



August 16, 2019

Re: Cariboo Agricultural Research Alliance proposal to the Rural Dividend Fund

Dear Mr. Okechukwu and Mr. Campbell,

I am writing to request a letter of support from the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) for a proposal submitted on August 15th 2019 to the Rural Dividend Fund (RDF). I am writing on behalf of the Cariboo Agricultural Research Alliance (CARA), a broad alliance of stakeholders including representation from the CRD through your economic development department. The RDF proposal has been submitted by the Kersley Farmers' Institute (KFI), with support from our initiative.

Since 2008 the BC Agriculture Council's Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI) has worked with government partners to assist agriculture in addressing the challenges associated with climate change. CAI developed a [Cariboo Regional Adaptation Strategies](#) plan in partnership with the CRD in 2014, and has been successfully implementing projects in the Cariboo region since that time, working with the KFI and other partners.

The project proposal submitted to the Rural Dividend fund is for a *CARA Extension Development and Community Engagement Project*. The *CARA Extension Development and Community Engagement Project* will organize and deliver high-caliber knowledge transfer activities and materials to the agriculture community. It will also implement a First Nations and new Entrant Engagement Strategy, to build capacity within those under-represented sectors. The project has three main objectives: (1) host 2 workshops and 3-5 travelling seminars to highlight local research and innovative management practices that increase the competitiveness of agri-businesses throughout the Cariboo Regional District; (2) develop and deliver extension materials (including 6-8 fact sheets, research updates and newsletter, and synchronized event calendar), and (3) implement the First Nations and New Entrant Engagement Strategy, in order to increase participation in CARA and help each community develop capacity to realize their strategic plan's objectives around agriculture development and food security.

The *Cariboo Regional Adaptation Strategies* identified the need to increase local adaptation research and extension activities as a high priority for the region. Further, it was determined that a regional research alliance (Cariboo Agricultural Research Alliance, CARA) was the best approach to address these needs. All the of the proposed project's goals were determined by the CARA Steering Committee, which is comprised of producer, industry, government, academic and First Nations representatives. It is anticipated that as a result of the project activities, CARA will continue to gain momentum and continue to build the Cariboo's reputation of having a thriving agriculture sector, with the required resources for individual agri-businesses to succeed – including attracting new entrants to the region. The increased involvement of producers in CARA activities and the capacity which will be built in both agricultural and First Nations communities throughout the region will support local skills development and increase economic development in the agriculture sector.

The total project budget is **\$100,000.00**, and **\$79,369.00** has been requested from the Rural Dividend Fund. The remaining funding has already been committed from the Beef Cattle Industry Development Fund.

For further information, please contact me at Samantha@bcagclimateaction.ca, 778-676-7657.

Sincerely,

Samantha Charlton - Program Manager, Adaptation Programming