

Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP)

“Green Business Accelerator” (GBA)
Project Report



**RURAL
ISLANDS**
ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP
CULTIVATING RESILIENT
PARTNERSHIPS

December 22, 2023

Project Summary

GBA Project Deliverable

- New or enhanced programs / services that are related to workforce development, business development, and industry or sector development, retention, and expansion.
- ‘Green Business Accelerator’ research goal was an assessment of market climate mitigation or adaptation solutions in BC’s rural island business communities
- Project activities to be completed within 2 years of start of May 2023
- Project requirement: progress reports and a final report that outlines the project’s performance and outcomes.

GBA Goals

- Learn about opportunities for green business in BC's rural islands:
 - Impact areas and themes
 - Size and scale
- Learn more about ourselves
 - The islands as a region; communities as people
 - What we mean by 'green business'
- Turn ideas into action
 - Fund-able, repeatable programs for BC's islands
 - Demonstration of island impact potential

GBA Strategy

- Secondary research – to tell us about BC’s rural island region vs BC/Canada, by:
 - **Demographics** - #s and growth, by age/gender/education, and over time/by island
 - **Key industries**, by NAICS
 - **Workforce growth/decline** - over time/by island
 - **Off-island commutes** - over time/by island
- Primary research (surveys, interviews & workshops) – to answer specific questions about green business:
 - **Knowledge** and **intention/willingness** to adopt
 - What **barriers** exist / **resources** are needed

Research Team

RIEP

- Sherese Johnson PROJECT MANAGER
- Colin Stein PROJECT MANAGER
- Janis Brooks INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT CONSULTANT
- Doug Fenton ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

CTRS *Market Intelligence Services*

- Aaron Cruikshank PROJECT LEAD
- Meagan Doner SECONDARY RESEARCH
- Pankaj Pandey PRIMARY RESEARCH
- Caroline Wakefield PRIMARY RESEARCH

GBA Project Summary

- **Jun-Jul:** Work Plan, contracting, meetings & data collection
- **Aug:** Team meetings, survey & in-depth interview (IDI) design
- **Sep:** Survey 1st Wave, initial IDIs

Scope change

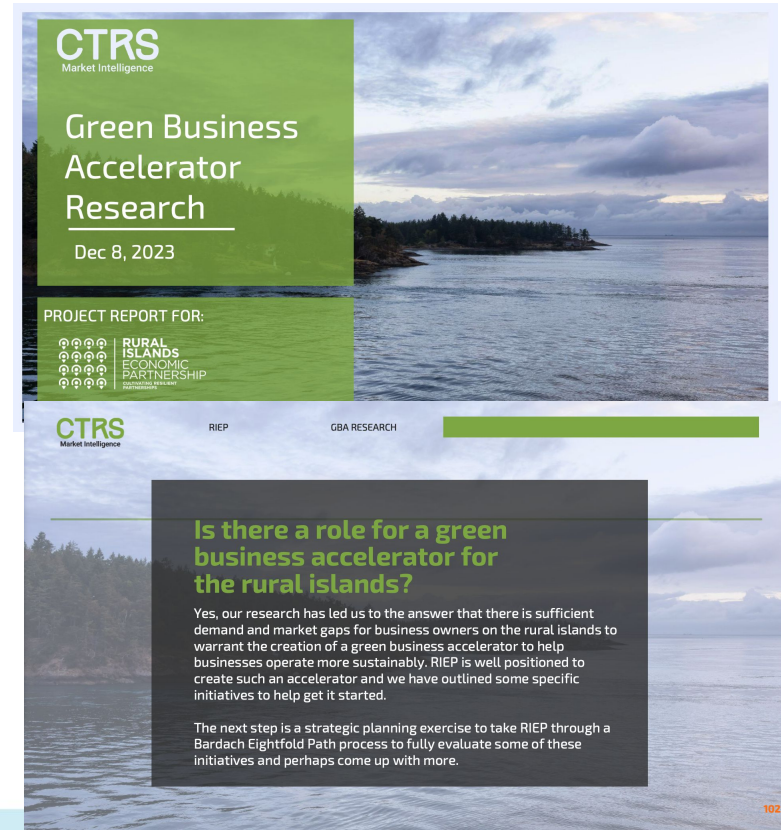
- **Oct:** Survey 2nd Wave
- **Nov:** Data analysis and reporting
- **Dec:** Report draft review / Board review

GBA Report Highlights

GBA: The Bottom Line

There is an opportunity for a ‘green business accelerator’ to help BC’s rural island businesses operate more sustainably.

- A majority of community members know about and value green business practices, but a minority of them adopt such practices
- Barriers are stopping many business owners who otherwise have the readiness, willingness & intention to make changes



Green Business Barriers

In-Depth Interview Analysis

During the course of the research, the team at CTRS had the opportunity to speak with nine business owners throughout the rural islands to get their perspective on a range of issues. The highlights, as they relate to the GBA are:

1. Affordability of solutions comes up repeatedly
2. People are looking for strategies and solutions
3. There is a perception that the older infrastructure on the islands is preventing more adoption of environmental solutions and new infrastructure is required
4. Community engagement, volunteerism and creative community-driven solutions are seen as essential to making sustainability happen on the rural islands
5. Environmental education will drive the community to find solutions
6. Businesses want to see more eco-friendly technology make its way to the islands
7. Businesses want policies that encourage and subsidize sustainable practices
8. Local food is key
9. Housing affordability was a central theme

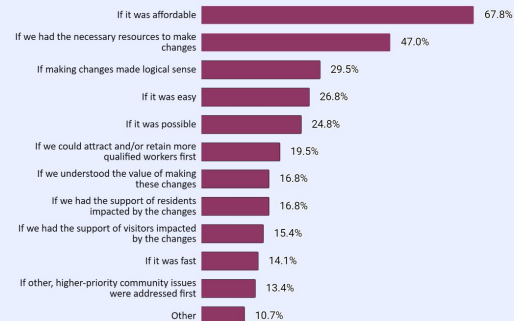
Resource Availability and Its Impact



Base: 27

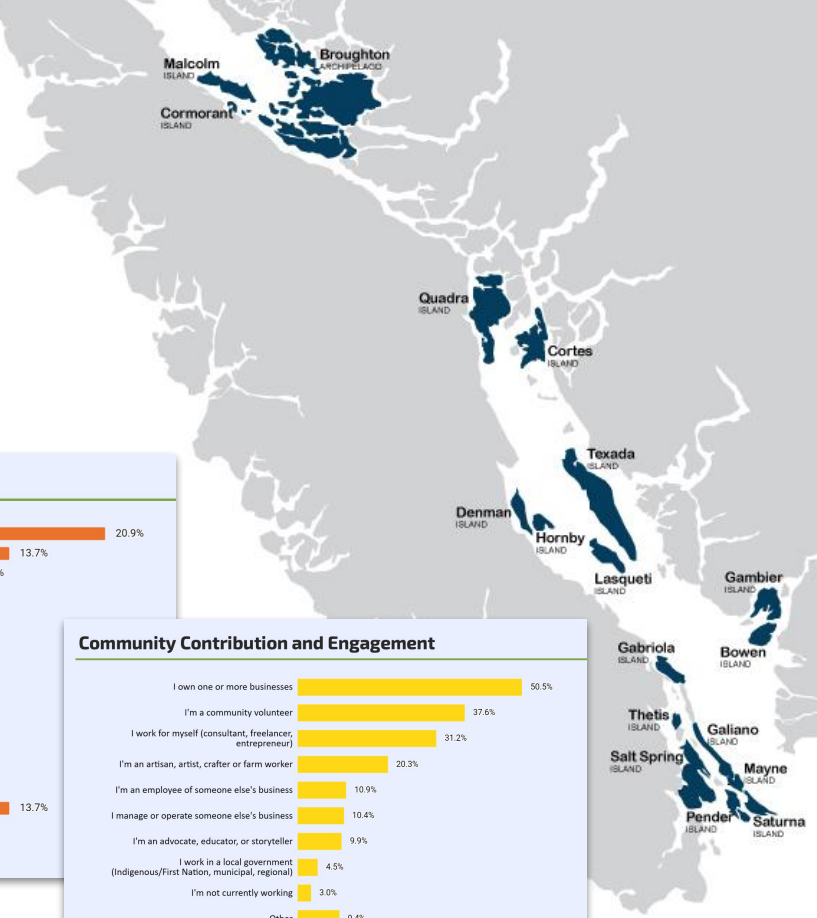
Facilitators for Community-Oriented Changes

Caveat: Due to t
representative c

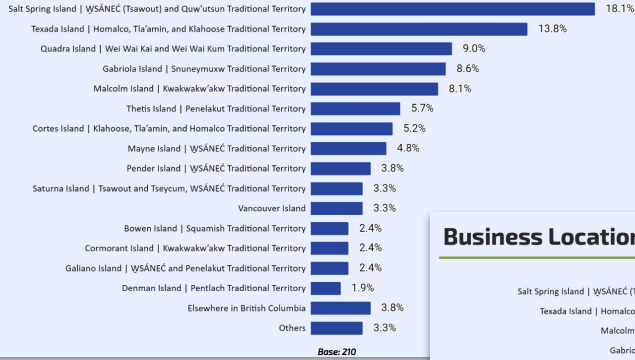


Who We're Talking About & Who They Represent

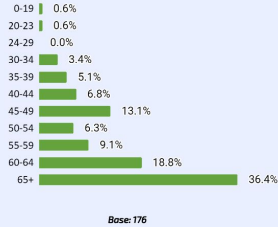
Research Participants



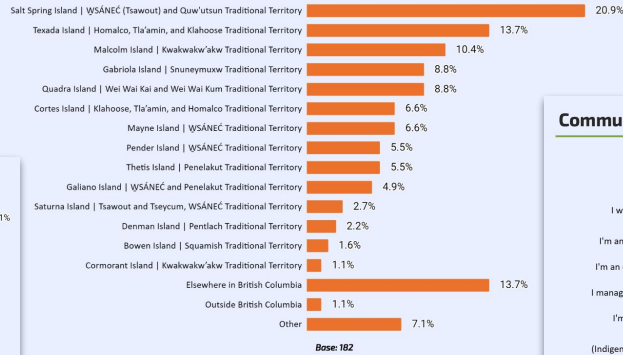
Residence Details



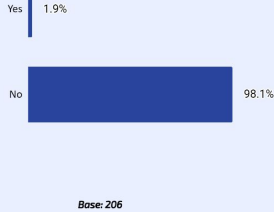
Age



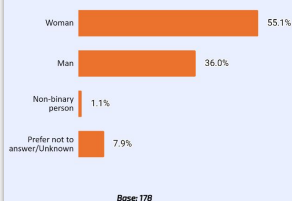
Business Location and Workplace



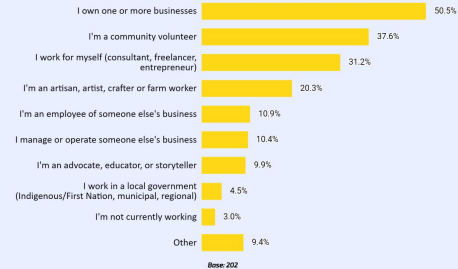
Indigenous Person



Gender

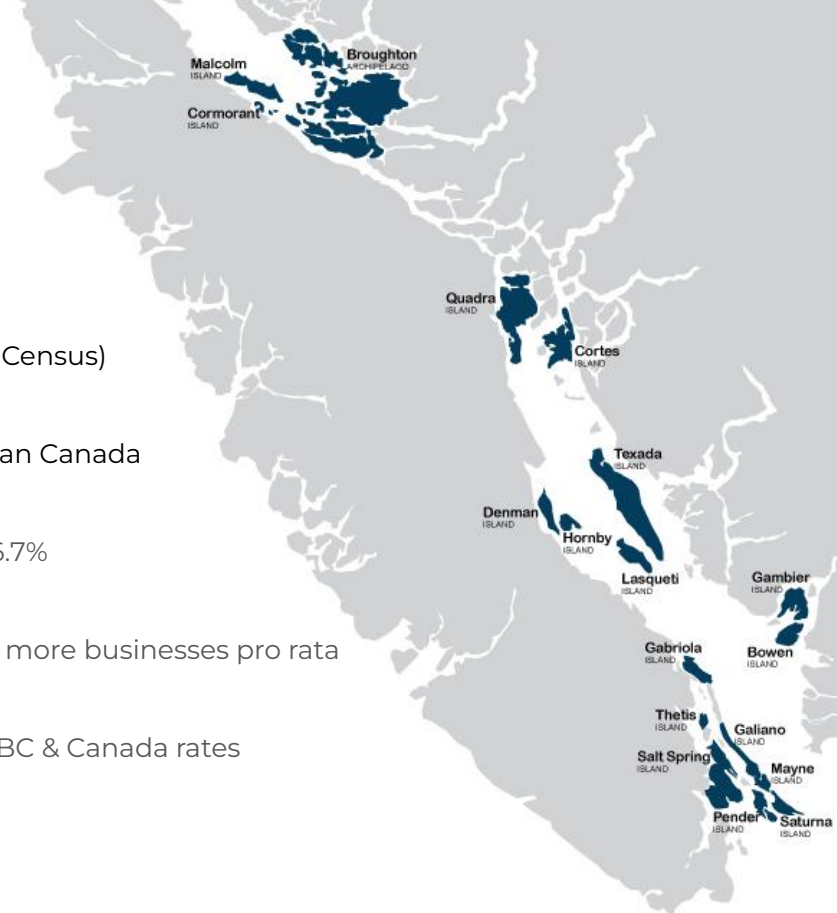


Community Contribution and Engagement



Regional Profile

- **18 islands**
- **38,000 people** 1.5% CAGR over 10 years (2011, 2016, 2021 Census)
- **6.4% Indigenous** 8% greater than BC, 30% greater than Canada
- **53% labour participation rate** BC rate is 66.7%
- **2,455 businesses** 1 for every 15 people – BC has ~50% more businesses pro rata
- **11% of workforce commutes** less than half BC & Canada rates



[Click for Island Profiles](#)

RIEP.ca/impact



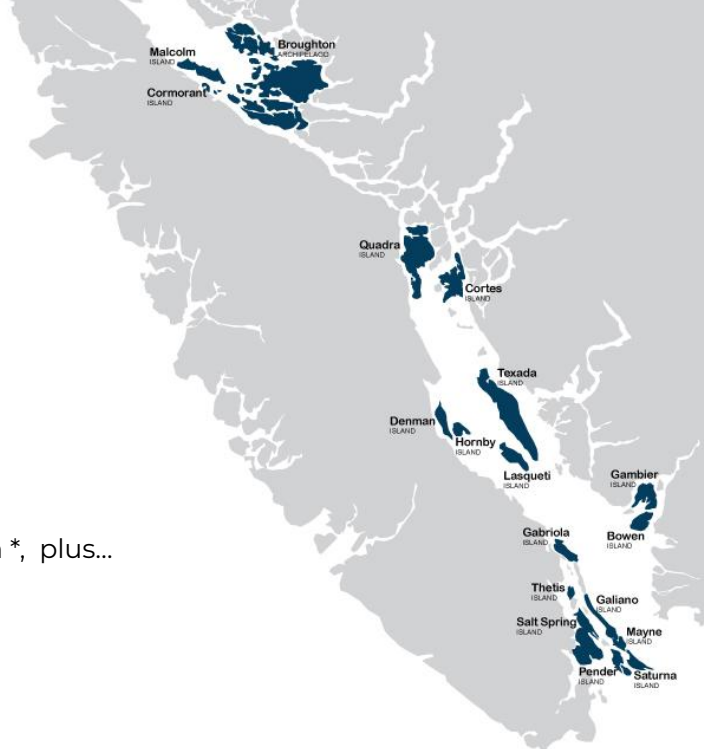
Economic Profile

- **Top industries**

- Construction *
- Professional, scientific & technical services *
- Health care and social assistance
- Retail trade

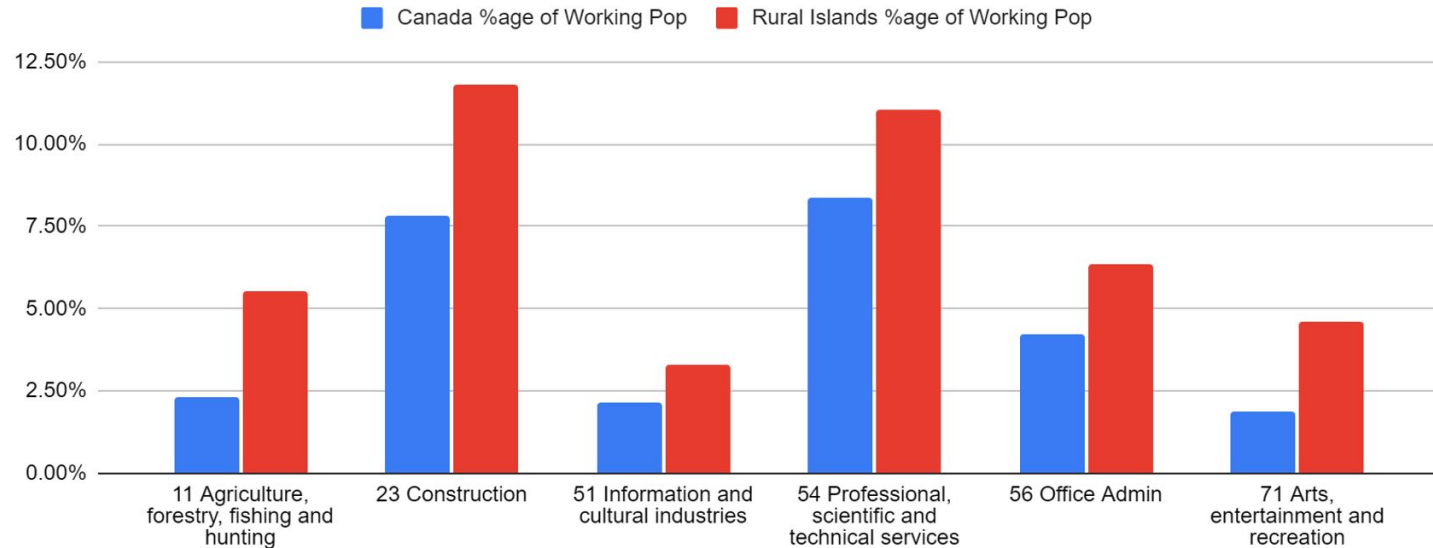
- **Over-represented industries** Industries marked with *, plus...

- Office admin
- Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing
- Arts, entertainment & recreation
- Information & cultural industries



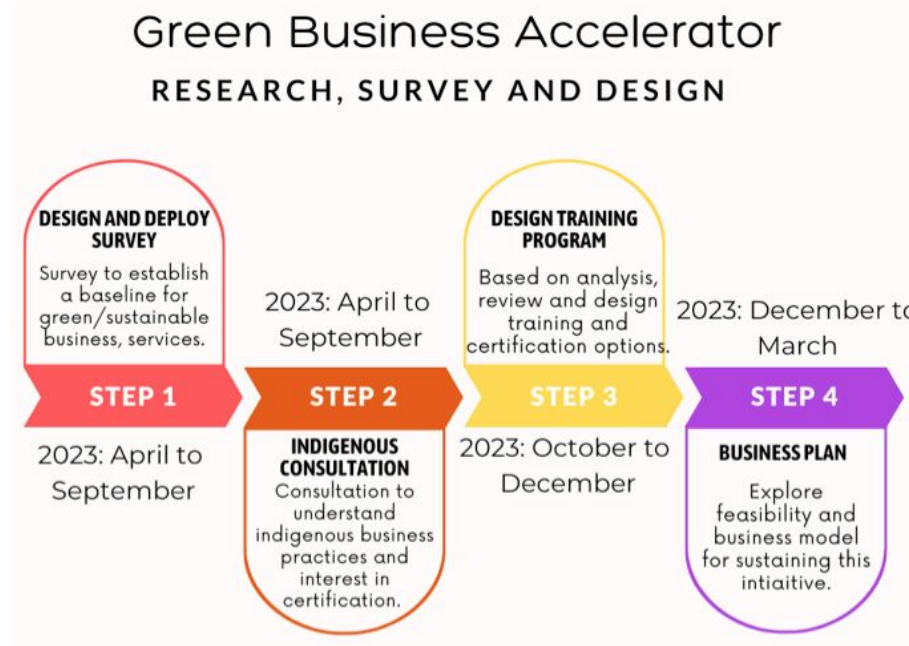
Economic Profile

Working Population as POP: Canada vs Rural Islands



What are the recommendations?

Scope of original REDIP application



Recommended GBA Initiatives

Impact potential for specific, potential green business initiatives

Rural Islands Recycling Alternative

Potential impacts include:

- Reduced landfill usage
- Lower GHG emissions
- Resource conservation
- Job creation
- Cost savings to the community
- Community engagement and education
- Reduced dependency on off-island waste management solutions
- A cleaner environment

Rural Island agri product, forest product, fishing and hunting product exchange

Potential impacts include:

- Local Economic Growth
- Job Creation
- Increased Tourism
- Strengthened Community Bonds
- Cultural Preservation
- Improved Access to Resources
- Sustainable Practices Promotion
- Conservation Awareness
- Skill Development and Education
- Improved Nutritional Access

Rural Island Green Building Centre of Excellence

Potential impacts include:

- Promotion of Sustainable Practices
- Conservation of Local Ecosystems
- Job Creation
- Boost in Local Economy
- Development of Green Technologies and practices
- Training and Education
- Community Engagement
- Promotion of Sustainable Living
- Influence on Policy
- Leadership in Green Building

Rural Island Eco Program Identification and Implementation Service

Potential impacts include:

- Facilitating Accessibility of Eco Solutions
- Awareness and Education
- Cost Savings for Residents
- Economic Viability of RIEP
- Stimulating Local Economy
- Reduced Carbon Footprint
- Sustainable Transportation
- Conservation of Resources

Next Steps

- Board to consider recommendations — full report
- Decide on budget & schedule for remaining project deliverables (incl. additional research, business planning, program design, and final reporting to Ministry)
- Conduct strategic planning and development for future program opportunities

Thank You!

RuralIslandsPartnership.ca



**RURAL
ISLANDS**
ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP
CULTIVATING RESILIENT
PARTNERSHIPS