

ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN BC'S NORTHWEST

Individual Forum Report

Burns Lake

Those who met in Burns Lake expressed considerable concern regarding the recent bailouts. This concern centered on worries that the Northwest tends to be forgotten and neglected by such programs, and that generally speaking bailouts prove to be no more than band aid solutions. It was further suggested that money would be far better spent if invested in training and education.

There was broad consensus amongst the participants that cuts to Income Tax and the GST do not lead to worthwhile savings or the significant reinvestment of more money back into the economy; a far more beneficial course of action would be a decision on the part of the government to provide incentive tax credits for job training and green retrofits to homes and businesses. Our social safety net, according to those present, defines us as Canadians and is worth protecting, especially in rough times, which prove more difficult in rural regions. Once again the conversation turned to better training programs which would reduce the number of people in need of social assistance.

A good deal of the conversation focussed on road work including twinning Highway 16, building another road to Granisle and finishing the Smithers-Granisle cut-off. Participants likewise advocated for a new hospital and improvements to CN and BC Hydro. Lastly, the conversation turned to topics including the development of food security through the use of greenhouses and growing more locally, as well as the promotion of green research and development.

Facilitators included: Stuart Abbels and Doug Montaldi