

## **2021 Census Data for the Bulkley Valley-Lakes District Airshed**

Report to the BVLD AMS Board of Directors, by Director [Sybille.Haeussler@unbc.ca](mailto:Sybille.Haeussler@unbc.ca)

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The Micro-Emissions Inventory for the BVLD airshed demonstrated the importance of having accurate population data for our airshed, both to estimate emissions and also to project the health effects of those emission on sectors of the BVLD population.

In January 2021, the BVLD AMS approved a budget and workplan that allocated \$350 for custom census data from Statistics Canada. I took responsibility for overseeing this project and the work was delegated to Lisa Ronald, a post-doctoral research associate with Northern Health and SFU who worked with Paula Tait on air quality issues. We acquired boundary information from the airshed from Ben Weinstein and Lisa began working with the GIS librarian at SFU to extract data for appropriate census “dissemination areas” from the 2016 Census. Shortly afterwards, Lisa was seconded to work on COVID related issues and she was unable to complete the work before her 2-yr post-doctoral term came to an end.

At that point, I discovered that the 2021 census data would be released beginning in February 2022 and concluded rather than ordering a Custom Census Survey immediately from Statistics Canada, that we should wait until the 2021 data were available. Total population information was released in February, but detailed data describing gender, ethnic diversity, employment profiles, etc. are being released gradually from April through November, 2022. Dave, Sue and I examined the release dates and agreed that we should submit our request for a detailed Custom Census Survey in September 2022. The project has therefore been deferred until late 2022.

It is difficult to obtain accurate information for the BVLD Airshed because the boundaries do not conform well to Statistics Canada Census subdivisions and given the high percentage of First Nations and rural populations who may be especially affected by particulate emissions from open burning, woodstoves, dust and proximity to industrial operations, it is important to get an accurate geographic breakdown of the population.