

Vanderhoof well situated for aviation

The centuries old action of the Nechako and Stuart Rivers has engraved a plane shaped valley in the heart of British Columbia. At the centre of the basin lies the thriving village of Vanderhoof, a modern day community with agricultural roots.

Settled by turn of the century pioneers in search of fertile land, Vanderhoof in the 1980's is a flourishing farming community well supplemented by logging and wood derivative industries.

arena, completed in 1979, offers roller skating, swimming lessons and children's programs during the summer months and a variety of activities in the winter. The indoor curling rink, constructed in the same year by an independent local club, complements the roster of seasonal sporting activities.

Other recreational facilities include five ball diamonds in town and one in the neighbouring area, two developed parks, a large riverside

society.

The environs of the village have definite attraction with several sparkling lakes and fish filled rivers within easy driving distance. Hunting is popular in the fall, attracting enthusiasts from far away.

Alcan's Kenney Dam is a 100 kilometre (sixty mile) drive from Vanderhoof along a scenic, forested roadway. Once North America's largest earth and rock filled dam, the massive structure holds water in Knewstubb

Lake, part of the glittering Ootsa chain, and reroutes flows to the Kemano Powerhouse, 300 km. west.

Nearby, Cheslatta Falls sends rainbow hued spray high into the air as the entire volume of the Nechako River plunges 100 feet into the channel.

The river has been much publicized since Alcan first announced plans to implement Kemano Completion, a water re-routing scheme capable of dangerously depleting the flows in north-central B.C.'s

river system.

Further south, in the Kluskus Shield, mining exploration companies are reportedly drilling for silver, lead and copper. While some small scale gold and jade activity is taking place to the north of Vanderhoof, the major concern in the district is the Placer Development's molybdenum mine in Endako, located ninety km. from the village.

Politically, Vanderhoof is governed by a four member Council

headed by Mayor Don Grantham, currently is his fourth year of office.

Grantham is also a director of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, the administrative body for unincorporated areas between Smithers and Fort St. James.

At the provincial level, the village is represented by Omineca MLA Jack Kempf, a Socred who hails from Houston. In Ottawa, the member is Lorne McCuish, MP for Prince George-Bulkley Valley.

Flourishing area

The major employer in the area is Plateau Mills, a lumber processing company that is part of the BCRIC group of companies. The firm provides jobs for almost 300 people while contracting most of the logging work to local independents.

Two other sawmills, Bond Brothers and L and M Lumber, operate in the area, employing approximately 200 people.

A growth spurt in the past five years has increased the population, services and tax base of Vanderhoof, turning the municipality into an administrative and supply centre for the Nechako Plateau.

Twenty-five hundred people reside in the town while another five thousand have settled on farms and ranches within a twenty mile radius. The trading area extends further, encompassing about 14,000 people.

Over fifty new businesses have opened their doors in Vanderhoof during the past five years with a corresponding boom occurring in the commercial building sector. Slated for construction this year are a luxury apartment, a courthouse, a new municipal office, a shopping mall, and a large automotive parts store. Tentative plans are also in the offing for a second plaza, two hotels and a variety of other projects.

Twenty-three government agencies have headquarters in the Village with the majority offering services on a regional basis. In addition, the community offers locally oriented facilities geared toward recreation, health, history and the arts.

bird sanctuary attracting up to 50,000 Canada geese a year, a campground, a beach and two tennis courts. A third paved court is scheduled for development this year.

The Vanderhoof Airport, four miles north of the village, is a growing concern, housing two flying clubs and a half dozen businesses. The apron, taxiway and main runway were paved in 1978-79, and further development is on the way. Top priority has been given to the installation of lighting and a non-directional beacon.

The village also boasts a seaplane base, located on the Nechako River near the Riverview Drive subdivision.

An active local group, the Nechako Valley Historical Society, opened the Vanderhoof Community Museum this year after months of intensive restorative work on the original Board of Trade building.

The seventy year old structure, in derelict shape when the Society moved it to its present location at Highway 16 and Pine Avenue last year, was officially opened as a museum earlier this month.

Two other buildings - the original OK Cafe and the first Royal Bank - are slated for restoration this year. As more buildings are moved to the site and refurbished, the museum will be operated as a historic village.

Although run on a volunteer basis, the arts are flourishing in Vanderhoof with regular features organized by Arts Unlimited, the local gallery, the Vanderhoof Coffeehouse, the Nechako Valley Theatre group and the music



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