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# Northwest Library Federation

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2017 Provincial Grant  
Report

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March 1, 2017

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The Northwest Library Federation is comprised of seven public libraries: Houston, Smithers, Hazelton, Terrace, Kitimat, Prince Rupert and Stewart. NWLF communities 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 Northwest Library Federation was created in 2006 to address these issues and improve the level of library service for all people of the area.

2017 activities and achievements included:

- *regular information on professional development options* to NWLF library directors and their boards through the monthly training opportunities document distributed throughout the province. Written thanks for the value of this service was received from twelve libraries outside the NWLF.
- *the NWLF e-newsletter*, highlighting news on programs and activities of all member libraries, to encourage dialogue and interaction within the region. With an open rate of over 50% and a click rate of close to 45%, interaction with this vehicle well exceeds industry standards.
- *funding for self-initiated course completion* in NWLF libraries;
- *purchase of a subscription to GrantStation* on behalf of all libraries, to assist in finding and securing grant funding;
- *provision of database subsidies* to NWLF libraries on a sliding scale, to create a more even playing field in the provision of database access for patrons;
- *sponsorship and coordination of three regional tours*: magician Leif David (for the Summer Reading Club), author Gwynne Dyer, and CirqueWorks for children and their families. Attendance at these events achieved record highs with some libraries attracting more than 250 patrons. Community partnerships in conjunction with NWLF events also greatly exceeded previous years, and included local art galleries, school districts, home school groups, child development societies, friendship centres, local governments, museums,

bookstores, and friends of the public library. One member library took in over \$1,300 in donations at the Gwynne Dyer event.

- *research and promotion for reconciliation events in our member libraries.* One of four interested libraries produced a very moving and successful gathering in 2017.
- *a strategic plan review and update* by all library directors and board members in Hazelton, in lieu of an annual conference (the updated document is attached to this report). It should be noted that NWLF did not hold a conference in 2017 in deference to Beyond Hope. This was an error and should not be repeated in future years. The NWLF conference is the only opportunity for member library staff and boards to access joint training and networking, primarily due to travel costs. While attendance at NWLF conferences exceed 50 staff and board members, Beyond Hope attracts fewer than 10 attendees from the Northwest. In 2018 and thereafter, a robust NWLF conference should be produced every year in order to achieve staff and board professional development goals.



## 2015-2018 Strategic Plan -- Introduction

British Columbia's Northwest region, which encompasses the Northwest, the Skeena River Basin 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 region 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 Valley and Northwest 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% in the Northwest and 19% in the Bulkley Valley.

Communities with public libraries range in size from 499 to 12,500 people; differences between them in size and capacity have contributed to a disparity in patron access to both physical and digital resources as well as to programs and services. The Northwest Library Federation (previously 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.

# Northwest Library Federation

## 2017 – 2020 Strategic Plan

Our Vision	Northwest residents have equitable, easy access to the world of knowledge.
Our Mission	The Northwest Library Federation supports member libraries working together to enhance the services they provide to their communities.
Our Guiding Principles	<p><b>Collaboration:</b> Member libraries work together on projects of collective benefit.</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> Member libraries are answerable first to their own boards; collaboration is pursued where it does not conflict with local goals.</p> <p><b>Democracy:</b> Each member library has an equal voice in the NWLF decision-making process.</p> <p><b>Transparency:</b> NWLF is an open organization answerable to member library boards, funders and the public.</p>
Our Goals 2016 - 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Increase service equity between member libraries</li><li>2. Enhance library services in the region</li><li>3. Create a community of member libraries</li></ol>

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

**Strategies:**

- Provide targeted funding to equalize gaps in capacity
- Provide training opportunities to support staff and board development
- Identify and share existing expertise between libraries

**Impact: *Patrons in every community experience equivalent service***

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

**Strategies:**

- Offer programs that support increased community engagement
- Collaborate with other federations as well as other library and community organizations
- Advocate for ongoing and increased provincial support

**Impact: *Libraries provide an enriched level of service***

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

**Strategies:**

- Facilitate ongoing communication between libraries
- Provide opportunities for joint training and networking
- Maintain shared policies to govern the operation of the Federation

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

<b>Goal #1: Increase service equity</b>				
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provide targeted funding to equalize gaps in capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget development</li> <li>• Review funding allocation model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most important needs are supported</li> <li>• Libraries are funded more clearly based on need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs assessment (survey) to identify gaps</li> </ul>	Board
Provide training opportunities to support staff and board development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce yearly conference</li> <li>• Provide monthly training opportunities document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libraries are supported in achieving their training and development goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback surveys</li> </ul>	NWLF Director
Identify and share existing expertise between libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update board and staff contact list</li> <li>• Communicate available human resources for library follow-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and volunteers with needed expertise are identified</li> <li>• Human resources are shared when feasible</li> <li>• Gaps in service are addressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource list</li> <li>• # of visits</li> <li>• Secret shopper???</li> </ul>	NWLF Director, Library Directors

<b>Goal #2: Enhance library service</b>				
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Offer programs that support increased community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize yearly tours of performers and artists offering the greatest opportunity for community partnerships</li> <li>• Publicize tours regionally</li> <li>• Investigate inclusion of regional community organization reps as associate members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libraries become more central to their communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NWLF program surveys</li> <li>• Individual library program surveys</li> <li>• Each library identify their partnerships with examples of how they work together</li> </ul>	NWLF Director, Library Directors
Pursue opportunities to collaborate with other federations as well as library and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize regular inter-federation meetings</li> <li>• Participate in inter-federation programs</li> <li>• Attend ABCPLD meetings</li> <li>• Investigate participation on BC Public Libraries Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources (time and money) are used effectively</li> <li>• Shared issues are identified and addressed</li> <li>• Northwest and Federation issues are communicated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of meetings</li> <li>• Issues addressed</li> </ul>	NWLF Director
Advocate for ongoing and increased provincial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop NWLF advocacy plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NWLF supports the advocacy efforts of member libraries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan completed</li> </ul>	Board



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<b>Goal #3: Create a Community</b>				
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Facilitate ongoing communication between libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize library activities to all board and staff</li> <li>Include a standing “issues sharing” agenda item in LDAG and board meetings</li> <li>Share outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board and staff and are aware of activity within member libraries</li> <li>Ideas for collaboration and program/service improvements are generated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter analytics</li> <li>Qualitative feedback</li> </ul>	NWLF Director, Library Directors
Provide opportunities for joint training and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall conference</li> <li>Investigate use of technology to hold meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inter-library interaction is increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference attendance &amp; feedback survey</li> </ul>	NWLF Director
Maintain shared policies to govern the operation of the Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review NWLF policy manual</li> <li>Support a common strategic planning process for all libraries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NWLF operates transparently</li> <li>Continuity is enhanced</li> <li>NWLF strategic plan meaningfully supports individual library strategic plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual is updated as needed</li> <li>Member libraries’ strategic plans follow a common format</li> </ul>	Board