
North Coast Library Federation

Provincial Grant
Report 2015

March 1, 2016

Introduction

British Columbia's Northwest region, which encompasses the North Coast, the Skeena River drainage and the Bulkley Valley, is a diverse environment with some of the most picturesque wilderness in British Columbia. For at least 10,000 years, the region has been the traditional territory of First Nations people, including the Haida, Haisla, Gitksan, Nisga'a, Tsimshian and Wet'suwet'en.

With rugged coastline and islands in the west to mountain peaks, valleys, glaciers and plateaus in the interior, its climate is as diverse as its geography. The vast area is known for its magnificent freshwater and saltwater fishing, paddling, hiking, skiing and snowmobiling, as well as habitat for many species of wildlife including grizzly bears, cougars, moose, wolves, and salmon.

BC's Northwest has a long history of forestry, mining and fishing, all of which are still critical to its economy. In 2013, the largest industries by employment in the Bulkley Valley and North Coast regions were wholesale and retail trade, public administration, education, manufacturing, and construction.

Just 2% of British Columbians (a little over 80,000 people) live in the Bulkley and North Coast regions. About half the population lives in urban centres, with the other half in rural areas. 10% of the population are immigrants, and an average of 28% are First Nations – 37% on the North Coast and 19% in the Bulkley Valley.

The North Coast Library Federation (NCLF) is comprised of seven public libraries: Houston, Smithers, Hazelton, Terrace, Kitimat, Prince Rupert and Stewart, along with the campus libraries of associate member Northwest Community College (NWCC). NCLF Communities with public libraries range in size from 499 to 12,500 people; differences between them in size, capacity, and access have contributed to a disparity in patron access to both physical and digital resources as well as to programs and services. The North Coast Library Federation was created in 2006 to address these issues and improve the level of library service for all people of the area.

Statistics courtesy Province of British Columbia, www.welcomebc.ca

SECTION 1

2015 Federation Deliverables

1. Strategic Planning

In April 2015 the library directors and board members of the Federation met for a visioning workshop with facilitator Shelley Worthington of Smithers. The purposes of the session were to:

- Describe the difference we hope to make in our communities because of the work of the NCLF
- Outline the values that guide the Federation's work and the decisions we make as a group
- Identify the roles, mechanisms and relationships needed to reach our common priorities

The desired outcomes of the session were to:

- Establish a vision statement for the NCLF
- Reevaluate the current mission statement
- Create a living document that is the foundation for future strategic planning

All outcomes were achieved, supporting the many subsequent written iterations of the new plan, which was eventually approved by the board in November 2015.

The 2016-2018 NCLF Strategic Plan is attached to this document as Appendix 1.

2. Training and Professional Development

A comprehensive training needs survey was undertaken in June 2015 to examine preferred training formats, topics, and to identify knowledge of online training options. Based on the responses, the following recommendations were endorsed:

- Continue yearly conference delivery
- Explore other in-person training options for local areas (PR/Kitimat/Terrace, Hazelton/Smithers/Houston)
- Develop guidelines to provide dedicated funding for self-initiated course completion
- Provide dedicated travel funding for yearly library conference attendance

The survey found that the majority of respondents are unfamiliar with what online training options are available. As a result, it was recommended that the NCLF should:

- Continue to provide regular information on online training options to library directors and NCLF board
- Develop a guide to online training options eligible for funding from the Federation

The survey also found that Community Outreach (including Community Engagement, Advocacy and Developing Partnerships), Marketing (including Promotion, Public Relations and Branding) and Facilities Management (including reconfiguring spaces and space planning) were the top three areas of interest for all segments of the Federation: staff, directors and board.

It was therefore recommended that these topics should be incorporated into the 2016 NCLF conference, with sessions covering as many of the preferred topics as possible. In addition, the possibility of sponsoring a library space planner to consult with NCLF libraries on their needs should be explored.

The annual fall meeting of Federation board and staff was held in October 2015. 26 staff members and 17 board members attended the conference, an increase of 50% over the previous year. The conference program is attached as Appendix 2.

The goals of the conference were to:

- Highlight the existing expertise in NCLF member libraries
- Offer practical knowledge to apply to participants' role at the library
- Facilitate networking and information sharing

A post-conference feedback survey was conducted, with a 50% response rate. 100% of respondents agreed that the above goals were met.

One welcome outcome, based on staff request, was the creation of a staff function contact list which was distributed for ease of ongoing communication, idea sharing, and assistance for specific challenges.

The Federation also offered travel funding for attendance at the 2015 Beyond Hope Library Conference. The purpose was to expand participants' contacts in the North, as well as to provide library-specific training. Survey feedback on the conference and its applicability to library work was extremely high.

3. Collaboration

In 2015 the NCLF worked in partnership with the BC Libraries Cooperative to produce a new federation website, which is now up and running.

The strong working relationship with associate member Northwest Community College changed in 2015. Due to cost and staffing constraints, NWCC discontinued the provision of the joint material delivery system in place since the federation's inception in 2006. However, the College remains an important member of the Federation, participating in LDAG and board meetings, sharing professional development, and most importantly, offering reciprocal borrowing privileges: patrons may borrow from campus libraries of NWCC and from public libraries in the Federation using either library card.

A programming survey was completed in December 2014 to determine the priorities for author readings and programming in 2015. In 2015, tours of NCLF libraries included BC aboriginal author Eden Robinson, children's performer Norden the Magician (for SRC), and BC author Chris Czakowski. Attendance at these events ranged from a low of 10 to a high of 150, and led to the discussion and development of a new NCLF Readings Program policy. It also led to the 2016 strategic plan objective of confining future Federation tour funding to well-known authors that attract the largest possible audience for the community, either in the library or in partnership with other organizations.

The NCLF also participated in two inter-federation programs in 2015: Books for Babies and Book Club Sets. These programs continue to give libraries throughout the province greater capacity to maximize resources as well as to address community needs.

4. Resource Sharing

Interlibrary Connect expanded into a combined service area in 2015 when the North Coast, North Central and the North East Library Federations joined together in one sharing zone. The success of Interlibrary Connect in the NCLF has been remarkable over the past three years. In 2013, 1734 items were shared through ILC; in 2014, 2344 were delivered through ILC; in 2015, the total number of items shared through ILC was a whopping 4,706.

In addition, the resource-sharing partnership with Northwest Community College has already been mentioned above.

SECTION 2

2015 Federation Goals

1. Produce 2016 – 2018 strategic plan

This goal was achieved as outlined in Section 1.1.

2. Provide targeted staff and board training

This goal was achieved as outlined in Section 1.2.

3. Initiate more inter-federation collaboration

The objectives associated with this goal were to establish regular communication with other federation directors, and to move the expansion of Interlibrary Connect forward. Both objectives were achieved: federation representatives now meet with Libraries Branch staff on a bi-monthly basis, and communication and information sharing has increased markedly as a result. ILC expansion was achieved as outlined in Section 1.

4. Resource Sharing

This goal was achieved as outlined in Section 1.

APPENDIX 1

2016 – 2018 NCLF Strategic Plan

Our Vision	North Coast residents have equitable, easy access to the world of knowledge.
Our Mission	The North Coast Library Federation supports member libraries working together to enhance the services they provide to their communities.
Our Guiding Principles	<p>Collaboration: Member libraries work together on projects of collective benefit.</p> <p>Autonomy: Member libraries are answerable first to their own boards; collaboration is pursued where it does not conflict with local goals.</p> <p>Democracy: Each member library has an equal voice in the NCLF decision-making process.</p> <p>Transparency: NCLF is an open organization answerable to member library boards, funders and the public.</p>
Our Goals 2016 - 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase service equity between member libraries2. Enhance library services in the region3. Create a community of member libraries

2016 – 2018 Strategic Plan

Goal #1: *Increase service equity between member libraries*

Strategies:

- Determine and implement technology expansion based on library need
- Determine and implement strategic training opportunities to build human capital
- Identify and share existing expertise between libraries

Impact: *Patrons in every community experience equivalent service*

Goal #2: *Enhance library services in the region*

Strategies:

- Increase the level of community engagement
- Increase opportunities to collaborate between NCLF libraries, other BC Federations, and other community organizations
- Add value to member libraries

Impact: *Libraries provide an enriched level of service*

Goal #3: *Create a community of member libraries*

Strategies:

- Devise methods to facilitate ongoing communication between libraries
- Provide opportunities for joint training and networking
- Develop shared policies to govern the operation of the Federation

Impact: *Library staff and board members can easily find support to do their jobs*

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Goal #1: Increase service equity				
Strategic Area of Focus	Actions	Outcome	Measurement	Responsibility
Analyze and implement technology expansion based on library needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update existing technology plan Identify and implement next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members share common understanding of technology needs An updated plan is created Technology gaps are addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member survey: directors, board and staff Record of technology improvements 	NCLF Director, Library Directors
Determine and implement strategic training opportunities to build human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise, deliver and analyze training needs survey Update training plan Implement recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both collective and individual member training preferences and gaps are identified Training directly addresses member needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training feedback surveys 	NCLF Director
Identify and share existing expertise between libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze training needs survey Interview library directors Determine gaps and incorporate information into training plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and volunteers with needed expertise are identified Human resources are shared when feasible Gaps in service are addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource list Member survey 	NCLF Director, Library Directors

Goal #2: Enhance library service				
Strategic Area of Focus	Actions	Outcome	Measurement	Responsibility
Increase community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the bar for NCLF-sponsored tours • Investigate potential for new NCLF programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries become more central to their communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCLF program numbers • NCLF program feedback • Number of new patrons 	NCLF Director Library Directors
Pursue opportunities to collaborate with other library and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed with Interlibrary Connect expansion • Develop shared promotional tools • Participate in inter-federation programs • Investigate partnerships for every NCLF program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources (time and money) are used effectively • The reach of program and service offerings increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IC statistics • Community partner feedback • NCLF budget 	NCLF Director Library Directors
Add value to member libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate value-add programs and services • Identify needed resources • Secure external expertise if required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCLF helps libraries achieve their goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member survey 	NCLF Director

Goal #3: Create a Community				
Strategic Area of Focus	Actions	Outcome	Measurement	Responsibility
Facilitate ongoing communication between libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop website • Create an E-newsletter for board and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers are aware of activity within the Federation • Ideas for collaboration and program/service improvements are generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Federation website • Member survey 	NCLF Director, Library Directors
Provide opportunities for joint training and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff exchange • Fall conference • AGM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged board and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Training feedback surveys 	NCLF Director
Develop shared policies to govern the operation of the Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and expand NCLF policy manual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NCLF operates transparently • Continuity is enhanced • Process is collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member survey 	NCLF Director, Library Directors, Board

APPENDIX 2

NCLF Fall Conference October 16 –17, 2015

*Hosted by the **North Coast Library Federation**
in partnership with the **Prince Rupert Public Library***

Thursday, October 15: Pre-Conference Event

7 – 9 p.m. **Author reading:** Chris Czajkowski
 Location: Prince Rupert Public Library
 101 6th Avenue West
 250-627-1345

Chris Czajkowski was born in England, and arrived in Canada after a decade of backpacking round the world. Within two years she was building her first cabin, a day and a half's walk from the nearest road, surrounded by the spectacular Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, British Columbia. From there she wrote letters to Peter Gzowski's Morningside on CBC Radio, which became the basis of her first book *Cabin at Singing River*.

30 years later, with 10 other published books about her wilderness life to her credit, Chris lives on the sparsely populated Chilcotin plateau, about 500 km north of Vancouver. Mountains are still her close companions. Her best-sellers include *Diary of a Wilderness Dweller*, and *Lonesome: Memoirs of a Wilderness Dog*. Her latest book *And the River Still Sings*, describes her life from childhood, and attempts to explain how and why she ended up choosing such a remote, eminently satisfying lifestyle.

Friday, October 16

9:30 – 10:00 **Light breakfast & registration**

10:00 – 10:15 **Welcome**

Joe Zelwietro, Chief Librarian, Prince Rupert Public Library
Lauren Wolf, Director, North Coast Library Federation

10:15 – 11:15 **Opening Doors: Programs and Partnerships**

Jess Dafoe, Deputy/Youth Services Librarian, Terrace Public Library

How can libraries do more with limited budgets and resources, to create fun, innovative and valued programs, and maximize their reach, success and relevancy? Jess will present and lead discussion on engaging our communities, embracing non-traditional partnerships, and understanding how libraries truly fit in everywhere.

Jess Dafoe loves the creativity that comes from finding new ways to present stories, promoting everyday literacy to parents, motivating teens, and helping adults try new things. Over the years she has gained a keen understanding that by working together libraries are not only better-equipped to meet our individual goals, but also our collective aspirations engaged and inclusive communities.

11:15 – 12:15 **The Possible Makerspace: Providing Innovative Technology without Space or a Budget** (with tech petting zoo)

Wendy Wright, Director, Smithers Public Library

Would you like to offer access to a wider range of technology in your library? Are you curious about the Makerspaces popping up in larger libraries but think it could never work for yours? The Smithers Public Library has been successful in incorporating cutting-edge technology in a very small building within a very

limited budget. This has attracted groups of patrons, such as teens, who have not regularly visited the library before.

You will also have the opportunity to try out a selection of the library's circulating technology kits, children's iPads, and mini 3-D printer in our mini-makerspace "petting zoo," while you learn tips on funding sources, how to find the best new technology fit for your space and your community, and why a Makerspace can help your library achieve its mission and add value to traditional library service.

Wendy Wright has always loved connecting people with stories, ideas, and information. Before becoming a library director, she worked in bookstores and the publishing industry for nearly two decades. She is delighted to join the Smithers team at a time of unprecedented change in the services that public libraries offer to empower and inspire their communities. She cannot imagine ever being bored working in a library!

12:15 – 1:00

Lunch

Museum open for viewing

1:00 – 2:00

Improving Library Service to First Nations Communities

Joe Zelwietro, Library Director, Prince Rupert Public Library

Robert Pictou, host, "Open Connection," CFTK-TV Terrace

First Nations comprise 37% of North Coast communities, yet remain one of the least-served groups in our public libraries. Join library director ***Joe Zelwietro*** and TV host ***Robert Pictou*** as they discuss the stories behind the statistics and engage us to consider programs and services that can help close the gap.

2:00 – 3:00

Staff Roundtable

3:00 – 5:00

Library Directors Advisory Group meeting

6:00 - ?

Dinner

Saturday, October 17

10:00 – 12:00 **NCLF Board Meeting**

12:00 – 1:00 **Lunch**

Museum open for viewing

1:00 – 4:00 **Strategic Board Recruitment and Development**

Denise Baker, Executive Director, Vantage Point

An effective and engaged board begins with a strong board development strategy. This session will explore the role of the board in bringing the right people on to the team, engaging their strengths, and creating a structure that supports success.

Participants will gain the knowledge to:

- Apply practices that build effective boards in the areas of structure, board development, team dynamics, and board continuity;
- Recognize the importance of diversity in building an effective board
- Move beyond recruiting the usual suspects by creating a strategic framework to identify, recruit, and engage outstanding board members
- Prepare the board for strategic board recruitment
- Ensure board succession planning becomes part of the culture.

***Denise Baker** is the Executive Director of Vantage Point, a not-for-profit organization that delivers foundational, advanced and custom learning opportunities focused on governance, leadership, planning, and people engagement. She has had the opportunity to create high performance teams and organizations in a career that has spanned international for-profit, higher education, and not-for-profit. She is a skilled facilitator, leading discussions on topics related to board governance, leadership, women in leadership, strategic planning, and mentoring. Denise has an honours English Degree and a Masters of Library and Information Science from UBC.*