

COMMUNITY
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TourismBC

BRIDGE RIVER VALLEY TOURISM WORKSHOP REPORT

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1 – Introduction and Tourism Planning Context

Background

The Bridge River Valley is located in the South Chilcotin Mountains approximately 300 km north of Vancouver and 100 km west of Lillooet. It is accessible on a year-round basis by road from the Lower Mainland via Highway 99 to Lillooet and then Road 40 into the Valley to Gold Bridge and Bralorne, the two main communities. An alternative access is north of Pemberton via the Hurley Road, which is a gravel 4x4 road open only in the summer, although can be accessed by snowmobile in the winter.

The Valley already has some well-developed tourism infrastructure and products including successful heli-skiing, cat-skiing, backcountry ski touring and snowmobiling operations in the winter, as well as mountain biking and horseback riding adventure packages in the summer. While the roofed accommodations base is on a small scale overall, a variety of facilities is available ranging from a luxury resort to budget motels, small lodges and a B&B. There are also a number of rustic campgrounds available in several Provincial Parks and Recreation Sites throughout the Valley.

Bridge River Valley also has a First Nations heritage and a rich gold mining history which provide cultural and heritage tourism opportunities.

The Expression of Interest

The Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Tourism BC, part of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, & Innovation to participate in the *Community Tourism Foundations* program. This program has been designed to provide planning assistance to communities that will enable them to strengthen their tourism industry and increase its value to the overall economy. The EOI related to the whole Valley, largely comprised of Electoral Area A of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District.

In response to the EOI, the Bridge River Valley's tourism stakeholders were invited by The Ministry to attend a one-day Tourism Planning Workshop. This workshop has been designed for communities that are at a relatively early stage in their tourism development and provides an opportunity for tourism stakeholders to become involved in shaping the direction of future growth, and to gain a broader appreciation of the potential role of the regional tourism association and Tourism BC in strengthening tourism locally. This Workshop was held in Gold Bridge on March 27th, 2012 and was facilitated by the Tourism BC facilitator, John Murray. The session attracted a cross-section of tourism stakeholders from the Valley itself and nearby Pemberton.

Objectives of the Tourism Planning Workshop

The objectives of the one-day Workshop were as follows:

1. To bring tourism stakeholders together to share information and exchange views on the current tourism situation in the Bridge River Valley.
2. To provide an overview of the roles of Tourism BC and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA) in relation to community tourism development.
3. To increase stakeholders' understanding of the tourism planning process.
4. To present an overview of the tourism industry in BC and current trends that are affecting demand.
5. To review the existing planning context for tourism in the Bridge River Valley and characteristics of current visitors to the area.
6. To identify the Bridge River Valley's key tourism products and features, including attractions, accommodation, festivals/events and other tourism oriented services.
7. To review the key issues, challenges and opportunities associated with the Bridge River Valley's tourism industry.
8. To facilitate discussion on strategic directions for tourism and reach consensus on key tactics and initiatives to be taken over the 12 to 18 months.

This represents considerable ground to cover in one day, so it is not possible to develop a comprehensive tourism plan on the basis of these discussions. This report, therefore, is a preliminary assessment of tourism in the Bridge River Valley and recommendations for moving forward in the short term. Implementation of this report's recommendations will assist with generating enhanced momentum and direction for tourism stakeholders, which will help to strengthen tourism as a key sector of the Valley's economy.

Workshop Participants

The Workshop was attended by 11 tourism stakeholders from the region, who represented a good cross section of different types of tourist operators, non-profit organizations and the Regional District. Amy Thacker attended on behalf of the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association and Laura Plant attended on behalf of Tourism BC. Amy and Laura presented an overview of the two organizations and their work at the community level. The remainder of the workshop was facilitated by John Murray, a Community Tourism Foundations program facilitator. Following is a list of the participants who attended the session.

Name	Organization
Teri Anderson	◆ Bralorne Pioneer Museum
Peter Colapinto	◆ Bridge River Trails Society
Debbie Demare	◆ SLRD Area A Director, Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society
George Henry	◆ Pemberton Museum
Shirley Henry	◆ Pemberton Chamber of Commerce
BJ Moore	◆ Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
Michelle Nortje	◆ Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society
Laura Plant	◆ Tourism BC / Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Innovation
Amy Thacker	◆ Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association
Terry & Cathy Thiessen	◆ Highland Cream Resort
Darlene Watts	◆ Gold Dust Motel
Peter Weilandt	◆ BC Parks
John Murray	◆ Tourism BC Facilitator

The Tourism Planning Process

In preparing a community tourism plan it is important to keep in mind the following principles:

- **Visitor needs must be addressed.** BC communities must be responsive to visitor needs. Communities need to understand visitor needs first, develop tourism experiences to meet those needs, and then market the appropriate tourism experiences to the appropriate types of visitors.
- **Collaboration of tourism stakeholders is critical.** To address the issues and opportunities facing the tourism industry, consultation and collaboration among all types of local/regional tourism industry stakeholders is required.
- **Effective Partnerships.** Tourism is a fragmented industry with many components and effective partnerships among tourism operators, communities, destination marketing

organizations, and all levels of government are essential to building a cohesive, strong and sustainable tourism industry.

- **Sustainability.** Tourism in British Columbia’s communities and regions must be developed in a sustainable manner, recognizing the need for economic, social, and environmental sustainability.
- **Community support.** To be successful, tourism development needs to be supported by all major stakeholders in the community, including businesses, local government, and residents.

The tourism plan encompasses the overall vision, goals and objectives, and provides a “blueprint” for developing the industry over the coming years. The tourism plan should also be flexible enough to take new, unexpected opportunities into consideration during implementation.

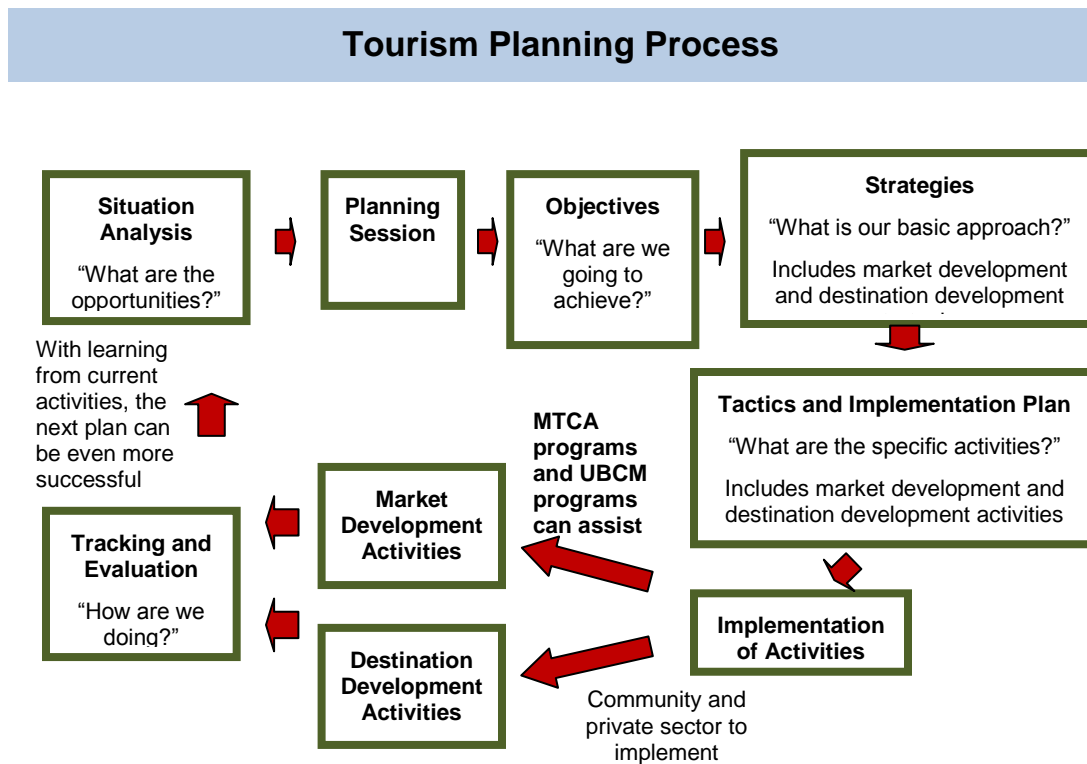
The tourism plan should be designed to accomplish the following:

1. Define the tourism business situation and context – past, present and future.
2. Identify the tourism-related opportunities and challenges facing the community.
3. Establish specific and realistic business objectives for tourism.
4. Determine the strategies and tactics required to accomplish the objectives.
5. Establish a timetable and roles and responsibilities for implementing projects and activities.
6. Identify mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of projects/activities against the defined objectives.

Once the tourism plan is completed and implementation begins, results should be tracked regularly so that an updated plan, with learning from the current year’s activities, can be more effective in enhancing the community’s tourism industry. For many communities and regions, the objectives and strategies should be reviewed, with most of the updates occurring on the detailed tactics.

The tourism planning cycle can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 1.1: Tourism BC’s Community Tourism Foundations Planning Process



Source: Tourism BC

The Bridge River Valley’s application to the Community Tourism Foundations program and its involvement in the Tourism Planning Workshop is recognition of the importance of tourism strategic planning. As the Valley’s stakeholders seek to build on this Workshop, they need to maintain a commitment to answering the following questions on a regular basis:

- What is the current tourism and economic environment?
- Who are the current visitors to the Valley?
- What opportunities and issues is the Valley facing?
- What tourism business objectives does the Bridge River Valley expect to achieve?
- What tourism products and services does the Valley offer that are of interest to existing and prospective visitors?

- What actions are required to make the Valley's current and potential products of greater interest to visitors?
- What processes are being used to communicate with existing and potential visitors?
- Who will do what and when?
- How will progress be measured?

A planning process that takes into account all of these questions will provide structure and rigour to decision-making regarding tourism initiatives that fit within the overall plan.

The Rationale for Planning

Undertaking a strategic planning process for the tourism industry in the Bridge River Valley on a regular basis will assist with developing:

1. An enhanced appreciation of the range of stakeholders and tourism product/services and the potential linkages among them.
2. An increased awareness of the benefits of tourism to the wider community – especially to the local economy, culture and environment.
3. A longer-term perspective on tourism development that can withstand the impact of shorter-term political changes.
4. A greater ability to position tourism as an important driver for economic growth and to attract new investment in marketing and product development.
5. An increased likelihood of new opportunities for collaboration among potential partners.
6. An improved understanding of target markets and a greater appreciation of the need for integrated marketing and communications.
7. A realistic appreciation of the resources required to deliver tourism services effectively.
8. An awareness of the benefits to be gained from adopting a regional and partnership approach to tourism planning and development.

2 – Bridge River Valley Tourism Destination Overview

The Bridge River Valley is in a strategic location just north of the Highway 99 corridor. The Valley has oriented itself towards tourism, making use of its principal natural assets in the South Chilcotin Mountains of BC. The Valley is an outstanding outdoor adventure/recreation destination, both winter and summer. As a result of the mining heritage of the area, the principal communities of Gold Bridge and Bralorne offer a number of intact heritage buildings as good potential heritage tourism resources and points of interest.

Location, Access and Travel/Touring Patterns

The Bridge River Valley is located approximately 300 km north of Vancouver and 100 km west of Lillooet and is accessible by automobile, snowmobile, float plane and helicopter. There are three alternative road access routes from the Lower Mainland:

- During the summer and early fall, the fastest route is via Highway 99 to Pemberton and then the Hurley Road into the Valley. This route is a summer-only gravel road suitable for 4x4 vehicles, which involves a climb over the 5,500' Railroad Pass and is approximately a 3½ hour drive from Vancouver. In winter it is possible to travel along this unplowed road via snowmobile from the Pemberton Meadows to Bralorne or Gold Bridge.
- The second fastest route is via Highway 99 to Pemberton, continuing on the Duffy Lake Road section of Highway 99 to Lillooet, followed by Road 40 from Lillooet into the Valley. This route takes approximately 5 hours from Vancouver and is usually suitable for all vehicles, as it is a mixture of paved and gravel surfaces and is generally well-maintained by Interior Roads in Gold Bridge.
- The most dependable driving route is via Hope to Lillooet and then into the Valley on Road 40, with a total travel time of 6 hours from Vancouver.

The scheduled bus service available that comes closest to the region is Greyhound from Vancouver, Squamish and Whistler to Pemberton. Some tourist businesses in the Bridge River Valley offer local shuttle services by van for their guests, such as Tyax Wilderness Resort. Chilcotin Holidays offers scheduled passenger van service up to four times a week between Vancouver and their guest ranch.

The closest airport with scheduled flights is in Kamloops, with daily flights on Air Canada Express (Jazz) and Westjet. The second closest airport is in Pemberton and is available for private aircraft and charters, as well as helicopter service. Float plane service is available to Tyax Wilderness Resort and other lakes. Vancouver International Airport is the major gateway for international visitors to the region, but is a 5-6 hour drive away.

Rocky Mountaineer Vacations operates a scenic tour train service along the former BC Rail line, although the trains do not stop in the Bridge River Valley.

Attractions and Activities

The Bridge River Valley is a premier mountain location for many outdoor recreation/adventure activities and there is a fairly extensive infrastructure of outdoor adventure/recreation facilities and amenities that have been developed over the years. In virtually all cases the focus is on wilderness experiences, so any developed facilities such as campgrounds are of a rustic nature. There are currently close to a dozen forestry recreation sites/campgrounds in operation in the Valley, several provincial parks, and numerous hiking and biking trails, as shown in Figure 2.1. Of particular note is South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park, which is a huge wilderness area encompassing almost 57,000 hectares and is currently engaged in a management planning process.

In addition to extensive independent activities by Bridge River Valley residents and visitors, there are a number of major tourist operators who make use of the provincial parks and recreation sites for their various tour packages and programs.

Figure 2.1: Principal Outdoor Oriented Attractions and Features in the Bridge River Valley

Nearby Attractions	Details / Description
BC Forestry Recreation Sites in Bridge River Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carol Lake • Carpenter Lake • Friburg • Gun Lake • Kingdom Lake • Marshall Creek • Marshall Lake North • Mowson Pond • Mud Lake North and Mud Lakes South • Plateau Ponds • Tyaughton Creek
Big Creek Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilderness park encompassing 65,982 hectares • Accessible by trails, no facilities and wilderness camping only • Spectacular scenery in southern portion makes it popular for horseback riding, backpacking, hunting, wildlife viewing, and mountaineering • Abundant wildlife including mountain goats, California bighorn sheep, moose, wolves, black bears and grizzly bears

Nearby Attractions	Details / Description
Bridge River Delta Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class A provincial park covering 992 hectares • Intricately braided river system and braided tributaries to the delta on Downton Lake • Important spring habitats and cross valley connection for grizzly bear • Habitat for moose, mule deer, wolverine, mink, Harlequin duck • No facilities available
Bridge River Trails Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carl Creek Trail, Sunshine Mountain Trails, Kingdom Lake Trail, Waterloo Trail (Mt. Fergusson), Bradian Trail Network, Green Mountain Trail
Dams and Reservoirs (BC Hydro)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 330 hectares of rolling hills • Wildlife viewing • Fishing for Rainbow Trout • With 46 campsites, ideal for family camping vacations
Fred Antoine Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class A provincial park covering 2,230 hectares • Includes a complete and undisturbed watershed (Antoine Creek) and the upper elevations of Fred Creek • Offers a wilderness recreation experience and contains numerous signs and artefacts of First Nations traditional use • No facilities available
Gwyneth Lake Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class A provincial park covering 132 hectares • Park includes a small lake and marsh, and is situated on the Hurley-Carpenter Lake road tour route from Lower Mainland • Lake and marsh provide habitat for aquatic species • Old “Forest Service” style campground with 6 campsites and a pit toilet
Mountain Bike Trails in South Chilcotin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Cinnabar to Mowsons Pond Mountain Biking Trail • Spruce Lake to Gun Creek Hiking/Biking Trail • Taylor Basin to Spruce Lake Hiking/Biking Trail
Snowmobile Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These include: Slim Creek, Lone Goat (Ice Caves), Jewel Creek to Dixon, Taylor Basin, East Hurley, Kingdom Lake, McGillivray
South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually spectacular area with mid elevation grasslands, sub alpine and alpine meadows, alpine lakes and mountain peaks • Very large land area of 56,796 hectares • Mountain goats, mule deer, grizzly bears, black bears, California bighorn sheep, moose, wolves and wolverines are found in Park • Over 200 km of trails through broad valleys, alpine meadows and ridges • Hikers, horseback riders and mountain bikers use the Park and its

Nearby Attractions	Details / Description
	trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilderness, backcountry or walk-in camping at 6 designated sites – basic facilities available at some sites (picnic table, pit toilet) • Also fishing, hunting and winter recreational activities
Yalakom Provincial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a Class A provincial park covering 8,941 hectares • Park protects the whole of the undeveloped basin of Yalakom Creek and much of Nine Mile Ridge • Encompasses old growth forest, areas of high elevation aspen stands and krumholz forest • Multiple California bighorn sheep, mountain goat and mule deer migration corridors • Many trails throughout the area for backcountry recreation and hunting • No camping facilities

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and discussions in Workshop

The Bridge River Valley also has a significant intact built heritage consisting of various historic buildings and sites in Bralorne, Gold Bridge, Gun Creek and at Sunshine Mountain. These heritage assets are summarized in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Bridge River Valley’s Principal Historic Buildings and Heritage Features

Location	Historic Building/ Feature	Description
Bralorne	Boulbe Memorial Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently restored by the Bridge River Valley Community Church Society • It is available for weddings and other events
	Bralorne Community Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features a classic gymnasium and full kitchen • Hall has recently been cleaned and renovated, is used for community events and is available to rent.
	Bralorne Mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was once the richest gold mine in Canada, but closed 30 years ago • However, the Mine has recently re-opened as a result of the high price of gold • May be potential for pre-arranged tours by appointment
	Bralorne-Pioneer Mine Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originally the building served as the old mine office, but now operates as the Bralorne-Pioneer Motel
	Bralorne Pioneer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum Society was formed in 1977 to preserve the

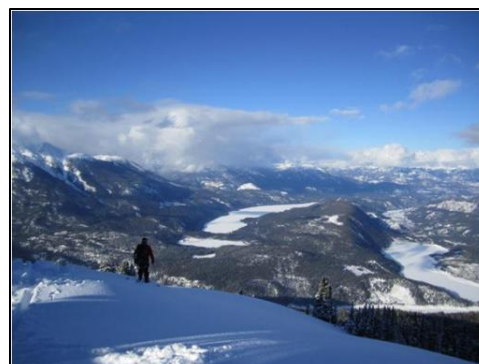
Location	Historic Building/ Feature	Description
	Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> history of the Bridge River Valley Open May long weekend to Oct. Thanksgiving weekend
	Pioneer Mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This mine is closed and the town deserted Foundations overgrown with brush are still visible to hikers through the 1,000-acre mining claim Bralorne Gold Mines Ltd. is currently exploring the property with a view to re-establishing operations
Gold Bridge	Bridge River Valley Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This cemetery was established in 1930 and is maintained by the Gold Bridge Community Club
	Gold Bridge Model Bakery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Bakery operated from 1934 to 1967 Peak of production was in the 1950s at 6,000 loaves per week
	Will Haylmore Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will Haylmore was sub-miner recorder for the district and he also had a placer mine Historic building was Restored by the Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society
Gun Creek Campground	Historic Minto Townsite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old Townsite becomes visible during mid-summer when water levels are low
Sunshine Mountain	Sunshine Mountain Ski Cabin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Originally built by the Mine and used by staff on weekends – had a rope tow and regular ski races Local families still use the cabin and ski hill

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and discussions in Workshop

With the development of appropriate interpretive signage, heritage plaques and heritage tour brochures, the Valley’s built heritage itself could become more of an attraction, based on the historic buildings and sites shown in Figure 2.2.

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Activities Offered in the Bridge River Valley

Listings of the range of tourism and outdoor recreation activities that can be enjoyed in the Bridge River Valley are shown in Figures 2.3 and 2.4 for the winter and summer seasons. These are outdoor activities that are particularly well-suited to the natural environment in the Bridge River Valley and the various outdoor attractions and features such as the nearby provincial parks and recreation areas. While most of these activities can be pursued on an independent basis, many are also offered by tourist operators, as indicated. Some of the winter



activities such as cat-skiing, heli-skiing and snowmobile tours are particularly lucrative for the tourist operators that offer them or provide the accommodation facilities and other services for these groups.

Figure 2.3: Principal Winter (Snow) Season Tourist Activities in the Bridge River Valley

Activity	Conducted Independently	Offered by Operator(s)
Cat-skiing		◆
Heli-skiing		◆
Ice fishing	◆	
Nordic skiing, ski touring	◆	◆
Snowmobiling	◆	◆
Snowshoeing	◆	◆
Skating	◆	
Sled (snowmobile) supported skiing, snowboarding	◆	◆

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC Facilitator based on background research and discussions in Workshop

A wide range of summer mountain activities is available in the Bridge River Valley, as shown in Figure 2.4. Most of these can be pursued independently, although there are several major operators offering guided outdoor adventure/wilderness experiences in the Valley, as shown.



Figure 2.4: Principal Summer (No Snow) Season Tourist Activities in the Bridge River Valley

Activity	Conducted Independently	Offered by Operator(s)
Boating, swimming, water sports	♦	
Camping	♦	♦
Canoeing/kayaking	♦	
Fishing (lakes and rivers)	♦	♦
Heli-hiking, biking, photography and other types of air access excursions (also via floatplane)		♦
Hiking, backpacking, mountaineering, guide-outfitters	♦	♦
Horseback riding/guest ranches	♦	♦
Mountain biking	♦	♦
Rock-hounding, gold panning, mines heritage	♦	
Spa/wellness getaways		♦
Touring independently by road	♦	
Trail/logging road riding on ATVs/dirt bikes	♦	♦
Wildlife viewing, birding	♦	

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC Facilitator based on background research and discussions in Workshop

A list of the principal tours and excursions operators who bring tourists into the Bridge River Valley is shown in Figure 2.5. Chilcotin Holidays, Spruce Lake Wilderness Adventures, and Tyax Wilderness Resort all have major accommodation facilities based in the Valley and offer outdoor adventure/wilderness packages on a year-round basis. TLH Heli-skiing Ltd. is now integrated with Tyax Wilderness Resort.

Blackcomb Aviation and Totally Awesome Adventures are based in Whistler and Pemberton, but bring visitors to the Valley on organized tours and excursions. Backcountry Snowcats has a base of operation in the Hurley Pass, including a modular accommodation building known as Hurley Mountain Lodge. Whitecap Alpine has operated in the Valley since the 1970s and has its base of operation in the McGillivray Pass at its own McGillivray Pass Lodge.

Figure 2.5: Principal Tours and Excursions Operators in the Bridge River Valley

Operator Name	Activities Offered	Season(s) Offered
Backcountry Snowcats	Offers 2-4 days cat skiing packages in the South Chilcotin Mountains, using Hurley Mountain Lodge in the Hurley Pass as a base.	Winter
Blackcomb Aviation	Heli-adventures including glacier hikes, alpine picnics, heli-skiing and snowboarding adventures	All year
Chilcotin Holidays	Guest ranch adventures, packhorse trips, grizzly-viewing, guide training, fly-fishing, hiking, winter adventures	All year
Spruce Lake Wilderness Adventures / Tyax Adventures	1-2 hour/all-day trail rides, 3-14 day pack tours, assisted mtn. bike tours, backcountry hiking and skiing expeditions, guide training, wildlife viewing	Winter & Summer
TLH Heliskiing Ltd.	All inclusive backcountry heliskiing packages for all budgets – 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7 day packages	Winter
Totally Awesome Adventures	Based in Whistler and Pemberton, but offers day and overnight snowmobile tours from Pemberton over the Hurley to Bralorne.	Winter
Tyax Wilderness Resort & Tyax Air Services	Mountain bike tours, horseback riding, hiking, float plane sightseeing, fishing, canoeing and paddle-boats, heli-skiing	Winter & Summer
Whitecap Alpine	Helicopter accessed backcountry ski touring, ski camps and winter mountain leadership courses. Operates McGillivray Pass Lodge, which is its base of operations.	Winter

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and discussions in Workshop

Festivals and Events

Bridge River Valley hosts only a few annual festivals and events. We have included a list in Figure 2.6 of the principal annual festivals and events that are currently operated or have recently operated in the Bridge River Valley. Those currently operating include the Bralorne Baseball Tournament, Farmer’s Market and a relatively new festival called Winterfest, now in its third year. The Fishing Derby, Gold Bridge Days and Golf Tournament are not currently operating, although there appears to be interest in re-establishing a summer festival along the lines of Gold Bridge Days, provided that staff support and funding can be obtained. The limited

population base is a major constraint on recruiting sufficient volunteers to organize major festivals and events that can draw visitors from outside the Valley.

Figure 2.6: Bridge River Valley’s Principal Annual Festivals and Events

Festival/Event	Description	Month
Bralorne Ball Tournament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves local and visitor teams and supporters 	July
Farmers’ Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly event starting in May each year 	May-September
Fishing Derby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently operating – do not have the staff and volunteer resources required to organize this 	Summer
Gold Bridge Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently operating – do not have the staff and volunteer resources required to organize this A similar type of summer festival could be an opportunity if staff and funding support can be obtained 	Summer
Golf Tournament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently operating – do not have the staff and volunteer resources required to organize this 	Summer
Winter Fest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New festival launched this winter 	February

Source: Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society, as well as discussions in the Tourism Planning Workshop

Accommodation Facilities

More than a dozen roofed accommodation facilities are located in the Bridge River Valley, as shown in Figure 2.7. There are a total of thirteen operators offering roofed accommodation facilities including a B & B, a guest ranch, three lodges, a small hotel/inn, three motels, a luxury wilderness resort, two lakeside chalet rental properties, and a wilderness back-country operator with approximately 25 cabin or wall tent units. These establishments offer approximately 130 rooms or units of accommodation. Only six of the thirteen establishments are listed in the BC Accommodation Guide for 2012, as shown, although most have their own websites or are hosted on a partner’s website.

Figure 2.7: Roofed Accommodations in the Bridge River Valley

Location	Name of Establishment	No. of Rooms/ Units	Listed in BC Accommodation Guide 2010
Bralorne	Bralorne B & B	2	No
	Bralorne Lodge	4	No
	Bralorne Pioneer Motel	6*	Yes

Location	Name of Establishment	No. of Rooms/ Units	Listed in BC Accommodation Guide 2010
	Mines Motel	10	No
Gold Bridge	Gold Bridge Hotel	11	Yes
	Gold Dust Motel	6	No
Gun Lake	Highland Cream Resort	3 (chalets)	Yes
Hurley Pass	Hurley Mountain Lodge (Backcountry Snowcats)	7	No
McGillivray Pass	McGillivray Pass Lodge (Whitecap Alpine)	8	No
Tyaughton Lake	Chilcotin Holidays Guest Ranch	19	Yes
	Morrow Chalets	3 (chalets)	Yes
	Tyax Adventures / Spruce Lake Wilderness Adventures	25 units/50 beds**	No
	Tyax Wilderness Resort	28	Yes
Total No. of Rooms/Units		130	

* Offers short and long term accommodation – 3 of 6 units usually on long term rental

** 5 camps with 10 beds per camp in cabins and wall tents (equivalent to 25 rooms)

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and BC Accommodation Guide and discussions with operators

The Bridge River Valley also offers camping facilities at a variety of provincial parks and provincial recreation sites, as shown in Figures 2.8 and 2.9. Altogether there are 15 provincial parks, provincial recreation sites and a BC Hydro recreation site that offer rustic camping facilities. The majority of these locations offer a number of discrete campsites, while South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park offers wilderness sites. Facilities available typically include one or two outhouses at each campground, along with one or more picnic tables. Boat launches are also available at a number of the recreation sites. Currently there are no fully serviced campgrounds available in the Valley (e.g. with water, sewer, electrical hook-ups etc.).

Figure 2.8: Campgrounds in the Bridge River Valley

Location	Name of Campground	# of Sites	Facilities
Bralorne	Kingdom Lake Recreation Site	14	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
Gold Bridge	Bridge River Retreat Campground	5	RV sites, 3 cabins available
	Gun Creek Campground (BC Hydro)	13	Tables, Toilets

Location	Name of Campground	# of Sites	Facilities
Gun Lake	Gun Lake Recreation Site	7	Tables, Toilets
Hurley Road	Gwyneth Lake Provincial Park	6	Tables, Toilet
South Chilcotin	South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park	wilderness sites	6 designated wilderness camping areas, some with Tables, Toilets
Tyaughton Lake/ Mud Lake	Friburg Recreation Site	5	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
	Mowson Pond Recreation Site	6	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
	Mud Lake North and Mud Lakes South Recreation Sites	6 + 2	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and discussions in Workshop

The other forestry recreation sites/campgrounds shown in Figure 2.9 are currently in operation, while a few others (not listed) have been decommissioned and are not operational and/or accessible. Some of the newer provincial parks (e.g. South Chilcotin Mountains, Gwyneth Lake) encompass former forestry recreation sites within their boundaries.

Figure 2.9: Other Forestry Recreation Sites/Campgrounds in the Bridge River Valley

Name of Forestry Recreation Site / Campground	# of Sites	Facilities
Carol Lake	8	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets, Wharfs
Carpenter Lake	2	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
Marshall Creek	3	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
Marshall Lake North	6	Boat Launch, Tables, Toilets
Plateau Ponds	3	Table
Tyaughton Creek	4	Tables, Toilets

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, websites and discussions in Workshop

Food and Beverage and Retail Services

With its small population base the Bridge River Valley is unable to support more than a few food and beverage and retail outlets. The majority of the restaurants are located in some of the Valley’s major accommodation facilities, as shown in Figure 2.10. There is also a stand-alone pub and restaurant – the Mineshaft Pub & Grill and a local party rental, cooking and catering operation, as shown.

Figure 2.10: Food and Beverage Establishments in the Bridge River Valley

Restaurant	Services Offered
Gold Bridge Hotel	· Restaurant & Pub
Lone Goat Café	· Restaurant in the Bralorne Pioneer Motel
Mineshaft Pub	· Restaurant & Pub
Sandy’s Party & Events	· Party Rentals, Cooking, & Catering
Tyax Wilderness Resort	· Licensed Dining Room & Lounge

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various brochures, listings and Workshop input

The principal tourist-oriented retail services and other services available for visitors in the Bridge River Valley are shown in Figure 2.11. As indicated, the retail options are extremely limited, consisting primarily of the Valley Hardware and Grocery, Bridge River Valley’s Honey and some automobile service operations, with only one option for purchasing gasoline at present. There are a number of community amenities and services that can also cater to visitors including the golf course, ski hill, Community Resource Building and Post Office in Gold Bridge, the Gold Bridge Public Library and the Tourist Information Booth in Gold Bridge.

Figure 2.11: Tourist Oriented Retail and Other Services in the Bridge River Valley

Category	Name of Establishment
Groceries, Sundries, Specialty Foods	· Valley Hardware & Grocery · Bridge River Valley’s Honey
Liquor Outlet	· in Valley Hardware & Grocery
Service Stations / Auto Repair	· Bob Shaw – auto service, welding, metal art · Gasoline available at Mineshaft Pub · Grizzly Gas – currently closed/for sale · Pioneer Paul’s Tire Repair

Category	Name of Establishment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top Gun Towing
Other Services/Facilities for Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge River Community Club Golf Course • Community Resource Building – Gold Bridge • Gold Bridge Post Office • Gold Bridge Public Library • Sunshine Mountain Ski Hill • Tourist Information Booth – Gold Bridge

Source: Compiled by Tourism BC facilitator from various maps, brochures, websites and Workshop input

In spite of these limited retail and visitor service offerings, most of the basics are available to visitors who wish to take day trips or overnight trips into the Valley at any time during the year. It is hoped that with incremental tourism and economic development, it will be possible to support a larger population base and additional retail and visitor services.

3 – Tourism Market Characteristics

Overview of Tourism in British Columbia

Tourism is one of the largest sectors of the BC economy in terms of revenue and employment, so is strategically important to the Province and its residents. While it is difficult to get completely up-to-date data because of the time lags required for data collection and tabulation, statistics available for 2009 and 2011 provide an indication of the magnitude of this sector:

- Tourism in BC was estimated to be worth \$12.7 billion in visitor revenue in 2009.
- Tourism GDP was nearly \$6.3 billion in 2009, based on a 2002 constant dollar.
- Tourism employed about 128,600 British Columbians in 2009.

In the short-term, however, there has been some significant decline in international travel to BC from the U.S. and overseas, which has had a negative impact on tourism in the province, as shown in the international arrivals data in Figure 3.1 for 2011 which shows the increases and decreases compared to 2010. The problems of the Eurozone and the Tsunami in Japan have clearly had an impact on tourism activity in 2011.

Figure 3.1: U.S. and Overseas Customs Entries into BC, 2011

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	2011	% Change 2010-11
U.S. Overnight Customs Entries	2,822,687	-2.1%
Asia/Pacific Overnight Customs Entries	806,172	-0.1%
Japan	105,408	-17.2%
Taiwan	38,886	-0.3%
Hong Kong	75,323	+1.8%
Australia	157,419	+1.6%
New Zealand	31,658	-8.4%
South Korea	94,440	-10.8%
China	136,292	+15.0%
India	43,443	+0.6%
Europe Overnight Customs Entries	448,913	-9.3%
United Kingdom	197,935	-5.3%
Germany	79,169	-5.0%
Netherlands	29,108	-10.6%
Switzerland	21,724	-5.6%
France	23,807	-6.4%
Total Overnight Customs Entries	4,173,474	-2.3%

Source: Research and Planning, Tourism BC

Economic Trends Affect BC's Tourism Industry

World economic trends and world tourism trends provide a context for tourism planning in British Columbia. Because tourism expenditures are largely discretionary in nature, the health of the tourism industry is very dependent on available personal disposable income. When economies are strong, tourism expenditures grow more rapidly than consumer spending as a whole, because consumers and businesses have more discretionary funds available. Likewise, during recessions, tourism declines quickly and substantially, as happened in 2008-09 during the severe economic recession, precipitated by the global financial meltdown then, from which we are still recovering as of 2012.

The global economy, led by the United States slowed significantly in 2008.

- The U.S. economy entered a recession in December 2007 which worsened significantly in the fourth quarter of 2008, with GDP anticipated to have decreased about 4% in 2008Q4. A recovery was not expected to begin until at least 2009Q3 and as of 2010Q1 was showing some positive signs.
- More than 1 million jobs were lost in the U.S. between September and November 2008. While the job losses were concentrated among younger, less educated workers, older college graduates, who comprise the bulk of BC's U.S. visitors, were not unscathed.
- The Consumer Confidence Index declined in both Canada and the U.S. during 2008.

The economies of British Columbia and Alberta were less affected, but declining oil, lumber and base metals prices have been a drag on their economies. Alberta (+1.3%) and BC (+1.0%) were both forecast to grow in 2009, but at a much slower pace than in recent years.

Global economic situations and exchange rates have a clear impact on travel patterns, with respect to how much people travel and the destinations they choose. However, it is difficult to quantify the relationship between travel patterns and exchange rates, as many other contributing factors will affect travel, such as the cost of transportation, air access, distance, passport regulations, border issues, and the marketing activities of competitive destinations.

A combination of factors has been influencing the downturn of two key international tourism markets for British Columbia, the U.S. and Japan. The U.K. market has been similarly impacted.

- The U.S. is British Columbia's main international market and changes in the economy and other factors, not only affect the number of visitors from the U.S. to BC, but also can

affect BC and Alberta residents' propensity to travel in BC; the U.S. is a key competitor of British Columbia's in many markets.

- Poor U.S. economic performance in 2009 more than offset the benefits of a more favourable exchange rate and lower gas prices; American visitation was expected to continue to decline overall in 2009.
- Japan is British Columbia's largest Asia-Pacific market. In 2008 the rapidly weakening Japanese economy, combined with decreased air capacity to BC, led to a decrease in visitation to BC.
- Japan and the UK, BC's two largest overseas markets, have also entered sharp recessions with growth rates of -0.9% and -1.4%, respectively, predicted for 2009. This was expected to result in an overall decline in visitation from these countries in 2009.

World Tourism Trends¹

Tourism is an important part of the worldwide economy, making up approximately 6% of worldwide exports of goods and services (2003). In another record year for the industry in 2007, 903 million international tourist arrivals were recorded by the WTO (World Tourism Organization), increasing 6.6% or an additional 56 million international tourist arrivals from 2006. Growth (international arrivals) was highest in the Middle East (+15%) followed by Asia and the Pacific (+10%), Africa (+7%), Europe (+5%) and the Americas (+5%).

The World Tourism Organization expresses optimism for the tourism industry over the long term, forecasting international arrivals to reach over 1.6 billion by the year 2020.

- Travel challenges and anxiety along with international events continue to influence travel decisions in the near term, particularly the weak economy.
- The World Tourism Organization indicates that the growth of international tourism arrivals significantly outpaces the growth of economic output as measured in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) when GDP reaches a certain level. In years when world economic growth exceeds 4%, tourism growth tends to be higher.
 - However, when GDP growth falls below 2%, tourism growth is lower than GDP growth.
 - For example, during the period from 1975 to 2000, when GDP grew by 3.5%, tourism grew on average 1.3 times faster, with an average growth rate of 4.6% per year.

¹ Based on analysis prepared by Research and Planning, Tourism BC

- This bodes well for the economic recovery, which is starting to show signs of occurring.

As the North American and world economies move back to growth mode, we should see some significant recovery in the tourism sector. Therefore, it is important for the tourism sector in BC to maintain a strong market presence, in order to capture the benefits of tourism growth when it occurs.

Tourism is a worldwide industry and British Columbia is a small player on the global stage. As a result of worldwide competition, the dependence on overall economic conditions, personal disposable income, consumer confidence, and world events that are not within anyone's control (such as wars and disease), international tourism growth can be volatile in the short term.

- However, the tourism industry experienced a substantial recovery from the major negative impacts several years ago of events such as the Iraq war, SARS, and a previously weaker U.S. economy.
- Therefore, tourism has always proven to be resilient and is expected to grow at a healthy rate over the long term.

For the industry in BC, domestic visitors are likely to show less volatility and will likely make up the vast majority of visitors over the short term, until visitation from international markets recovers. The currently high value of the Canadian dollar will slow the recovery from the U.S. market, but it will eventually recover and continue to be an important market for BC.

Tourism Visitation to the Bridge River Valley

With support from Tourism BC's Community Tourism Opportunities Program, Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society conducted a Visitors' Survey during 2011, both online and an intercept survey conducted in person at two locations entering the Bridge River Valley. This was helpful for better understanding the tourism market for the Valley and its attractions, activities and features. Some results from this survey have been shown in Figures 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4.

Figure 3.2 indicates how visitors first found out about the Bridge River Valley, which provides an indication of the potential effectiveness of alternative marketing and promotional strategies. As shown, word of mouth, through family and friends, is the most dominant source of information about the Bridge River Valley as a tourism destination. However, travel brochures, websites (e.g. bridgerivervalley.ca and *HelloBC*) and advertising appear to have had an impact as 4-6% of visitors surveyed online first heard about the Valley in this manner. Recognizing the relatively

limited marketing and promotion of the Valley as a tourism destination to date, these results appear reasonable.

Figure 3.2: How Visitors First Found Out About Bridge River Valley

How did you first find out about Bridge River Valley?	Online Survey Results (%)
Family	47.9
Friends	36.6
Brochure	4.2
Website	5.6
Facebook	0
Magazine	1.4
TV	0
Advertising	4.2

Source: Based on data from BRVEDS Online Visitor Survey, 2011

In Figure 3.3 the level of participation in various tourism activities in the Bridge River Valley is shown. This indicates that many travellers, particularly in the summer, are visiting the Valley to relax and do some sightseeing, so it is attractive as a get-away destination. Beyond relaxing and sightseeing, principal activities in the summer appear to be hiking, ATVing/dirt-biking, and mountain biking, while in the winter snowmobiling and snowshoeing or cross-country skiing are popular, among those surveyed. It should be noted that while heli-skiing and cat-skiing has been very successful in the Valley for some operators, these activities attract a small volume, high-yield market segment, so the overall numbers tend to be small, even though revenue can be significant.

Figure 3.3: Activities Visitors to Bridge River Valley Participated In

Activities participated in when visiting Bridge River Valley	Online Survey Results (%)
Skiing or Snowboarding	5.1
Snowmobiling	26.6
Snowshoeing or X-country Skiing	17.7
Mountain Biking	21.5

Activities participated in when visiting Bridge River Valley	Online Survey Results (%)
Hiking	55.7
4 x 4	38.0
Touring Bicycling	1.3
ATVing or Dirt Biking	45.6
Relaxation	73.4
Hunting	20.3
Sightseeing	72.7

Source: Based on data from BRVEDS Online Visitor Survey, 2011

Another important aspect of the survey was measuring where the visitors are from, as shown in Figure 3.4. The largest category shown is for “Other British Columbia”, but the majority of these individuals are most likely from the Lower Mainland. More than one-quarter of all visitors are resident in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, primarily Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton. Relatively small numbers of visitors are from other parts of Canada (Alberta would dominate here) and the U.S. (typically Washington State, Oregon and California account for the majority of American visitors).

Figure 3.4: Bridge River Valley Visitor Origins

Where is your place of residence?	Online Survey Results (%)
Sea to Sky Corridor	26.7
Other British Columbia	57.3
Other Canada	9.3
U.S.A.	6.7

Source: Based on data from BRVEDS Online Visitor Survey, 2011

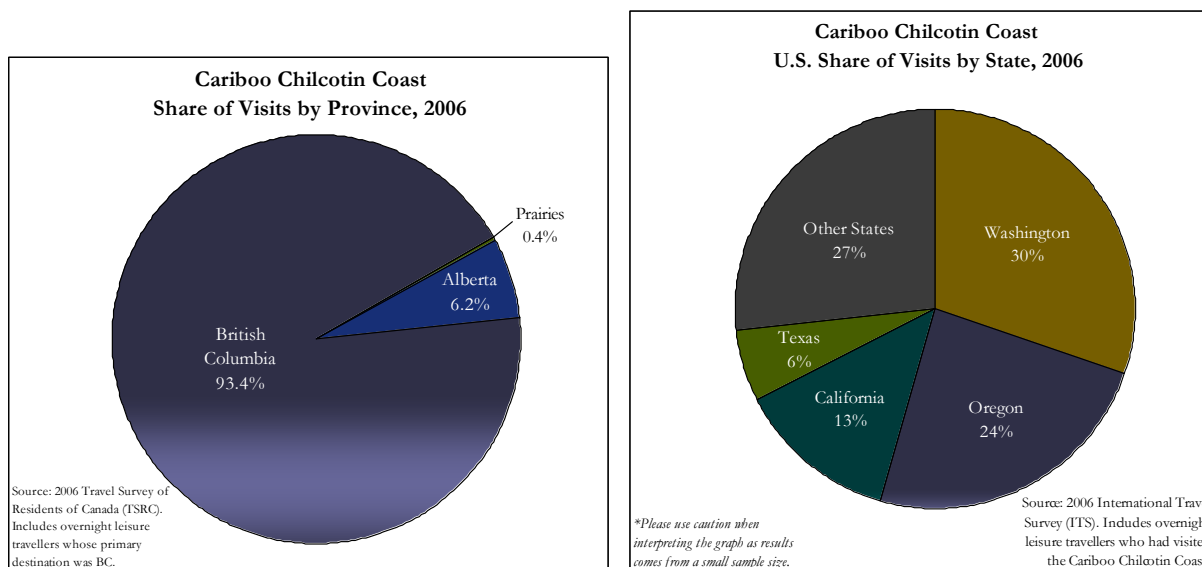
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Profile

The Bridge River Valley is located within the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast tourism region, one of six regions in BC with a destination marketing organization that partners with Tourism BC to promote the region to travellers in BC, the rest of Canada, the U.S. and overseas. Tourism BC maintains visitor statistics for the region, monitoring overall trends and visitation patterns.

Origins of Visitors

Data on the origins of visitors to the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region is available for 2006. The majority of visitors are Canadian and Primarily from BC, as shown in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: Origins of Canadian and U.S. Visitors to Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, 2006

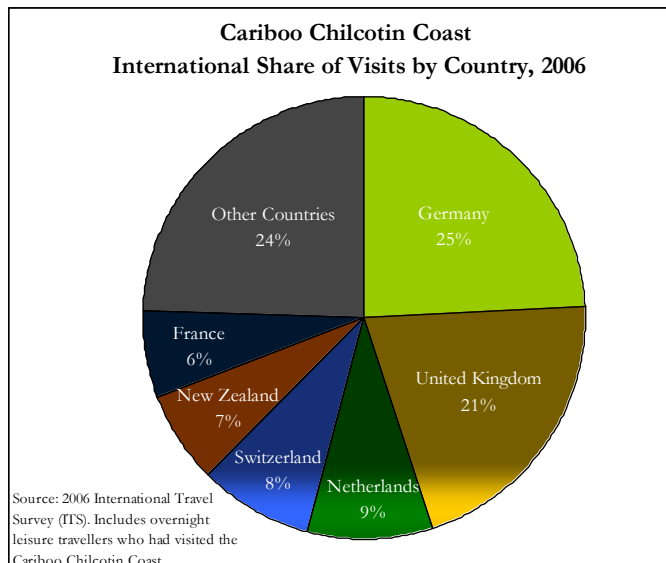


Source: Tourism BC

The breakout of U.S. visitor origins shown indicates that the majority are from the west coast states of Washington, Oregon and California, in that order.

The origins of visitors from other countries are shown in Figure 3.6. The majority are from European countries – primarily the U.K., Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland and France, which account for about two-thirds of the visitors from other countries.

Figure 3.6: Origins of Overseas Visitors to Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, 2006



Source: Tourism BC

Visitor Centres

A review of The Ministry’s visitor statistics for the Visitor Centres in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region indicates the following:

- A total of 43,393 visitor parties visited the Visitor Centres (VCs) in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast tourism region in 2008, representing 2.8% of those visiting VCs province-wide.
- Total provincial Visitor Centre usage was down 5.8% from 2007, and VC usage in the region decreased 11.0% relative to 2007. Decreases were evident in all quarters, relative to 2007. The number of visitor parties for the region peaked in July and August of 2008. These months alone contributed nearly half (47.2%) of total visitor parties for 2008, while the months of June through to September represented 71.8% of total visitor parties to the region.
- From 2000 to 2008, there has been an average annual increase of 1.7% in VC use in the region; this is up from the 4% decline that was witnessed from 2000 to 2004.
- Caution is advised when interpreting these figures as they reflect not only changes in visitation to the region, but also changes in the hours of operation for the VCs within the region.

Figure 3.5: 2008 VC Visitor Parties - Cariboo Chilcotin Coast and British Columbia

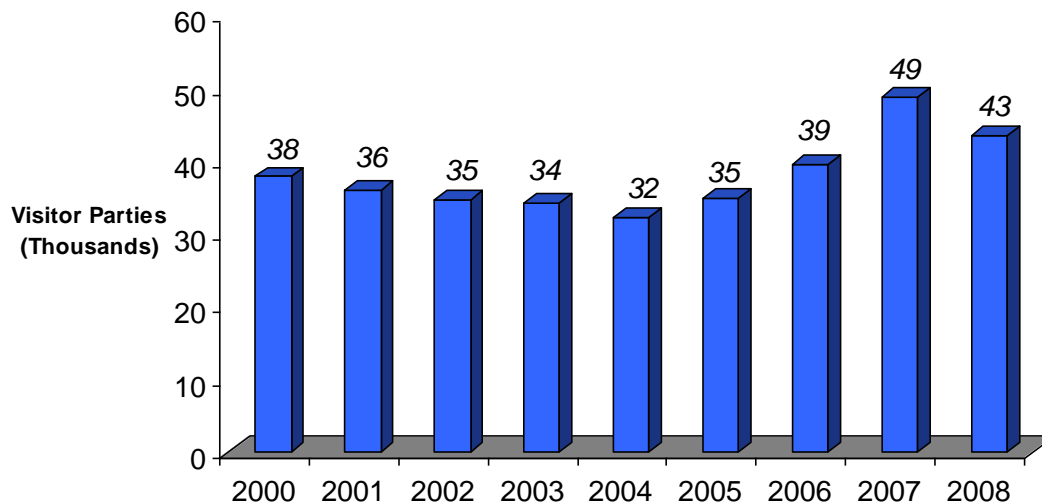
Region / Province	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total 2008
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	3,270	11,855	24,911	3,357	43,393
% change	-17.2%	-7.9%	-11.2%	-13.8%	-11.0%
British Columbia Total	176,471	421,275	776,243	198,863	1,572,852
% change	-4.9%	-6.6%	-8.2%	+5.6%	-5.8%

Source: Research and Planning, Tourism BC

*All % change figures are for changes from same period of 2007.

The preceding figures show that the region incurred a more significant decline in the use of Visitor centres in 2008 compared to the province as a whole, indicating the region was particularly hard hit by various factors affecting the decline in tourism activity (e.g.- perhaps because of greater dependence on the U.S. market because of the access to the Alaska Highway through the region).

Figure 3.6: Cariboo Chilcotin Coast VC Use 2000 – 2008



Source: Research and Planning, Tourism BC

Accommodation Type and Capacity

Accommodation data is available for roofed accommodations in the region. There is a significant roofed accommodations base in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region, with only a small component of this in the Bridge River Valley so there is significant regional competition.

- Of the 2,309 fixed-roof accommodation properties listed in the 2009 British Columbia Approved Accommodation Guide, 142 or 6.1% are located in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast tourism region.
- Resorts and Lodges are well represented in the region, with 28.7% of the province's total number of lodges and cabins. Inns and B&Bs comprise 31.0% of the region's accommodation facilities. Hotels and motels, while not as numerous as in other tourism regions of British Columbia, comprise 34.6% and 34.1%, respectively, of regional accommodation capacity.

Figure 3.7: Fixed-Roof Accommodation Facilities in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region

Accommodation Category	No. of Facilities	% of Provincial Total	Total No. of Units	% of Provincial Total
Inns and B&Bs	44	4.9%	228	6.2%
Cabins	10	15.6%	55	12.6%
Hotels	17	3.4%	688	1.3%
Motels	31	5.9%	678	4.1%
Resorts and Lodges	31	28.7%	301	7.4%
Cottages	4	4.0%	7	1.0%
Other*	5	4.7%	29	3.5%
Total	142	6.1%	1,986	2.6%

Source: 2009 British Columbia Approved Accommodation Guide, Tourism BC

*Includes hostels, houseboats, houses and guest suites.

Room Revenue

In 2008, total room revenue in the region increased 3.3% relative to 2007, totalling \$27.4 million. Room revenue in the region accounted for 1.4% of total provincial room revenue in 2008. Regional room revenue has increased by an average of 3.4% annually from 2000 to 2008.

Figure 3.8: 2008 Room Revenue – Cariboo Chilcotin Coast and British Columbia (\$000s)

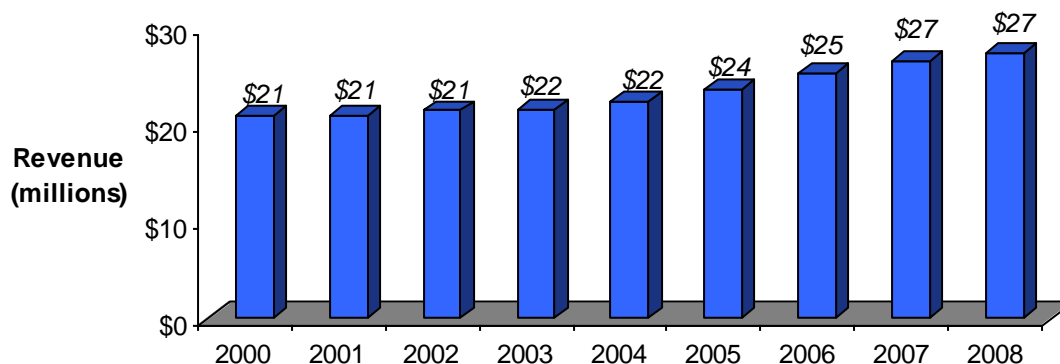
Region / Province	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total 2008
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	4,310	7,084	11,017	5,023	27,434
% change*	23.9%	1.4%	1.2%	-3.5%	3.3%
British Columbia Total	436,326	503,985	687,844	350,859	1,979,015

Region / Province	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total 2008
% change*	5.3%	3.2%	-1.6%	-4.1%	0.6%
% of BC Total	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%

Source: BC Stats

*All % change figures are for changes from same period of 2007.

Figure 3.9: Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Room Revenue 2000 – 2008



Source: BC Stats

Any tourism situation analysis must acknowledge the impact of a number of already well-identified tourism planning factors from an international/global perspective:

- Rising value of the Canadian dollar – *this particularly impacts on number of American visitors*
- Perceptions of cross border issues among potential American visitors – *has a further negative impact on the U.S. market*
- Safety and security issues – *tendency to stay closer to home*
- The profile of BC and the opportunities associated with the Olympic and pre-Olympic visibility – *higher profile and international focus*
- The increasingly competitive marketplace and aggressive marketing within our traditional source markets – *difficult to maintain our share of the “noise level”*

- Potential for growth from the Asian markets, once the current economic downturn subsides – *how to adapt to or attract a new unfamiliar audience*
- The traditional importance of the British Columbian resident as a crucial target group for any provincial sector marketing initiative – *typically accounting for one-half or more of total visitor activity*
- Evolving demographics, ethnicity and the aging population and how their expectations impact tourism products and the delivery of them – *impact on physical activities and expectations of higher quality and more service*
- The role of the internet in travel planning and on line product availability, book now/buy now – *market presence, anonymous searching, information capture and ease of buying.*

In 2007, over 23 million tourists spent \$13.2 billion dollars in British Columbia, many of whom participated in activities taking place in British Columbia's natural environment. Nature-based and outdoor adventure tourism are recognized as growth areas, as is culture/heritage tourism. These are important market segments for the Bridge River Valley.

4 – Tourism Organization and Marketing

Tourism Organization

Several organizations based in the Bridge River Valley, or in the broader region, play a major role in the area's tourism industry. This includes the Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society, the Bralorne Pioneer Museum Society, and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association.

Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society (BRVEDS)

This is the primary organization involved in tourism development and marketing for the Valley. This organization has a mandate to encourage and assist in the promotion of economic development in the upper Bridge River Valley. BRVEDS is funded by a tax requisition from the residents of Area A in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). The organization has a 7-member board of directors and 30 members who support the organization. It has been responsible for the tourism marketing initiatives to date, particularly the BridgeRiverValley.ca website which has been an effective tool for marketing and promoting tourism visitor activity in the Valley, both summer and winter.

The Society also operates the tourism information booth and the Community Resource Building on behalf of the Valley community.

Bralorne Pioneer Museum Society

This organization is staffed by volunteers and operates the Bralorne Pioneer Museum. It was originally established in 1977 to preserve the history of the Bridge River Valley.

Bridge River Valley Trail Society

This Society manages a series of hiking and biking trails located within the Valley. The trails include the following: Carl Creek Trail, Sunshine Mountain Trails, Kingdom Lake Trail, Waterloo Trail (Mt. Fergusson), Bradian Trail Network, and the Green Mountain Trail. The Society's mandate is to protect, maintain and upgrade this trails network and encourage front country recreation tourism in the Valley.

Bridge River Valley Snowmobile/ATV Association

This organization is responsible for maintaining local snowmobile and ATV trails, although to date has not had a tourism focus. It also has a mandate to promote safe snowmobiling.

Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association

This is a destination marketing organization that promotes the broader region, and is one of the Province's six regional marketing organizations. It produces an Annual Travel Guide and acts as Tourism BC's representative in the region, providing tourist operators with access to all of Tourism BC's marketing/promotion and tourism development programs, including the Community Tourism Foundations program. It also maintains a photography image bank, provides familiarization tour assistance, undertakes itinerary planning assistance, and provides expert regional knowledge.

Bridge River Valley Organizational Consolidation

A major issue within the Valley in terms of its organization for tourism, economic development and other community issues is the multiplicity of organizations that currently exist relative to the very small overall population base. It is difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers to manage all of these organizations (approximately 16 of them), so there is a discussion underway about amalgamating a number of the organizations under one overall management group. It is important, however, that any such amalgamation be done carefully, as it is often helpful to have separately incorporated societies, such as the Museum Society, that are able to access grants that are specific to that function (for example, there are community museum grants available that only a Museum Society can apply for).

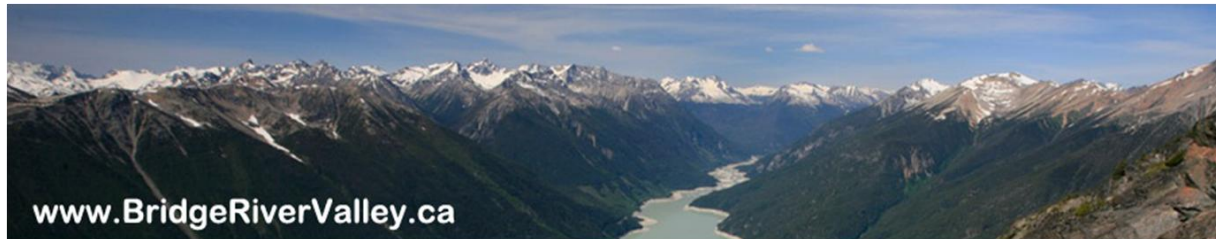
In general the BRVEDS has done an excellent job of providing leadership in economic development and tourism for the Valley and has been the driving force behind the current tourism planning initiative. The Society does urgently need some fulltime staff support to further its accomplishments, as there are limitations to what can be achieved only using volunteers.

Tourism Marketing

The Bridge River Valley is already involved in a number of tourism marketing activities designed to attract more visitors.

Websites – BridgeRiverValley.ca and ISurvivedtheHurley.com

These two websites provide comprehensive visitor information about the Valley including accommodations, attractions, activities and services available. The BridgeRiverValley.ca website is set-up in two versions – summer and winter – both of which can be accessed all year, but website visitors enter the website via the season that is current at the time.



2010-2011 Winter Marketing Plan

This Plan was successfully implemented and with the assistance of the CTO Program and a new winter brochure, a poster and a logo were produced. The brochures have been distributed to appropriate snowmobile retailers in BC and Alberta and the logo has been incorporated on the website. In 2011 BRVEDS applied to the SLRD and received approximately \$10,000 in funding to carry on with the Winter Marketing Strategy during 2011-12. BRVEDS is currently on-target with completion of this plan, which will encompass most of the activities originally proposed, including attending the *Alberta Snowmobile, ATV and Off-Road Show* and advertising in *North Shore News* and *The Pique*.



Participation in Tourism BC's Community Tourism Opportunities Program

Under this program, cooperative funding is provided by Tourism BC, and accessed through the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA), to assist communities that are able to implement eligible tourism initiatives. During 2011 BRVEDS participated in a Community Tourism Opportunities project to develop the new website, *ISurvivedTheHurley.com*, to be used both winter and summer. An accompanying logo was produced, as well as some basic branded merchandise (e.g.- T-shirts). This project has resulted in some buy-in from some of the Valley's larger tourism operators, such as Tyax Lake Lodge, TLH Heli Skiing, Sled Bralorne and The Mineshaft Pub. Also using Community Tourism Opportunities support, BRVEDS has undertaken a small image bank photography project (value \$2,500) and conducted a Visitors' Survey.



Representation by CCCTA in Travel Trade Activities

The Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association represented the Bridge River Valley and other communities within their broader region at various tradeshows and marketplaces including: Canada's West Marketplace, Rendezvous Canada and National Tour Association.

Travel Media Relations

The Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association also represented the Bridge River Valley other communities in their broader region at various travel media marketplaces, including Go Media and Media Marketplace.

Tourism Development

Community Tourism Foundations

This is a community tourism planning program provided by Tourism BC that utilizes the services of a professional facilitator who works with the community tourism stakeholders and the regional destination marketing organization (e.g.- CCCTA) to create a Tourism Plan aimed at enhancing and growing the local tourism industry. An Expression of Interest was submitted by the Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society. The application was approved for a one-day Workshop to be hosted within 2011-2012. The Workshop, as noted earlier, was held on March 27, 2012 and facilitated by one of Tourism BC's professional facilitators, John Murray.

5 – Tourism Challenges and Opportunities

Participants in the Tourism Planning Workshop recognized that the Bridge River Valley faces a number of significant tourism challenges, primarily related to the limited infrastructure/facilities and small population base. At the same time there are many good potential opportunities to capitalize upon.

Community Tourism SWOT Analysis

Some of this was included as part of the Bridge River Valley's Community Tourism Foundations Expression of Interest, and has been supplemented by the Tourism BC Facilitator, in part based on discussions in the Tourism Planning Workshop.

Strengths

- Spectacular scenery and natural environment
- Accessible backcountry
- Well-developed trails systems in some areas
- South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park and several other unique Provincial Parks
- Strong historic values (mining town) and presence of heritage buildings (some restored)
- Proximity to Sea to Sky Corridor
- Well-developed winter and summer outdoor adventure products including snowmobiling, heli-skiing, cat-skiing, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking
- A number of high quality tourist operators are bringing national and international travellers to the Valley for unique outdoor adventure experiences
- A variety of roofed accommodations and campgrounds are available at strategic locations
- Good websites with comprehensive information have been developed for marketing the Valley.

Weaknesses

- Small permanent population, so unable to sustain effort in any particular area
- Road access is challenging for some visitors (no fully-paved road access)
- Minimal local tourism product development beyond several major tourism operators

- Gold Bridge experiencing difficulties with its small hotel in decline and its gas station closed
- Competition/conflicts among commercial operators for areas to operate in
- Old and out of date maps
- Limited visitor services available, including few retail outlets
- Lack of facilities in Provincial Parks and difficulty of access to some parks
- Need for enhanced signage and visitor information.

Opportunities

- Maximize winter backcountry activities and tourism of all kinds
- Consolidate and professionalize the Valley's heritage assets and market them
- Build on mountain biking in South Chilcotin Mountains park with stayovers and rides in other areas of the Valley
- Build the touring bike visitation
- Develop improved visitor information and signage
- Develop improved mapping of the Valley and its attractions and features
- Interpretive signage for both historic and natural features
- Bralorne picnic sites development
- Having breakfasts available in Valley at restaurants and accommodations (only offered on a daily basis to houseguests at some accommodation facilities)
- Trails development (especially trailhead signs and maps)
- Heritage tourism oriented tours – include gold rush history
- Industry themed tours such as mine tours, hydro power and dam tours
- First Nations' partnerships to promote Aboriginal cultural tourism
- Enhanced marketing and branding.

Threats

- Further population decline could undermine sustainability of community infrastructure (school closing, roads not maintained to same level)
- Area based major tourism operators do not see the need to build and support local communities and population
- Competition from other nearby markets with stronger local tax bases to finance marketing and other initiatives (e.g.- Pemberton and Lillooet)
- Intrusion into Valley of snowmobile and ATV clubs based outside in communities such as Pemberton and Lillooet
- Lack of local public funds to invest in community facilities and infrastructure which limits the ability to access matching funding from various government programs.

6 – Tourism Objectives, Strategies and Tactics

This section of the report contains the key recommendations that were identified in the Bridge River Valley Tourism Planning Workshop. The Tourism BC Facilitator has added additional detail regarding the specifics of the proposed initiatives and how they could be implemented.

Vision

Various elements of the Bridge River Valley's overall tourism vision were articulated by participants in the Tourism Planning Workshop and included the following:

- A more sustained level of business and larger stream of visitors than at present, which would reduce the impacts of seasonality
- A larger local employment base and population base as a result of expanded tourism activity
- A stronger draw from key BC tourism markets including the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor, as well as touring loops via Highway 99, Highway 97 and the Trans Canada Highway
- A much better understanding among local residents of the socio-economic value of tourism to the community
- Larger events staged in the Valley to attract visitors – staged by the local community and also by outside event organizers
- Continued enhancement of the existing tourism product base, based on incremental improvements rather than dramatic change
- Continued focus on relatively low volume high yield tourism market segments, in order to retain the unspoiled appeal of the Valley
- Strong regional partnerships within the Valley and with adjacent destination areas and First Nations.

While this vision is long term, it is important in the short term to initiate activities and projects that will contribute to, and are consistent with, the various elements of this long-term vision for tourism in the Valley.

Goals and Objectives

Based on these visionary elements, the overall tourism development goals for the Bridge River Valley are as follows:

- To build and strengthen the economy through tourism, to support the local population base and business community.
- To improve infrastructure and services for tourism as the foundation of the plan.
- In the short term, to maximize the economic benefits of the existing visitor activity through enhanced product delivery during the summer and incremental marketing for the winter season.

In support of these overall goals a number of specific tourism development objectives are recommended:

1. To improve visitor information and signage within the Valley itself, to enhance awareness of tourism attractions, features and activities
2. To improve road access to the Valley, both via Route 40 on a year-round basis and the Hurley Road during the summer
3. To revitalize critical visitor facilities and services that are in decline or have been lost, including the gas station and some local accommodation facilities
4. To further develop the heritage tourism potential of the Valley through enhancement and interpretation of existing historic buildings/sites and First Nations cultural tourism
5. To work towards development of a major summer festival that would create awareness of and draw visitors to the Valley
6. To more effectively partner with adjacent destination areas, communities and First Nations in the region vis-à-vis tourism
7. To further enhance marketing and promotional activities for both summer and winter seasons.

Target Markets

The high priority summer or non-snow activity oriented target market segments for the Bridge River Valley are as follows:

- Mountain biking

- Hiking and mountaineering
- General touring/sightseeing/getaways
- Horseback trail riding

The medium priority non-snow target market segments include:

- Camping
- Anglers and hunters
- History / heritage travellers (incl. antiques/collectibles shoppers)

Winter or snow season priority target market segments include:

- Snowmobiling
- Heli- and cat-skiing
- Backcountry ski touring

The principal geographic target markets are:

- BC residents – primarily from the Sea to Sky Corridor and Lower Mainland
- Alberta – primarily Calgary and Edmonton areas
- Secondary geographic targets include west coast U.S. (mainly Washington/Oregon) and Europe (mainly U.K. and Germany)

The primary demographic target market is the 30-50 age group in the \$60,000+ household income bracket.

Tourism Development Strategies and Tactics

Following are four foundational tourism development strategies that the Bridge River Valley must deploy to enhance its tourism sector over the next 12 to 18 months and set the stage for further growth and development:

1. Further develop basic tourism infrastructure including enhanced road access, visitor information and essential facilities.

2. Enhance the tourism attractions base by facilitating/encouraging development of new or enhanced tourism products.
3. Develop effective tourism partnerships with adjacent destination areas, communities and First Nations.
4. Undertake incremental Bridge River Valley tourism marketing and promotional activities targeted at the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor.

The specific tactics and initiatives required to implement each of these strategies are described in the remainder of this chapter. Suggested budgets indicated for some of the tactics are clearly very preliminary and may need to be researched further prior to implementing specific tactics. They are based on the Facilitator’s experience as a consultant in tourism planning, development and marketing and have been provided, where possible, as a preliminary indication of the order of magnitude of financial resources that may be required.

Strategy 1 – Further Develop Basic Tourism Infrastructure

The three recommended key tactics or initiatives required to implement this strategy are as follows:

1. Develop visitor information “Entry Kiosks” and additional way-finding signage.
2. Encourage principal access roads upgrading and enhanced maintenance.
3. Facilitate revitalization of gas station business at Gold Bridge.

Tactic 1.1	Develop visitor information “Entry Kiosks” and additional way-finding signage
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is a need for more comprehensive visitor information and signage once visitors reach the Bridge River Valley. The visitor information entry kiosks concept is already being worked on and it is envisaged that a minimum of four such kiosks would be strategically located within the Valley for the purpose of providing information to visitors regarding attractions, features, activities and tourism oriented businesses and services that are available. These unmanned visitor information kiosks would be modeled after similar initiatives in other communities and should incorporate the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An attractive design, likely in natural wood, which fits into the scenic

<p>Tactic 1.1</p>	<p>Develop visitor information “Entry Kiosks” and additional way-finding signage</p>
	<p>natural environment of the Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An overall Valley map showing the communities, key attractions, points of interest and features (e.g. principal lakes, rivers, major trailheads, Provincial Parks, etc.) ▪ One or more interpretive display panels describing key natural, cultural and historic features of the Valley ▪ Listing of principal tourism facilities and services available for visitors ▪ A display area for advertisements of tourism oriented businesses, which could be charged a fee for placing these ads (under glass to be weather-proof and to control what is displayed) ▪ These kiosks could be strategically located en route to the principal communities such as Gold Bridge and Bralorne – currently four such kiosks are being planned at strategic locations within the Valley. <p>◆ Additional way-finding signage is also required within the Valley to better direct visitors to major tourism attractions, facilities and points of interest. These would include the provincial blue and white signage identifying tourist businesses and visitor services and amenities (e.g. M for Museum), as well as local directional signage to important tourism attractions, facilities and services. Among the specific signage needs that were identified in the Workshop are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Directional signage to provincial parks and provincial recreation sites, where these are road accessible ▪ Directional signage and trailhead signage for major hiking and mountain biking trails within the Valley ▪ Clear generic identification signage for important tourism features, facilities and services including museum, gasoline, restaurants, groceries ▪ Consistent looking way-finding signage to major roofed accommodation facilities and campgrounds that are accessible by road ▪ Any non-provincial local way-finding signage should have a consistent look.
<p>Specific Initiatives/ Actions</p>	<p>◆ Partial funding has already been received for the visitor information kiosks and a design has been prepared. The following additional steps need to be undertaken to implement this initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalize design and location of first kiosk to be implemented in 2012. ▪ Obtain the required permits to place and build the first kiosk. ▪ Seek additional funding, if required, for the first kiosk.

Tactic 1.1	Develop visitor information “Entry Kiosks” and additional way-finding signage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain a contractor and supervise installation of the first kiosk including development of display panels. ▪ Manage and maintain the kiosk on an ongoing basis, soliciting advertisements from tourism operators and local businesses, as appropriate. ▪ Determine locations of the other three kiosks and obtain appropriate permits. ▪ Apply for funding support for the additional kiosks from appropriate funding programs. ▪ Implement the additional kiosks during 2013. ▪ Consider development of additional visitor information signage at strategic entry points to the region such as Pemberton and Lillooet, for possible implantation in 2014 or sooner. <p>◆ The way-finding signage initiative will need to be planned out in more detail, prior to implementing. Therefore, the following steps will be required to implement this signage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a way-finding signage plan that would identify all of the facilities, services, attractions and points of interest for which way-finding signage is considered a priority. ▪ BRVEDS should hold a workshop or workshops to receive business and community input for the way-finding signage program. ▪ The next step in the process will be to contact the appropriate jurisdictions in relation to the placement and installation of signage – this would include the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, BC Parks, and the Squamish Lillooet Regional District. ▪ Work with the various jurisdictions and funding agencies to determine the funding options for the various types of signage that are not provided by the Ministry of Transportation. ▪ Apply to Ministry of Transportation for appropriate signs within its jurisdiction on the roads it controls. ▪ Determine road signage requirements for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, for signs on local roads and within communities. ▪ Apply to appropriate jurisdictions for all signage locations. ▪ Work with the appropriate jurisdictions to order the signage and monitor installation. ▪ Work closely with BC Parks regarding signage for its road accessible parks and for trailhead signage (both way-finding and marking the

Tactic 1.1	Develop visitor information “Entry Kiosks” and additional way-finding signage
	trailheads).
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To create a much stronger awareness among visitors to the Valley of the various attractions, services, facilities and points of interest available for visitors. ◆ To facilitate travel throughout the Valley by providing sufficient directional signage to major tourism attractions, facilities and services.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society will take the lead in this initiative, working with appropriate ministries including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Transportation ▪ Ministry of Environment – BC Parks ▪ Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation ▪ Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The initial visitor kiosk will be established during 2012. ◆ The other three planned visitor kiosks within the Valley will be put in place during 2013. ◆ The additional information signage at Pemberton and Lillooet would be targeted for 2014, or sooner if possible.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Depending on the final details of design and placement, each of the proposed visitor kiosks may cost in the range of \$10,000 to \$20,000 or more, depending on their complexity and size. ◆ Ministry of Transportation signage for tourism attractions and services are provided by the Ministry, but they must meet their guidelines and criteria – they will also be maintained by the Ministry on an ongoing basis. ◆ Other local community tourism signage and those on roads not controlled by Ministry of Transportation will likely require funding, although the Province may fund BC Parks and provincial recreation sites and campground signage.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development and establishment of the visitor information kiosks ◆ Development and completion of the tourism attractions and services way-finding and identification signage plan ◆ Number of attractions, services and facilities for which way-finding signage is established over the next several years ◆ Soliciting comments from visitors via visitor surveys regarding improvements to signage.

Tactic 1.2	Encourage principal access roads upgrading and enhanced maintenance
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discussions in the Tourism Planning Workshop indicated that the quality of road access and maintenance is a major issue for the Valley. The two main access routes are Road 40 from Lillooet, which is largely a paved secondary highway interrupted by some gravel sections, as well as areas where the road has been severely damaged. The other main access road is the Hurley Road which starts north of Pemberton Meadows and follows the Hurley Pass ending up in Bralorne. The Hurley Road is a gravel 4-wheel drive road, which is in extremely rugged condition and requires safety and grading improvements. The Hurley is an extremely important summer access route to the Valley from the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, providing a much more direct access to Bralorne and Gold Bridge from that corridor than the longer route via Lillooet. The specific road improvements that are desirable for both routes are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete the pavement of Road 40 to Gold Bridge and Bralorne, which would require repaving the broken-up sections and stabilizing and paving or at least putting chip-seal on the gravel sections. ▪ This may require accompanying roadbed and slope stabilization in some locations. ▪ While basic highway road signage is fairly good along Road 40, some improvements may be in order. ▪ The Hurley Road requires re-grading in many areas, improvements to some switchbacks, corners and bridges, as well as improved gravel surfaces in many areas. ▪ Improvements to basic highway safety signage on the Hurley may be required in some areas, along with some guardrails or markers.
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS should organize a stakeholder meeting inviting tourist operators and residents from throughout the Valley to provide input regarding the specific improvements that are required along both major routes. ◆ BRVEDS, in consultation with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Village of Pemberton, District of Lillooet, should develop a strategy for appropriate road improvements. This strategy should ensure that the following jurisdictions are included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Transportation (Lillooet/Squamish offices) ▪ Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations ▪ Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

Tactic 1.2	Encourage principal access roads upgrading and enhanced maintenance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Environments – BC Parks ◆ The effort should be a partnership of BRVEDS, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton and any First Nations communities within the region that will benefit from the road improvements. ◆ Develop a briefing package citing the continuing increases in use of the Valley for tourism and recreational purposes and provide specific details (including photographs/locations) of the continuing deterioration of the road conditions. The briefing should also outline the economic and community development benefits of improving the roads into the Valley, which would directly translate into incremental jobs, fitting well within the Province’s job creation strategy.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Both major access routes to the Valley have a myriad of safety and road condition problems that need to be rectified for the comfort and safety of local residents and the numerous visitors who travel into the Valley each year. ◆ Road conditions are so poor that many visitors are discouraged from coming to the Bridge River Valley, thereby reducing the viability of local tourism businesses and having a negative economic impact on the Valley. ◆ During the summer fire season it is essential to have two viable and safe road routes into and out of the Valley for emergency purposes.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society working in partnership with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, the District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton and possibly local First Nations. ◆ Major local tourist operators and businesses should also provide support for this initiative and indicate to provincial authorities how improved access would enhance their businesses and result in more jobs and economic activity in the Valley.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It is likely that all of the road improvements required may not occur in a single season so an objective of two to three years to make all of the required improvements may be reasonable. ◆ The process should commence as soon as possible and it is recommended that the initial Bridge River Valley stakeholder meeting be held during June 2012.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Clearly the road improvement requirements could run into the millions of dollars and would likely have to be implemented over a period of two to three years, possibly accessing federal infrastructure funds, if

Tactic 1.2	Encourage principal access roads upgrading and enhanced maintenance
	<p>appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS would need to set aside a budget for the process as at minimum some travel to various ministry offices and possibly to Victoria will be required from time-to-time to conduct the various presentations and briefings. There may also be a need to recruit some professional assistance to help develop some of the briefing materials. Therefore, it may be appropriate to allocate a budget of \$5,000 to \$10,000 to cover some travel expenses and professional assistance.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The number of road improvements made on Road 40 and the Hurley Road over the next few years would likely be the best measure of success of this initiative. ◆ Another measure would be the dollar value of these improvements and comparison with annual improvements made during years prior.

Tactic 1.3	Facilitate revitalization of gas station business at Gold Bridge
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The only full-fledged gas station business in the Valley was located at Gold Bridge – Grizzly Gas – and it has closed. While gasoline is available at the Mineshaft Pub and Grill in Bralorne, no propane or diesel is available in the Valley. Tourism stakeholders believe that there is plenty of business for a successful gas station among local residents, and visitors travelling into the Valley by car and by snowmobile. BRVEDS would like to facilitate the revitalization of this gas station business for the benefit of Valley residents, tourism businesses and the Valley’s economy as a whole. This will require the sale of the current facility to a new owner who can revitalize it as a viable business, which may require adding some ancillary elements that could serve local residents and visitors, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small laundromat and showers for the use of campers, hikers and mountain bikers ▪ Small snack bar operation catering to travellers and residents ▪ Sales of other supplies and sundries required by travellers such as campers, hikers and mountain bikers ▪ Bicycle repair services, catering to mountain bikers ▪ Car wash and bike wash. ◆ By combining a number of needed traveller and visitor services with the gas station operation itself, viability of the business would be enhanced.

Tactic 1.3	Facilitate revitalization of gas station business at Gold Bridge
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Several steps will be required to facilitate revitalization of the local gas station business including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include discussion of the gas station as an issue for the proposed Town Hall meeting to be held in 2012. ▪ Research the current status of the site and any environmental requirements that may be triggered by transfer and rejuvenation of the business. ▪ If environmental remediation is required, determine the potential for funding from a “brownfield” program. ▪ Determine if the gas station could be developed as some form of co-operative or other similar business model and who would provide investment dollars such as Community Futures. ▪ Determine how funding and potential operations of the station would work, if developed as a cooperative or under the Economic Development Society. ▪ Develop a strategy for encouraging a business person/entrepreneur to invest in and re-establish the gas station business. ▪ Research requirements for brownfields redevelopment and funding according to regional district and provincial government requirements. ▪ Work with the prospective operator to facilitate approvals and marketing and promotion of the new business among residents and visitors.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Having a full-fledged gas station is essential to the Valley’s tourism industry as many travellers depend on the availability of gasoline and diesel fuel for their vehicles and propane for camp stoves, barbecues and RVs. Snowmobiles also require gasoline, so it is important to have at least one full-fledged gasoline service station operating on a daily basis year-round within the Valley. ◆ As noted, this would also be a suitable location to provide ancillary services required by visitors such as a laundromat, showers, car wash and bike wash.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society would work with local stakeholders to implement this initiative. ◆ Some local businesses may have an interest in the gas station business, such as those already involved in the automotive business, and should be encouraged to invest.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ As the issue is of great concern to local residents, as well as to tourism

Tactic 1.3	Facilitate revitalization of gas station business at Gold Bridge
	<p>businesses, and is considered an essential service in the Valley, timing is immediate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Therefore, a Town Hall meeting should be set up to address this issue and consider the alternatives for re-establishing this gas station business. ◆ This should occur during June of 2012 and be followed-up by the other implementation steps, with an objective of re-establishing the business later in 2012 or 2013, depending upon what is required. ◆ If there are environmental remediation requirements, this will clearly slow down the process, but these must be addressed.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Additional research will be required to determine the level of investment that would be needed to re-establish the gas station business. ◆ BRVEDS will need to devote some of its time and resources to pursuing the initiative, which may involve providing some travel expenses for attending meetings with provincial and Regional District officials.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The only measure of success for this initiative will be re-establishment of a viable gas station business to replace the one that has closed. ◆ BRVEDS should monitor the ongoing progress towards this ultimate objective.

Strategy 2 – Facilitating/Encouraging Development of New or Enhanced Tourism Products

The following key tactics or initiatives are required to implement this strategy:

1. Develop natural and cultural heritage interpretive signage and tours.
2. Develop a new summer festival that will attract visitors to the Valley.
3. Facilitate enhancement of the local tourist accommodations base.

Tactic 2.1	Develop natural and cultural heritage interpretive signage and tours
<p>Description</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Interpretive signage and tours was recognized as a key tourism product development opportunity in the workshop discussion. The potential for developing heritage signage and plaques, which would recognize and interpret the area’s gold mining history and historic buildings and sites, was discussed. The potential for similar interpretive signage in relation to the Valley’s natural environment features and significant viewpoints was also recognized. Developing this type of interpretive signage would enable natural and cultural heritage tours and excursions to be developed in the Valley by local tourist operators and businesses. Natural and cultural heritage features that would be most appropriate for the interpretive signage and tours include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The various historic buildings and heritage features and sites listed earlier in this report in Figure 2.2 ▪ Significant natural features located throughout the Valley, particularly in proximity to Provincial Parks and Provincial Recreation Sites and Trails (see listing in Figure 2.1) ▪ Other scenic look-offs where the geology, landscape and flora and fauna can be interpreted ▪ First Nations communities. ◆ The development of tours that incorporate the various interpretive features could take on any or all of the following forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Print and electronic brochures that identify interpretive touring routes and interpretive features throughout the Valley, providing some commentary regarding key natural and cultural heritage features ▪ Similar brochures for walking tours of the principal communities in the Valley such as Gold Bridge and Bralorne, again focusing on historic buildings and other cultural and natural features ▪ Local valley tours offered by a tourist operator with an appropriate mini bus or touring van that could be offered to independent visitors and special groups ▪ A local guiding service that could be available for hire by independent travellers and groups to provide interpretive tours of the Valley.
<p>Specific Initiatives/ Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development of the interpretive signage program will require the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare an interpretive signage development plan, identifying which historic buildings, heritage features and natural features would best lend themselves to interpretive signage, based on their significance,

Tactic 2.1	Develop natural and cultural heritage interpretive signage and tours
	<p>likely appeal, and locations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize the interpretive signs identified and seek funding for the development and installation of some initial signage, working with partners such as Cariboo Chilcotin Tourism Association, Tourism BC and BC Parks. For a list of potential funding sources, please visit www.for.gov.bc.ca/heritage/funding_opportunities.htm • Once funding is obtained, retain professionals with experience in the development and installation of interpretive signage. • Manage the development and installation of the new signs. <p>◆ To pursue the development of interpretive tours in the Valley the following steps are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good initial step would be to design appropriate interpretive tour itineraries focusing on the historic and natural features, with specific itineraries themed around such things as the gold rush heritage, hydro-electric power development in the Valley, interpretation of geologic and landscape features, and First Nations cultural heritage. • Seek funding for development and publication of self-guided touring brochures (for driving, biking, hiking and walking). • Based on the popularity of the printed/downloaded interpretive tour itineraries, it may be possible for a local tourism business and/or the Economic Development Society to establish a local tour guiding service in the Valley. • The initial stage would be to have trained guides available for hire by independent travellers and groups coming into the Valley. If this is successful, it may be possible to lease or purchase a van that could be used for guided tours and shuttles within the Valley, or a tourist operator with an appropriate vehicle already could offer the service.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This would provide much needed additional activities for summer visitors to the Valley, particularly those who are touring and sightseeing. ◆ The establishment of interpretive signage would also enable additional business opportunities to develop, such as a tour guiding service and/or organized sightseeing tours within the Valley. ◆ The result would be additional economic impacts as this would increase tourism spending and length of stay within the Valley.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This initiative would need to be led by the Economic Development Society, working in partnership with Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism, Tourism BC, BC Parks and First Nations communities. ◆ Existing tourist operators that already have vans suitable for touring may wish to offer organized tours and shuttles to various points of interest in

Tactic 2.1	Develop natural and cultural heritage interpretive signage and tours
	the Valley and would be appropriate partners for the organized tours and guiding opportunities.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Preparation of the interpretive signage development plan should be initiated in 2012 and may require funding support for professional assistance to develop this plan. ◆ The initial signs could be put in place during 2013. ◆ Interpretive tours and excursions could be initiated once there is sufficient interpretive signage in place to effectively support these itineraries, likely later in 2013 or 2014.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If professional assistance is required to assist with development of the interpretive signage plan, it may be necessary to allocate a budget of \$5,000 to \$10,000 for this activity. ◆ Development and implementation of individual interpretive signs could easily be in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000 each or more, depending upon the complexity, elaborateness of the sign and amount of research required for any text and photos incorporated into the signage.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development and installation of interpretive signage ◆ Development and distribution of interpretive tour itinerary brochures ◆ Development and operation of actual interpretive guiding services and tours in the Valley.

Tactic 2.2	Develop a new summer festival that will attract visitors to the Valley
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It was recognized by workshop participants that some type of summer “Mountain Festival” could be a key attraction for local residents and visitors to the Valley, helping to enhance its overall market profile. This could replace Gold Bridge Days which no longer operates, although a concern is the limited volunteer resource base available to stage such festivals which require substantial work. The BRVEDS is hoping to obtain financial support for a staff person who could coordinate such a festival with the support of volunteers, as a key part of his or her job description. Various ideas were put forward regarding the components of “The Bridge River Valley Mountain Festival” such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some type of competition or race in keeping with the Valley’s tourism product offerings, such as a mountain bike rally • An “Amazing Race” type scavenger hunt and/or geocaching activities

Tactic 2.2	Develop a new summer festival that will attract visitors to the Valley
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High Tea at the Museum ▪ Saturday Night Dance and/or music performances ▪ Various kids activities ▪ Meal events, such as a pancake breakfast and/or mountain BBQ.
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development of the festival would require undertaking the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize a stakeholders’ meeting of economic development and tourism stakeholders to discuss concepts and ideas for the festival. ▪ Based on the output of this session, prepare a festival plan outlining the various events that would need to be organized. ▪ Determine who would help to organize the various individual events (e.g. the Museum Society could organize the “High Tea” at the Museum). ▪ Apply for funding for development and marketing of the event, including staff support ▪ Establish a festival organizing committee with representation from each of the individual component events that need to be organized. ▪ Work with staff and volunteers to plan in detail and organize the overall festival and individual component events. ▪ Prepare and implement a marketing and promotional plan with financial support from tourism partners such as CCCTA and Tourism BC. ▪ Market and stage the first summer festival in 2013 or 2014.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A hallmark event is frequently a way of enhancing the market profile of a destination area and enhancing community spirit and volunteerism. ◆ The predecessor summer festival, Gold Bridge Days, has existed in the past, so there is a concept upon which to build. ◆ There is a core of tourism operators within the Valley that would benefit from the festival and could be encouraged to partner in its planning and development, marketing and operations.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS and tourism industry partners in the Valley would lead the initiative, partnering with CCCTA and Tourism BC.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assuming staff support can be funded and recruited this summer, planning for the new festival could be initiated later in 2012 and during the winter of 2012-13, with a view to staging an initial modest-scale trial version of the festival during the summer of 2013. If the trial is successful the concept could be expanded upon in 2014.

Tactic 2.2	Develop a new summer festival that will attract visitors to the Valley
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The main budget requirement will be to have a staff member available for the Economic Development Society who could devote 25% to 30% of their time to this activity, supported by volunteers. ◆ Funding assistance for marketing the festival may be required as a minimum of \$5,000 to \$10,000 of incremental marketing would likely be needed to promote the festival.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The best measure of success would be the establishment of the festival itself, likely in 2013 or 2014 ◆ A further measure of success would be the financial viability of the initial summer festival staged and the number of residents and visitors who are attracted to it.

Tactic 2.3	Facilitate enhancement of the local tourist accommodations base
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In the workshop session concern was expressed that one of the key local accommodation establishments, the Gold Bridge Hotel, is for sale and in need of rejuvenation. This is considered an important local tourism asset, so BRVEDS is hoping to play a facilitation role in transitioning this business to new owners/investors. At the same time it was also pointed out that there is really only one formal B&B operation in the Valley and the establishment of additional B&Bs would be an appropriate way to provide additional visitor accommodations. Issues concerning the Gold Bridge Hotel include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the hotel being offered for sale at a price which is in sync with the market demand for such a facility and what is the current status of any potential sale? ▪ Determining what roles BRVEDS can play in helping to promote this business/investment opportunity ▪ Is the appropriate commercial realtor being used who has experience in the tourist accommodation sector? ▪ Are there other businesses or entrepreneurs in the Valley that may have an interest in purchasing this business at an appropriate price? ◆ Issues regarding the B&B accommodation opportunity include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determining if there are residents with an interest in establishing B&B operations in strategic locations within the Valley ▪ Identifying the accommodation standards that are required for a viable B&B operation ▪ Consideration of the investment requirements and availability of

Tactic 2.3	Facilitate enhancement of the local tourist accommodations base
	<p>funding assistance for establishing B&Bs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying what roles BRVEDS can play in the development and establishment of new B&B businesses in the Valley.
<p>Specific Initiatives/ Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The following steps should be undertaken to help facilitate transition of the Gold Bridge Hotel to new owners/investors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRVEDS should initiate discussions with the owners, offering assistance in helping to market the sale/transition of their property • It will be important to determine the current status of the proposed sale of the hotel and the extent to which a sale is either imminent or appears unlikely. • BRVEDS could help the owners and realtor put together a promotional package highlighting the merits and potential of this business opportunity and how it fits within the short-term tourism plan presented in this report as a result of the tourism planning workshop. • BRVEDS may wish to promote this and other business opportunities (such as the gas station) on its website, with some preliminary briefing information highlighting the merits of these opportunities. • BRVEDS may wish to undertake its own search for prospective investors from within the Valley and beyond and help to broker negotiations between prospective investors and the owners and realtor. ◆ For pursuing development of B&B opportunities, BRVEDS can again play a facilitation role, which may include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially BRVEDS should publicize this as a potential business opportunity for local residents within the Valley, recognizing that this type of business is something which is part-time and contributes to overall household income, but typically is not sufficient to be the only source of household income. • Advise any residents with an interest in establishing a B&B on the research they need to undertake prior to initiating this type of operation. • Small Business BC has a helpful publication entitled: <i>Bed & Breakfast Business Sourcing Guide</i>, the most recent edition of which was prepared in 2005. This provides regulatory/legal information in terms of acts and regulations that will need to be complied with, possible funding and financing assistance sources, listing of various other “How To” publications that should be reviewed prior to entering the business, publications that provide helpful marketing advice, including those that are among Tourism BC’s Tourism Essentials

Tactic 2.3	Facilitate enhancement of the local tourist accommodations base
	<p>publications, and organizations that could provide training opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canada Select Accommodation Rating Authority in BC should be contacted for details of their requirements for B & Bs with various star rating levels. • BRVEDS could help to market and promote new B&B businesses, once they are established, as part of their overall marketing and promotional activities for the Valley. <p>◆ The Trade and Investment Team at Opportunities BC might be a good contact for linking the Bridge River Valley with potential investors for the hotel, gas station, etc. https://trade.britishcolumbia.ca/Buy/Opportunity%20Profiles/Pages/OpportunitiesBC.aspx</p>
Rationale/ Objective	<p>◆ To maintain the existing roofed accommodations base within the Valley, which is relatively thin, as well as to augment it gradually by establishing additional B&B operations.</p> <p>◆ To maintain an existing accommodation facility, which is a critical community asset that generates an ongoing economic impact for the Valley.</p>
Responsibility	<p>◆ BRVEDS would take the lead on this, working closely with the owners of the Gold Bridge Hotel and any prospective B & B operators.</p>
Timing	<p>◆ Facilitating the transition of the Gold Bridge Hotel is an immediate opportunity that should be pursued as it would be a shame to lose this as a going concern, should the owners be unable to sell and decide to close the business. Maintaining a commercial accommodation facility at this location has the best chance of success if the existing operation is sold as a going concern.</p> <p>◆ The B&B opportunity could be pursued at any time, but it would be appropriate for BRVEDS to present the opportunity to local residents and tourism stakeholders, along with accompanying information sources, during 2012.</p>
Budget	<p>◆ This is primarily a facilitation opportunity that would not require an incremental budget, although should BRVEDS be able to retain a staff person, this individual could devote some time, supported by BRVEDS board members, to facilitating these initiatives.</p>
Measuring Success	<p>◆ Success in the case of the Gold Bridge Hotel will be based on the actual transition to new owners that are able to rejuvenate the property and operate profitably.</p>

Tactic 2.3	Facilitate enhancement of the local tourist accommodations base
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The success of the B&B initiative could be measured by the number of new B&Bs established in the Valley over the next few years.

Strategy 3 – Develop Effective Tourism Partnerships with Adjacent Destination Areas, Communities and First Nations

The focus of this strategy is to foster broader tourism development and marketing partnerships within the region. Specific tactics include:

1. Proactively seek out tourism development and marketing partnerships with Pemberton and Lillooet
2. Undertake proactive consultations with local First Nations to identify and pursue tourism partnership opportunities

Tactic 3.1	Tourism development and marketing partnerships with Pemberton and Lillooet
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tourism stakeholders in the Valley recognize that Pemberton and Lillooet are effectively gateways to the Bridge River Valley and both communities have access to a significant flow of visitor traffic. Therefore, the concept of tourism packaging and marketing partnerships is appropriate as everyone potentially benefits – Pemberton and Lillooet benefit by being able to offer a broader destination attractions base that includes the natural and historic features and outdoor adventure/recreation activities of the Bridge River Valley; and the Valley benefits by being able to tap more directly into visitors to those communities. ◆ Both Pemberton and Lillooet have actively indicated their interest in such partnerships as two representatives from Pemberton attended the tourism planning workshop and the Economic Development Officer from the District of Lillooet (who had hoped to attend) did have discussions prior to the workshop with the Tourism BC facilitator and the representatives from Tourism BC and CCCTA who attended the workshop. ◆ Among the partnership opportunities that should be explored are the following:

<p>Tactic 3.1</p>	<p>Tourism development and marketing partnerships with Pemberton and Lillooet</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative marketing/promotion/advertising, which could promote the Bridge River Valley with Pemberton and/or Lillooet as BC's accessible mountain and wilderness adventure destination • Possible joint promotional brochures/pamphlets (print and electronic) • Marketing website linkages • Promotional brochure exchanges to cross-promote tourism operators in the Bridge River Valley with those in Pemberton and Lillooet, and vice versa • Specific packaging opportunities, combining such things as accommodations, meals, tours and excursions in the Bridge River Valley as well as in Pemberton and/or Lillooet in the same package. <p>◆ The short term focus should be on successful partnerships with Pemberton and Lillooet, although over the longer term there should also be opportunities to work with Tourism Whistler as it is one of the largest sources of visitors in the province and relatively accessible to the Bridge River Valley.</p>
<p>Specific Initiatives/ Actions</p>	<p>◆ BRVEDS and local tourism stakeholders need to initiate the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial step would be to stage a Partnership Conference inviting community officials and tourism operators in the Bridge River Valley, Pemberton and Lillooet to participate, as well as First Nations and appropriate government officials. • Prospective partners to be invited could include the following: BRVEDS, District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton, Mt. Currie Band, Xwisten First Nation, Community Futures, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Western Economic Diversification, Regional Economic Development, Tourism BC, SLRD, Shalath/Seton First Nation, BC Parks, Ministry of Transportation, MFLNRO, Recreational Sites/Trails, and Heritage. • BRVEDS could potentially apply for funding assistance for this conference from such organizations as Western Economic Diversification. • Discussion sessions at the conference could include such topics as: product development partnerships, packaging partnerships, and marketing and promotion partnerships • As part of the partnership session, a preliminary action plan should be crafted, establishing a Partnership Committee of key stakeholders from the Bridge River Valley, Pemberton, Lillooet and the First Nations, as well as a short term action plan for initiating actual

Tactic 3.1	Tourism development and marketing partnerships with Pemberton and Lillooet
	<p>partnership activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative advertising initiatives targeting the lucrative Lower Mainland market may be an appropriate starting point for the partnership process. • At the product development and packaging sessions in the Partnership Conference individual operators could have a chance to dialogue and this may set the stage for individual partnership arrangements for product development, packaging and marketing.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Individual operators are already packaging Bridge River Valley with components in the Pemberton and Whistler areas. ◆ Pemberton already promotes activities in the Bridge River Valley as part of its destination attractions base. ◆ Lillooet also promotes attractions and features that are in the Bridge River Valley.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS would initiate the partnership process in collaboration with appropriate officials at the District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton and First Nations communities. ◆ Tourism businesses and stakeholders for all three jurisdictions would be important participants, along with CCCTA, Tourism BC, BC Parks and First Nation communities.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It may be possible to organize the Partnership Conference as early as the fall of 2012, although more likely is the spring of 2013. ◆ Actual partnership initiatives would follow the conference and would likely be implemented gradually during 2013 and 2014.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A budget of \$3,000-\$5,000 or more may be required to stage the Partnership Conference, depending upon how many are expected to attend, where it is held and the extent of sponsor contributions. Presumably attendees would pay their own travel costs. ◆ Some travel expenses may be required to attend meetings in Pemberton and Lillooet.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The establishment of formalized packaging and marketing initiatives with Pemberton and/or Lillooet ◆ The number of operators from more than one jurisdiction that partner in product development, packaging and/or marketing ◆ Number of participants in partnership packages and marketing activities.

Tactic 3.2	Consultations with local First Nations to identify and pursue tourism partnership opportunities
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ First Nations communities have had a presence in the Valley for thousands of years and it is home to the St’at’imc people. The St’at’imc offer Xwisten Experience Tours during June through September each year which tours an extensive archaeological site with over eighty identified traditional pit houses, as well as providing a tour of the Bridge River fishing grounds and a salmon barbecue. Another feature of interest to visitors is the Kaoham shuttle, which is a small two-car train that runs daily between Lillooet and Seton Portage along the shore of Seton Lake. The First Nation communities in the Valley include the Xwisten, Shalath and Mount Currie bands, all of which have demonstrated an interest and involvement in the tourism industry. Aboriginal Tourism BC (www.aboriginalbc.com) has been actively promoting cultural tourism throughout BC for many years and the Xwisten Experience received an ATBC Cultural Authenticity Award. Opportunities for partnering with First Nations communities in the Valley include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging of non-Aboriginal accommodation facilities with the cultural tourism experiences offered by the First Nations ▪ Integration of Aboriginal cultural tourism products into the packages and itineraries offered by non-Aboriginal tourism operators ▪ Partnering in tourism product development initiatives ▪ Marketing partnerships to promote both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage tourism products in the Valley.
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initiating effective partnerships with First Nations communities requires a pro-active effort involving the following steps, which should be undertaken prior to the Partnership Conference noted in the Tactic 3.1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BRVEDS should arrange to meet with the chiefs and councils of each of the First Nation Communities – Xwisten, Shalath and Mount Currie – as a first step in the process. ▪ Discussions could focus on the mutual interest in tourism in the Valley and the potential for jointly packaging and marketing Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences. ▪ Liaise with the Band Manager and/or Economic Development Officer in each case to set up meetings with Chief and Council. ▪ Identify specific partnership opportunities and projects. ▪ Work with each band’s Economic Development Officer and Band Council to develop and implement appropriate partnership opportunities.

Tactic 3.2	Consultations with local First Nations to identify and pursue tourism partnership opportunities
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ First Nations in the Valley have already developed and are operating some quality tourism products and experiences, but there is relatively little awareness among other local residents and visitors to the Bridge River Valley. ◆ Studies have indicated that, while there is a significant growing interest in Aboriginal cultural tourism products, these are usually experienced as a part of broader-based itineraries. Therefore, there is a need for the Aboriginal communities to package with other non-Aboriginal tourism products and tour operators, in order to increase visitation to their Aboriginal attractions. ◆ Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences add an important dimension to the Valley’s attractions base and tourism product offerings, which can be enhanced through effective partnerships.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This would be initiated by BRVEDS, working closely with the Economic Development Offices and Band Councils for each of the First Nation communities in the Valley. ◆ Other tourist operators and tourism stakeholders would be involved in relation to specific opportunities.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It is appropriate to initiate discussions with each of the First Nation communities during 2012, with a view to building appropriate partnership initiatives during 2013 and 2014.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially this initiative would require some time spent on the part of members of the board of BRVEDS and officials at each of the First Nations communities. ◆ Once partnership projects are identified, budgets for individual partnership projects could be established.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A first measure of success would be establishment of a positive two-way dialogue between BRVEDS and each of the First Nation communities. ◆ The ultimate measure of progress is the number of partnership projects pursued jointly by BRVEDS and Bridge River Valley tourism stakeholders with each of the First Nation communities. ◆ An important measure would be the number of new First Nation tourism products developed, as well as the number of new non-Aboriginal tourism packages and products developed and marketed that have Aboriginal tourism components.

Strategy 4 – Undertake Incremental Bridge River Valley Tourism Marketing and Promotional Activities

The focus of this strategy is to attract more visitation to the Valley from the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor. Specific tactics include:

1. Develop a Bridge River Valley Summer Visitors Guide.
2. Implement incremental marketing/promotional activities targeted at the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor.

Tactic 4.1	Develop a Bridge River Valley Summer Visitors Guide
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The concept of developing a Summer Visitors Guide as an additional marketing tool was discussed in the session – in the end it might have a year-round focus. This would be in the form of some type of brochure or pamphlet which could be available in both print and electronic form and could be similar in concept to Tourism Pemberton’s brochure. Important elements to include in the Bridge River Valley Visitors Guide include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A good map of the Valley showing the key access routes (Hurley Road and Road 40) ▪ Communities, attractions and features, and the location relative to key access points such as Pemberton and Lillooet ▪ Lots of colour photographs of the scenery and key attractions and features ▪ Listings of accommodation facilities, campgrounds, provincial parks, provincial recreation sites, historic sites and buildings, and other key features of interest to tourists ▪ Contact information, especially the website ▪ Room for small display advertisements from individual tourist operators and businesses, which would generate revenue to offset the costs of printing and distributing the Visitors Guide.
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Once the basic requirements of the new Visitors Guide have been determined, several action steps will need to be undertaken to implement it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apply for and secure funding for the Visitors Guide development, printing and distribution – possible funding sources would include Tourism BC’s Community Tourism Opportunities (CTO) program (www.jti.gov.bc.ca/industryprograms/BuildingAndGrowingYourBusiness/Community_Tourism_Programs/CommunityTourismOpportunities.htm) and the Northern Development Initiative Trust

Tactic 4.1	Develop a Bridge River Valley Summer Visitors Guide
	<p>(www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca) The Marketing Initiatives program provides up to \$20,000 in grant funding; projects must be focused on development and implementation of a marketing initiative that will directly increase revenues within the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and work with a professional graphic designer who has done high-quality tourism brochures (CCCTA and Tourism BC can be of assistance). • Design a full-colour brochure that is comprehensive enough to be effective, but still affordable. • Ideally it should be a fold-up brochure that folds into a 4" x 9" size format, so it fits easily in standard brochure racks and is easily mailed out when required. Download the free <i>Ads & Brochures that Sell</i> guide from the Tourism BC <i>Tourism Business Essentials</i> series: www.jti.gov.bc.ca/industryprograms/BuildingAndGrowingYourBusiness/TourismBusinessEssentials/BusinessEssentialsPublications.htm • Publicize development of the brochure among tourism stakeholders in the Bridge River Valley in order to recruit participants for small display advertisements in the Guide. • Make use of the Bridge River Valley Image Bank, previously produced under the CTO program, to illustrate the brochure. • Seek ongoing advice and assistance from CCCTA and Tourism BC in development of the brochure in terms of design, content and distribution. • Print the brochure, upload it to the website, and coordinate distribution through tourist information centres in the Bridge River Valley, Lillooet, Pemberton, Whistler, Vancouver and other strategic locations in B.C.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bridge River Valley has many tourism attractions, activities and features to offer which are not well known in the broader marketplace, so presenting these in a well-designed Visitors Guide brochure will be a helpful marketing tool. ◆ The brochure should be designed so that it works well in both print and electronic formats and can easily be downloaded, so it is complementary to the Bridge River Valley website.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS would take the lead in producing the brochure with participation of various tourist operator and business stakeholders who would participate in listings and advertisements, as well as helping with distribution of the brochures.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ideally the brochure should be developed and printed for the summer

Tactic 4.1	Develop a Bridge River Valley Summer Visitors Guide
	2013 tourist season, which means it should be in print by about March of 2013, or before if possible, in order to be distributed at travel and sport shows in the winter/early spring.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This could be specified in more detail once the specific requirements have been determined, but it is reasonable to suggest that an initial budget of at least \$12,000 to \$15,000 would be required to design, print and distribute a high-quality visitor guide brochure. Revised versions and reprints in subsequent years will be less expensive.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Number of brochures printed and distributed ◆ Increases in number of unique visitors to BridgeRiverValley.ca website ◆ Increases in the number of visitor enquiries ◆ Number of downloads of pdf version of the Visitor Guide.

Tactic 4.2	Incremental marketing/promotional activities targeted at Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky Corridor are the principal sources of visitors to the Bridge River Valley and represent a population base of well over 2 million residents. This area is reasonably accessible to the Bridge River Valley via various road routes or air. Bridge River Valley offers a more natural and authentic outdoor adventure experience than can be offered in Whistler with its multi-billion dollar developed infrastructure of accommodation facilities, restaurants, retail and lift-accessed mountains. Bridge River Valley can offer day and overnight outdoor adventure experiences that are very complementary to what can be experienced in Whistler and the Lower Mainland, but much stronger marketplace awareness of the Valley in these target markets is required. ◆ The marketing and promotional campaign targeted at the Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky Corridor should emphasize the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The spectacular wilderness environment of the South Chilcotin mountains ▪ The numerous provincial parks and provincial recreation sites that can be accessed by visiting the Valley ▪ The outstanding snowmobiling, heli-skiing, cat-skiing, back country ski touring, mountain biking, hiking, horseback trail riding and other outdoor adventures available ▪ Proximity to the Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky Corridor and key

Tactic 4.2	Incremental marketing/promotional activities targeted at Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor
	<p>access routes and modes of transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major tourist facilities available in the Valley including a full range of different types of roofed accommodation facilities • Major tourist operators offering packages and outdoor adventure programs in the Valley including Chilcotin Holidays, Tyax Adventures, Whitecap Alpine, Backcountry Snowcats and Totally Awesome Adventures • The campaign may include attendance at travel and sport shows in the Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky Corridor, distribution of brochures such as the new Visitors Guide, media relations activities, and selective advertisements.
Specific Initiatives/ Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially various aspects of the campaign will need to be planned out including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall media relations strategy and specific activities which would help to launch and sustain the campaign • Development of special offers and packages that could be placed on the <i>HelloBC</i> website and included in cooperative advertising • Appropriate blogging activities on the BridgeRiverValley.ca website and <i>HelloBC</i> website • Development of an ongoing flow of material for major social network sites including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Flickr • Inter-relationships with marketing and promotional activities of CCCTA and Tourism BC. ◆ Steps required to develop and implement the incremental marketing/promotion campaign include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial preparation of an overall marketing plan and media plan for the campaign, working in consultation with CCCTA and Tourism BC. • Working with CCCTA to design and implement the media relations component of the campaign, including hosting of travel writers and possibly selected tour operators. • Design of cooperative advertisements featuring packages and special offers of tourist operator partners. • Depending upon what is affordable, advertisements placed in such publications as <i>The Pique</i>, <i>Whistler Question</i>, <i>Georgia Straight</i> and <i>Vancouver Sun</i> Travel Section may have merit. • The new Bridge River Valley Visitors Guide, when developed, should be distributed in Pemberton, Whistler, Squamish and Tourism Vancouver Visitor Centres, as well as other visitor centres within the

Tactic 4.2	Incremental marketing/promotional activities targeted at Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky Corridor
	<p>Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky Corridor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for and secure funding for this incremental marketing/promotional campaign through CTO, CCCTA and the Northern Trust, as appropriate.
Rationale/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To create a stronger awareness in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor and Lower Mainland of the Bridge River Valley and the winter and summer tourism and outdoor adventure experiences it offers. ◆ To draw a larger number of visitors from this lucrative market of more than 2 million people.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BRVEDS would spearhead the initiative for the Valley, working in close consultation with CCCTA and Tourism BC. ◆ Tourist operators in the Valley would participate in the cooperative advertising and media relations components of the program.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This initiative could be launched for the summer season of 2013, but planning would be required during the winter of 2012-13.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To make an impact in this large marketplace it is likely that a minimum investment in range of \$20,000 to \$25,000 would be required. ◆ The actual budget would depend on the details of the marketing and promotional campaign that is actually developed.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increases in number of unique visitors to the BridgeRiverValley.ca website ◆ Increasing number of referrals/links to websites of tourist operators that participate in cooperative advertising and media relations activities.

Continuing Existing Tourism Initiatives

It is important that the Bridge River Valley continues with its existing tourism initiatives that are already contributing to the Valley’s awareness as a tourism destination. These include the following:

- **Continue to maintain, update and upgrade the BridgeRiverValley.ca website.** As noted earlier the website provides comprehensive tourism information about the Valley and has both summer and winter components. Further enhancements with additional photos, videos and blogging are always helpful, as well as updating any narrative, listings and directories.

- **Continue with the “I Survived the Hurley” website and promotion.** The isurvivedthehurley.com website is linked to BridgeRiverValley.ca and is another helpful marketing and promotional tool for the Valley that should continue to be maintained and enhanced, along with the sales of branded promotional products.
- **Continue to operate the Tourist Info Centre in the Community Resource Building.** This is an important function for visitors as well as local residents who invite friends and relatives to visit and are looking for interesting local attractions and activities in the Valley.

Implementing the Strategies and Tactics

The Bridge River Valley Economic Development Society will need to take the lead in implementing the strategies and tactics that have been recommended in this report. Some important first steps include the following:

1. Form an Implementation Committee that could consist of representatives from the BRVEDS Board, along with a few other local tourism stakeholders and businesses who are interested in helping to lead this process.
2. Liaise with CCCTA and Tourism BC to determine funding opportunities for the various initiatives and how some of them may be packaged together to better enable funding support.
3. Apply for funding and recruit a qualified staff person to support BRVEDS in all of its activities to move forward with implementation of this short term tourism plan on a day-to-day basis.
4. It may also be appropriate to apply for a summer student grant to fund a college or university student intern position to further assist with the coordination and implementation of various strategies and tactics.