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Road Runner



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Employee Newsletter June 2018

Environmental Services Field Day Benefits Wetland

Submitted by Brent Persello, Provincial Manager, Environmental Service Delivery

A wetland enhancement project in Salmon Arm got some extra help when employees from the Southern Interior Region and Thompson Nicola District teamed up with the region's environmental group, on March 27.

The newly constructed wetland was completed in the fall of 2017, just before snowfall, and it was time for further work. The employees, accompanied by four-legged and furry mascot "Raven," took part in a number of environmental enhancement activities, including cutting, preparing and planting vegetation stakes around the new pond, seeding disturbed areas, and installing several new bat houses.

The wetland project is being undertaken as part of the Salmon River four-laning project along the Trans-Canada Highway, which is expected to begin construction in the near future. The project is located about an hour east of Kamloops, and includes expanding the highway to four lanes, replacing the aging Salmon River Bridge and making significant access/frontage road improvements.

The new wetland is close to the Salmon River, and over time, it will provide important habitat for a

number of avian, amphibian, reptile and mammal species, including wood ducks, great blue herons, western screech owls, painted turtles, western toads, garter snakes and Townsend big-eared bats. Much of the surrounding area has been impacted by past land use (primarily agricultural) and this

project offered a tremendous opportunity to re-establish some of the habitat features that were present in the area prior to development.

Vegetation around the pond will help attract insects for songbirds and amphibians to feed on, provide roosting and nesting habitat, and

offer shade and hiding cover to species using the wetland. Basking logs, sand and gravel for nesting, and tree root balls placed in and around the pond at the time of construction will also create habitat complexity for amphibians, reptiles and waterfowl.

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▲ Kamloops-based employees from the regional and district office joined up with the environmental services team to enhance a newly established wetland.

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Due to its proximity to our regional office, the project offered a unique learning opportunity for a number of employees, many of whom have worked on the Salmon Arm four-laning, but haven't had the chance to see this aspect of the project. District staff, and regional employees from corporate services, operational services, project delivery and property services, all came to get hands on with environmental services work for the day.

The regional environmental team was very appreciative of these employees' support and willingness to get muddy! So a big thanks to all who attended.

In closing, five fun facts...

1. Without bats there would be no tequila. Tequila comes from the agave plant pollinated by bats.
2. A single bat can eat 2,000 mosquitoes a night. So, when you see a bat while camping this summer, that's good news!
3. Most bats can't actually get off the ground; they spend their entire lives flying or hanging upside down.



▲ Our mascot Raven attended, along with Raven's companion Regional Environmental Coordinator Jill Carruthers.

4. A group of toads is often called a "knot."
5. When frogs park illegally, they get toad! ♦



▲ New growth starting at the wetland in Salmon Arm.

What New Federal Investments in Public Transit Mean for BC

Submitted by Lisa Mitchell, Transit Branch Administrator

Imagine it is shortly after 5 p.m. on a Tuesday.

You are in your car, on a bus, a train, or on your bike. You have just left work and your only desire at this very moment is to move; to make that transition from your work life to your personal life as stress-free and seamless as possible. Only your car is one of thousands on its way through Metro Vancouver, the bus has moved two metres in 20 minutes on its way north on Highway 1, you had to squeeze your way onto a full train, and cycling has been especially life threatening tonight as you navigate through the throngs of frustrated drivers.

What if there was one less car on the road? A dedicated bus lane? Or a bicycle lane? How would this change your Tuesday evening?

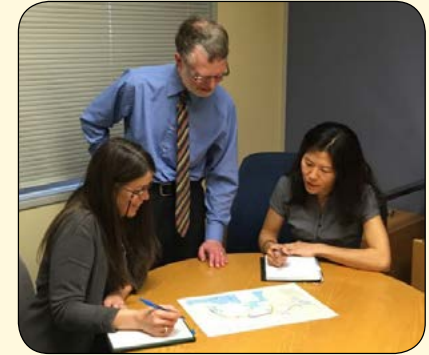
These are the questions we ask and do our best to answer here at the Transit Branch. What will life look like for B.C., with people out of their cars and into transit?

Over the next ten years, the Transit Branch will work with a number of partners to deliver more than \$8 billion of public transit projects across the province.

\$2.69 billion has been committed for transit projects under the recently announced Integrated Bilateral Agreement (IBA) as part of the federal government's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan. The IBA builds on existing funding currently committed under the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF), and combined with provincial and local cost sharing as well as other provincial funding such as the



▲ Artist's rendering of the Stewardson Way pedestrian overpass, in New Westminster.



▲ Some members of the Transit Branch who will be closely involved with Integrated Bilateral Agreement transit projects: Sherry Barnes, Ross Long and Junko Preniq.

Transit Minor Betterments program, B.C. will see a total of more than \$8 billion in transit improvements during the next decade.

Projects already approved under PTIF include planning and early works for a SkyTrain extension along the Broadway corridor in Vancouver and for light rail in Surrey, new buses and rapid transit vehicles (rail and SeaBus), bus communications technology, upgrades to bus and SkyTrain systems and facilities, and

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