

Parks and Recreation

Summary

Residents of the Quesnel area are well served when it comes to meeting their recreational needs. Some of the many services we have to offer include:

- Hallis Lake Cross Country Ski Centre—one of the finest cross country ski facilities in British Columbia
- Quesnel and District Museum & Archives—one of BC's top 10
- Cariboo Raceway Park—one of the top five go-kart tracks in North America
- Barkerville Historic Town—Western Canada's largest heritage site
- Bowron Lake Park—world renowned wilderness chain of lakes
- Aquatic Centre with 25 meter swimming pool, leisure pool, hot tub, sauna, and fitness centre
- Arts Centre with art gallery, gift shop, pottery studio, banquet and meeting rooms, and childcare facilities
- Twin Arenas with two ice surfaces and a unique leisure skating patch
- Quesnel Curling Club with 8 sheets of ice
- Equestrian Park with heated indoor arena
- Troll Ski Resort (downhill)
- Three golf courses (Two 9 and one 18 holes)
- Bowling Lanes with 10 lanes
- Five fitness centres
- Movie Theatre with 2 screens
- Quesnel Skateboard Park
- Quesnel's Riverfront Trail
- Quesnel & District Antique Machinery Park
- Cottonwood House Historic Site
- Ten Mile Lake Provincial Park
- Pinnacles Provincial Park
- World's Longest Wooden Truss Footbridge, on the Riverfront Trail
- Comprehensive Youth Centre
- and most other pursuits that you could ask for including fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, camping and trail riding...

Quesnel Arts and Recreation Centre

The Quesnel Arts and Recreation Centre is a multi-faceted facility that is one of the focal points for community recreation. The facility has 25 metre pool complete with leisure pool, hot tub, sauna, fitness centre and children's birthday party area. The Japanese garden, located off the pool deck, is open to the public daily. It is also available for celebrations and special events. Aquatic programs offered include Red Cross and RLSS swimming lessons, deep water running, aquasize classes, synchronized swimming, water polo, snorkeling clinics and master swimming. Also offered are Red Cross and St. John's First Aid programs and a range of motion programs. There is a weight room and our Fitness Counsellor is available for consultations and equipment orientation. For more information call 992-8200.

Quesnel Library

The Quesnel Library (<http://www.cariboord.bc.ca>) is one of 16 branches of the Cariboo Library Network. The Library offers over 40,000 materials including: fiction, non-fiction, books-on-tape, magazines, newspapers, legal guides, local history, and more. Other services include summer reading clubs, preschool story hours, videos, audio book services for the visually or physically challenged, and photocopying services. A large new facility is planned for the library and will be open in 2002.

Quesnel Art Gallery and Gift Shop

The Quesnel Art Gallery and Gift Shop are also located in the Arts and Recreation Centre. The gallery features local artists and those from farther afield, children's art and traveling shows. The gift shop showcases a wide variety of local arts and crafts. The pottery studio and kiln, in the same complex, are enjoyed by students and experienced potters alike. Meeting rooms and a banquet hall are available for a wide range of activities. For more information call 992-8200.

Quesnel & District Twin Ice Arenas

A large complex located in city centre, has Twin Ice Arenas houses two full sized hockey rinks, leisure skating patch and banquet room. It is home to the Quesnel Millionaires and Quesnel Kangaroos hockey Teams. Sports programs for all ages are offered including figure skating, ringette and shinny teen and tiny tots hockey. For more information call 992-7125.

Quesnel and District Museum and Archives

Recognized as one of the top ten community museums in BC, this museum (www.quesnelmuseum.com) opened in 1963 and now houses over 19,000 artifacts. Visitors will find much of interest including a valuable coin collection, 1911 White car and rare Chinese artifacts. Many artifacts are on display in exhibits that depict subjects such as mining, farming and pioneer life. There are also activities and displays for children including Scavenger Hunts and a Discovery Place. Growing numbers of high school and university students, genealogists and other history buffs now use the archives, established in 1994.

City Parks

The City of Quesnel is proud of its numerous parks. Our combination of sport, passive, agricultural and linear parks help to cater to all interest groups. Many of our facilities have been built in recent years and provide modern up-to-date amenities such as creative playground equipment. Quesnel is truly a picturesque community with flower-lined streets and numerous gardens.

For the walking enthusiast Quesnel's Riverfront Trail is a peaceful two part circle tour of our city made up of the 5.2 km North Quesnel Trail and the 4.3 km West Side Trail. Both trails consist of paved walkways that meander along the scenic Fraser and Quesnel Rivers and Baker Creek. They are joined by the Fraser River Walking Bridge, a historic wooden bridge constructed in 1928 that connects downtown Quesnel to West Quesnel.

The City offers over 50 ball and soccer fields for community enjoyment. West Fraser Timber Park, one of the city's recent ventures has 5 new ball diamonds. West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd, a major contributor to this park is responsible for the large and exciting playground structure on site. Home to the Nature Education and Resource Centre, as well as the community garden, lawn bowling facilities and hiking trails. Skateboarders can enjoy the Quesnel Skate Park that was completed in October 1997. The park was designed by the youth of our community and the participants in the project are justifiably proud of the outcome. Quesnel's main park, Lebourdais, is centrally located and most large summer festivities, such as Canada Day, Art in the Park and Billy Barker Days Festivals, are held there. The park is home to a children's water park, large outdoor stage, beautiful rose garden, playground and the Rotary ball Park.

One of the newest parks in Quesnel is the Civic Plaza adjoining Lebourdais Park and nestled between the library, curling rink and ice arenas. This "people place" is a gathering place for residents and visitors to meet, relax and enjoy the pleasant surroundings.

Alex Fraser Park

Adjacent to the main Hwy. 97 interchange between Dragon Lake Hill and the Quesnel River Bridge. Headquarters for the area's rodeo and agricultural events and Fall Fair. Alex Fraser Park is home to the Quesnel Arts and Recreation Centre and the peaceful and serene Japanese Gardens built in tribute to Shiraoui, Japan, our "Twin Sister City". In large part, Alex Fraser Park also serves our agricultural community. The Quesnel Rodeo is held here during Billy Barker Days every July and plays host to the BC Rodeo Association Finals.

Chuck Beath Memorial Park

Highway 97 South, across from the tennis courts. Picnic tables, close to the Riverfront Trail.

Weldwood Park

Downtown on Hwy. 97 at Bowron Ave. Picnic tables and swings. On the Riverfront Trail.

West Fraser Timber Park

Just across the Quesnel River's Johnston Bridge. New facility being developed for baseball and fastball events and tournaments. Also, site of new lawn bowling court.

Ceal Tingley Park

Located at the confluence of the Fraser and Quesnel Rivers, this park is a peaceful refuge within our busy city and the view is very intriguing. Picnic tables, restored antique steam shovel, historical plaques set about the park. Kilometer Zero for the Riverfront Trail.

Johnston Subdivision Park

Located beside Johnston Avenue just up the hill as you cross the Johnston Bridge. There is a children's playground and picnic tables under lots of trees.

Wilma Hanson Memorial Park

In West Quesnel, turn right at Westpark Toyota onto Lewis Drive. Baker Creek peacefully bubbles along one side of the park under shady Cottonwoods. This park is on the Riverfront

walk and has a picnic table.

Lebourdais Park

This is Quesnel's main park. Facilities include picnic tables, swings and slide, water spray park (a guaranteed hit for the kids on a hot day), bandshell and a baseball diamond. This is also home of Quesnel's outstanding Museum, the Quesnel Visitor Info Centre, Shiraoui House and the Billy Barker Days Society office. The tennis courts are nearby. Bordering the park is the Pioneer Cemetery, the Twin Arenas and the Curling Rink. Enjoy an impressive rose garden and flower garden at the front of the park on Highway 97.

Parks and recreation outside the immediate area

Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail, See Nuxalk-Carrier Grease Trail, below.

Barkerville Historic Town, www.barkerville.bc.ca

Barkerville, one of western North America's largest historic sites, is located less than an hour's drive from downtown Quesnel. The 1870s are alive and well in Barkerville. The discovery of gold on the Fraser River in 1858 precipitated a gold rush that reached its peak on Cariboo creeks. Billy Barker made his famous strike in 1862 on Williams Creek downstream from Richfield almost 37,500 ounces of gold were recovered in all.

Audio visual presentations and interpretive exhibits provide background information and interesting glimpses of the past. Stroll along the streets and view over 125 restored or reconstructed buildings, most of which contain realistic displays depicting all aspects of mining town life.

Three campgrounds are conveniently located within walking distance of Barkerville Historic Town. Lowhee, on the Barkerville Highway, has 87 sites, showers, flush toilets and a sani-station. Government Hill, near the Barkerville Cemetery, has 23 sites and basic facilities. Located near the turn-off to Bowron Lake, Forest Rose has 56 sites, showers, flush toilets and a group site with a covered cooking shelter. There is a paved landing strip for small aircraft close by.

Bowron Lakes Provincial Park

The Bowron Lake canoe circuit is one of the top ten canoeing circuits in the world and used by travelers from all over the globe. The spectacular wilderness destination of Bowron Lake Park is nestled in the western slopes of the Cariboo Mountain Range, 32 km east of Wells.

Cottonwood House Historic Site, www.cottonwoodhouse.ca

Located just 20 minutes from downtown Quesnel east on Highway 26, Cottonwood House is a must-see preserved road house on the Gold Rush Trail to Barkerville Historic Town. With its hewn log walls and dovetail-notched corners, Cottonwood House was built during the 1860's to serve travelers seeking gold in Barkerville. It is one of the oldest buildings in British Columbia and is one of the few remaining roadhouses along the original Cariboo Wagon Road. Enjoy wagon rides, walks, building tours, interpretation of Cottonwood House, observation of farm animals, blacksmithing, country kitchen, candy store and mini golf.

Hallis Lake Nordic Ski Area

One of the best nordic ski areas in western Canada, Hallis Lake is also great for walking, hiking and biking in spring, summer and fall. Nordic skiers can enjoy trails for all skill levels, loops up to 32 km long to National Standards, a 2.5 km lighted track, biathlon area, a 1500 square foot day lodge with a full basement and kitchen facilities, a 1000 square foot equipment shed, a timing/communications building and a parking lot.. Racing trails meet CSA/FIS requirements. The Hallis Lake ski trails have been developed and are maintained by the Cariboo Ski Touring Club (CSTC), which has a membership of 560. Training is available for children as young as 5 years old to adults. All coaches and instructors are certified with Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors (CANSI), Biathlon Canada, or National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). Several local skiers have competed in the Olympics, the BC Cup race series, or the National and Provincial Biathlon Team competitions.

The facility is also available for professional retreat-type meetings, or other club-type activities. There is no overnight accommodation available on site. For more information, visit: <http://mypage.uniserve.ca/~cstcquesnelbc/> or contact: ronski@quesnelbc.com

BC Forest Service Picnic Areas and Campsites

The Ministry of Forests runs an extensive network of picnic areas and 146 overnight campsites throughout the region for tenters and recreational vehicle users. The camps are quite rustic and secluded. For more information and a map, call the Ministry of Forests at 992-4400 or call the Quesnel Visitor and Conference Bureau at 992-8716. Also see www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/rec/brochure/CFR_quesnel_camp.htm

Nuxalk-Carrier Grease Trail/Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail

Source: www.bcadventure.com

The Grease/Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail is an important historical trail in the region. It follows a millennia-old aboriginal trading route that First Nations guides led Alexander Mackenzie along, on the first recorded overland journey across North America in 1793. The trail is 450 kilometres (279 miles) long, and starts at the mouth of the Blackwater River just west of Quesnel and stretches to the Dean Channel near Bella Coola. It consists of highways, forest roads, local wagon roads, rivers and coastal waters. Overall, there are about 120 recorded prehistoric archaeological sites near the trail and another 260 within only one or two miles.

Pinnacles Provincial Park

Interesting formations are close by in Pinnacles Provincial Park, just outside City limits. Formed by years of water and weather wearing on soft and hard pockets of volcanic ash and basalt, these unique pillars have been in the making for around 12 million years. View the entire city from a distance at this breathtaking vantage point, and walk along the canyon rim for a beautiful view of Baker Creek, hundreds of feet below.

Puntchesakut Lake Provincial Park

This beautiful deep blue lake is located amid fir and aspen trees 18 mi/26 km west on the Nazko Highway. Fishing, boating, swimming, and picnicking are some suggested activities. Boat launch, picnic tables, fireplaces, wood, change houses, sandy beach and outdoor toilets.

Quesnel Rod & Gun Club

The Quesnel Rod & Gun dates back to the early 1920s but was incorporated in 1957. In 1981 it moved from its old site across from the golf course to kilometer 24 on the Nazko Highway. It is one of the largest shooting range facilities in western Canada.

Special features:

Indoor facilities:

- a 25 meter indoor range with 18 positions
- a meeting room with full kitchen facilities and handicap washrooms

Outdoor facilities:

- a 500 meter rifle range with 27 shooting positions
- a 100 meter pistol range with 30 positions
- 2I S.U. rapid fire shooting bays with 4 positions
- 4 trap houses with 5 shooting positions at each house
- 4I. P.S.C. bays (pistol shooting)
- a Black Powder trail walk with targets for black powder rifle, pistol, hawk and knife

One thing that sets the range apart from most other ranges is that all ranges can be used at the same time. With a little more upgrading and equipment it could host Olympic class shoots!

There are several shoots (black powder, trap and handgun) held at the club each year drawing shooters from across Canada and the U.S. Federal Fisheries Officers, Conservation Officers, Sheriffs, and R.C.M.P. members have used the range for training purposes.

Ten Mile Lake Provincial Park

This popular 260 hectare, 141 site camping and picnic area is located 7 mi/11km north of Quesnel on Highway 97 and is popular both in the summer and winter. Interpretive programs are offered from mid June to the end of August. There is a large swimming area and playground, as well as a covered picnic shelter. The lake offers good rainbow trout fishing in early spring and in summer evenings. There are also 10 km of trails including a self-guided nature trail leading to a beaver lodge and dams. Boat launch, picnic tables, fire pits and wood supplied. Winter offers ice fishing and cross-country skiing over the trail system.

Activities & Sports

Listing available at <http://www.quesnelinfo.com/activities.asp>

Clubs & Organizations

Listing available at <http://www.quesnelinfo.com/clubs.asp>