

TNRD Focused on Continued Advocacy with New Provincial Government Sworn In

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Kamloops, BC – November 19, 2024 – Following the fall 2024 Provincial Election, swearing-in of new Members of the Legislative Assembly, and appointments of Cabinet Ministers, the Thompson-Nicola Regional District (TNRD) is looking forward to continued advocacy to the Province for priorities identified by the Board of Directors.

The TNRD has focused on expanding advocacy efforts by building effective partnerships with senior levels of governments, while advocating collectively on common issues with local governments, First Nations, and non-government organizations.

Current Board priorities that the TNRD has advocated for provincial support for in recent months and years include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Small Water System funding:** The TNRD has requested that the Province support a sustainable funding model for small water systems. Due to a lack of economies of scale on small utility systems, public and private operators struggle with keeping rates affordable while funding basic maintenance. Any improvements are heavily reliant on grant funding to fund multi-million-dollar upgrades for safety and sustainability.
- **Maintenance of emergency egress routes:** Many TNRD communities have only one road in and out, and the TNRD is seeking to partner with the Province on a program to ensure that emergency routes are marked and maintained to a passable standard, with procedures for proactive maintenance.
- **Regional connectivity:** To address dead zones for cell service, and improve internet connectivity in rural areas, the TNRD is looking forward to pursuing funding through Connecting Communities BC, and advocating for long-term funding being delivered for this program.
- **Highway 5 corridor safety:** With many fatal accidents in recent years and ongoing safety concerns on the Yellowhead Highway north of Kamloops, the TNRD is looking forward to working with the Province to address concerns around a lack of enforcement options, and focusing on infrastructure improvements to safeguard travellers on this corridor.
- **Updates to the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR):** Approximately 31% (more than 800,000 hectares) of the TNRD's land base is within the ALR and bound by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission Act. The TNRD has requested the Province to eliminate unnecessary regulations for accessory buildings within ALR lands, which are addressed through local government zoning bylaws.
- **Invasive Plant Management funding:** The TNRD has requested the Province to establish a dedicated and more adequate budget for invasive plant management on Crown land, and to dedicate a line item within the budgets for the ministries of Forests, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Environment, specifically for invasive species

management within the TNRD. While the TNRD has a successful invasive plant management program, this service is limited to treatment on private property and is funded by property taxes.

For local governments like the TNRD, advocacy is a key factor for the organization to secure funding, develop projects, and change policy or legislation from senior levels of government.

Advocacy efforts by the TNRD are in alignment with the Board's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, which includes five strategic priorities and advocacy objectives in each section. To view the Board's Strategic Plan, visit: tnrd.ca/strategicplan.
