



*building communities together*

## **2026 Business Plan Red Bluff Sewer (1775)**

*Kelly McDonald, Manager of Utilities*

***Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.***

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### **Department Services**

- The Cariboo Regional District (CRD) owns and operates the Red Bluff Community Sewer System.

### **Background Information**

- The Red Bluff Sewer System was established in 1982 and services approximately 2,230 land parcels, including a portion within the City of Quesnel boundaries.
- The system collects sewage through the provision of numerous lift stations, 64.8 kilometres of sewer piping and a pre-treatment plant. Once collected, the sewage is discharged to sewage treatment lagoons owned and operated by Cariboo Pulp. Treatment of the sewage by Cariboo Pulp occurs under a long-term contractual arrangement.



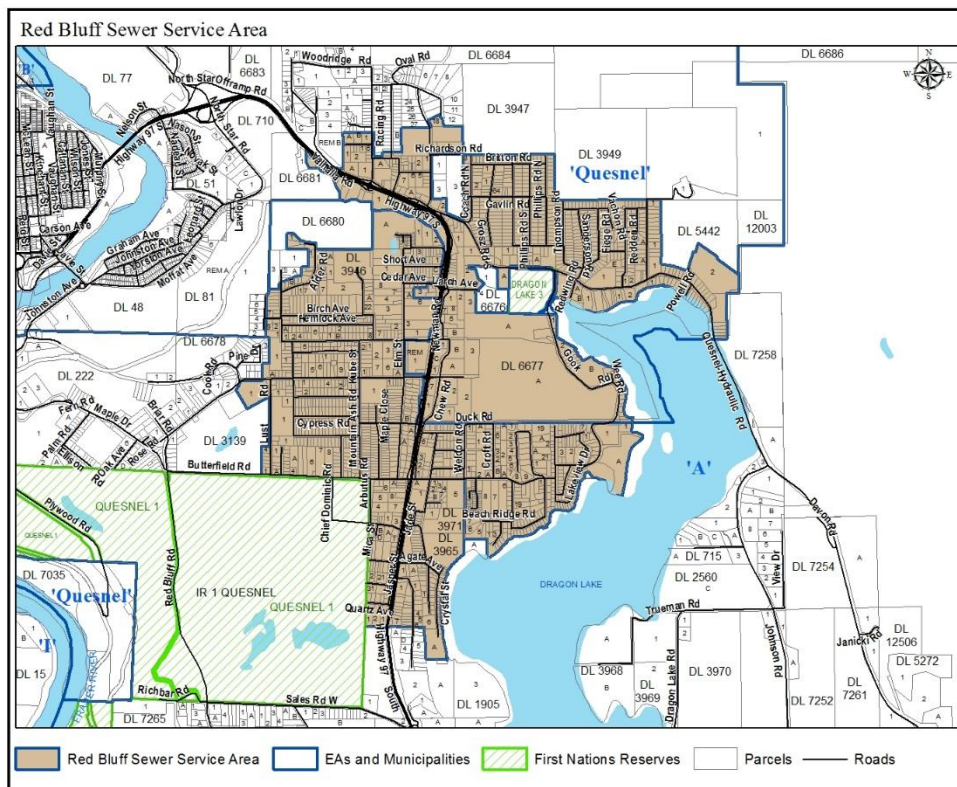
**Cariboo Pulp and Paper Lagoons**

## Operations

Establishment Bylaws 4935 and 5368 authorize the CRD to cover the costs of the service by way of taxation of assessed property, parcel tax and user fees. No limit has been set on the level for taxation by assessment.

No parcel tax is currently being collected for this location.

As Electoral Area A is the only stakeholder, and the *Local Government Act* requires more than one vote, the entire Board is responsible for the governance of this service.



## Significant Issues & Trends

The recent hydraulic capacity assessment of the Red Bluff sewer system indicates that it has ample capacity to accommodate all potential developments permitted under the current zoning regulations. However, with the recent approval of carriage houses in the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) and the City of Quesnel, it is essential to evaluate the impact of these additional flows on the system as well.

The Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) requires local governments to report and record tangible capital assets. In the future, local governments may also be required to amortize these assets over their useful lives. To support this, the Cariboo Regional District

(CRD) is currently developing master plans, as well as asset management inventories and software, to facilitate future budgeting and financial planning.

### **Business Plan Goals, Objectives & Strategies**

1. **Goal:** Increased effluent storage to lower probability of a sewer overflow into the environment.

**Rationale:** Currently, two lift stations are of concern in the event of a pump failure. The underground fiberglass holding tanks fill up within minutes during peak flow. The installation of a secondary equalization tank would give operators more time to react to a potential mechanical issue and lessen the chances of overflow into a water body.

**Strategy:** Obtain cost estimates and drawings for the installation of an equalization tank for lift station 6-1 and/or 3-3.

2. **Goal:** More staffing to provide a better level of service as well as increased preventative maintenance.

**Rationale:** Our water systems are operating with below minimum staffing recommendations, as we increase our preventative maintenance and more staff are needed. This will reduce staff turnover and provide an increased level of service.

**Strategy:** Contribute funds based off system size to the wage of one more operator in the Southern Region.

**Estimated Cost:** Slightly increased operating costs will lead to overall reduction in reactive maintenance costs in the long run.

3. **Goal:** Complete construction on the Red Bluff pre-treatment plant expansion.

**Rationale:** This project is carried forward from 2025. The project will allow for a new bay for repairs and parking for the crane truck as well as increased storage space.

**Strategy:** Issue the request for proposals as planning is complete.

**Estimated Cost:** \$500,000



### **Overall Long-Term Goal for the Red Bluff Sewer System**

The primary objective for the Red Bluff Sewer System is to transition from a reactive maintenance approach to a proactive model focused on ongoing maintenance and timely replacement. Significant progress has been made in 2025. This strategic shift will ensure the long-term viability of the system while minimizing future expenses. Although short-term costs may rise to facilitate essential upgrades and replace aging infrastructure, this investment will ultimately lead to significant savings and enhanced reliability for our community.

### **Overall Financial Impact**

The projected capital reserve as of December 2025 is \$67,000.

No parcel tax is currently being collected for this location.

The current residential user fee is \$299 per year and may increase in 2026 to match the growing needs of this service and inflation.