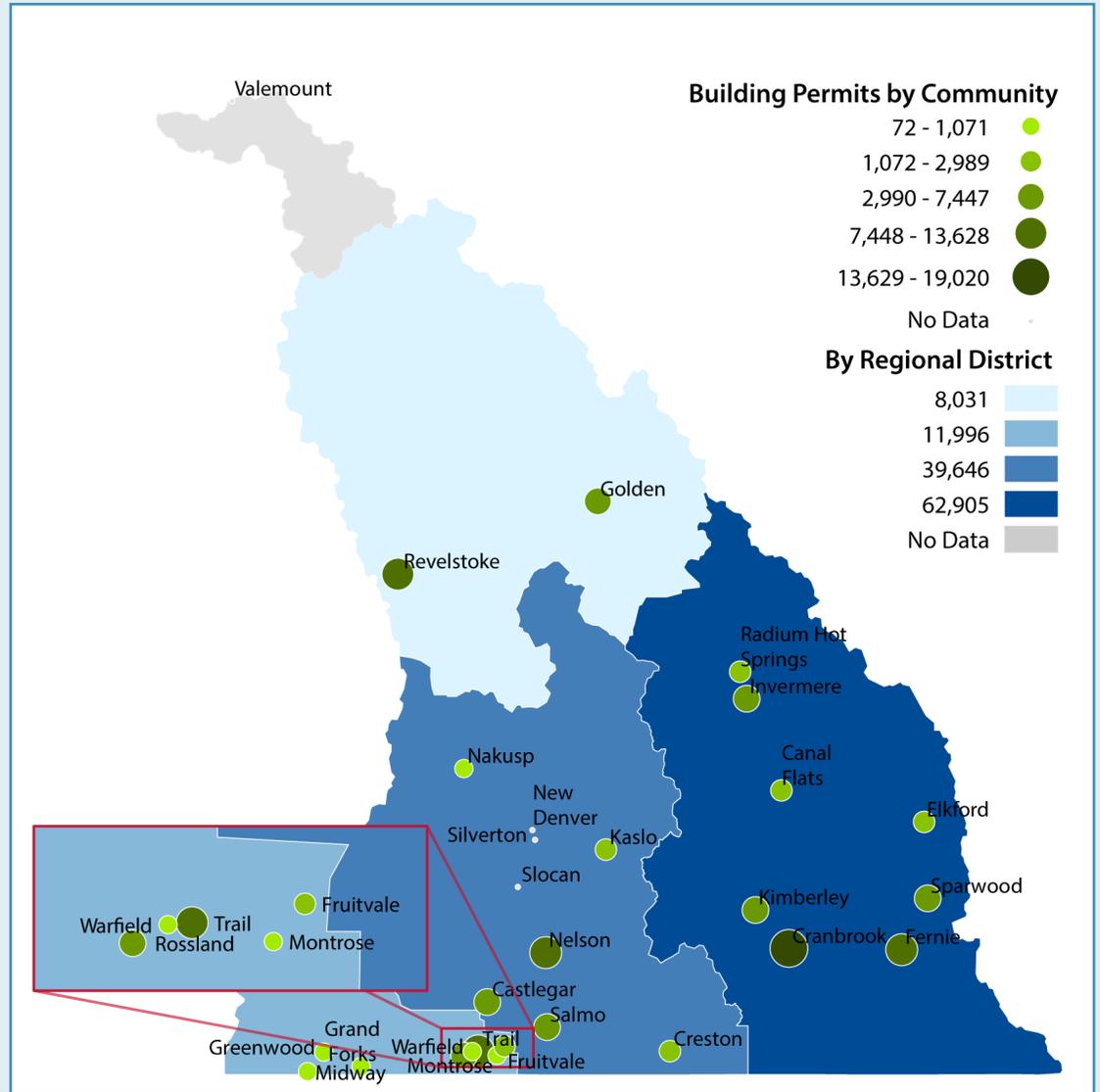
This year, all Basin-Boundary communities saw higher **HOTEL ROOM REVENUES**. Rates of increase were highest in Revelstoke (14%) and lowest in Fernie (3%).



The Trade sector saw the greatest **JOB GROWTH** in the Kootenay Development Region from 2012 to 2013, while Manufacturing led in the Thompson-Okanagan, and Public Administration led in the Cariboo.

All Basin-Boundary Regional Districts saw **GROWTH IN BUSINESS COUNTS** in 2013. The rate of change was highest in the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (5.2%) and lowest in the Regional District of East Kootenay (1.7%).

Fewer **BUILDING PERMITS** were issued in our region in 2013 as compared to 2012, although some communities within the region saw growth.





WORKFORCE

P

15%

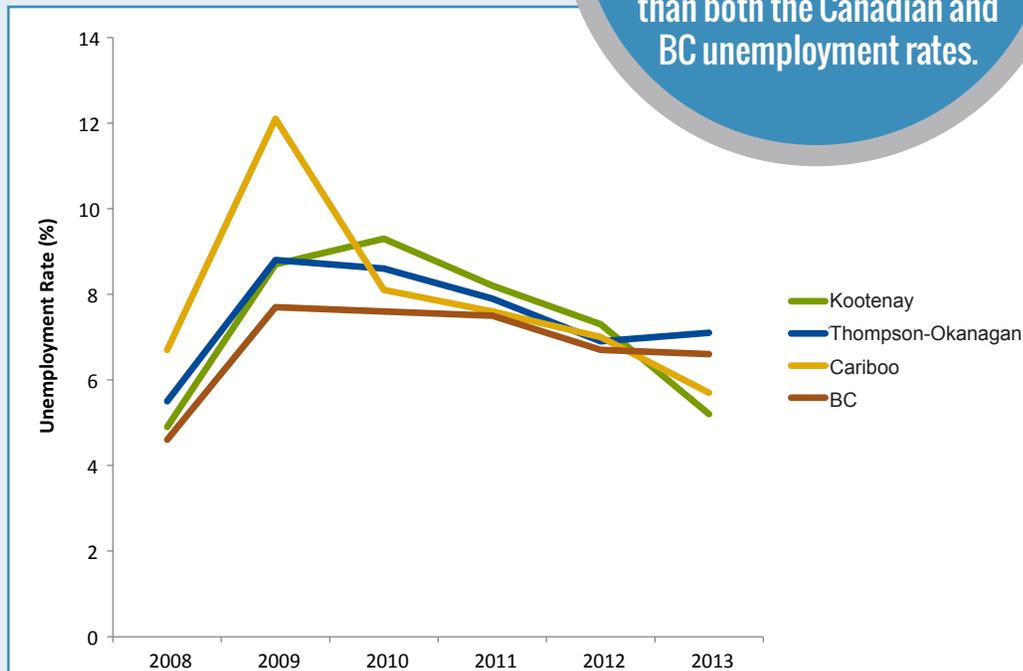
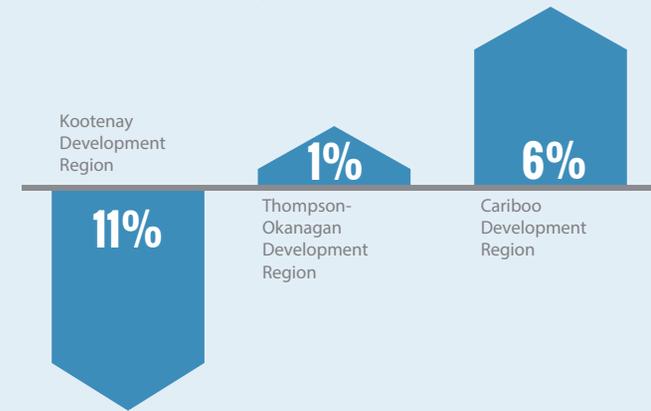
Only 15% of poll respondents agree that there are sufficient **JOB OPPORTUNITIES** available in their community.



As compared to 2012, 2013 median **HOURLY WAGES** fell by 11% in the Kootenay Development Region (DR), increased by 1% in the Thompson-Okanagan DR, and increased by 6% in the Cariboo DR.



Unemployment rates in both the Kootenay and Cariboo Development Regions have hit their lowest levels since the 2009 Great Recession. These are lower than both the Canadian and BC unemployment rates.



P

44%

of businesses surveyed reported difficulties **RECRUITING FOR POSITIONS** at their firm.

The Kootenay Development Region experienced **JOB GROWTH** for the 3rd year in a row with 3,100 new jobs created last year – the highest job creation rate in BC. The Cariboo region saw roughly 3,900 job losses, while the Thompson-Okanagan region saw roughly 7,500 **JOB LOSSES**.



INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING

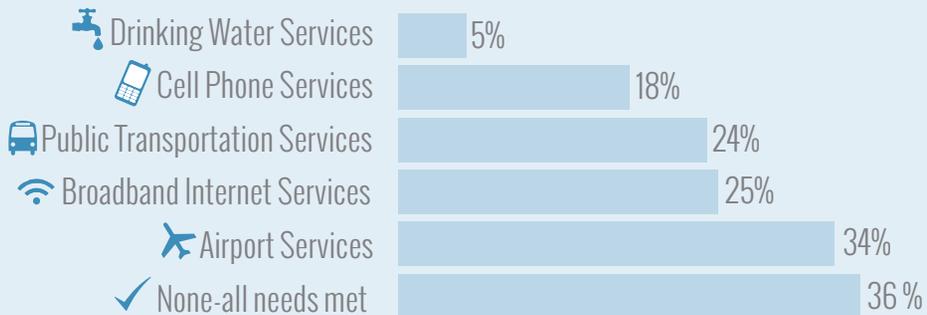
Our region's **WASTE DISPOSAL** rate (647 kg/person/year) is 13% higher than the BC average.



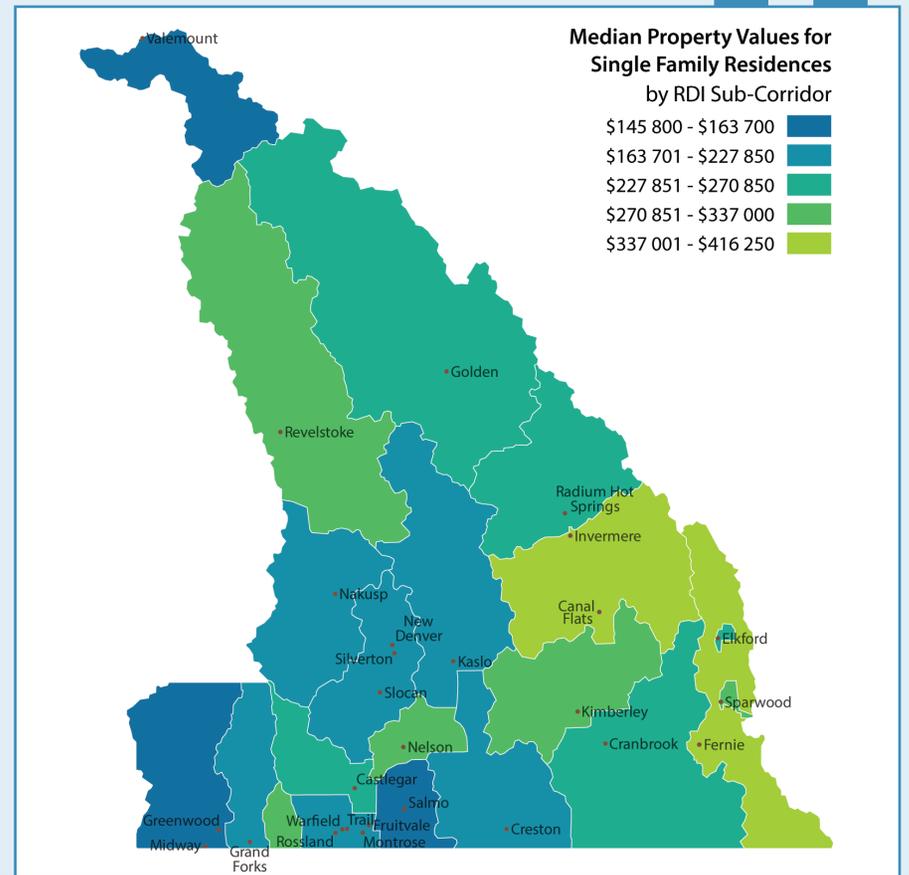
68% of developed properties are within **1 km** of a fixed transit route.



P Some poll respondents report that certain **INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES** don't meet their needs, including the following:



P 90% of poll respondents have been able to find a suitable home that they can afford. The median **PROPERTY VALUE** for single family residences is \$261,000.





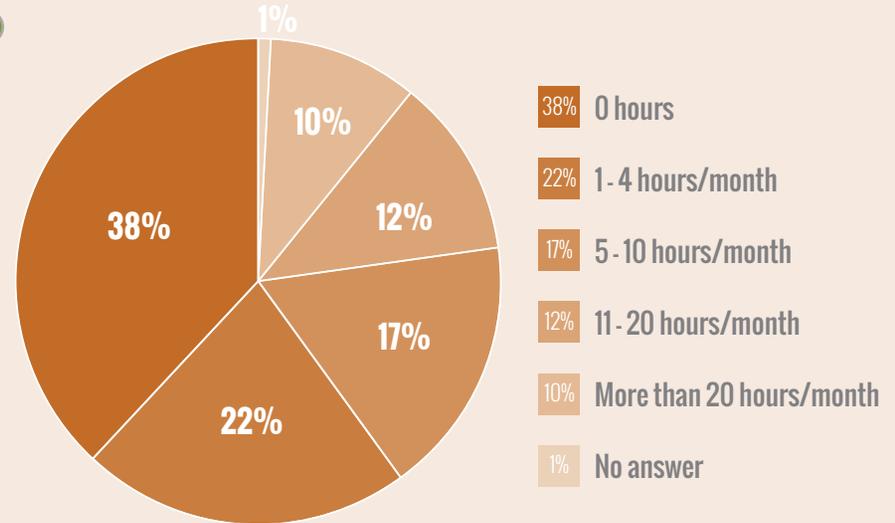
DEMOGRAPHICS, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & SAFETY

CRIME RATES in our region are generally lower than the provincial average, except in the Windermere and Grand Forks Local Health Areas.

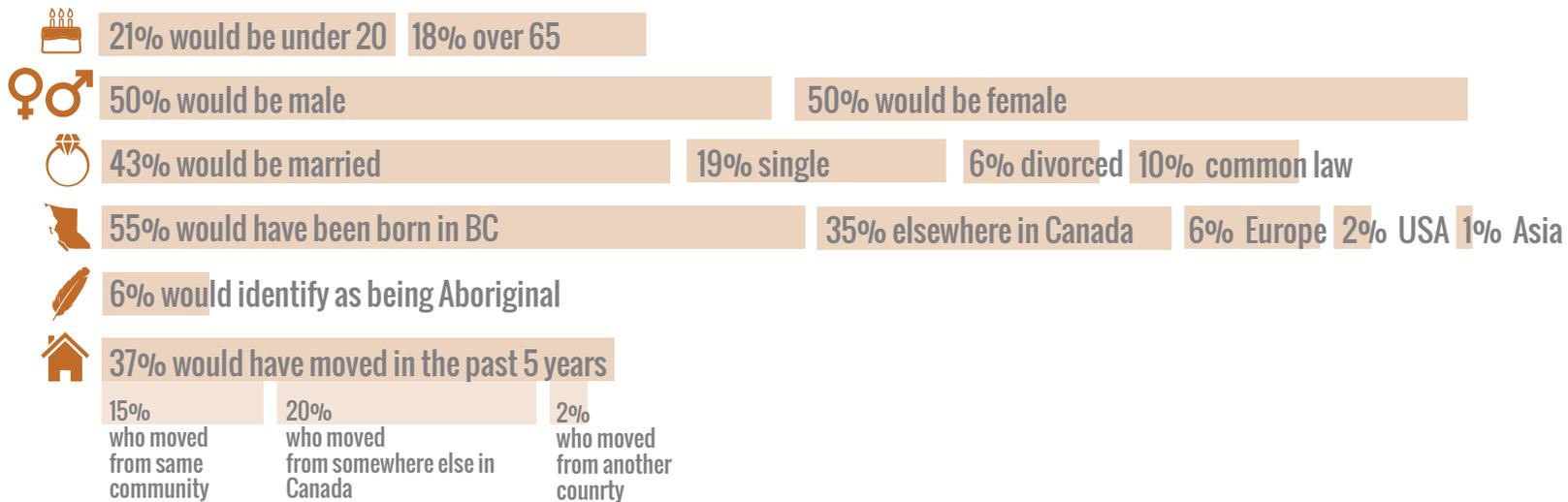


AVERAGE TIME SPENT VOLUNTEERING

P



IF THE BASIN-BOUNDARY REGION WAS A COMMUNITY OF 100 PEOPLE



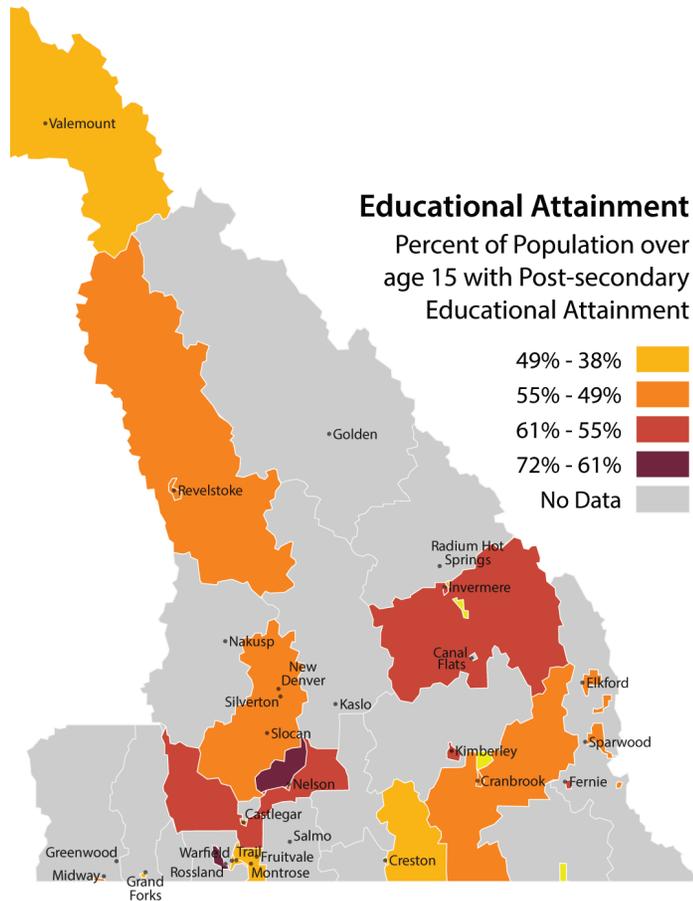


EDUCATION & LEARNING

Across the Basin-Boundary -

54.2% of the population over the age of 15 has completed **POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**.

15% has a university bachelor's degree or higher.



Like the majority of districts across the province, **STUDENT ENROLLMENT** has declined in all 7 of our school districts over the past 6 years.

- P** Nearly 1 in 4 poll respondents say that “**EDUCATION**” as a social service in their community does not adequately meet their needs. 11% say that “**CHILD CARE**” does not adequately meet their needs.

Most school districts in our region have average or above-average **HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION** rates.

School District	Average % Completion for 2006-13	Trend
Southeast Kootenay (SD 5)	78.9	↑
Kootenay Lake (SD 8)	76.7	↓
Kootenay-Columbia (SD 20)	81.3	Stable
Rocky Mountain (SD 6)	80.2	↓
Revelstoke (SD 19)	87.8	↑
Arrow Lakes (SD 10)	86.7	↑
Boundary (SD 51)	86.3	↑
BC	80.6	↑



HEALTH & WELLNESS



Incomes are **MORE EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED IN ALL** Basin-Boundary communities as compared to the Canadian and BC averages. **INCOME INEQUALITY** is highest in Fernie, Sparwood and Rossland, and lowest in Slocan and RDCK Areas C and D.

P

86% of poll respondents say they are generally **SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIFE.**

P

High levels of **SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS** generally indicate positive well-being. 45% of poll respondents meet socially with friends or relatives more than once a week, while about a quarter do the same once a month or less.



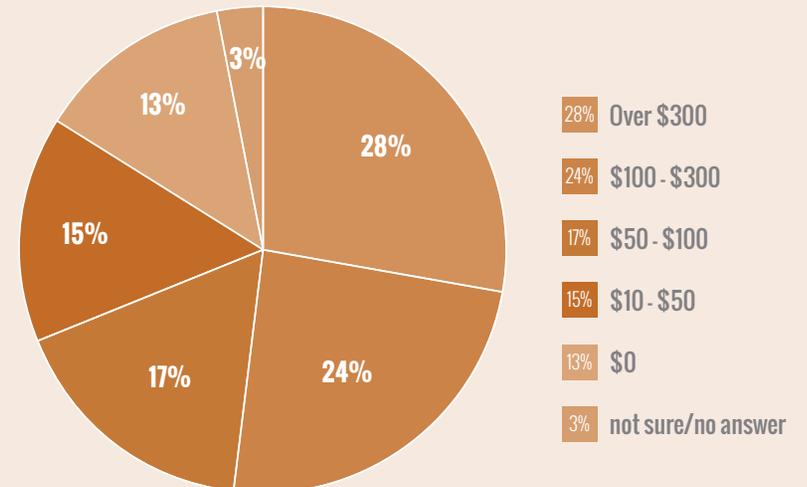
The number of children experiencing challenges related to **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT** increased last year in all Basin-Boundary Local Health Areas with the exception of Southeast Kootenay and Revelstoke.



2013 CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Half of poll respondents donated over \$100 to charity last year.

P





ARTS & HERITAGE

54%

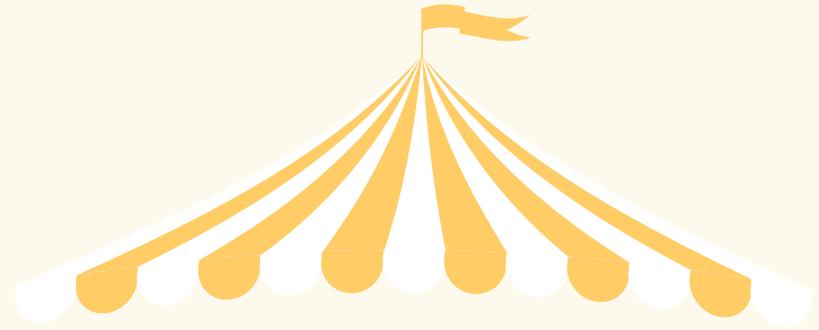
P of surveyed households spend between \$1 and \$500 on **ARTS, HERITAGE AND/OR CULTURAL** activities each year.



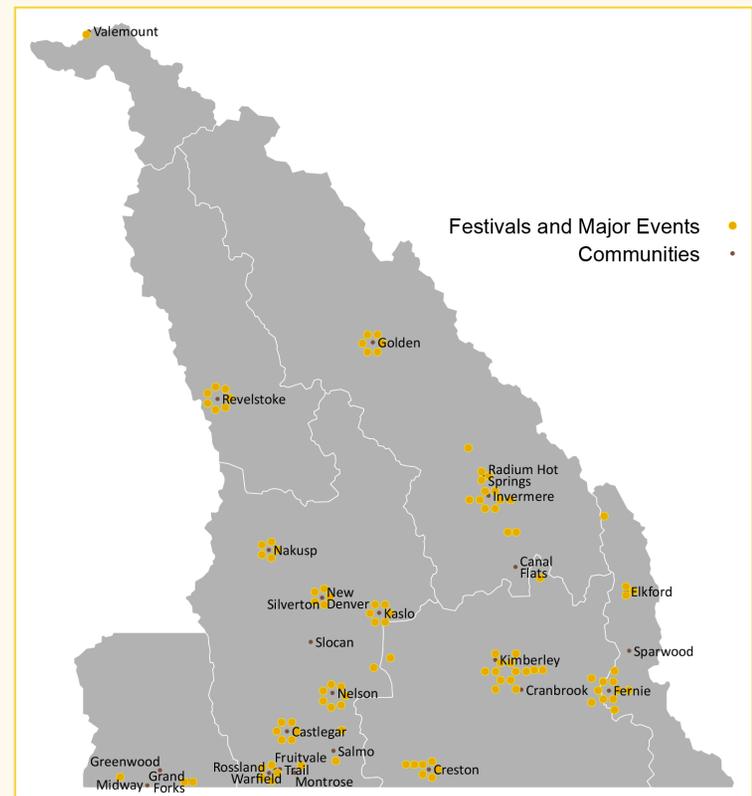
From 2008 to 2012,

over \$900,000 was **INVESTED IN HERITAGE** through the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance. These funds leveraged **MORE THAN \$1 MILLION** from other sources.

There are at least **95** **MUSEUMS** and/or **HISTORICAL SOCIETIES** working to preserve, protect, and educate about our region's heritage



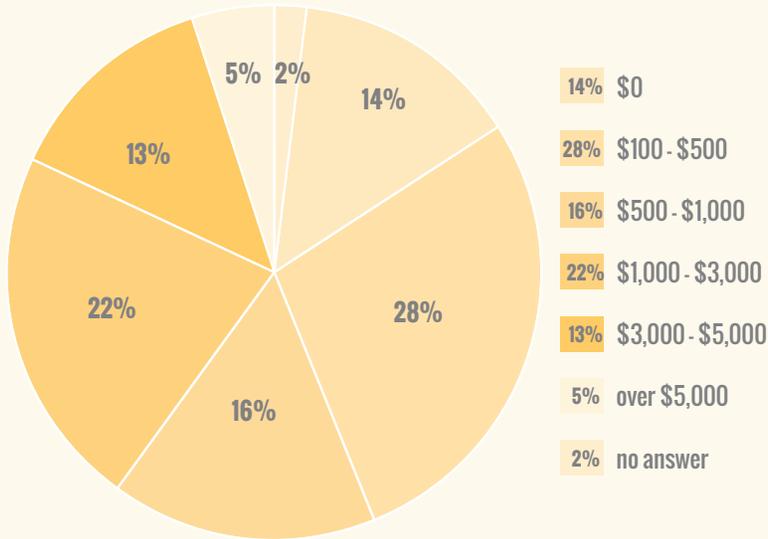
Our region hosts over 100 annual **FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS** throughout the seasons, adding to our cultural, social and economic well-being.





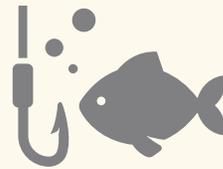
CULTURE & RECREATION

P Surveyed households spend the following amount on **SPORTS AND RECREATION** each year:



There are at least **52** commercial **RECREATION TENURES** across our region, with approximately

70% offering helicopter access to the backcountry.



P **70%** of poll respondents agree that their schedule allows for adequate **LEISURE TIME**.



P Half of poll respondents say they have a strong sense of **SPIRITUALITY**.



P Most businesses surveyed say the **CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES** in our region make a positive contribution to the **BUSINESS CLIMATE**.

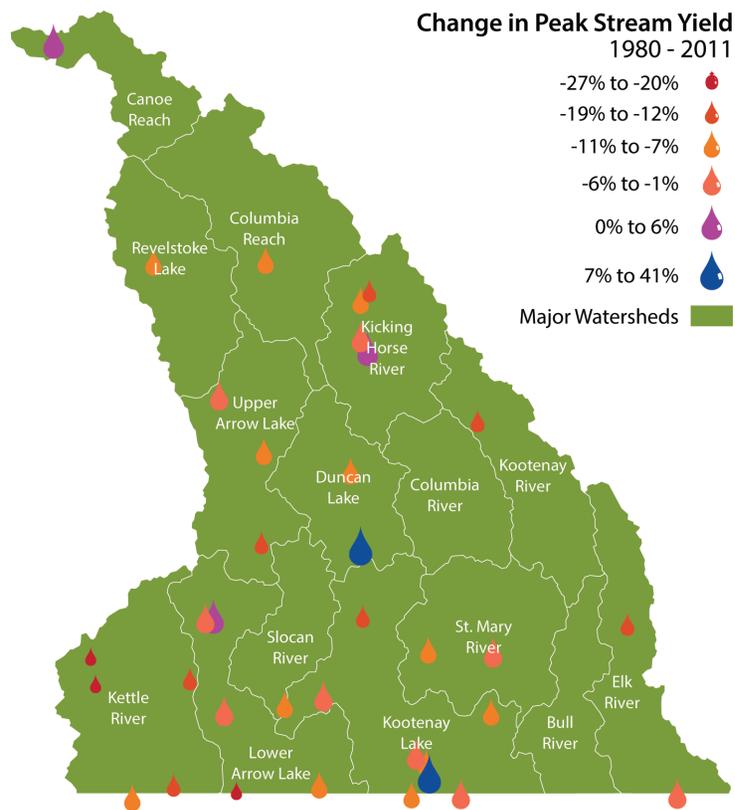
Our region has over 140 **RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**, from skate parks and ball fields to ice rinks and multi-use complexes.



WATER, AIR & CLIMATE

P 76% of poll respondents say that they often consider the environment when making purchasing, voting, or behavioural decisions.

86% of monitored streams show a negative trend in **STREAM FLOW VOLUME** during peak flows. **97%** show a negative trend during late-summer low flows, indicating that there is less water available for human use when demand is highest.



Our rate of **WATER CONSUMPTION** remains very high at 972 litres per person per day. That's the equivalent of running an average garden hose for over 48 minutes!

The Columbia Basin Water Quality Monitoring Program reports that 9% of stream monitoring sites are "severely stressed" due to **HUMAN PRESSURES**.



P Almost three quarters of poll respondents feel that they have a good idea of how **CLIMATE CHANGE** might affect their community. Only 10% do not.



All Basin-Boundary **AIR QUALITY** monitoring stations recorded higher average concentrations of fine particulate matter in 2013 as compared to 2012. The difference was highest during the winter months.



LAND & FOOD

THE LENGTH OF OUR **GROWING SEASON** IS INCREASING, WITH STATIONS SHOWING RATES OF CHANGE THAT RANGE BETWEEN 8 AND 25 DAYS PER CENTURY.

Only **1.2%** of the most threatened low elevation zones are protected by **PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL PARKS**, while **PRIVATE CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS** are now protecting twice that amount.

P **LOCAL FOOD** continues to be an important issue for residents.

69% of poll respondents would pay extra for food that is grown locally.

P **71%** of poll respondents grow at least some of their own **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**.

The **hot and dry summer of 2014** made it the biggest **WILDFIRE** year since 2007, with over 6,800 hectares burned.

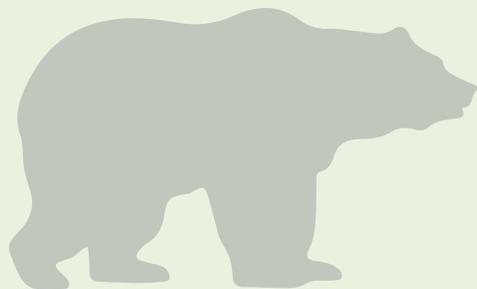
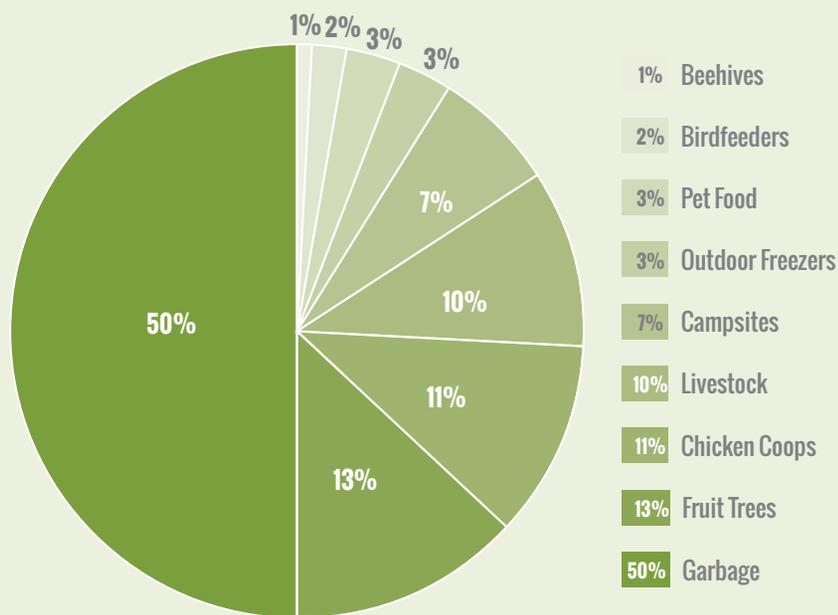




BIODIVERSITY

Garbage continues to be the main cause of **HUMAN-BEAR CONFLICT** in our region. As a result, Conservation Officers must destroy an average of over 100 bears every year.

CAUSES OF HUMAN BEAR CONFLICT

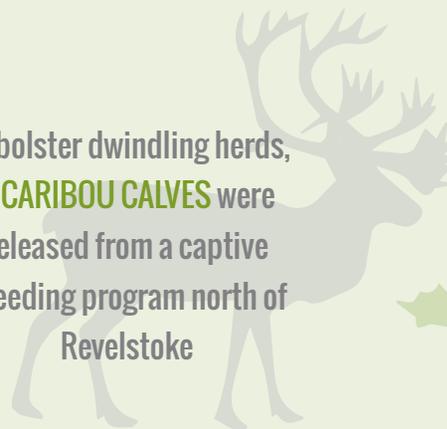


Many recovery efforts are underway for **SPECIES AT RISK** in our region. In addition to the many habitat restoration projects, there were several reintroduction projects in 2014, including:

Over 9,000 **JUVENILE STURGEON** were released in the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers



To bolster dwindling herds, 9 **CARIBOU CALVES** were released from a captive breeding program north of Revelstoke



Over 12,000 healthy **WHITEBARK PINE** seedlings were planted in the East and West Kootenays



2,000 **NORTHERN LEOPARD FROG** tadpoles were reintroduced this past spring into the Columbia marshes



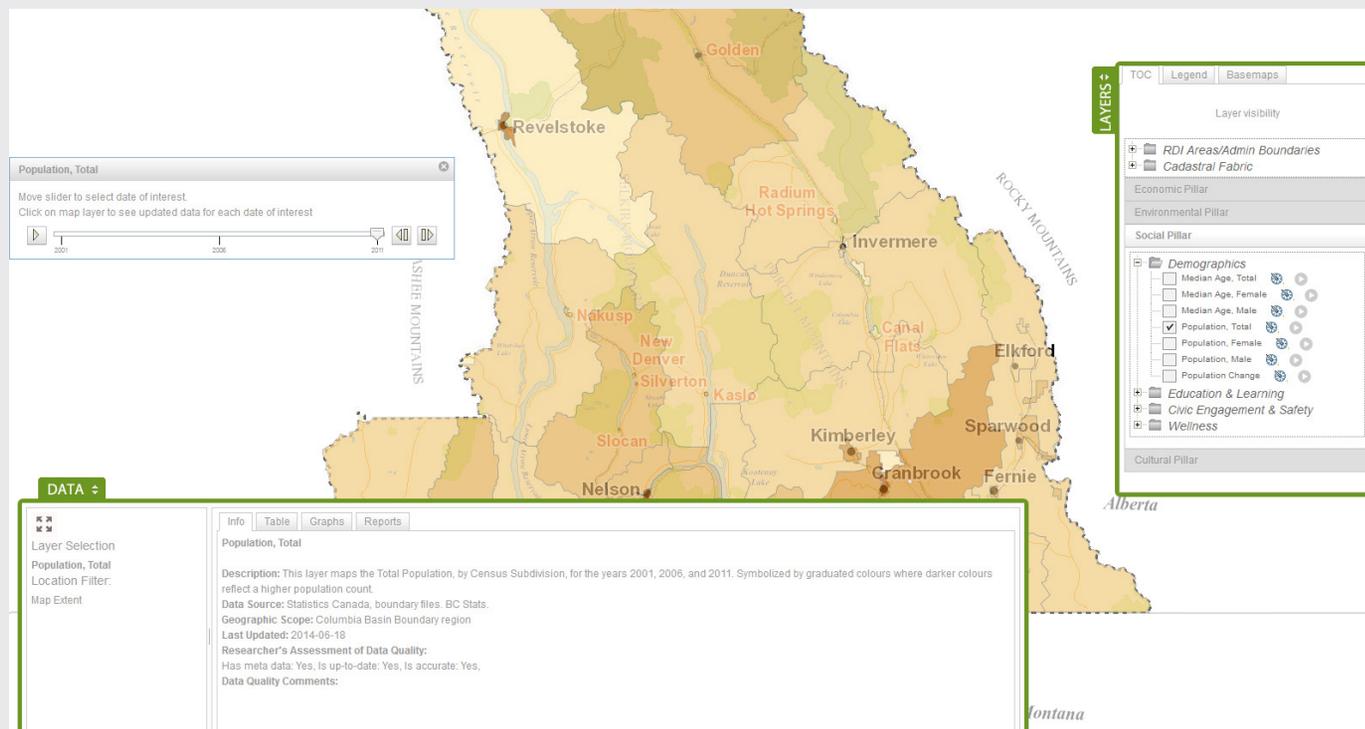
The Digital Basin

Go online for more useful information on your community.

In early 2014, the RDI launched the

Digital Basin online information portal.

This innovative new tool provides Basin-Boundary communities with access to the RDI's most up-to-date maps, data tables, graphs and reports on indicators and assets related to regional well-being. With over 100 data layers on environment, economy, society and culture available online, the Digital Basin can supply the information you need to complete your plan or project proposal. Check it out at www.cbrdi.ca/state-of-the-basin/digital-basin-portal. A series of video tutorials is available to help you understand how to make the most of the tool.



The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, at Selkirk College, is a regional research centre with a mandate to support informed decision-making by Columbia Basin-Boundary communities through the provision of information, applied research and related outreach and extension support.



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