

# Annual Report

2022-2023



*Nechako-Kitamaat  
Development Fund Society*



## Message From the Chair

For twenty-four years, Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund has supported communities in achieving economic development and community building goals, while contributing to overall community health and stability.

This year, we reached a significant milestone and approved our 12 millionth grant dollar.

Our directors live in the affected region and have intimate knowledge of the communities and their needs. We work closely with the projects we fund to achieve success and enable not only our communities to thrive, but also the people who call them home. The rural North can be proud of its accomplishments and contributions that strengthen the whole of the province. Together, through a grassroots approach to economic development we have accomplished much.

This year saw us return to our communities. We were grateful to get back into the communities after the pandemic and visit with Mayors, Chiefs and Councils, tour projects and meet with the dedicated volunteers who bring these projects to life.

24 new projects were approved, and our funds were fully expended for the year.

Unfortunately, the fund is receiving a diminished amount from the Province. As a result, we had to innovate and work to do more with less. A priority for the year was our Under \$5,000 grant program. This program was a huge success with 13 of the 24 approved projects for the year being in this category.

As we look forward, our top priority continues to be to increase the capital in order that we can provide more support and funding to the communities and fund critical projects at a higher amount.

We eagerly anticipate the upcoming year and continuing to meet in the communities and tour the many successful projects.

NKDFS  
Board Chair  
Cindy Shelford






# Statistics



**\$12 Million**

in funding granted since inception

**\$262,514**

in funding granted in 2022

**425**

projects since inception

**24**

new projects in 2022

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## 12 Millionth Grant Dollar

We reached a significant milestone this year with the 12 millionth grant dollar approved.

Since inception in 1999, NKDF grants have supported the communities in achieving economic development and community building goals, while contributing to overall community health, and stability.

These projects would not be possible without the vision of community leaders and dedicated volunteers, who have worked tirelessly toward the goal of creating vibrant, diverse and economically viable communities.

### **Did You Know**

The first project approved by NKDF was in November 1999. The Vanderhoof Chamber of Commerce was granted \$1,019 to host a Proposal Writing Workshop.

The 12 Millionth dollar was approved in May of 2022 for the Nechako Valley Exhibition Society to host an Agriculture Learning Series. Through these workshops youth will enjoy recreational opportunities and introduction to local agriculture, the second largest industry in the region. This project highlights the NKDF values of supporting projects that contribute to overall community health, development, and stability.

A Joint Press Release with the Government of BC was issued on July 27, 2022 to announce the 12-millionth Grant Dollar Milestone

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022JERI0040-001172>

## Grant Criteria

### Infrastructure

- Infrastructure that strengthens the local and regional economy and increases the ability of local business to compete in the marketplace.
- Infrastructure that contributes to a healthy and economically vibrant downtown.
- Infrastructure that attracts tourism and/or resident attraction
- Recreational infrastructure that encourages resident attraction and retention
- Infrastructure projects that improve the condition of an asset that contributes to community development including community halls.

### Planning and Research

- Projects that provide the background information and pre-planning required to make decisions about future investments. Types of projects include feasibility studies, market research, needs assessments, surveys, strategic plans, and tourism plans.

### Human Development

- Projects that provide skills training that enables people and organizations to increase employment, economic activity, and capacity. Types of projects include job skills training and workshops and courses for volunteers and small business owners.

### Marketing

- Projects that support economic diversification and development of new markets, and serve to facilitate business attraction initiatives, investment attraction initiatives, resident recruitment initiatives, and visitor attraction initiatives. Types of projects include branding development, marketing campaigns, web-based strategies, digital strategies, and signage.



## Project Spotlight

### 24 New Projects Funded in 2022 for a total of \$262, 514

#### 2022 Soccer Nets and Equipment - \$5,000 Burns Lake Youth Soccer Association

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the 2022 season saw the fields once again filled with soccer players. The Soccer Association received a grant of \$5,000 from NKDF to assist with the purchase of equipment, nets, coaching, and equipment for referees.

##### Naomi Hanson, Burns Lake Youth Soccer Association

"The executive of Burns Lake youth soccer, players, and community greatly appreciate the funding from NKDF. New nets and equipment have been purchased for the long awaited 2022 season with these funds."



#### Lakes District Secondary Launch 2022 - \$3,000 Burns Lake & District Chamber of Commerce



The Burns Lake & District Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Lakes District Secondary School PAC received \$3,000 to host two career days to connect grade 9 students with local professionals.

##### Pam Higginson, LDSSC PAC Chair

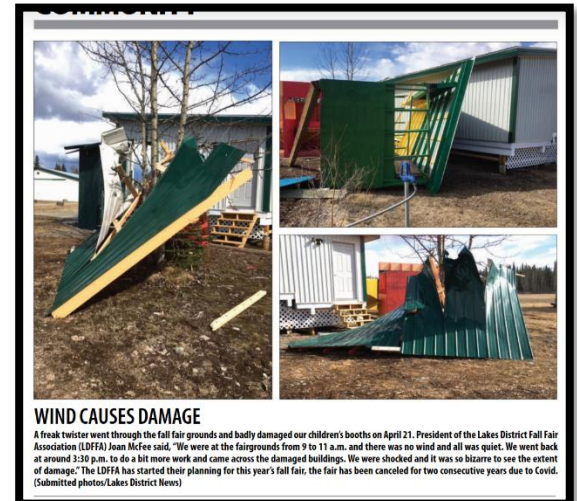
"We are very pleased and thankful to have this opportunity to partner with NKDF. This project is building relationships between students, parents, the school, businesses, and community partners. All working together to reach our collective goal; every student will transition to work or post-secondary after graduation."

## Emergency Booth Repairs - \$5,000 Lakes District Fair Association

An extreme wind event damaged the Children's Booth ahead of the 2022 Fair. NKDF provided \$5,000 to assist with repairing the booths.



The Restored Booths



## Building Siding Replacement - \$15,000 Vanderhoof Menshed Society

The Vanderhoof Menshed Society received \$15,000 to upgrade the building façade at the Menshed storefront and workshop on Burrard Street. The Menshed space brings together men who might otherwise be isolated and marginalized and connects them in a supportive and meaningful way. An activity-based organization, together the members work on community-inspired projects such as building picnic tables, sheds, docks, wheelchair ramps, and refurbishing household items and making them saleable.





**2022 Nechako Valley Exhibition - \$15,000**  
**Nechako Valley Exhibition Society**

\$15,000 was granted to the Nechako Valley Exhibition Society to assist with putting on the 2022 Exhibition. After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Exhibition Society returned. hosted a family-friendly Exhibition that builds community. A true agricultural Fair, regional agricultural producers were showcased, and the achievements of the 4-H clubs celebrated. A family fun zone with mechanical bulls, water walking balls and paddle boats made the Exhibition a family-friendly event that celebrated community

**2022 Agricultural Learning Series -\$10,000**  
**Nechako Valley Exhibition Society**

The Nechako Valley Exhibition Society received \$10,000 for the 2022 Agricultural Learning Series. The Exhibition Society hosted a variety of workshops including beekeeping, blacksmithing, beef cattle production, and food preservation. The offered courses reflect industries and lifestyles still prevalent in the region and were designed to help to connect increasingly urbanized youth with the agricultural roots and heritage of their community, placing an emphasis on learning and development in local, sustainable, and self-sufficient crafts and trades.

**Airport Emergency Lighting - \$15,000**



## District of Vanderhoof

The District of Vanderhoof received a grant of \$15,000 to upgrade the emergency lighting at the airport. The Vanderhoof airport plays a critical role in connecting the region to the rest of the province including serving as an access point for medical transport and firefighting services. Upgrades to the emergency lighting will ensure there are no interruptions to services.

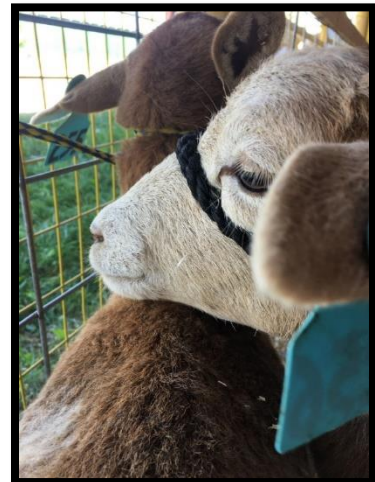


## Riding Arena and Stable Repairs -\$3,011 Fraser Lake Saddle Club

With the easing of COVID restrictions, the Fraser Lake Club hosted 10 Gymkhanas in 2022. The events this past year were especially important as the club's revenue was severely impacted through the course of the pandemic. This project included repairs to the riding arena fencing, updating the old gates, and repairs to the horse stalls.

## Beef Barn Renovations - \$5,000 Nechako Valley Exhibition Society

The Beef Barn at the Nechako Valley Exhibition Grounds provides infrastructure for one of the province's most highly regarded and attended beef shows. Through this project the barn will be renovated.



## Vanderhoof International Airshow - \$5,000 Vanderhoof International Airshow Society

The Vanderhoof International Airshow is designed to provide family entertainment and market the amenities of the region to visitors and the North American aviation segment. A show with a variety of acts appealing to families was assembled for 2022. In addition to vintage, historic and aerobatic aircraft, the 2022 Airshow showcased vintage cars, a dragster car, Monster truck rides and model aircraft demonstrations.



### **Fall Fair 2022 Structural Improvements - \$5,000**

#### **Lakes District Fair Association**

In advance of the first Fall Fair after a two-year hiatus, the Fair Association made upgrades to infrastructure required to successfully host the fair. Updates were made to the Main Bleachers, Main Gate Ticket Booth, and the Information Booth. As well, a ceiling was added to the Children's Stage to enhance the acoustics.

### **Family Dance - \$3,775**

#### **Circle of Hearts Society for Women**

The Circle of Hearts Society hosted a Family Dance that welcomed all community members to come together for an evening of fun and interaction after two years of pandemic restrictions. This project was approved under the NKDF 2022-2023 strategic priority of supporting social and community projects that bring people back together after COVID.



### **2022 Fall Fair -\$12,000 Lakes District Fair Association**

NKDF contributed \$12,000 toward the 2022 Lakes District Fall Fair which was held in Burns Lake on September 9-11. This marked the return of the fair after a two-year hiatus due to COVID. The weekend was a huge success with events including Moto-x, the Children's stage, and a music festival. The fair was a welcomed gathering for the whole community.

### **Curling Rink/Community Hall Development -\$50,000 Village of Fraser Lake**

The Village of Fraser Lake Curling Rink was the community's first indoor sports facility built in 1968. Currently, the facility can only be used five months per year for curling when the ice is installed. A full renovation is underway to transition the space into a Community Hall designed for multi-use by multiple community and private groups for gatherings and sports users year-round.





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### **Nulki-Tachick Lakes Feasibility Study -\$5,000**

#### **Nulki-Tachick Lakes Stewardship Society**

Nulki-Tachick Lakes Stewardship Society was granted \$5,000 to go towards a feasibility study. There is concern of deteriorating water quality in the Nulki and Tachick lakes due to blue-green algae. This study will determine the feasibility of a harvesting program in addition to examining alternative methods that could be used to reduce excessive nutrient levels in the lakes.



### **Economic Impact Assessment of BC Vets -\$5,000**

#### **BC Cattlemen's Association**

Nechako-Kitimaat Development Fund Society granted \$5,000 to The BC Cattlemen's Association to conduct an assessment to quantify the economic impact of the veterinary shortage in BC. There is currently a critical shortage of large animal vets causing significant challenges for the farming and ranching communities across northern BC, especially in rural and remote areas. This study will identify the scope of the shortage, the impact on the agriculture sector and the economic opportunities being lost as a result.

According to a report by the Society of BC Veterinarians, the need in BC for vets is outstripping the demand by a gap of approximately 100 vets per year.

"The funding support received from NKDF was instrumental in helping reach the goal of conducting the economic impact study. The shortage of large animal Veterinarians is a serious concern of our membership, and this assessment will aid in plotting a path toward possible solutions," said Alex Kulchar, Director (Vanderhoof) BC Cattlemen's Association.

The BC Cattlemen's Association is working with The Nechako Valley Producers Group and The Regional District of Bulkley Nechako on the project.





### **Saving Lives at the Library -\$2,000** **Burns Lake Public Library Association**

The Burns Lake Public Library will purchase and install an automatic external defibrillator (AED) and train staff in proper usage.

### **Rental Ski Inventory -\$5,000** **Omineca Ski Club**

The Omineca Ski Club provides rental skis to ski club members at a reasonable rate to encourage people to get out and be active without having the financial burden of purchasing equipment. Over the last few years, the membership and demand for equipment has been growing. Through this project, additional skis and boots will be purchased for the ski rental program.



### **Summer Maintenance Work Crew -\$15,000** **Ride Burns Mountain Biking Association**

\$15,000 was approved for the Ride Burns Mountain Biking Association to be used to hire summer students to assess the 100Km network of trails and make repairs. The Biking trails at Boer Mountain began in 2005 with a vision and a grant of \$3,360 from NKDF for a feasibility study. Since then, NKDF has contributed \$449,281 for an additional 10 projects that have developed the trail system into a world class mountain biking destination. Burns Lake has the distinction of being awarded Canada's first International Mountain Biking Association Ride

Center designation. Mountain Bike BC heralds The Boer Mountain trail network as one of the most progressive and sustainable trail networks found anywhere.

### **Foundry Burns Lake -\$25,000 Carrier Sekani Family Services**

Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society granted \$25,000 to Carrier Sekani Family Services to assist with the development of Foundry Burns Lake.

Foundry is a province-wide network of integrated health and wellness services for young people between the ages of 12 and 24. There are currently thirteen operating Foundry's across BC, with six centers in development, including one in Burns Lake. In partnership with Carrier Sekani Family Services, Foundry Burns Lake will offer Foundry's core services, and a drop-in centre operated by Carrier Sekani Youth Services. This will extend the age range to 29 years and offer a variety of programming and social services to support young people in living a good life. While Carrier Sekani is an Indigenous host agency, Foundry is a centre for all youth Indigenous and non-indigenous, regardless of their background. Here, youth can access mental health care, substance use services, physical and sexual health care, youth and family peer supports, and social services all under one roof.

In each community, Foundry looks different, but the purpose remains the same. As a service agency, Carrier Sekani Family Services blends Carrier knowledge with western practices to create effective models of care. The centre will be influenced by Carrier culture to create a comfortable, inviting, and culturally safe space for all youth and their families.

Foundry's are operated by host agencies throughout the province, these agencies are innovators in health and social services within their respective communities. The Foundry Brand is recognized as a leader in youth services in BC, providing a cornerstone for community agencies to work together in partnership rather than competing for scarce resources.

Ground-breaking on the Burns Lake Foundry will take place in April, 2023.

### **Dog Park/Museum Site Washroom- \$5,000 District of Vanderhoof**

The dog park, museum and Visitor Information Centre offer a starting point for many of Vanderhoof's recreational opportunities, including biking and walking trails. When the Visitor Centre and other museum buildings are closed, such as in the evenings or during the winter, there are no public washroom facilities available. The District of Vanderhoof will install a washroom at the Museum/Dog Park site.

### **Lakes Outdoor Recreation Society -\$18,728 Ootsa Lake Outhouses**

The Lakes Outdoor Recreation Society (LORS) was granted \$18,728. The Ootsa Lake campground is currently being expanded by 20 sites, due to increased demand. Tourists and locals will now have alternative sites to camp at during the peak season. The grant funds will be used to install three outhouses, including one wheelchair accessible outhouse, at the expanded campsite.

### **Haisla Nation Council - \$15,000 Active Measures Program**

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Haisla Nation Council was granted \$15,000 toward the Active Measures program. Active Measures is an immersive 10-month program designed to increase overall mental, physical and emotional health and well-being of participants. The NKDF funding will support the Cultural Phase of the project including salmon harvesting, regalia making, and cultural exchange.

**Ferland Park Equipment – \$15,000**  
**District of Vanderhoof**

The District of Vanderhoof was granted \$15,000 to replace the playground equipment at Ferland Park. The District will replace the play structure in order to modernize it and improve safety.

## Measuring Success

The Board adopted the following strategies for 2022-2023:

- 1) To pursue efforts to increase the capital and investment returns for NKDF programs.
- 2) To serve as a leader and provide the catalyst to re-invigorate and galvanize communities as we emerge from COVID.
- 3) To support social and community projects that bring people back together after COVID.
- 4) To expedite funds to the communities by promoting and encouraging applications through the NKDF Under \$5,000 program.
- 5) To ensure that the Province of BC is aware NKDF is a resource to implement the StrongerBC Economic Plan.

*Priority 1: To pursue efforts to increase the capital and investment returns for NKDF programs.*

A Community Engagement Plan was developed that outlines the common message we want to share with the broader community and leaders. The plan details ways in which NKDF will leverage established relationships and partnerships to support and advocate alongside us for increased capital.

### Successes:

- Conversation with Ellis Ross MLA, Skeena.
- Presentation to Burns Lake Mayor and Council.
- Presentation to District of Vanderhoof Mayor and Council.
- Letter sent from Mayor Moutray sent to Premier Eby.
- Conversations with Davin Greenwell, Director, Regional Economic Initiatives.
- Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation.
- Conversations with Assistant Deputy Minister Chris Rathbone.
- Commitment from Chris Rathbone for ongoing dialogue.
- Joint press release with Province on reaching 12 Million Dollar Milestone.

We have requested support from Mayors, Chiefs and Councils as follows:

- Written support. Letters to the Premier and the Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation.
- Networking and discussions with MLAs.
- Networking and discussions with other NKDF communities.
- Raising the issue in conversations.
- Sharing the positive impacts of NKDF grants to the region.



*Priority 2: To serve as a leader and provide the catalyst to re-invigorate and galvanize communities as we emerge from COVID.*

As we transitioned this past year from the pandemic to the new reality, NKDF worked to assist with revitalizing the social support systems and community events through grassroots efforts including in-person visits, reaching out to organizations, and encouraging innovation and creativity in project applications.

**Successes:**

- Booth at the Nechako Valley Exhibition
- In-person meetings
- Project Tours in Fraser Lake, Kitamaat Village, and Vanderhoof



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*Priority 3: To support social and community projects that bring people back together after COVID.*

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NKDF launched a social media campaign to bring awareness to the NKDF grant programs, solicit applications and encourage innovation from organizations as they work to re-launch after a two-year hiatus.

**Criteria:**

- The return of annual events after a hiatus due to COVID.
- New events that encourage the community to come together.
- Recreational opportunities that support quality of life.
- Events/projects that support tourism and promote the region as a destination for tourists.
- Projects that support opportunities for non-profit organizations to restore revenue streams that were impacted by COVID.

**Successes:**

**Return of Annual Events – Projects Funded**

- Vanderhoof International Airshow Society - Vanderhoof International Airshow
- Nechako Valley Exhibition Society - 2022 Agricultural Learning Series
- Lakes District Fair Association - 2022 Fall Fair
- Nechako Valley Exhibition Society - 2022 Nechako Valley Exhibition

**New Events – Projects Funded**

- Burns Lake and District Chamber of Commerce - Lakes District Secondary Launch 2022
- Circle of Hearts Society for Women -Family Dance

**Recreational opportunities that support quality of life.**

- Burns Lake Youth Soccer Association - 2022 Soccer Nets and Equipment
- Omineca Ski Club - Rental Ski Inventory

**Projects Funded that Support Tourism**

- District of Vanderhoof - Airport Emergency Lighting
- Ride Burns Mountain Biking Association -Summer Maintenance Work Crew

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*Priority 4: To expedite funds to the communities through the NKDF Under \$5,000 program.*

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We launched a highly successful social media awareness campaign to promote the Under \$5,000 Grant Program. The marketing showcased past projects approved through this program and encouraged applications for funding requests from \$100 up to \$5,000. The Under \$5,000 Grant Program allows for applications to be submitted on a continuous in-take. Applications are vetted, processed and funding decisions are made within three weeks of receipt of application.



## No Project Too Small!



Submit your application now for grant requests from \$100-\$5,000

For full grant criteria and information on applying visit  
<https://www.nkdf.org/how-to-apply/requests-under-5-000>



**www.nkdf.org**



### Successes:

In the past year there were 25 inquiries about the under \$5,000 program, 17 applications were received and 13 projects approved.

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*Priority 5: To showcase the ways in which the Stronger BC Economic Plan aligns with NKDF principles and seek opportunities to invest in projects that exemplify this alignment.*

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The StrongerBC plan aligns with many of the principles and values NKDF already strives toward. NKDF has long supported projects that build resilient and robust communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

A number of NKDF funded projects this past year specifically fit the goals of the StrongerBC Plan:

- Burns Lake Library Association - Saving Lives at The Library (Safer Communities)
- Nulki-Tachick Lakes Stewardship Society - Nulki-Tachick Lakes Feasibility Study (Climate Action)
- BC Cattlemen's Association - Economic Impact Assessment of BC Vets (Jobs and Training, building resilient communities)
- Carrier Sekani Family Services - The Foundry (Safer Communities)

**Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation**

"I want to thank the Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society board and volunteers for their advocacy and hard work throughout the pandemic and their continued dedication and commitment to rebuilding vibrant, resilient communities. Our government, through our StrongerBC Economic Plan, will always be here to support communities to build strong, vibrant and diverse economies in rural B.C."

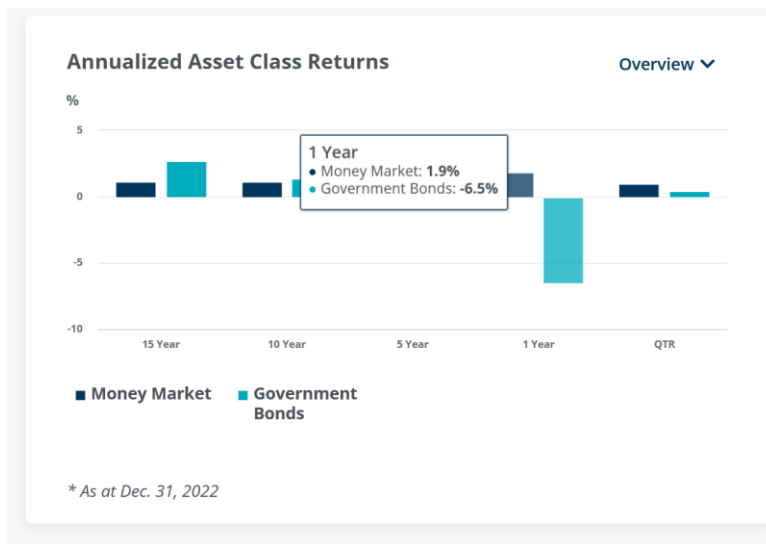
**Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation** "...The Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society supports local communities in realizing their goals and assists our government in achieving a shared vision for resilient communities as part of our StrongerBC Economic Plan..."

**Brenda Bailey, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation**  
"I'm pleased to see the Province's funding of the Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund being put towards community improvements that create connections and strengthen communities. Strong communities can adapt to change and respond to challenges, which is why building resiliency is one of the objectives of the StrongerBC Economic Plan."



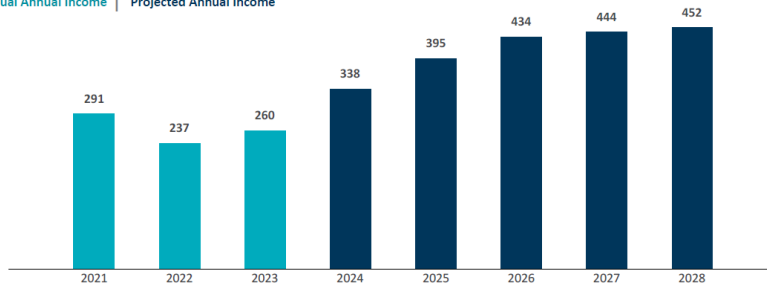
## Investments

The Legacy Fund is held with BCI. This past year the NKDFS investments held with BCI earned a rate of return of -6.5% (Government Bonds) and 1.9% (Money Market). The total value of the Legacy Fund is \$13,288,462.54

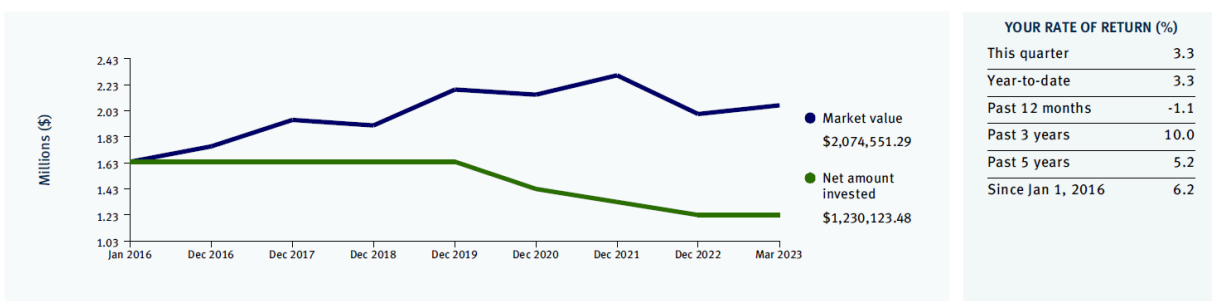


## Return Summary

Actual & projected fiscal year income (\$'000)  
 Actual Annual Income | Projected Annual Income



The working fund is held with PHN. This past year the NKDFS investments held with PHN earned a rate of return of -1.1%. The total value of the working fund is \$2,074,551.29



## Board Members



**Cindy Shelford, Chair**



**Doris Fraser,  
Secretary/Treasurer**



**Tom Clement, Privacy Officer**



**Quinten Beach, Rio Tinto**



**Lisa Grant, Kitamaat Village**



**Ken Guenter, Burns Lake**



**Jamie Neilson, Fraser Lake**



**Mike Robertson, Southside**



**Craig Smith, Vanderhoof**

## Staff



**Britta Boudreau, Manager**

Phone: [\(250\) 964-4066](tel:(250)964-4066)

E-Mail: [manager@nkdf.org](mailto:manager@nkdf.org)

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