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Project Comeback

Creating vibrant rural communities by retaining and attracting a young adult population

December 2012 – November 2014



Project Comeback

Introduction

In British Columbia, many rural communities face:

- Trends of youth out-migration and an aging baby boomer population.
- Closing businesses because of fewer young people to take them over.

“3% of employees in Kaslo are less than 25 years old” - BRE Survey

Why this project?

- A vibrant young population is an important part of a healthy community, both in terms of succession planning for local businesses and in ensuring an active, engaged, and well-rounded citizenry.
- Having young people involved and advocating for their generation in rural communities creates a space for youth to be recognized and appreciated in their home communities, and provides them with a place they may look to stay in or return to as they themselves age.

What is Project Comeback?

This pilot project was conducted in 5 rural BC Communities to strengthen rural youth retention through youth engagement.

Aim of Project Comeback

To help rural communities in British Columbia understand how they can better meet the needs of their younger citizens. This work has involved:

- baseline surveys
- review of best practices
- community engagement
- establishing local projects to attract, engage, and retain youth.

Why are Youth Leaving and What Can We Do?

Why are they Leaving??

“While employment and educational opportunities play a critical role in this decision making process, quality of life factors are increasingly important for young adults deciding where to establish themselves” (Cantrell et al 2008)

Why are they Leaving??

- Employment
- Education
- Access to services and amenities
- Quality of life considerations
- Perception of place
- Community engagement

What Can We Do?

- **Engage Engage Engage** with Young People
- Share social opportunities (Access to Information and Resources)
- Provide Relevant Training Opportunities
- Showcase Community
- Promote Entrepreneurial Opportunities

What are other Communities Doing?



Community Engagement

What are other Communities Doing?



BladeRunners

Promote Education Alternatives

What can We Do?



**KICKSTART
KASLO**


October 21, 6:00 | JVH Lighthouse Theater
Tradeshow @ 6 - local food served | Presentation @ 7

**5 VISIONS
5 MINUTES
\$5,000**

The **Business Retention and Expansion** survey results are complete and we need your input!
Vote for your favorite vision and \$5000 will be directed towards bringing it to fruition.

- 1 **Business Training** - Dawn Lang
- 2 **Youth Retention & Employment** - Neil Johnson
- 3 **Growth & Expansion in Local Food** - Patrick Steiner
- 4 **Tourism Diversification** - John Addison
- 5 **Broadband Services** - Randy Morse

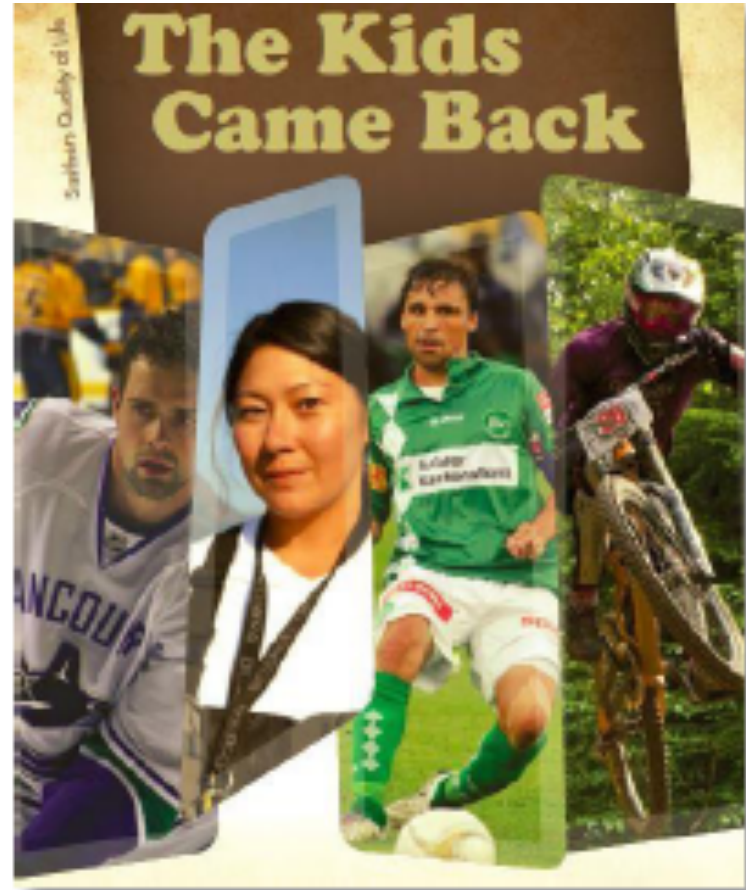
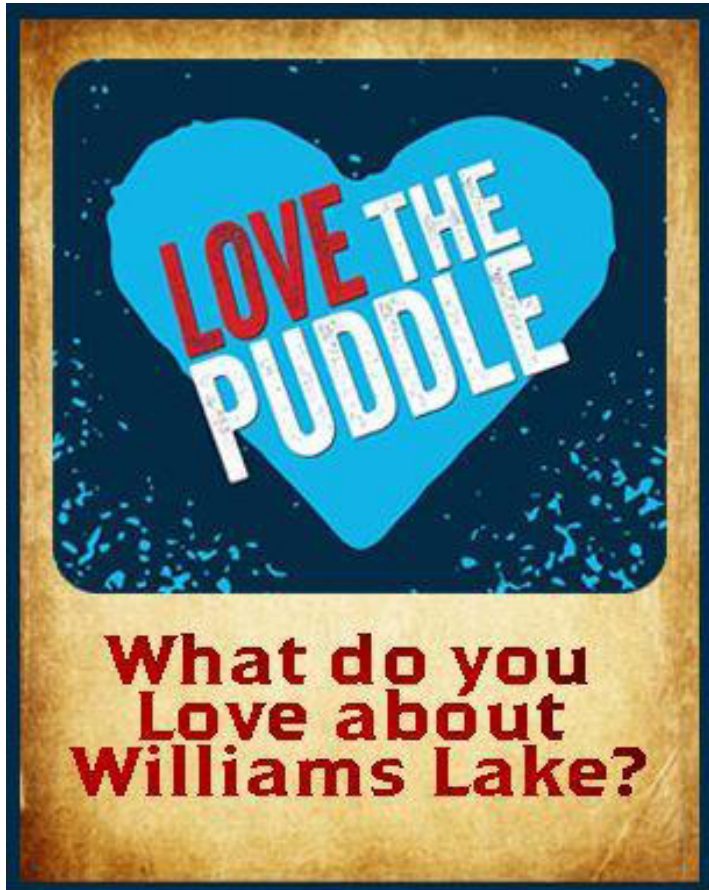
Determine the Economic Future
of North Kootenay Lake

 Project Comeback  RDI  Village of Kaslo  Columbia Basin trust



Show Entrepreneurial Opportunities

What are other Communities Doing?



Showcase Community

Conclusion

Project Comeback has been very well received in each participating community, and each community witnessed a positive impact upon just beginning a conversation about youth retention amongst their residents. This project has instilled foundations to build upon, and to ultimately create spaces that are vibrant and desired places for young people to settle and invest in their futures.

Find this Report at www.bcruralnetwork.ca/projects

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Quality of Life is key to Retention and Expansion