



# FORT ST JAMES





# Table of Contents

Welcome Message .....	3
Getting Here .....	6
Getting Around Town .....	7
Unique to Fort St. James .....	8

Parks.....	10
Seasonal Activities.....	11
Remote Wildlife Experiences.....	14
Trails.....	18
History .....	24

# Welcome Message

*On the scenic shore of beautiful Stuart Lake is a community both historic and resourceful!*

Fort St. James offers an abundance of year-round recreational activities including hunting, fishing, trails for biking, hiking, motor sports, water sports, marina, and snow and ice sports. Established by Simon Fraser in 1806, the Fort St. James area is rich with historical significance. The geographically close communities of Fort St. James, Nak'azdli, Tl'azt'en and Yekooche First Nations played an integral role in developing the north. Beginning with the fur trade and building strong economies on forestry, mining, energy and tourism; Fort St. James is a resourceful place! It is also independent business

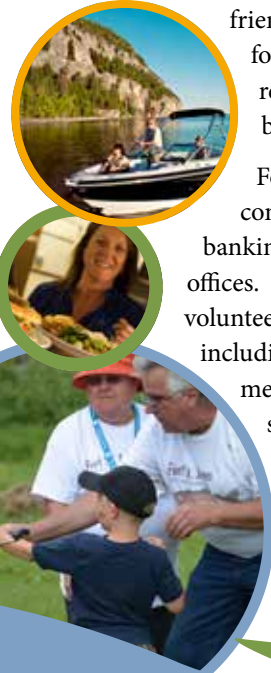
friendly, providing resources and supports for entrepreneurs even being formally recognized with a provincial "open for business" award.

Fort St. James is a service centre for rural communities offering stores, restaurants, banking, accommodations and government offices. Uniquely this town boasts an array of volunteer-driven organizations and services including a ski hill, golf course, theatre and medical clinic that are run by non-profit societies. Our local organizations are very active and host events and fundraisers throughout the year including dances, dinners, theatre and concerts, workshops, tournaments and parades.



Fort St. James provides a safe and healthy community for families and gainful employment opportunities. A College of New Caledonia campus, accompanied by three elementary schools and a high school keeps our innovative community engaged and educated. In addition to education, health is a priority with our Stuart Lake Hospital and Medical Clinic and community hall for recreation.

Whether you visit for the history or stay for the resources, Fort St. James will leave you with a lasting memory of your experiences!









*Vibrant. FUN.*  
**ORIGINAL. Diverse.**  
**INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES**  
**COLOUR OUR WORLD.**

**LOVE**  
 Fort St. James

**WWW.LOVEFORTSTJAMES.COM**

Neighbours. Friends. Volunteers. Community Builders.  
 Meet the independent entrepreneurs building your local  
 economy at [www.LoveFortStJames.com](http://www.LoveFortStJames.com).

Use our useful search tools to find out more about the  
 businesses you know and love, or to find the hidden  
 gems in your own backyard!

Northern  
 Development  
 INITIATIVE TRUST



# Getting Here

## By Car

Travel Highway 16 west from Prince George for 101 km, or travel Highway 16 east from Burns Lake for 128 km to arrive at Vanderhoof. Turn north onto Highway 27 and travel 60 km to Fort St. James.

## Quick Facts

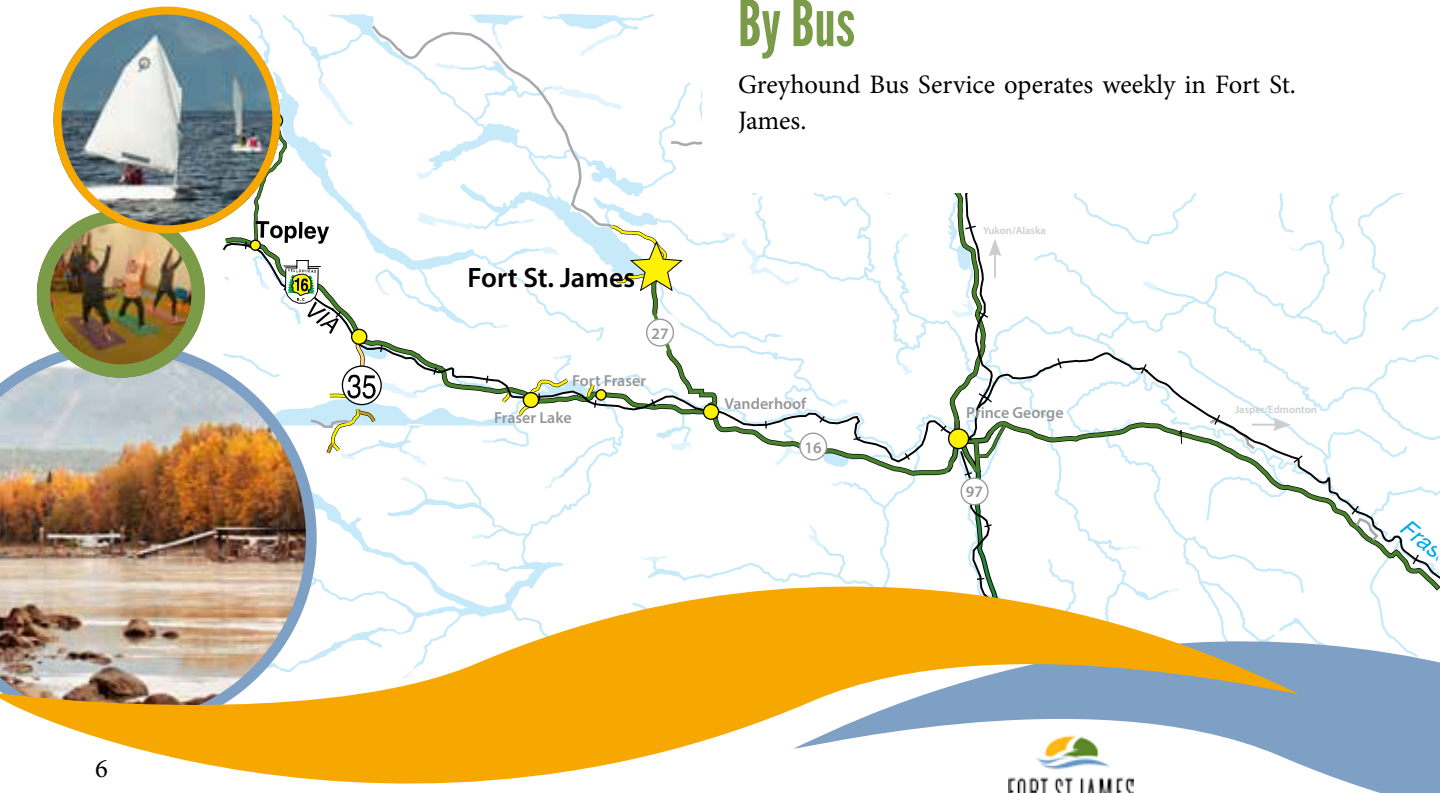
Population of Fort St. James, Rural area and First Nations reserves is 4,262.

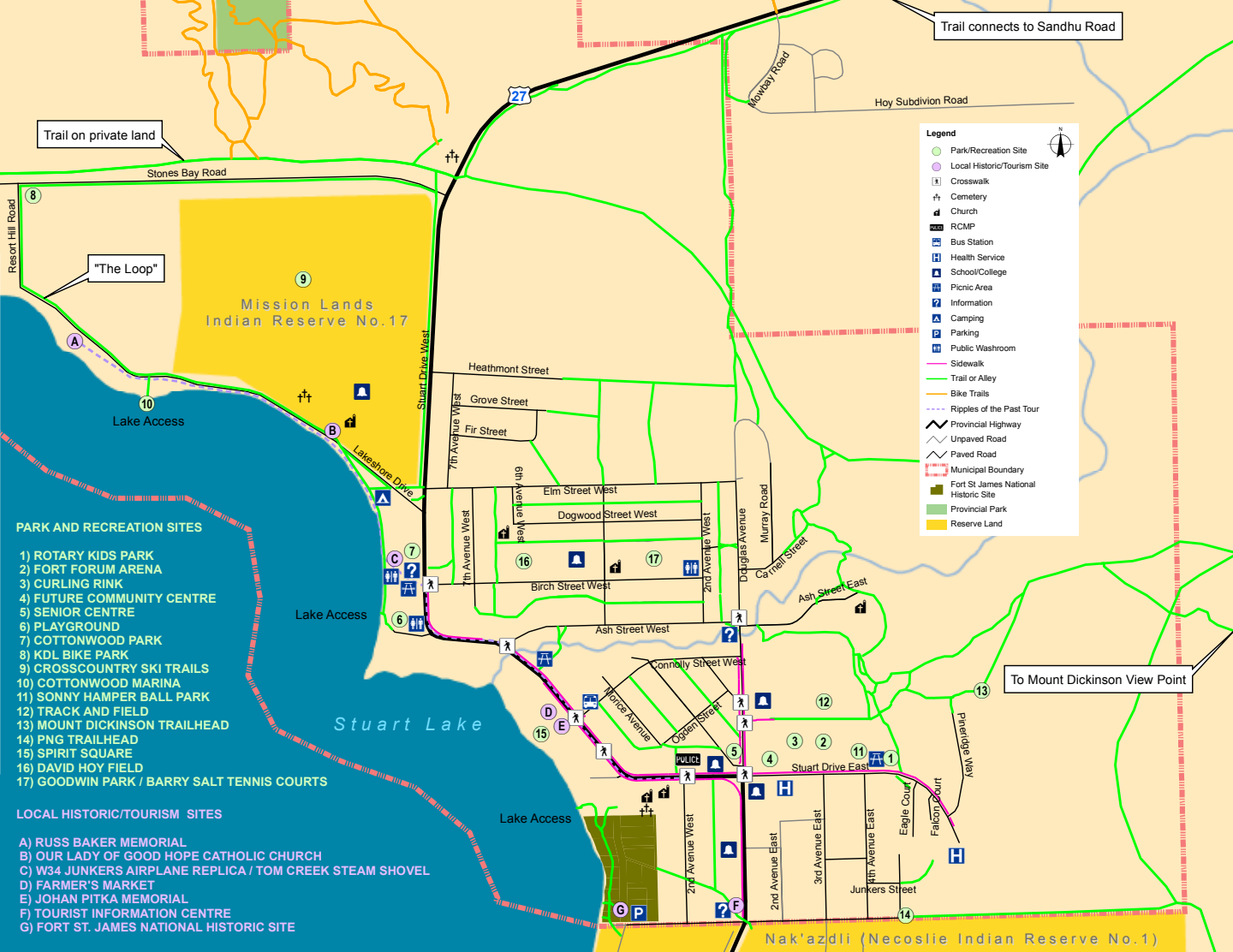
## By Air

Prince George is the closest large city (161 km away) with daily Air Canada, Central Mountain Air and West Jet services providing connections to Calgary, Vancouver, Kamloops, Edmonton, Fort St. John, Kelowna, and Smithers.

## By Bus

Greyhound Bus Service operates weekly in Fort St. James.





# Getting Around Town

Fort St. James is easy to walk around with many trails connecting common roadways.

We also have a 7 day/week taxi service.

Business listings can be found on the District's website at [www.fortstjames.ca/directory](http://www.fortstjames.ca/directory) or in the District's printed Business Directory.

# Unique to Fort St. James

## A Talking Rock

Fort St. James smiles back! 25 km south of Fort St. James is the Talking Rock, an important landmark for the people of the area. This rock has been painted with messages hundreds of times over the last 28 years to acknowledge special occasions and celebrations of our local residents!

## Greensides Carvings

Famed chainsaw artist Glenn Greensides has three of his early works prominently displayed in Fort St. James. An RCMP officer is located at the police detachment; a prospector is at the Visitor Information Centre, and a logger stands as a worker's memorial at the municipal office.





## Annual Events

The entertainment provided within Fort St. James never ceases, whether it be catching a hockey game, an event at the historic park, a night out for live theatre or a festival in the park.

January/February	Caledonia Classic Dog Sled Races and WinterFest Snowmobile and ATV Club Poker Ride, Ladies Curling Bonspiel
February/March	Caledonia Classic Dog Sled Races and Winterfest, Slush Cup and Bathtub Races at Murray Ridge
June/July/August	Sunday teas, chicken races and demonstrations all summer at the National Historic Site
June	Salmon cook-off and Caledonia Days at National Historic Site, Aboriginal Day Celebrations – National Historic Site and Cottonwood Park
July	Stuart Lake Fishing Derby, Canada Day Celebration
August	Night Market, Music on the Mountain Music Festival
September	Terry Fox Run, Historic site open house and BBQ
October	Stuart Lake Hospital Auxiliary Turkey Dart Shoot, Nakazdli Halloween Dance and District Pumpkin Walk, Mt. Pope Annual Adventure Run, Fort St. James Children's Festival
November	Remembrance Day Ceremony, Christmas Craft Fair, Santa Claus Parade/ Moonlight Madness downtown shopping event, Festival of Trees
December	Heritage Christmas

# Parks

## Cottonwood Park

The Fort's flagship park, Cottonwood Park is on the lakeshore, with easy access from downtown. It's the home of many of the area's special events, including Canada Day, and the Caledonia Classic Dog Sled Race.

Amenities at Cottonwood Park include: Sandy beach, washrooms and change rooms, band stand, covered picnic area, volleyball courts, and playground. For visitors to town there is a small campground, an RV sani-station and an information kiosk. There is also a replica Junkers bush plane and a restored steam shovel on display.

## Spirit Square

Located in the commercial core of the town, overlooking Stuart Lake, Spirit Square is home to public artwork depicting the rich historical and cultural fabric of Fort St. James and area. Benches, picnic tables and extensive landscaping make this scenic park an excellent spot to relax or enjoy a bite to eat. It is also a key stop along the Ripples of the Past Interpretive Trail, and home to a war memorial cenotaph and the Johan Pitka Memorial

## KDL Bike Park

Fort St James KDL Bike Park is an amazing Skills Park that has fun pump track, technical features area, flowing jump lines, slope style features and trail, all built into just under 2 acres. This bike park is a must for bikers of all ages, including beginners.

?

## Goodwin Park



# Seasonal Activities

## Winter

### Murray Ridge Ski Area

The Murray Ridge Ski Area features 30 km of major alpine runs geared to provide an experience for all levels of skier and boarder. In addition, we have 20 km of groomed and track set cross country trails adjacent to the ski area complete with a 3.7 km lighted loop. The Murray Ridge Lodge and T-Bar offers lunches, hot beverages, rentals and a licensed bar.

### Ice Fishing

Many ice fishers flock to the region in Winter to catch their limits of the area's many lakes including Stuart Lake, Echo Lake, Kloch Lake and Grassham Lake.

### Dog Sledding





# Summer

## Fort St. James Farmers Market

The Fort St. James Farmers Market takes place Fridays afternoon from May to September in Spirit Square, in the commercial core of Fort St. James. This popular market includes locally grown produce, meat, honeys, teas, baked goods, syrups, woodworking, arts and crafts.

## Stuart Lake Sailing Club

Sailing classes, summer camps and drop-in experiences for adults and children are available with the Stuart Lake Sailing Club on picturesque Stuart Lake.

## Stuart Lake Golf Club

A challenging 9 hole course overlooking Stuart Lake. Available for booking golf events, parties and weddings. Amenities include rental clubs, carts, club house, lunch and licensed alcohol service.

## Guided Tours

Fort St. James businesses offer visitors and locals the opportunity to have guided trail and tour experiences. Find listings of Eco-tourism businesses on our online or print directory.

## Echo Lake Camp

## Camp Morice





## Stuart Lake

Boating on Stuart Lake is a common summer pastime, with excellent fishing, picnic and swimming options to provide relaxing summer enjoyment. Stuart Lake's fish offerings include kokanee, lake trout, ling cod, rainbow trout and bull trout. Stuart Lake is home to 6 Provincial Parks which protect significant bays, mountains, rivers and beaches, as well as several BC Forest Service recreation sites. Stuart Lake is also partial home to the endangered Nechako White sturgeon, a species of sturgeon genetically unique to the Stuart and Nechako watersheds.

Boat access on Stuart Lake can be found at the Cottonwood Municipal Marina, Stuart River Campground, Paarens Beach Provincial Park, Pitka Bay Resort and Sowchea Bay Provincial Park.

# Remote Wildlife Experiences

## Paddling

A caution to all paddlers in the area: weather changes can be sudden and often unpredictable. Pay attention to dark skies on the horizon, and changing weather patterns as well as weather forecasts prior to your trip.

### Nation Lakes Canoe Trip

Nation Lakes Provincial Park offers a renowned canoe route, across 120 km and 4 beautiful lakes: Tsayta, Indata, Tchentlo and Chuchi. The lakes are connected by the Nation River, which drains into the Arctic watershed. Canoeing the entire chain takes between 5 - 10 days and offers rustic campsites. It is suggested that travelers book with a resort/lodge to provide a shuttle from their completion point and offer local advice on the area, as conditions change seasonally.

### Takla Lake/ Stuart Lake Canoe Trip

A popular multi-day trip for paddlers is to paddle Takla Lake down to Stuart Lake. This trip takes on average 4 - 7 days. The North shore of both lakes offer plentiful recreation sites and wilderness.

### Stuart River from Fort St. James to Vanderhoof

This one to two day paddle is relatively easy, and provides a leisurely paddle from Fort St. James to Vanderhoof. The only rapids located along this route can be round just following the Stuart Lake Campground.

### Omineca Provincial Park

Omineca Provincial Park and Protected Area includes 80 km of the Omineca River Valley, the Wolverine Range, the mountains northwest of Germansen Landing to Nina Lake, and the area to the south, including the alpine ridges at the head of Evans Creek, Germansen Lake and surrounding visible areas. This park is primarily a wilderness area providing backcountry opportunities. There are six rustic vehicle accessible camping areas. Also, the Nina Lake South area offers a walk-in, pristine wilderness camping opportunity.



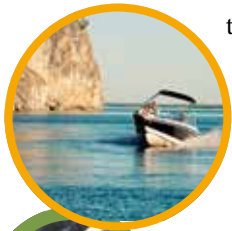




## Hunting and Fishing

Hunting and fishing are both very popular pastimes in the Fort St. James area, due to the easy access to remote areas available. Be sure to follow all safety and natural resource regulations when participating in hunting or fishing activities, and to use caution when in wilderness areas. A bylaw prohibits the discharge of firearms within municipal boundaries. Information on the open season for hunting in the Omineca area can be found by calling the local BC Government Agent Office at 250-996-7585.

Adventure, hunting and fishing lodges are scattered in many remote, amazing locations in the Fort St. James region. Many offer great facilities and food, some offer guiding services and specialized transportation to/from their locations. Consult the District's Business Directory online or in print format to learn more about local lodges and wilderness camps.









# Trails

## Mount Dickinson Trail

This is a short and steep hike from the end of Pineridge Way through spruce and fir forests to the slopes of a ridge behind the town of Fort St. James. On the top of this modest mountain, good views over the Stuart River valley can be had in several directions. Hike is moderate in difficulty and can be done in 1 – 2 hours return from the trailhead.

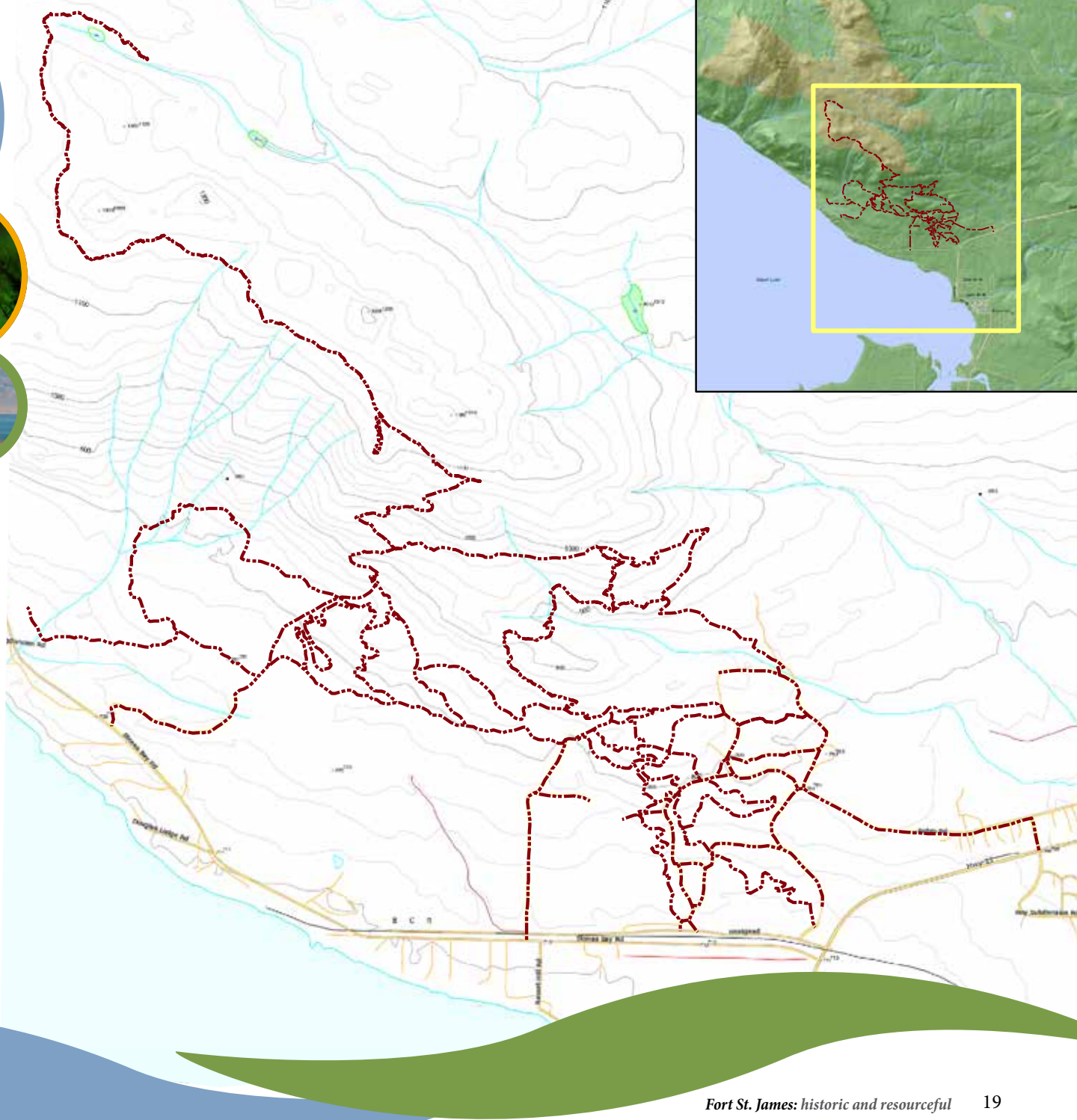
## The Loop

This walk is about 3.5 km in length and is normally started and finished from Cottonwood Park. Short and simple, this walk combines a path along the shore of Stuart Lake, roadsides of Lakeshore Drive, and additional pathways along Stones Bay Road and Highway 27. En route, you will pass by several historic features of the local community including the Russ Baker Memorial and Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church, both with interpretive signs to explore. Consider this loop for an after dinner stroll or as a convenient loop for an evening run.

## Mount Pope Provincial Park

Located just a short drive down Stones Bay Road, Mount Pope is the Stuart Lake area's classic hiking option. This widely graded, well maintained BC parks trail climbs 700 m of elevation over a 7 km distance. Hikers will see a series of interesting ecological zones including old growth Douglas firs, thick stands of spruce, lodgepole pine and a subalpine micro-climate unique in the area. Views en route are modest, but soon become outstanding once the final 1 km of trail is reached before the summit. This is a half to full day hike which requires some preparation. On a clear day you can see the Omineca Mountains in the north, Canadian Rockies to the east, Cariboos to the southeast and Sinkut Mountain to the south. Bring water, food, warm clothes, and be prepared for rapidly changing weather. Most importantly, be sure to bring your camera. Info: [www.bcparks.ca](http://www.bcparks.ca)





## Duz Cho Trail

A traditional use trail from McLeod Lake to Carp Lake, this hiking trail is recommended for skilled hikers and it is suggested to contact a qualified guide to access. Great vistas, mountain climbs and cultural learning await themselves to trail users, including restoration pit houses and culturally modified trees which can be accessed on Pinchi Mountain.

To access the Nyan Wheti or Duz Cho trail it is recommended to contact the Nak'azdli First Nation Natural Resource Office at 250-996-0088.

## Pope's Slope Biking Trails

This series of unofficial trails is ideal for mountain bikers and involves a series of informal but well worn paths of varying degrees of difficulty on the southern slopes of Mount Pope Provincial Park and on several areas of private lands. These trails offer a wide variety of great options for bikers and hikers to explore and all within a short distance from town.

## Motorized Utility Sports Vehicle Trails (Snowmobile/ ATV)

300+ km of signed and free access snowmobile/ATV trails provide great access and adventure for recreationalists south of Stuart Lake. A map of trails can be found at the Fort St. James Snowmobile Club House at ... (Location)

## Nyan Wheti

Nyan Wheti is an ancient land route in northern British Columbia, Canada from the Dakelh villages on Fraser Lake (Nadlehbunk'ut) to villages on Stuart Lake (Nak'albun), about 50 km to the north. The name in Carrier means "The Way Across."

The trail was used by the Dakelh people for as a major trade, travel and communication line,[3] and its use only increased when European fur trade forts were set up on the two lakes, Fort Fraser and Fort St. James respectively. From Stuart Lake, the route follows Sowchea Creek south to Nanna (Chuskan) Lake, then past Marie (Kwah) Lake, Sutherland Lake, and Pitka Mountain, where it passes through the Porte de l'enfer (Hell's Gate) Pass, ending finally in Nadleh Village on Fraser Lake. From Nadleh, the Cheslatta Trail continues south to Cheslatta Lake.

The trailhead in Fort St. James is located at the end of Baker Drive, off Sowchea road, between Paarens Beach Provincial Park and Sowchea Bay Provincial Park. It ends near the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation reserve, just off the Yellowhead Highway. It is a class 5 trail, and it recommended only for skilled hikers.





## LEGEND



Trailhead



Provincial Park



Parking



Camping

Nyan Wheti Trail

Omineca Trail

Shass Mountain Trail

Tulle Lake Trail

Motor Sport Trails



Unpaved Road



Paved Road



Provincial Highway



Protected Area



Provincial Park



Reserve Land



## Cross Country Ski Trails

Free cross country ski trails groomed on Stuart Lake bring trekkers from the National Historic Site to Cottonwood Park, along the shoreline of the lake, past Cliffside pictographs dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, past interesting geologic formations and up to an ice waterfall.



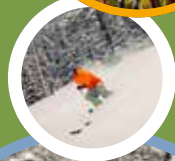
# Trail User notes in the Fort St James Area

**Share the Trails:** Trails in the Fort St. James region are used by a wide range of people on foot, on bikes and on horseback. Whatever the method, be sure to share the trails and be courteous to others.

**Is it Getting Windy?** Consider altering your plan! Dead standing timbers in densely wooded areas can become hazardous in strong wind conditions. Stuart Lake and the surrounding areas can quickly become windy as storms roll in across the lake. Before departing: check the weather, be alert and if weather deteriorates, consider adjusting your plans accordingly.

**Make Space for Wildlife.** Trail users may encounter a number of different wildlife species in their travels. If this happens to you, give wildlife space, do not harass, feed, or entice them and remain calm during all encounters

**Encounters with Bears.** All trail users should orient themselves with standard bear safe practices when using any trail in the area. Consider exploring the trails in groups, make plenty of noise, carry bear spray and know how to use it.



# History

## Ripples of the Past Interpretive Walk

Winding its way through the heart of Fort St. James is a new journey of discovery. Combined with a visit to the Historic Site, taking in a meal or outdoor activity, this fully accessible self-guided walk is a great day out for visitors of all ages and abilities. This project won a 2012 Interpretation Canada Gold Award in the “Non-Personalized Program” category.

## Hudsons Bay Cemetery

The graveyard is located on Stuart Drive behind St. Patrick's Anglican Church.

The Hudson's Bay cemetery is the oldest remnant of early fur trading in Fort St James. Little is known about its history and content, or even when the first person was buried here. Panels at the cemetery tell of lives in Fort St. James in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.



## Russ Baker Memorial

Aviation history buffs head to the Russ Baker Memorial, which was erected in honour of Frank Russell “Russ” Baker. He was one of the first bush pilots in the Fort St. James area in the 1930's. After World War II Russ Baker started Central BC Airways, which later became Pacific Western Airlines, which later became part of Canadian Airlines International Ltd.

On a secluded bluff with a spectacular view over Stuart Lake, this memorial to the legendary pilot Russ Baker is a great place for a peaceful retreat.



A photograph of Our Lady of Good Hope Church, a historic white wooden building with a tall, ornate steeple. The church is situated in a grassy field with trees and hills in the background. The sky is clear and blue. The church has a steep gabled roof and a small chimney. The steeple is decorated with green and white trim. The main body of the church is white with green trim around the windows and doors. There are two windows visible on the side of the church. A small wooden bench is in front of the church. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

## Our Lady of Good Hope Church

Built in 1873, this beautiful historic site is the third oldest church in BC, and was the first permanent Catholic mission north of Williams Lake. From 1885-1904 Father A.G. Morice was the priest, known for his book *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*. He also created the Carrier Syllabary and printed Carrier Prayer Books. This church was used for service until 1951 and continues to be used during the summer months on Saturday evenings.



## W34 Junkers Model at Cottonwood Park

This 1/3 scale model of a W34 Junkers Plane signifies the historic background of Fort St. James as a float plane base for Pacific Western Airlines (Central BC Airways). Russ Baker, famed bush pilot started Central BC Airways in 1946 and was based out of Fort St. James in the 1940's. These Junkers planes were built in Germany around and after WW1, were used by Baker's company and were instrumental in opening up the north for resource development.



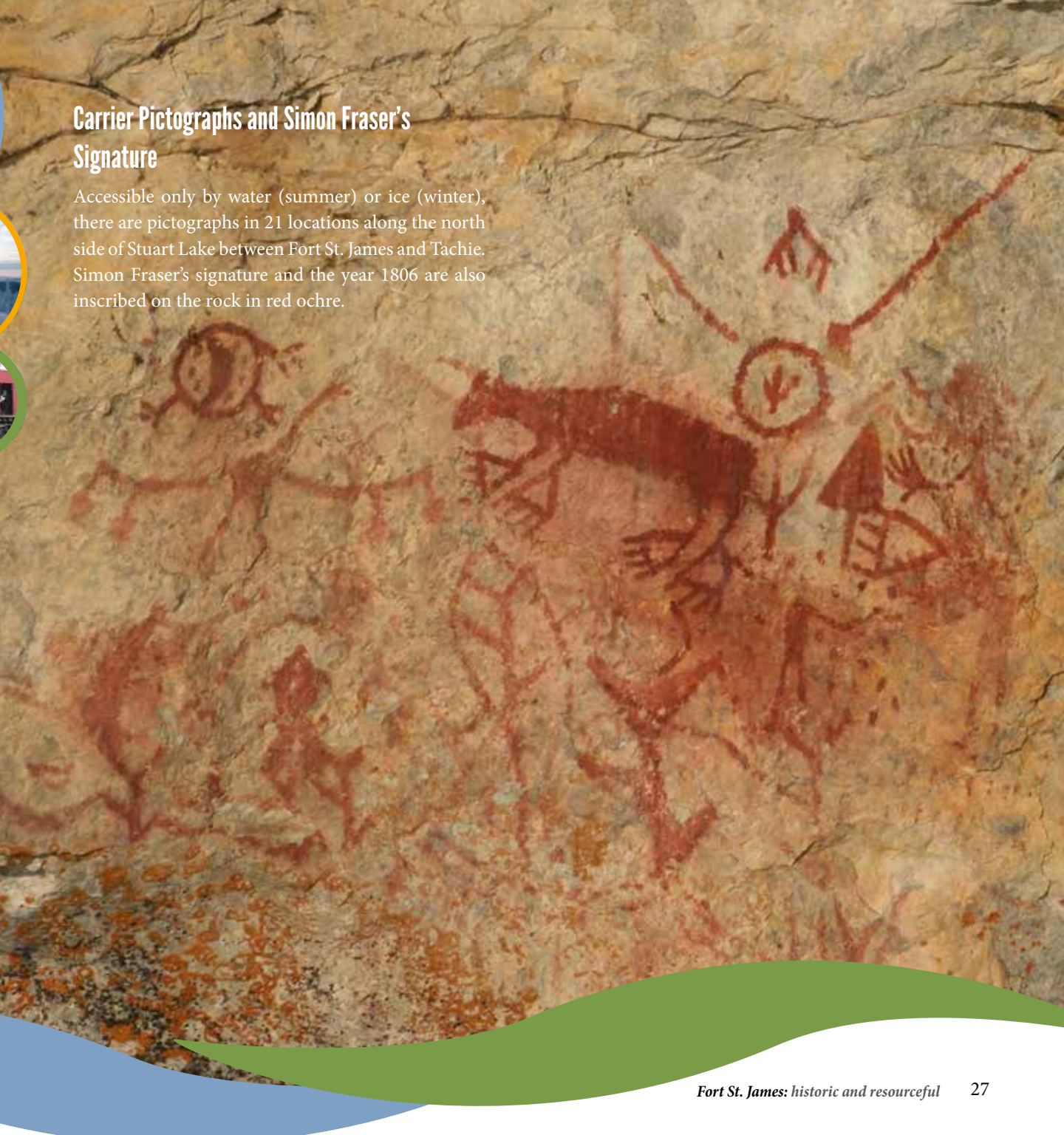
## Tom Creek Steam Shovel at Cottonwood Park

Built by the Marion Steam Shovel Company and used in the 1930's Omineca Gold Rush. This steam shovel is accessible to the public for their enjoyment.



## Carrier Pictographs and Simon Fraser's Signature

Accessible only by water (summer) or ice (winter), there are pictographs in 21 locations along the north side of Stuart Lake between Fort St. James and Tachie. Simon Fraser's signature and the year 1806 are also inscribed on the rock in red ochre.



## Gravesite of Chief Kwah/ Mouth of Stuart River

To access the Chief Kwah gravesite it is recommended to seek permission and a recommended guide from the Nak'azdli Band Office, 284 Kwah Rd. W./ Hwy 27.

Chief Kw'eh was a leader of the Dakelh people at Stuart Lake in the village of Nak'azdli. During his early life he distinguished himself as a warrior within a cycle of warfare between the Dakelh of Stuart Lake and the Chilcotin people to the south. In 1806, when Simon Fraser and his party arrived in Nak'azdli (Stuart Lake) to establish fur trade posts for the Northwest Company, Chief Kw'eh took on the role as fur trade chief, negotiating the new relationship between his people and the newcomers. This role continued after 1821 when the Hudson's Bay Company took control of the Fort. Chief Kw'eh's success as an intermediary and diplomat helped create peaceful relations in the region and resulted in him becoming the key Aboriginal leader of a wide territory. He is remembered as "dreamer of the salmon," and is thought to be still providing for his people by presiding over the salmon fishery from his burial place at the mouth of the Stuart River.

## Johan Pitka Memorial at Spirit Square

Located in Spirit Square, this monument commemorates Sir Johan Pitka's time in Fort St. James. A national hero of Estonia, Pitka established a community in the Fort St. James area in the 1920s. The Society for the Advancement of Estonian Studies in Canada installed the monument in 2009.

## Manson Creek Historical Society Museum

The Manson Creek Historical Society operates overnight accommodations and a museum documenting the gold rush in Northern BC. The historic community of Manson Creek is located roughly 3 hours north of Fort St. James.

## Fort St. James National Historic Site

280 Kwah Road

Fort St. James National Historic Site is a restored Hudson's Bay Company post on the southern shore of Stuart Lake. It is commemorated as a centre of trade and commerce in the 19th Century fur trade. The Fort was established in 1806 by Simon Fraser and John Stuart, on behalf of the North West Company. The National Historic Site displays the largest group of original wood buildings representing the fur trade in Canada. It allows visitors to see life as it was in the 1890's including interactive exhibits, period dressed staff, Sunday afternoon 'High Tea' (available by booking only), an operational bed and breakfast, a fur warehouse, cafe open daily for lunch, daily chicken races and a live sturgeon aquarium. Operations take place from June 1 to mid September with a season full of special events and activities.









# WELCOME TO THE Bulkley-Nechako PICTURE IT!



Northern  
British Columbia  
REGION



## Visitor Centres in the Bulkley-Nechako

Smithers ..... 1411 Court St  
Telkwa ..... 1620 Highway 16  
Houston ..... 3289 Highway 16  
Granisle ..... 3 Babine Dr

Burns Lake ..... 540 Highway 16 West  
Fraser Lake ..... 30 Carrier Crescent  
Fort St James ..... 115 Douglas Avenue  
Vanderhoof ... 2353 Burrard Avenue



FORT ST. JAMES

# #PICTURE YOURSELF IN THE HEART OF BC!

Take a "selfie" in front any of these eight community landmarks, post your picture on social media with the corresponding hashtag or bring your picture in to a regional Visitor Centre and receive a keepsake from your journey through the Bulkley-Nechako!

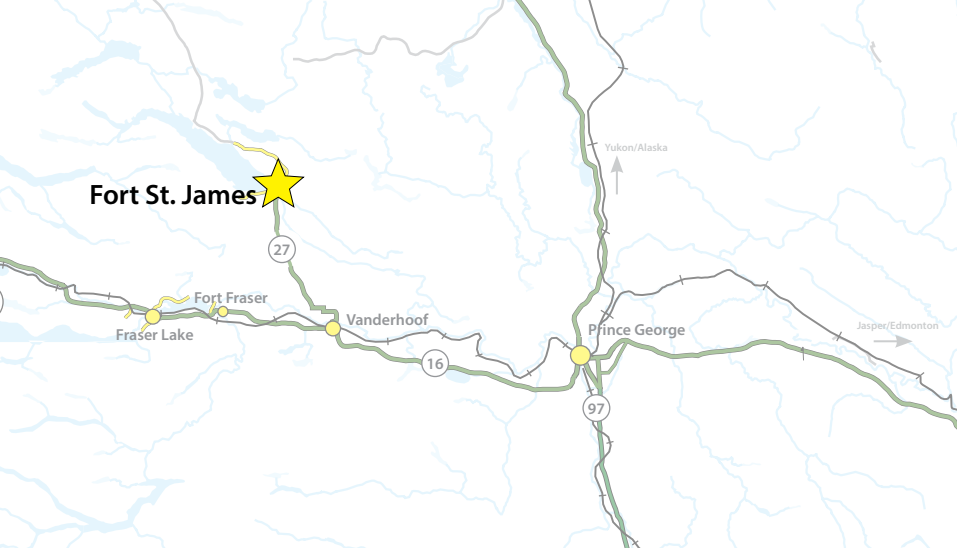


#visitbulkleynechako

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**FORT ST JAMES**  
DISTRICT

**250-996-8233**

**[www.fortstjames.ca](http://www.fortstjames.ca)**

**Fort St. James**  
**Visitor Information Centre**  
**250-996-2127**

