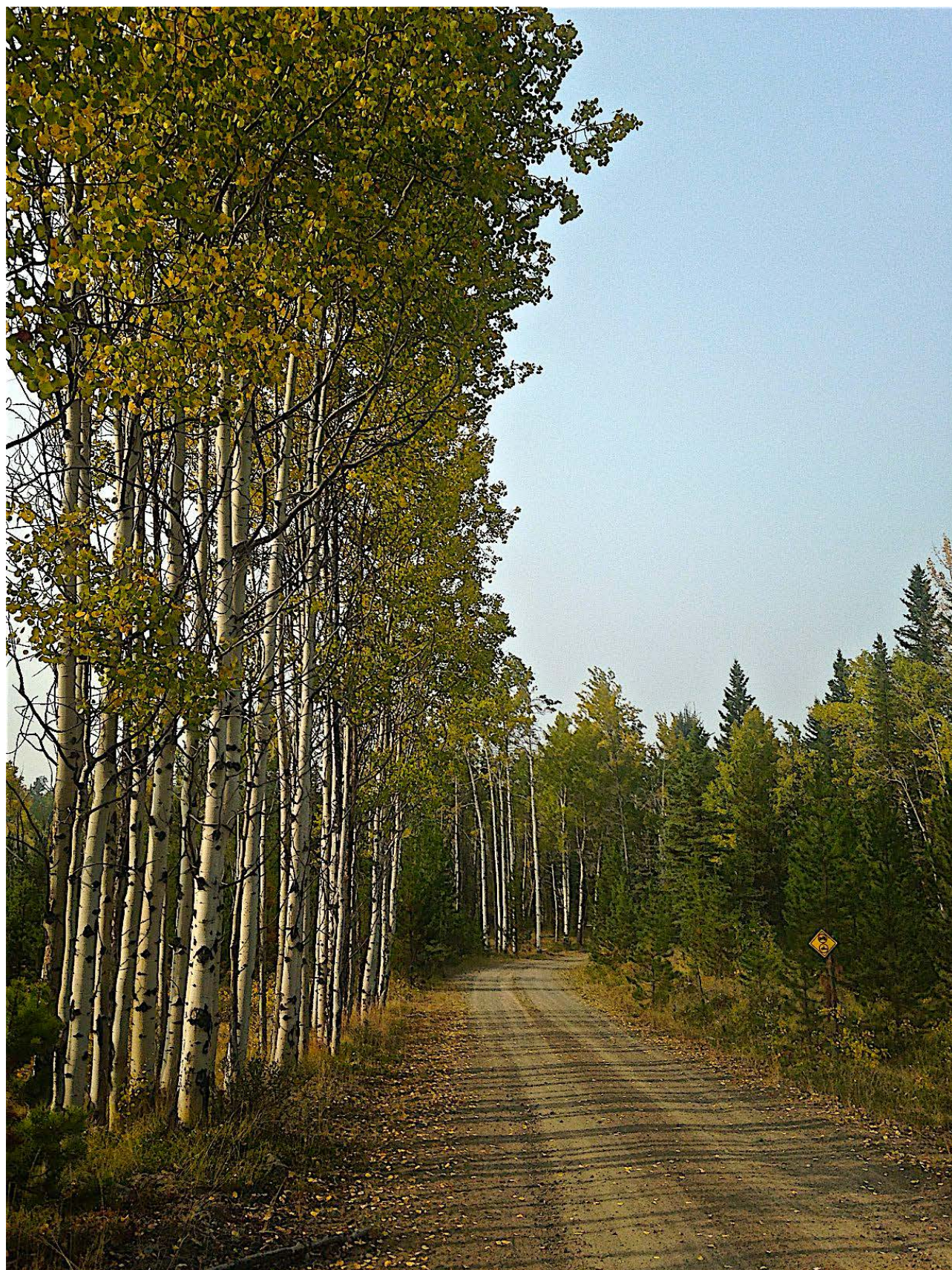




Cariboo Waggon Road heading into the Green Timbers Plateau  
Photo by Amy Newman

# New Pathways to Gold Society Fall Survey Report 2025

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*“At the beginning, we were visionaries. We put reconciliation right at the forefront, and we should keep that in mind at all times.”*

*“The projects that New Pathways are doing, shows that it's needed. If the directors think about folding New Pathways, consider what we'll lose: there's nobody in the wings.”*

*“I hope New Pathways can collaborate with all nations, not just the Chinese, not just the Caucasians. We should include all the Canadians. When I say Canadians, we include the First Nations, the Chinese and the Europeans.”*

## Summary

New Pathways to Gold Society has been working tirelessly over 18 years on projects up and down the corridor, from Hope to Barkerville. Now they are at a crossroads. What to do? Should they fold? Should they continue? And if they continue, how to do it?

Comments from all 28 participants in this survey show a diversity of opinion on the topic. 93% of the responses show that the society should continue to operate, though many followed “yes” with conditions for the society’s ongoing operations.

This survey was conducted from August 20-October 10. When seeking opinions about the future of NPTGS, a diverse cross section of people involved with the society was approached. There were 36 potential respondents contacted, of which 28 agreed to participate.

It should be noted there was not gender parity within the survey. Because of the nature of heritage projects, those directly working for NPTGS as contractors/paid support are men. There was also not parity with regard to multi-cultural involvement, though much effort was made to include as many viewpoints as possible from Indigenous and Chinese board members. All board members were contacted to participate, as well as former board members and others outside the organization, who were selected specifically to offer their views as outsiders to the society.

The following report will go through all survey questions, with responses from all participants compressed and collated to bring clarity for the society to use in its upcoming discussions relating to the viability of the organization.

Where it makes sense, percentages will be used to illustrate important responses. Many patterns of opinion emerged throughout the survey interviews and those patterns will be both obvious and useful for the society to recognize and process going forward.

All survey opinions, questions, comments – particularly those of a sensitive nature – have been edited to protect respondents’ identities. However, it is important to note that if a heavy hand is used here, comments may lose their relevancy by becoming too general. Care has been taken to protect identities of the respondents wherever possible.

All comments in quotes throughout the survey come directly from recorded conversations with the survey participants, edited only for space and clarity. Bulleted points, though not quoted, are in almost all cases, also quotes from participants, edited for brevity.

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**1. What is your level of familiarity with the work and purpose of New Pathways to Gold Society? Scale: 1 to 10 (10 being very familiar)**

| Rating | # of participants who chose this rating |
|--------|-----------------------------------------|
| 10     | 9                                       |
| 9      | 1                                       |
| 8      | 3                                       |
| 7      | 6                                       |
| 6      | 4                                       |
| 5      | 3                                       |
| 4      | 2                                       |

There were no survey participants with responses lower than 4.

Many survey participants have been involved with New Pathways to Gold Society since its founding/inception, so their knowledge of the society and all of its projects is vast. Others have joined or been involved with the organization more recently, and their knowledge of the society tends to be geared more towards their involvement in specific projects. These statistics reflect that level of involvement with the society over the years.

## 2. What do you think has been a success for New Pathways to Gold Society?

*“I think their success has been being inclusive and doing many projects on the trail together with the First Nations, and showing that cooperation.”*

*“For a large, complicated project, it's no small task, mobilizing a crew to do the work. It was definitely a team effort, but New Pathways to Gold was instrumental in making it all happen.”*

*“I'm most proud of the work we did on the Alexandra Bridge. The Cariboo Wagon Road: I'm proud of that. I'm proud of the Gold Rush Snowmobile Trail.”*

Survey participants responded with a variety of success stories about NPTGS. They include:

-  Alexandra Bridge Project
-  Cariboo Wagon Road Restoration Project
-  Chief Spintlum Memorial
-  Canyon War film & symposium
-  Gold Rush Snowmobile Trail
-  Golden Butterfly Project
-  Ice Caves Project
-  Tikwalus/AC Anderson Trail Project
-  1849 HBC Heritage Trail Project

These successes have also been noted:

### First Nations Reconciliation

-  leading a process of reconciliation with First Nations inclusion
-  uniting Indigenous / non-Indigenous leaders and communities along corridor
-  having 50% Indigenous representation on the board
-  recognizing key moments in First Nations history that NPTGS can bring to life
-  maintaining its original vision with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working together on a shared vision

### Funding

-  sourcing funds and raising awareness on projects
-  doing what they said they were going to do with funding
-  reporting to the funders always on time and to date within budget
-  providing core funding for several trail projects
-  taking early government funding, working with other agencies, and making projects happen

## Board

- ✚ uncovering passionate people in communities to serve on the board
- ✚ being aware of board structure, to be as equal as it could be
- ✚ creating strong makeup and mix of people involved
- ✚ working towards gender parity

## Engagement

- ✚ relationship building along the Gold Rush Trail from Hope to Barkerville
- ✚ community engagement, specifically in the Fraser Canyon
- ✚ working together with Indigenous communities and people
- ✚ being at the table with many people and convincing many to partner with them
- ✚ offering itself as a vehicle for getting projects done and bringing people together

## Goals & Projects

- ✚ creating unifying organization to accentuate Hope to Barkerville corridor
- ✚ supporting tourism objectives
- ✚ diversity of numerous projects, events and programs along the corridor
- ✚ work experience for youth as part of heritage trails projects

## Heritage & History

- ✚ securing a fair amount of BC's heritage history under their purview
- ✚ maintaining historical connection to the Gold Rush Corridor
- ✚ highlighting Gold Rush Trail and historical work that has come with it
- ✚ accentuating Indigenous, non-Indigenous and Chinese history
- ✚ rediscovering / reinvigorating historic sites and extensive research behind these projects

## Communications

- ✚ excellent communications over the years to keep carrying things forward

## Longevity

- ✚ still going is a big success after 18 years
- ✚ consistency; those who started it, passed it on to those who are still part of it

### 3. What has been a big challenge for NPTGS?

*“Funding, obviously, has been a challenge over the years. But I think in part because – what is New Pathways to Gold Society? Not everyone knows about it, who they are, what they do.”*

*“The role of the society is really critical to the success of this project, and twice now we've been rebuffed by major funders because of their uncertainty around the stability of the society. It's not working. There's an awfully steep hill to climb to regain that damaged trust.”*

*“It's always hard to find volunteers, but it's even harder now. There are fewer young people interested in community involvement than ever before.”*

Survey participants responded with a collection of various challenges which hold back the society from being able to operate at its strongest potential.

They include:

#### Funding

- ✚ finding champions for New Pathways
- ✚ securing reliable, sustainable, permanent funding to complete, carry out projects
- ✚ transparency required with regard to expenditure of funds
- ✚ having to compete for funding in heavily saturated, non-profit environment

#### First Nations

- ✚ relationship building with First Nations needs to improve
- ✚ many bands in corridor do not know about New Pathways
- ✚ NPTGS must earn trust from nations who don't know them
- ✚ First Nations may not want to tell their stories; how to break that cycle?
- ✚ 55 bands represented in our catchment area; established meaningful contact with only 3-5 of the bands in our region

#### Public Image

- ✚ loss of trust
- ✚ loss of credibility: damage/fallout from Yale Museum transition; handled poorly
- ✚ tarnished reputation and perception of financial instability with Alexandra Bridge, both of which scare potential funders

#### Goals & Objectives

- ✚ lack of follow through
- ✚ failure to follow through with securing corporate/industry support
- ✚ progress too slow on projects, leads to loss of contract support

- ✚ maintaining focus; working on projects beyond the scope of NPTGS
- ✚ trying to do or achieve too many things; NPTGS spreading itself too thin
- ✚ knowing where you want to go specifically, knowing, measuring whether you got there or not, examining where you could do better next time
- ✚ setting yearly measurable goals, a yearly plan; needing objectives; yearly evaluation of those goals, those plans, those objectives
- ✚ mission not well understood, even to itself at times; hard to know where you're going if you're not sure what your mission is

### Board & Succession

- ✚ finding great people
- ✚ having enough meetings
- ✚ trying to maintain consistent approach, given turnover of board members
- ✚ needing to get younger folks' participation; need true passing of the torch
- ✚ finding active board members who want to engage with project as a whole, as opposed to their own pet project

### Communication

- ✚ lack of regular communication with partners
- ✚ lack of written agreements with landholders
- ✚ lack of First Nations information on signage
- ✚ funding is great, but poor marketing and media access means people don't pay attention to you
- ✚ competitive stream with New Pathways; time and energy wasted with competitive attitudes; better communication between parties would help diffuse ongoing feuds

### Geography & Engagement

- ✚ diversity of the geographic area
- ✚ poor community engagement; being out in communities should be priority
- ✚ issue of nepotism; working in a community amid resentful, jealous residents
- ✚ trying to link communities and historic sites across an entire corridor
- ✚ massive geographical area New Pathways trying to cover; lack of buy-in from stops along the way
- ✚ tourism and destination development landscape changed in 18 years and put NPTGS into a position through no fault of their own

#### 4. What projects are you familiar with?

*“I visited the Alexandra Bridge and did a full-page feature on the bridge and NPTGS’ campaign to revitalize it. I know how much effort, blood and sweat NPTGS has put into this. It’s so meaningful – and it has a relationship with the Chinese community.”*

*“I was happy to see them working on the Cariboo Waggon Road. It would be great to start looking at ways to connect the old road back up together along with First Nations. There are spectacular pieces of the old hand-built wagon road in the Canyon...”*

*“The Gold Rush Snowmobile Trail. That’s been my main involvement. Anything the board wanted me to do, I would do.”*

Participants in the survey described the many projects and events they have been either involved with or heard about over the years that New Pathways to Gold Society has been in operation. These include:

-  Alexandra Bridge
-  Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Project
-  Chief Spintlum Memorial
-  Gold Rush Snowmobile Trail
-  Fish Ceremony at Lytton
-  Tikwalus/AC Anderson Trail
-  1849 HBC Heritage Trail
-  Canyon War (film & symposium)
-  Long Road to Cariboo (film)
-  Nam Sing (film)
-  Summer programming with NPTGS staff/board at Barkerville
-  HBC Trail 150 celebration with Royal Engineers at Barkerville

There were several cases where participants couldn’t remember a particular event they had gone to or been involved with over the years, but remembered that it had been a NPTGS event. There many participants who, when asked what projects they were familiar with, answered, “all of them!” or “too many to recount here!”

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**5. What is your impression of NPTGS and its projects? And how effective or successful do you see NPTGS and its projects? Scale: 1 to 10 (10 being outstanding or more than expected)**

Participants in the survey were all over the map (as it were) on this question. Their responses ranged far and wide, as these ratings will show.

| Impression | Effectiveness | # of participants who chose these ratings |
|------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 9          | 9             | 3                                         |
| 8          | 8             | 4                                         |
| 7          | 7             | 2                                         |
| 4          | 4             | 1                                         |
| 10         | 2             | 1                                         |
| 10         | 1             | 1                                         |
| 9          | 7             | 1                                         |
| 9          | 4             | 1                                         |
| 8          | 7             | 1                                         |
| 8          | 6             | 1                                         |
| 8          | 3             | 1                                         |
| 7          | 10            | 1                                         |
| 7          | 6             | 1                                         |
| 7          | 2             | 1                                         |
| 6          | 7             | 1                                         |
| 8          | 10            | 2                                         |
| 1          | 2             | 2                                         |

prior 2024  
post 2024

A few participants chose not to respond with ratings, only comments. Impressions and effectiveness or success of NPTGS projects cover a vast array of thoughts and ideas.

**Vision & Ideas for Projects**

- ✚ at its height in the early years
- ✚ with proper funding and buy-in from locals and government, projects are effective
- ✚ Alexandra Bridge looking great; we're seeing some work done
- ✚ organization's purpose very meaningful, very specific, had a very clear role
- ✚ projects like Cariboo Waggon Road expected to be a continuing work in progress
- ✚ like their vision and their goals, projects that they're choosing; good focus but broad enough it can take in a lot of communities
- ✚ really great ideas they've been coming up with; wonderful projects
- ✚ can give impressions of projects higher mark because it's not for want of trying, not because they don't care or are not passionate about it; intent is there
- ✚ great accomplishment getting qualified people to go in and do something the province should be doing on its own

- ✚ unique vision being a catalyst for indigenous and non-indigenous people in Hope to Barkerville corridor
- ✚ pulling something together in remote area, which is impressive; passionate group of folks on the board
- ✚ small grant organization; some people are not fully aware of our capacity; we're good at managing money
- ✚ good at growing awareness of important heritage assets like Alexandra Bridge and other projects, events they've done over the years; very effective and successful

### Execution & Completion of Projects

- ✚ projects tend to decay and diminish over time
- ✚ projects have been very successful, but they're at a crossroads now
- ✚ legacy project Cariboo Waggon Road seems to go on again, off again; not much consistency in putting that package out there
- ✚ could have done better job marketing themselves; always seemed unclear who was driving the program
- ✚ With more resources, they could have been very effective
- ✚ seemed to take "forever" to get certain projects and initiatives moving and over the finish line
- ✚ not always clear on what's being delivered for the money; circles back to communication issue...
- ✚ getting harder and harder to finish projects on time, with original idea of what they had in mind; those challenges getting harder and harder to address
- ✚ Alexandra Bridge: not getting that one over the line a big blow
- ✚ even with multi-year, multi-generational project, have witnessed them putting their money where their mouth is every time
- ✚ hasn't got buy-in locally that we would like to see
- ✚ working on destination development, getting it to drive economics for communities less effective
- ✚ though searching for government funding important, vitally important not to effectively become agent for province's non-transparent approach that has caused such substantial community rifts
- ✚ trust equals performance over time; happy with how NPTGS have stick-handled through many difficult times around the projects that take place

## 6. What skills do you think a NPTGS's Director should have?

*“Every board director should be able to bring something unique to the table: business experience; historical knowledge; how to deal with small communities. People who have a political background could be incredibly useful for an organization like this.”*

*“I became involved, wondering what my role as a director would be here. I didn't know. I reached out and asked someone and they said, ‘Just carry on.’ What does that mean, just carry on?”*

*“The recipe that's required now is for someone to come in and fix a mess, rebuild trust. Those are very specific skills and it needs to be a group of people who empower someone to be a point person to go and get a ministerial mandate. If they can't do that they're not going anywhere.”*

Survey participants had a great deal to say about what being a board director for New Pathways should be about: from skills to reconciliation to advocacy to community engagement. These kinds of qualities are on the mark for an Executive Director, too.

### Skills & Duties

- ✚ good basic computer and research skills
- ✚ good communication and written interpersonal skills
- ✚ good tourism-based resource knowledge
- ✚ experience at being a director on boards for other non-profit societies (x 3)
- ✚ strong economic development background
- ✚ successful organization of staff to deliver core functions
- ✚ attending all meetings; that's mandatory
- ✚ reviewing all material from meetings
- ✚ participating in decision-making and direction of work
- ✚ understanding how societies are supposed to operate
- ✚ your purpose is running the place; you have to be involved in everything
- ✚ partnership collaboration background to work with sectors responsible for economics and development, so skills and passion can marry with better delivery

### Reconciliation & Social Justice

- ✚ knowledge about UNDRIP
- ✚ willingness to work towards reconciliation (x 7)
- ✚ willingness to become educated around First Nations issues and truths
- ✚ knowledge about landscape, history, and appreciation of First Nations people (x 2)
- ✚ knowledge about environmental and social justice issues
- ✚ liaison to Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments
- ✚ 50-50 Indigenous, non-Indigenous an important balance to keep and strive for

- ✚ ability to liaise with First Nations in constructive way for them, not necessarily for us; need to ask them what they want, not what we think they want
- ✚ promote better exposure and better education on challenges our corridors faced over the years since 1858

## Financial

- ✚ accounting, business experience
- ✚ fiduciary aspect: background, knowledge and experience (x 5)
- ✚ background in construction costs
- ✚ multiple successfully delivered non-profit projects \$3-5-million

## History & Heritage

- ✚ Interest/knowledge of history/heritage of the province (x 8)
- ✚ display great enthusiasm for protecting and promoting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage.

## Diversity

- ✚ board should have diversity, diverse backgrounds (x 2)
- ✚ team approach where everyone's bringing something unique to the table (x 2)
- ✚ balanced range of skill sets so they can work off each other, fill in gaps as needed
- ✚ do Indigenous board members bring skills other than indigeneity?

## Communication & Marketing

- ✚ great communication and social media skills
- ✚ ability to communicate objectives and manage them to success
- ✚ getting back to people on time; follow up
- ✚ being business and negotiation savvy
- ✚ liaison to Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments
- ✚ clear communication with staff and contractors
- ✚ willingness to participate in PR and represent the organization
- ✚ connections to local, municipal, regional, provincial or federal government (x 2)
- ✚ connectivity with heritage, tourism and economic development
- ✚ skilled at government relations, political background (x 4)
- ✚ understand media relations; need media outlet, need marketing, need those people to give you that exposure
- ✚ relationship building: bring people together, coordinate with them on the ground, through all consultants and everyone else with role in projects

## Advocacy

- ✚ knowledge of fundraising processes and experience (x 3)
- ✚ understanding how things operate from political point of view, economics, how things are funded, built, where money comes from

- ✚ relationship building all the way up to different organizations that can fund it – private funding, public funding, grants
- ✚ need to see big picture; look outside corridor to external opportunities; build partnerships, whether it's private sector or government funding agencies
- ✚ charitable skills, angel investing skills, other legal skill sets

### Temperament, Passion & Creativity

- ✚ new directors need to be engaged!
- ✚ need to have the ethos; must feel strongly about what NPTGS is doing
- ✚ willing to work well with others and trust in their expertise
- ✚ willingness to hold staff accountable; achieve this without blame or drama
- ✚ being creative, figuring out ways to work together and get projects moving forward on a quicker time scale
- ✚ need to have patience, appreciation, time
- ✚ need free thinkers; being highly innovative with creative “outside the box” thinking
- ✚ willingness to be interested in Gold Rush Trail and goals of New Pathways
- ✚ should come in with open, enquiring minds, without prejudice, with some basic understanding about the problems involved
- ✚ everyone on the board should actually care; not just going on to fill a seat
- ✚ should be level-headed; passionate is good, but strong personal skills needed for dealing with others

### Audience & Community Engagement

- ✚ be a community leader
- ✚ need grassroots people who work in each region
- ✚ well-grounded knowledge of their community (x 2)
- ✚ experience within a community group to reach community-based decisions
- ✚ community engagement piece; just being out there and listening to people
- ✚ connected to their communities and who can help with local buy-in (x 4)
- ✚ directors are supposed to go out to their communities; those are your constituents; go to a meeting, make some phone calls; go talk to a couple of the bands
- ✚ need to understand the corridor as a whole; passion comes from your own community; need to put your passion for your community into the mix
- ✚ should have their own audience, their own people they represent; a certain audience, whether it's First Nations, mining, history, snowmobiling, cycling
- ✚ being involved in local celebrations throughout the year is important; need to support directors to do that

There were so many strong opinions and comments all across the survey participants on this subject. It feels important that they have their say here, quoted in full.

*“Before they get a new director, I think they have to look at how are they going to be successful, how are they going to be funded, and how active will a board be. Those are the questions that concern me the most after following them for all these years.”*

*“To see a large board and a questionnaire which is largely focused on growing up an existing board, red flags would go up for me. I don't think that's starting off down the right path. The society doesn't need more directors. It needs a fewer number of the right directors who have a functional relationship with the operational side of the society.”*

*“Many changes have occurred since 1858 – and how do we relate that history to our present day? How can we share that in a good way with our members, and have it included in some of the celebrations we have in the Canyon and up in the Cariboo?”*

*“We need a communications department...to work at social media, getting it out to groups and other individuals to say, ‘Hey, look at us, this is what we're doing. How can we connect with you? How can we move forward with you and your tourism initiatives?’ We need people who have time to put into this.”*

*“I think the most important quality for any volunteer projects is the heart of the participants. The love for the place – in this case the Hope to Barkerville Corridor – and the interest in making the place better is the most important things for a NPTGS director. Only when you have the heart are you willing to contribute your skills.”*

*“Patience is a virtue. Persistence is a virtue. Never accept defeat. Never give up. There is always a way... just gotta find it.”*

*“I want to be able to understand what it is we're trying to do and then say, ‘How do my personal skills, like my network of people, my background in planning and organizing things – how can I help?’”*

*“Perhaps we should create a questionnaire. How did the province originate? Where have First Nations played a role in the history of BC? There needs to be an understanding of history and First Nations people and what they do.”*

*“There needs to be a willingness to work as a team towards making the future better for all of us, Indigenous and non-Indigenous as well as the newcomers that have arrived since colonization. We have a lot of new people... and they didn't learn that Canada had this history. That's part of the important work that New Pathways to Gold does: help people to understand the truth about where they live in the corridor. It's always exciting because it's about education. This is our opportunity to educate people that visit the corridor – and each other as well. That's the power of New Pathways to Gold.”*

**7. Being active as a Director is important for ensuring a strong Board. Which of the following do you think is fair and reasonable to expect from a Board Director:**

- a. At least 8 hours/month**
- b. At least 16 hours/month**
- c. At least 3 or more days/month**
- d. Other**

There was a myriad of opinions given by participants in response to this question. Many felt that the options for response were too narrow in scope. The percentages given are approximate only, as some responses included larger chunks of time than what are given as options above.

 14% of participants stated that 4 hours (“other”) is reasonable.

*“A lot of the really talented people out there just don't have 16 hours that they can put into an organization every month. They have 3 or 4 hours, but their understanding, their ideas, their knowledge is fantastic and it's a great asset.”*

 43% of participants stated that between 8 hours/1 day and 16 hours/2 days is reasonable.

*“It's always going to be depending on whatever's going on. 8 hours might be plenty, one month. I think they have to put in whatever is required, depending on what's going on.”*

 36% of participants stated that 16 hours/2 days is reasonable.

*“A couple of days a month. More than that, when you're also holding down a full-time job, gets complicated.”*

 7% of participants stated that 3 days or more is reasonable.

*“The scale that New Pathways is operating at, 2 or 3 days (or more) a month is not unreasonable to expect from a board director. It's a pretty major commitment.”*

More quotes below for added depth to the understanding of this issue...

*“8 hours – or as much as you can give! I think it has to be a lifelong commitment based on what you're doing. As long as you're living and breathing and going down this corridor, you have value. It's a lifestyle. And if you feel you have time and where you can fit in, it's important.”*

*“Time is not the first measurement. Degree of effectiveness over time is.”*

*“How much time do I spend as a board member on anything? If I didn't have a job, I would spend hundreds of hours a month clearing trail, building bridges, doing stuff out there. We ask a lot of people and it's not easy to free up time to be a volunteer. You want board members that give as much time as possible, but you're happy to have anybody that loves what it is, that thinks what you're doing is meaningful.”*

*“Once you know what it is you're doing and the scope of the work to be done, then it's way easier to answer that question.”*

*“It depends on the director, but if you're going to be involved in a board, it can take several days a month; at least two days would be the minimum expectation. It should be a significant time commitment.”*

*“It also depends on the project location. If it's where you live, you'll be doing more! The board of directors also always respects the board member whose area the project is in. That level of engagement rises when the project is in their community. ‘They're opening this part of the trail. Are you able to be there, to represent New Pathways to Gold?’ Because we trust each other to represent our society well. It's a big thing too, that trust.”*

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Robertson Road, aka the Cariboo Waggon Road (near McLeese Lake & Soda Creek)  
Photo by Amy Newman

**8. Would you or someone you know consider becoming a NPTGS Director or undertake management responsibilities as a paid contract support person? Please provide names.**

*“If I was going to be involved it needs to be in something where things are going to get done and we’re actually going to move forward. That’s where I would put my time. And I think the mission of NPTGS – as I understand it – is a good mission.”*

*“If we meet people with fundraising abilities, we should consider them. They don’t have to be just from the interior. Money comes from the city. Urban people. Maybe there is someone who has connections outside of the corridor, connections to rich people!”*

*“I’m in — yes! If we get the society better organized, and we all agree where we’re going, that we’re going to contribute, that we’re going to attend meetings. When I belong to any organization I’m going to contribute or get out. If somebody doesn’t attend meetings, it means the organization has become irrelevant in their life. We need to be able to handle that in a nice way, but handle it and work with those who really want to do be there.”*

When asked this question, several survey participants came forward with names, either their own, or names of others they either knew or knew of, who might consider serving on the board of directors, or as paid support staff at NPTGS. A few past board members are interested in returning: Cheryl Chapman, Paul Clark, Ron Paull.

Here is a list of those names with quotes from those recommending them.

Mike McDonald, former Chief of Staff in BC government

*“He is interested in being considered for the board.”*

Dan Marshall, UVIC history prof and author

*“He would come onto the board if asked.”*

Paul Clark, International Business, Strategy & Sustainability, prof at TRU, Kamloops

*“He would like to be included on lists of potential future board members.”*

Peter LaRose, from Salmon Arm. Phone: 778-840-6656.

*“He is interested in getting involved with NPTGS.”*

Shane Doddridge, Cultural Heritage Coordinator at Tsilhqot’in National Government

*“He would be a great fit. He’s very connected in the community.”*

Stewart Cawood, Programming and Media Relations, Barkerville Historic Town

*“I think he had some capacity issues at work and was trying to figure out some time. He did tell us to get back to him this fall.”*

Haley Archer, Sustainability & External Relations Coordinator at Osisko, Wells

*“Works at Osisko; NPTGS would be more likely to get funds from them if they had representation on the Board. And we need some young people on the Board.”*

Leslie Edmonds, Ashcroft First Nations

*“He’s a former chief in Ashcroft. He has his language, the Nakatlum language. He knows the history; he knows everything in that corridor.”*

Mike Kennedy

*“He’s a retired high school teacher. And he’s probably the great, great, great grandson of Manson, Donald Manson, Manson’s camp on HBC.”*

Riley Forman, Boston Bar

*“The Formans are a big Boston Bar family. That family knows everybody. Somebody like that who’s good on social media, obviously loves where he’s from...”*

Jackie Tegart. Laurie Pilon.

*“Both were advocates for a lot of these community projects.”*

Fin Donnelly, former Member of Parliament, former MLA

*“...the guy who swam down the Fraser twice.”*

Joel McKay, City Manager of Quesnel.

*“He would be interesting to have on board as an ally for New Pathways. He used to be the head of the Northern Development Initiative Trust.”*

JP Winslow, Wells

*“He’s got a lot of skills, and more time on his hands in the winter. Connection to Barkerville. If he really was interested, wanted to do it, he would be really dedicated, as he showed when he worked for me. He’s also got that social work diploma now, too.”*

Anthony Germain, Quesnel?

*“He’s the kindest, most passionate man about history. He would be incredibly intimidated by the idea of being involved on a board because I’m already trying to get him to consider Friends of Barkerville. But perhaps in the future...?”*

There is a pronounced lack of gender parity in these suggestions. It is hoped that more effort will be placed in future to bring in qualified female (or female identifying) board members, based on views expressed regarding board diversity makeup.

For paid support positions:

Brendan Bailey, Wells

*“Strong voice from northern part of the corridor, which needs more representation. Working on graduate degree in business management. Board director on Friends of Barkerville. Passionate about Barkerville and the Gold Rush.”*

Brandy Cooper-Chardon, GM at Historic Hat Creek House

*“She loves history. GM for Hat Creek Ranch. Born and raised in the Ashcroft/Cache Creek area all her life and she hasn't left it. This would give her an opportunity to see what the rest of the corridor is doing, and without the blinders on her eyes.”*

Justin Brown

*“Local carpenter who is great at building things, building trails, building facilities. He is a professional carpenter, done quite a bit of work for us on the HBC trail in the early days. I would definitely direct them to him.”*

John Haugen

*“He's very well known in the museum and heritage area. On council for the Lytton First Nation. John does a lot of work already. He's always been a supporter of NPTGS.”*

Charlotte McDonald

*“She spent a few weeks living in Boston Bar dealing with communities at their lowest ebb. Degree in anthropology from Oxford. Worked in First Nations engagement for over 4 years. She could probably help on contract remotely. She's a good writer.”*

*“We need 100 more Frank Antoinettes!”*

*“The other name, more on the partnerships side of things, is the Fraser Basin Council. It has kind of leapfrogged over New Pathways a bit, because Fraser Basin's been doing things in the corridor, too. I think more from an environmental perspective, perhaps. They've got a multi-million-dollar budget every year. Their new chair is former Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin. I think Janet would be an ally for New Pathways.”*

**9. In your opinion, is the mandate of NPTGS adequate to achieve its objectives?  
Yes/No**

*“As for the mandate: I think that sometimes they've taken too narrow a focus in sticking to the three groups. What about the Jews in Barkerville? they were a strong group that have no representation. What about the Mexican packers? The Italians? The French Canadians? We pay them no attention.”*

*“I opened up the website, couldn't find a financial report, couldn't find a strategic plan, couldn't find a written copy of the mandate that you reference in your survey. If I was a funder of any type, red flags would go up right away.”*

*“Reconciliation is the direction the province and nation need to move in, especially anything involved with tourism. The whole point is about telling every story, so reconciliation is a huge part of that, in linking communities. I keep coming back to the corridor, and the Cariboo Waggon Road. It's an important mandate.”*

Progressing through the survey, there were – again – a multitude of opinions about the mandate of New Pathways to Gold Society. Some participants were not familiar with it at all. Some knew it very well. A few declined to comment based on their lack of knowledge. In collating these responses, nothing was cut and dried. Even those for whom the answer was YES, they knew the mandate and YES, they felt it was strong and effective, there were still conditions attached to their response.

-  57% of survey participants were familiar with the mandate.
-  43% of survey participants were not familiar with the mandate at all, or were familiar with it many years ago, but had no idea if it had been updated or not.
-  60% of survey participants familiar with the mandate (or had it explained to them), responded that YES, the mandate is effective, but suggested their “yes” came with conditions on how to keep it relevant and responsive in the future.
-  25% of survey participants familiar with the mandate (or had it explained to them), responded that NO, the mandate is not effective anymore and needs revision to make it relevant and responsive in the future.
-  11% of survey participants declined to answer the question as they didn't feel knowledgeable enough on the topic to respond.
-  4% of survey participants' responses were unclear; question was not answered.

## 10. If No, what should be adjusted to refine the NPTGS mandate?

*“They need to do some soul searching here. A newly refined mandate/mission statement would provide valuable guidance to the board. Then we wouldn’t be flopping around like a fish out of water...”*

*“Our foundation is about truth and reconciliation. When we look at that, and that's our mandate, then we look at the projects through that lens. Does it benefit the whole corridor? That underlying mandate is like the groundwork. It's a trail bed. Or it's the set. We develop the script together, and we share the story together.”*

*“If I had one really big recommendation for the board moving forward, it would be to work at making the mandate very concise: 2 or 3 sentences. Their mission, as related to that should also be very concise: 2 or 3 sentences. Hit some key values and have that posted so it's very clear what the society is focused on when people look at it.”*

For all survey participants, there were many suggestions about how to revise the statement to make it more resilient in the future.

- ✚ clarify objectives and goals
- ✚ focus more clearly on identifying core activities
- ✚ settle on who we are; who we are should help determine where we’re going
- ✚ focus mandate on what NPTGS wants to achieve in next 20 years
- ✚ ensure that legal support is behind them
- ✚ do more marketing, so it’s clear to public/everyone what the mandate is
- ✚ review objectives every year; shift and make adjustments if needed
- ✚ be fluid in our approach to what we're doing
- ✚ mission creep is significant: shiny objects nearby; stay focussed on objectives
- ✚ recognize the blending of cultures; we need to build on that blending
- ✚ if you're not moving forward, then you need to change your mandate
- ✚ do not get between community groups, exacerbate tensions, and despoil NPTG’s otherwise excellent accomplishments
- ✚ be grounded in the understanding we are looking at projects that enhance tourism accessibility within the corridor
- ✚ does this project or this motion or resolution fall within the parameters of our mission?

*“New Pathways to Gold supports the 94 calls to action which are objectives for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. What came to my mind, a month ago: Can it really be reconciliation if the ones who were harmed are doing most of the work?”*

## 11. What are your recommendations, if any, on how NPTGS should be governed both from the Board level and at the support personnel level?

*“I look back to when Gord Rattray was intimately involved and was a driver there. It would be great to find another Gord Rattray, who had the skill set. That is how I would frame my recommendation. And that goes for both the board and the support personnel.”*

*“NPTGS doesn’t need more directors, it needs an effective Executive Director to whom the board will provide strategic direction. The ED should be a paid position with responsibilities to raise funds, employ staff, and deliver the objective of the Society’s 3-Year Plan. This Plan should be brief, strategic, and realistic.”*

*“The one thing that I would not want to see is New Pathways to Gold being taken over by any level of local governments. If it can't remain independent as it has been with volunteers and First Nations, then I think that New Pathways to Gold should unfortunately pass on any successes that they have to manage over to other volunteer organizations.”*

Survey participants had several recommendations, comments and opinions on this topic:

- ✚ need greater community engagement
- ✚ must have really active ED, a strong leader, with quiet support from a board
- ✚ must be an active, knowledgeable board
- ✚ get a financial plan in place that is long term – a 10-year plan
- ✚ each project should have somewhat autonomous project manager
- ✚ strategic development work with Gail Wallin useful and meaningful
- ✚ need executive director and financial person and assistant supporting them
- ✚ assistant does jobs so ED doesn’t have to
- ✚ board governance model is a good one, as long as it's an engaged board and people with clear, moral, ethical vision
- ✚ board is strong balance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants; keep that!
- ✚ Need to have four strong meetings a year on the land, on our territories, based on the seasons
- ✚ need that connection with other board members on a person-in-person basis; increase budget for travel
- ✚ should have board representation from the destination, someone from Barkerville who is providing that perspective
- ✚ look forward 10 years: is it still a reasonable expectation looking at the way people volunteer now as opposed to when you joined this board?

- ✚ need corporate sponsorship (a mine?) that is willing to support you for the next 10 years for whatever you're doing, so not reliant on ever-decreasing government funding
- ✚ do not play politics! stay on the high ground! be there for all peoples who inhabit the Hope to Barkerville corridor
- ✚ What do you need to change to continue to function? To meet some of those goals and some of those core projects that you want to do?
- ✚ Someone has to see the vision and be carrying the flag at the front of the parade

*“There is a disconnect between how the board and paid staff work and the way they are perceived from the outside. I heard, not within government, but from others, people asking questions like, ‘Who are these New Pathways to Gold folks?’ ‘Do they do a good job?’ ‘Are they dependable?’ ‘What happens if they close up shop tomorrow?’*

*“In order to develop a vision and ideas, we need to be around a campfire. Campfire and dinner. That's so important right now. I always look forward to the dinners we have. I haven't seen my fellow board members for maybe three months. We could get a lot more done if we sit around a campfire – by the river, too – and talk about it.”*



ALN cycling the Cariboo Waggon Road, “big hill” (near 51 Mile)  
Photo courtesy of Richard Wright

*“The Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Project would only be a dream without funds from New Pathways to Gold Society.”*

## 12. In your opinion should NPTGS continue to exist if sufficient financial resources can be found? Yes/No

*“New Pathways to Gold Society should still stick around, assuming there's some funding, because a lot of people care so much about it. The work isn't done yet.”*

*“As they take time to reflect, they need to remember that this isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's time to talk about what the next 20 years look like. It's not a negative reflection. Things are going to look different, and they should celebrate it.”*

*“That's why these two men came together, is to put our stories together and move together. It never worked out then, but we're putting that together now, seven generations later, with New Pathways to Gold.”*

Survey participants had a lot to say in response on this question, as they have on all others. This is a passionate, engaged group of people, both on the board and in the wider NPTGS family. Even the most critical opinions which have been revealed here, are coming from what this writer sees as a place of deep caring about this organization.

It's clear from the responses that people want New Pathways to Gold Society to continue, and to flourish in what has become an extremely challenging marketplace of non-profits, in which they have to compete for every dollar they can find. All this effort and struggle in order to create and/or care for the kind of heritage and First Nations tourism assists that have been the hallmark of their mandate since the organization was created in 2007.

- ✚ 93% of survey participants responded **“YES”** to the question of New Pathways viability if sufficient financial resources can be found.
- ✚ 7% of survey participants responded **“MAYBE”** to the question of New Pathways viability if sufficient financial resources can be found.
- ✚ 54% (of the 93%) who responded **“YES”** had expectations for their conditional support of NPTGS. These include:
  - ✚ they must have the right people at the board table
  - ✚ need a plan and a vision going forward
  - ✚ find stronger partnerships that can be developed
  - ✚ decide what they're going to do; hard discussions at board level as to what the organization wants to be
  - ✚ need to look at their direction, even their whole structure; they've lost their way
  - ✚ only viable with a commitment to unify board of directors and reestablish trust of the Provincial Government as an urgent priority

- ✚ society really needs to do some soul searching as to whether it's possible for NPTGS to remain viable, because it might not be
- ✚ doesn't take much to bump yourself down or up the list; NPTGS has clearly been bumped down and it's going to take a bit of work to fix that
- ✚ need someone to go through their mandate, their objectives; ensure they're updated, coherent; must have a vision of the future that's reasonable, sustainable
- ✚ need a people person to come in and communicate on an individual basis to leadership, elders, social groups, and communities that would like to listen to us – legions, recreation clubs, etc
- ✚ funding formula and funding for New Pathways is at the heart of the challenge; board must be focussed on being politically in tune; people who should be on it, must be connected to the political realm
- ✚ first cost is volunteers who want to be a part of this, if you can find them; they're getting fewer and fewer
- ✚ increasing degree of divisiveness between indigenous and non-indigenous communities; hopefully, NPTGS work will diminish some divisive rhetoric
- ✚ have to be cognizant of all nations; there's a lot of nations we could reconcile with
- ✚ not just indigenous, non-indigenous stories; it's three, if you look at immigrant side of things; we're all immigrants, so tell Chinese history, too
- ✚ push for more tourism in corridor; great potential economic booster for First Nations, as well as everyone else
- ✚ tourism assets drive people along the corridor; important if you want tourists to get to Barkerville
- ✚ understand why New Pathways to Gold Society is doubting itself; should it continue to exist?
- ✚ if staying in broader destination development and trail space, how does NPTGS differentiate from all other entities now mandated into this space?

*“Nothing will come from these places if there isn't a New Pathways to Gold to step up and start making the pledge, the plea, the case, to keep the bridge, or Barkerville or the next thing... all these places that the organization is working towards.”*

*“As much as we want to dream and do the right work, the right things, it always comes down to the financials. To keep the history alive, there is always a cost to it... and we're getting older. Who am I going to pass this on to? We need to get youth coming to meetings like this, listening to what we're doing, because if we don't bring a youth to sit down, then this work's only going to last as long as we are breathing, and if we want to breathe new life into something, we need to bring something to the table.”*

## **Epilogue: What is the future for New Pathways to Gold Society?**

Let's let some of the survey participants speak to that as they were asked:

### **13. Do you have any additional comments to be provided to the current Board of Directors?**

*"The plans for Spintlum Park seem to be going ahead. That project is the heart of it. That is the narrative of Spintlum in 1850 and the Gold Rush. To me, it's the origin story of New Pathways to Gold."*

*"If I can sit down in a room and we can talk about what's going on and what needs to be done, I'll be there!"*

*"They've made me feel very comfortable to walk into any one of those communities and create a conversation about the work that's going to take place. We feel comfortable and welcome through their doors. That is a significant thing."*

*"New Pathways has much to be proud of and most definitely should continue if funding is available. Is there any other comparable organization committed to reconciliation, economic growth, and heritage preservation?"*

*"It's a challenging, changing landscape, and there are so many shifts from government, and entities are now mandated to do destination development. New Pathways to Gold led it before any of these huge shifts existed. If they're going to play in that space, what's that unique hook? What role do they have?"*

*"New Pathways has found a niche that can distribute money in a more creative way than anybody else can. So that's useful, but there are so many organizations. Somebody's got to come out on top of this organizational chaos and if they can, I'll say yes, they should keep going."*

*"I look at it as stars at night: there's a lot of initiatives they're doing that are very bright. They need to collaborate, look at what they're doing and the goals they need to follow. Those stars align that whole canyon..."*

*"The work that New Pathways is doing out there – it needs to be universal. Not only for Indigenous, but for non-Indigenous, Métis, Chinese... It's something that we all have to be concerned with and responsive to."*

*"Please continue following these things that we're all passionate about. We have a vision for the Canyon and the province."*

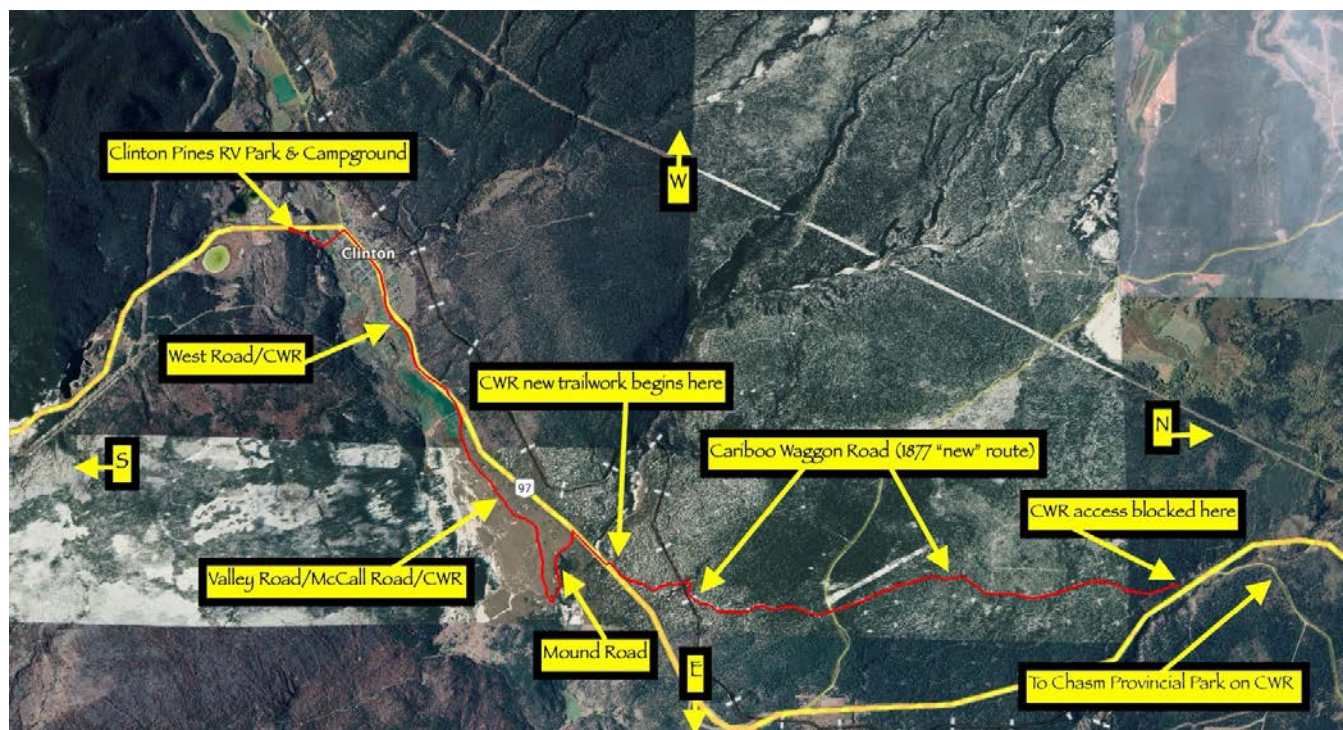
*“It's an honor to be working with the depth of experience of people that I serve with. We're looking at some hard discussions, hard decisions, but we're on the right path. We all know that we're searching for the next step forward.”*

*“I understand how difficult the job is that they've got. It's a massive geographical area. It's economic development, heritage reconstruction, tourism. Please keep up the fight! Few are actually fighting and doing it in a multidisciplinary approach, which is exactly what New Pathways is doing.”*

*“Perhaps the goals for NPTGS need to be defined, if not redefined. There are two different things there, defined and redefined. It's never been really clear to me, what the goal was. Perhaps the symbol of NPTGS could be a star; then you've got 5 points to go after, not just 3. Or a wheel, then you could gradually add more spokes to it as needed, as representation from more cultures are included.”*

*“New Pathways to Gold Society still has a place in the Canyon, in the Cariboo. We haven't outgrown our needs. I think this is going to expand and bloom more. We're just at the tip of the iceberg.”*

*“It's being able to tell that story. It isn't just a map and an old sign...”*



Map created by ALN for  
“The Pathway to Gold: A Traveller’s Guide to the Cariboo Waggon Road”

*“Another project which would never have come to fruition without NPTGS funding.”*