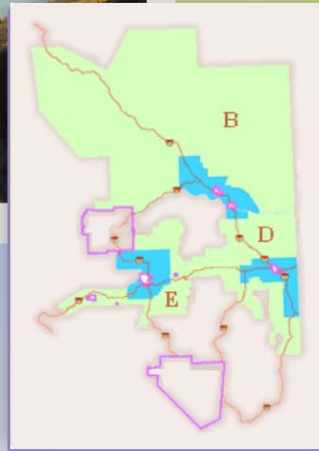
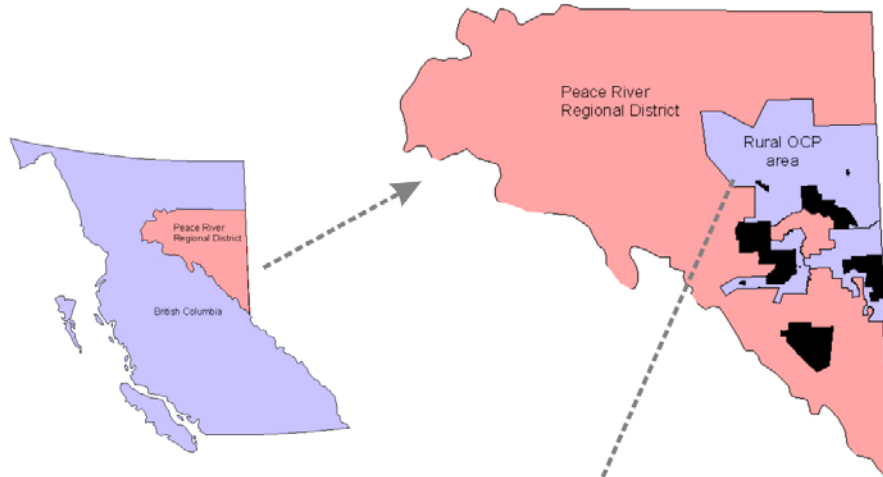


# Demographics Report Update

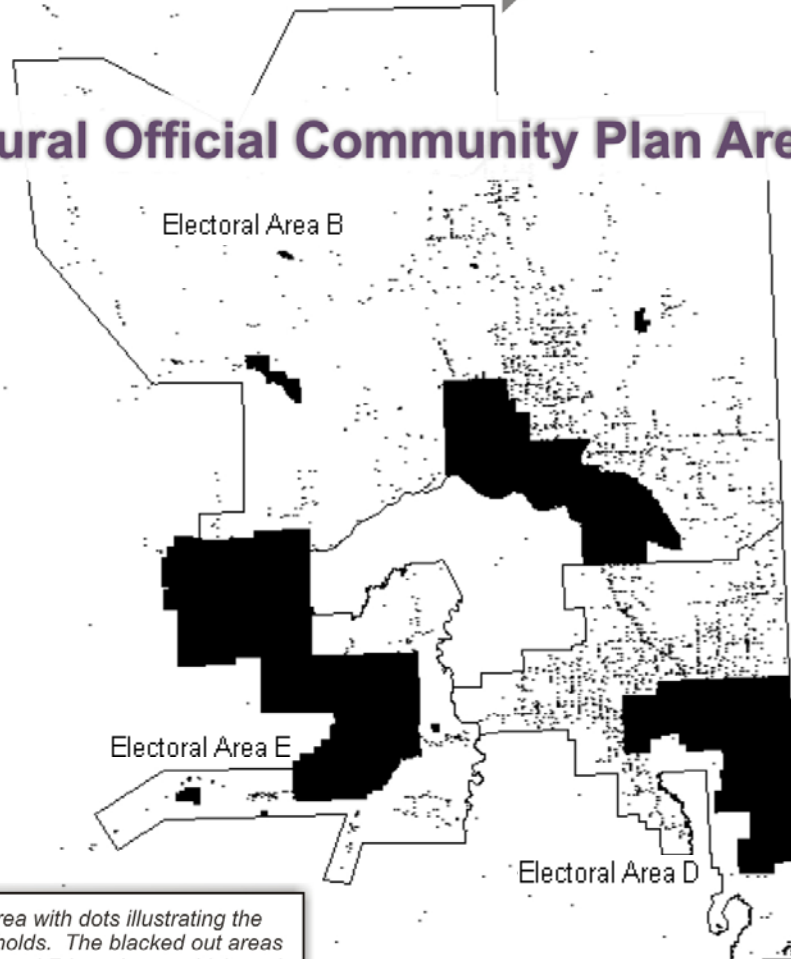
Prepared by Jodi MacLean  
Project Planner, PRRD  
November 2009



Rural  
Official Community Plan



## Rural Official Community Plan Area

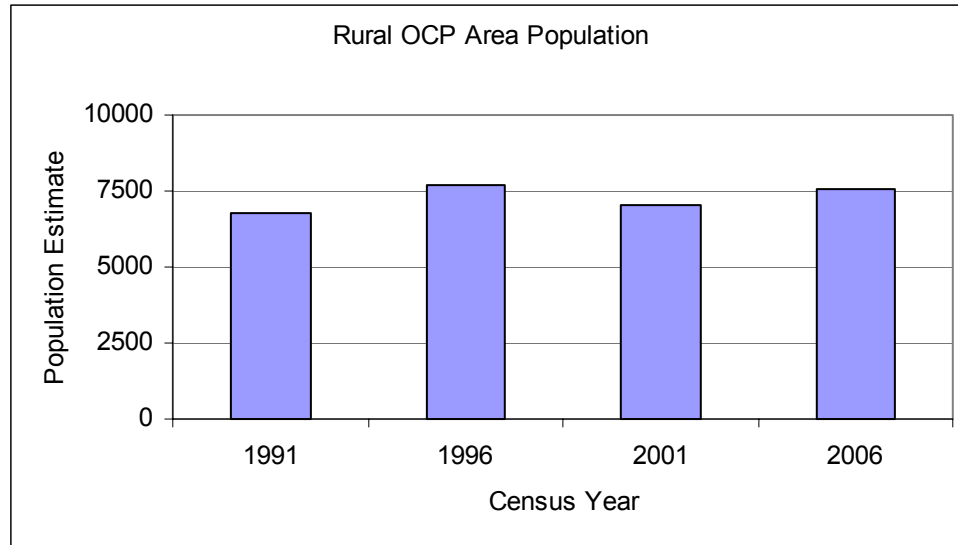


*The Rural OCP area with dots illustrating the location of households. The blacked out areas are municipalities and Fringe Areas which each have their own independent plan.*

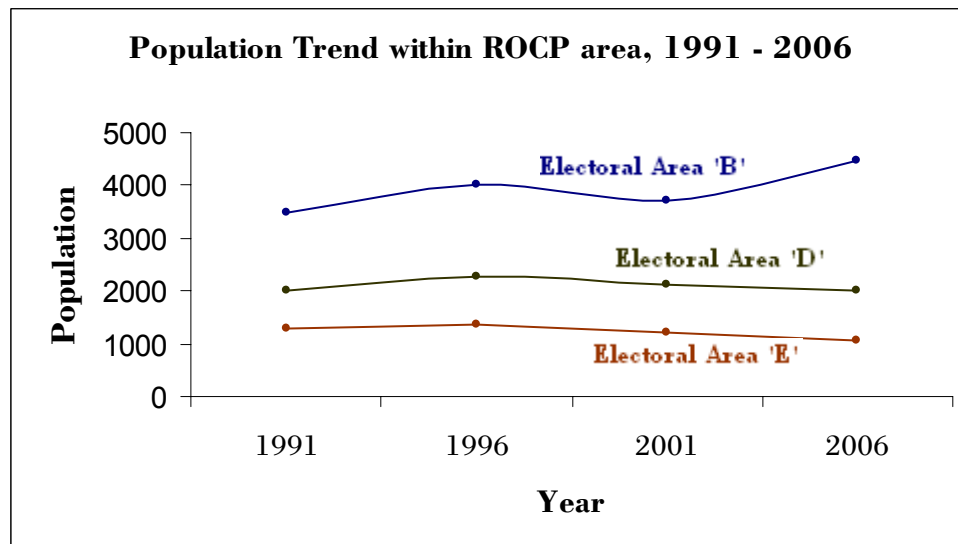
## 1.0 Rural Area Demographics

### 1.1 Population Growth

The 2006 Census identified an estimated population of 7,576 people in the Rural Official Community Plan (OCP) area. This constitutes a 1.5% annual increase from 2001. However, this increase is not uniform across the Rural OCP area: some communities are growing, while others are losing population.



The Rural OCP area is divided into 3 sub-areas: Electoral Area 'B' in the North Peace, Electoral Area 'D' in the South Peace, and Electoral Area 'E' in the West Peace. Communities in the north, within Electoral Area 'B', have been growing at a faster rate than those to the south and west, within Electoral Areas 'D' & 'E' whose Rural OCP area population has been declining.



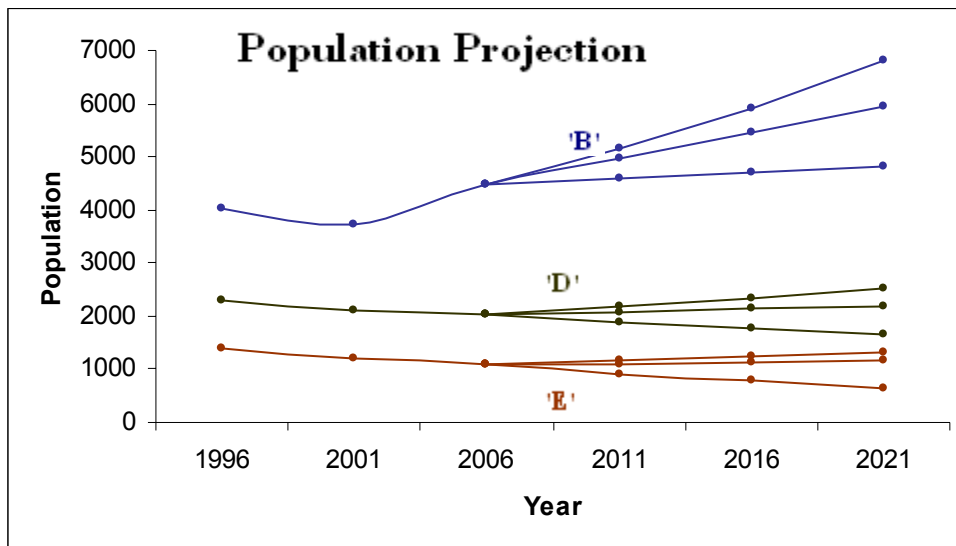
## 1.2 Population Projection

Pursuant to section 877(1)(a) of the Local Government Act, the official community plan must anticipate housing needs over a period of at least 5 years. Using the estimated population counts from the past census years, 3 scenarios are envisioned here: status quo, small growth, and high growth.

ROCP	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	Growth Rate
B	3,479	4,014	3,719	4,477	4,589	4,704	4,822	0.5%
					4,972	5,467	5,961	Status quo
					5,149	5,921	6,809	3.0%
D	2,013	2,281	2,126	2,025	1,888	1,775	1,646	Status quo
					2,076	2,128	2,181	0.5%
					2,177	2,340	2,516	1.5%
E	1,269	1,377	1,219	1,074	920	772	621	Status quo
					1,101	1,129	1,157	0.5%
					1,155	1,242	1,335	1.5%
Total	6,761	7,672	7,064	7,576	7,766	7,916	8,160	0.5%
					7,780	8,014	8,228	Status quo
					8,481	9,503	10,660	2.7%

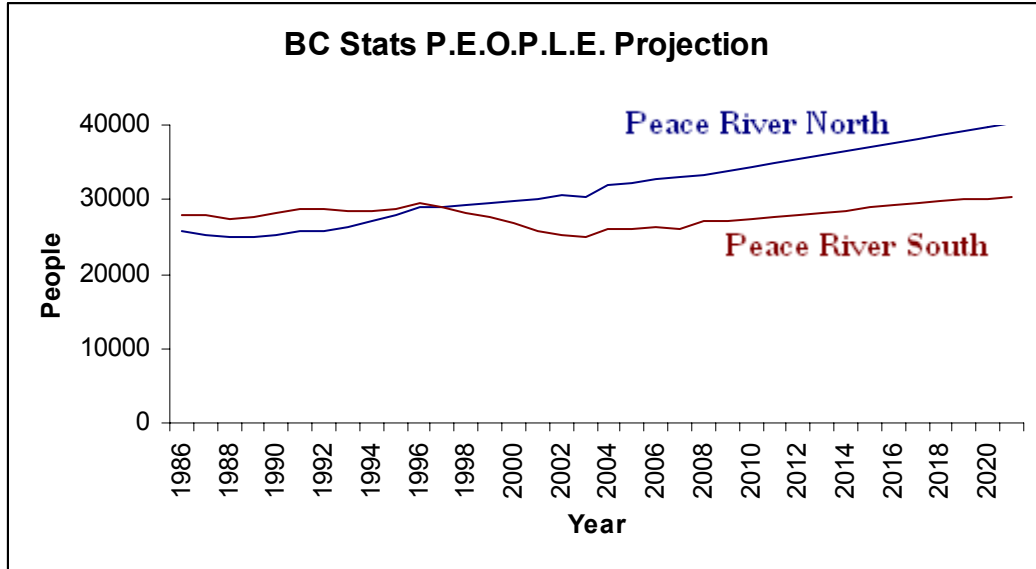
The status quo projection extends the previous population estimates using a least squares method. This status quo rate projects a continued decline in Electoral Areas 'D' & 'E' (of 1.2% and 2.8%, respectively) and a 2.2% annual growth in Electoral Area 'B' with an approximate 0.6% annual growth rate overall.

A low growth scenario uses 0.5% annual increase. A high growth scenario uses an annual 3% increase in Electoral Area 'B' and a 1.5% annual increase in Electoral Areas 'D' & 'E'.



### 1.3 BC Stats P.E.O.P.L.E. Projection

BC Stats uses a population projection model called P.E.O.P.L.E. to forecast population. The data is based on the Statistics Canada census and accounts for migration, births, and deaths during the intercensal years. However, the P.E.O.P.L.E. projections use Local Health Areas (Peace River North and Peace River South) which combine to form the PRRD. Data from municipalities and electoral areas are not separated.

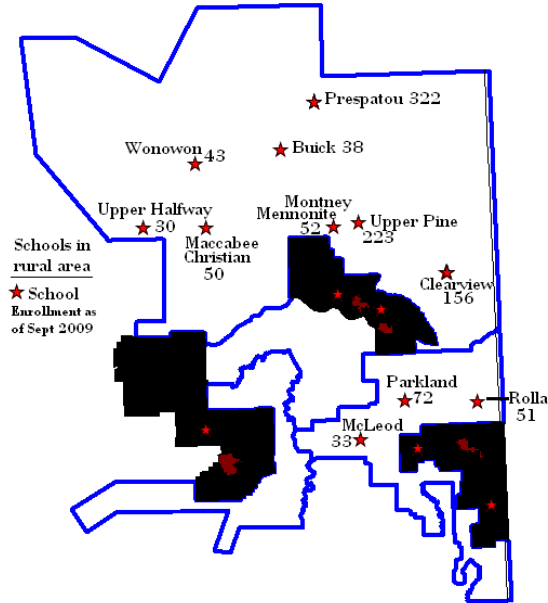


This method projects an annual increase of 1.6% in the Peace River North area (Electoral areas 'B' & 'C' combined with the City of Fort St. John and the Districts of Taylor and Hudson's Hope), and 1.0% annual increase in Peace River South (Electoral areas 'D' & 'E' combined with the City of Dawson Creek, Districts of Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge, and Village of Pouce Coupe).

	<b>PRRD</b>	<b>Peace River North</b>	<b>Peace River South</b>
Population (2008)	60,317	33,291	27,026
Population (2021)	70,726	40,321	30,405
Growth	10,409	7,030	3,379
Annual increase	1.3%	1.6%	1.0%

## 1.4 School District Projections

Both school districts (Peace River North 60 and Peace River South 59) project future enrollments to estimate school capacities.



SD	School	2008	2016	Annual difference
60	Buick	34	20	- 5.1%
60	Clearview	146	203	+ 4.8%
60	Prespatou	309	331	+ 0.9%
60	Upper Halfway	21	30	+ 5.4%
60	Upper Pine	213	203	- 0.6%
60	Wonowon	43	39	- 1.2%
<b>60</b>	<b>ROCP area North</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>+ 1.0%</b>
59	Parkland	80	56	- 3.8%
59	Rolla	47	80	+ 8.8%
59	McLeod	41	48	+ 2.1%
<b>59</b>	<b>ROCP area South</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>+ 1.2%</b>
	<b>ROCP area Total</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>+ 1.0%</b>

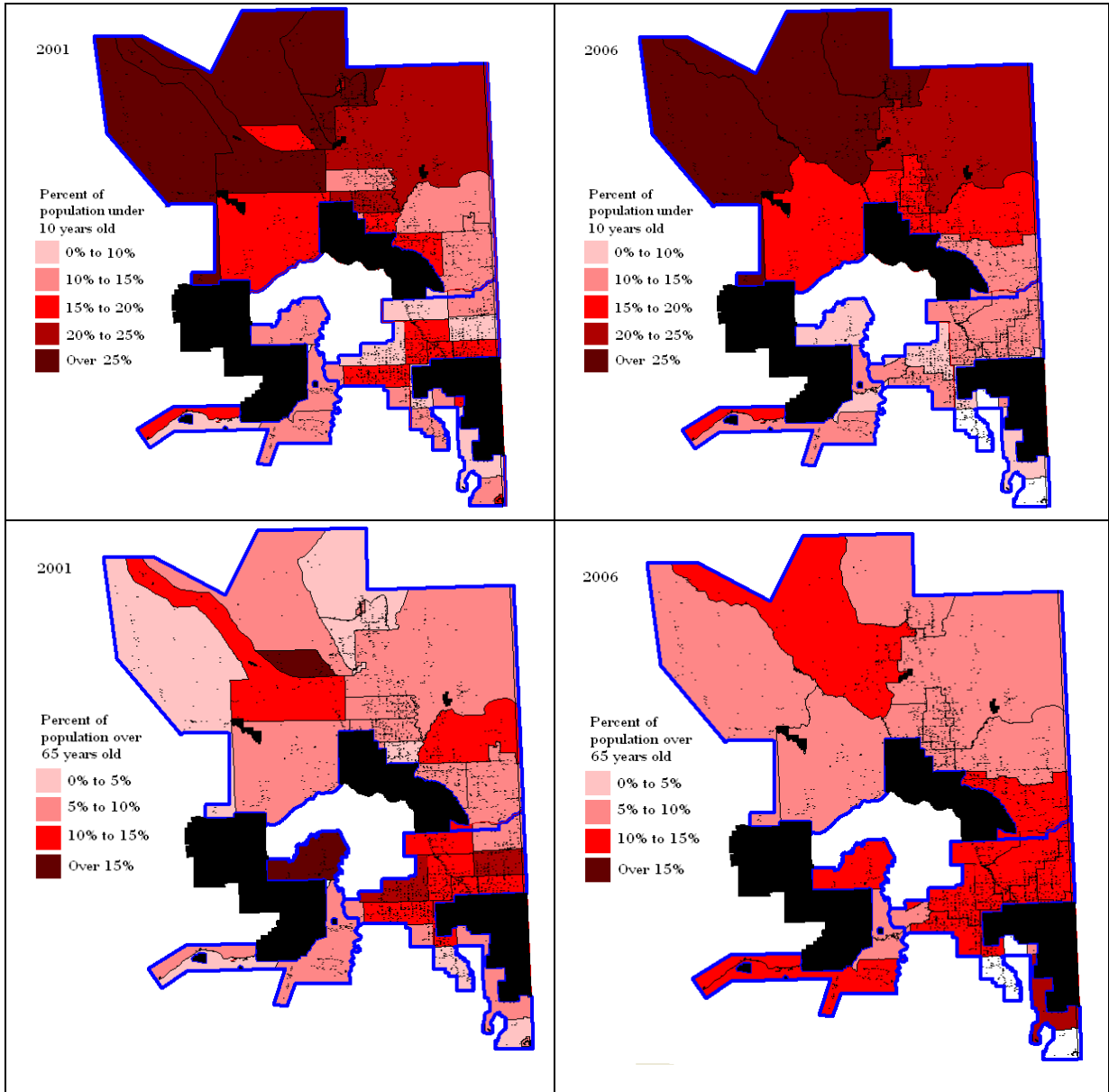
From Peace River North 60's 2008/2009 projections for schools within the Rural OCP area, a 1.0% increase in school aged children is expected.

In Peace River South, there are only 3 schools in the Rural OCP area. In the West Peace all children are transported to schools in Chetwynd or the Moberly Lake school. Of the three schools in the rural South Peace area, a 1.2% increase in enrollment is expected.

These figures do not include home-schooled children, or children attending urban, fringe area, or religious schools.

## 1.5 Age

A greater proportion of the population in the northern areas of the Rural OCP area is younger than the southern areas. Similarly, a greater proportion of the southern population is older than the northern areas.



Separating the ROCP median age from the electoral areas is not possible here but a table can be used to illustrate the general trends:

	<b>Median age</b>	
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2006</b>
Electoral Area B	28.7	30.0
Electoral Area D	38.2	41.7
Electoral Area E	37.2	41.0
Other jurisdictions		
• Electoral Area C	35.3	37.3
• City of Fort St. John	29.6	29.8
• City of Dawson Creek	34.0	35.6
• Village of Pouce Coupe	39.6	42.0
• District of Chetwynd	31.1	32.8
• District of Hudson's Hope	39.0	42.7
• District of Taylor	31.8	30.9
• PRRD	32.7	34.2
• BC	38.4	40.8

These median age trends show a significantly younger population in northern areas of the ROCP area (Electoral Area 'B') than the southern areas (Electoral Areas 'D' & 'E'). The median age of the population has increased almost everywhere between 2001 and 2006, but has increased the most in Electoral Area 'E'.

#### 1.4 Household size

Separating the ROCP average household sizes from the electoral areas is not possible here. However, observable trends include a higher average household size in the rural and northern areas and a declining average household size nearly everywhere.

	Ave. household size	
	2001	2006
Electoral Area B	3.3	3.2
Electoral Area D	2.8	2.7
Electoral Area E	2.8	2.6
Other jurisdictions		
• Electoral Area C	2.9	2.7
• City of Fort St. John	2.6	2.5
• City of Dawson Creek	2.4	2.3
• Village of Pouce Coupe	3.0	2.3
• District of Chetwynd	2.6	2.6
• District of Hudson's Hope	2.5	2.4
• District of Taylor	2.6	2.7
• PRRD	2.7	2.6
• BC	2.5	2.5

#### 1.5 Dwellings

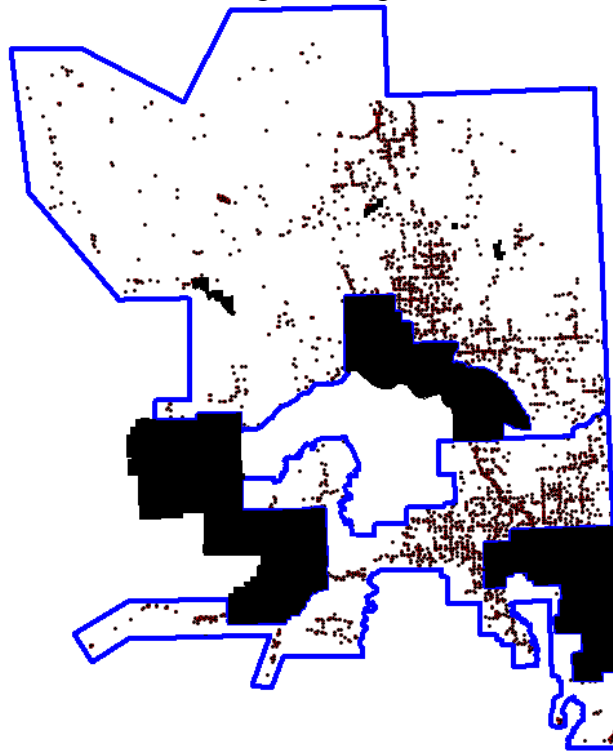
The 2006 census population figures combined with the average household sizes above indicates there are approximately 2,562 dwellings in the Rural OCP area.

Rural OCP area	Population (2006)	Average Household size	Approx. dwellings
Electoral Area B	4,477	3.2	1,399
Electoral Area D	2,025	2.7	750
Electoral Area E	1,074	2.6	413
Total ROCP	7,576	--	2,562

Assuming the a high growth scenario (3.0% annual increase in Electoral Area 'B' and 1.5% annual increase in Electoral Areas 'D' & 'E') and relatively stable average household sizes, a total of 633 new dwellings could be located in this area by 2016, and 1,011 by 2021.

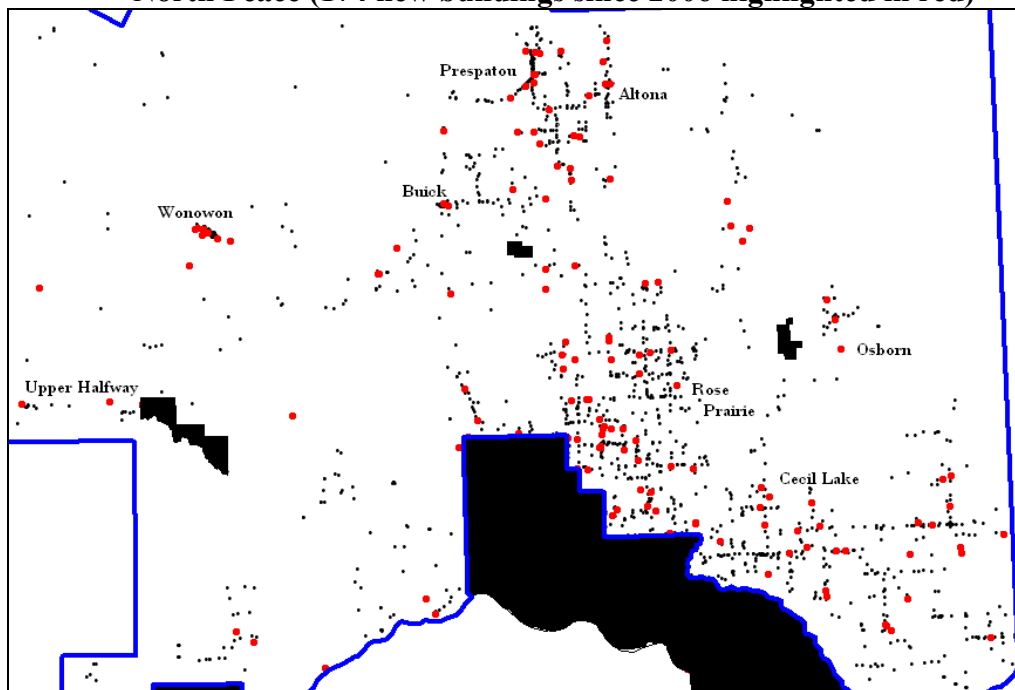
Rural OCP area	Ave Hhld size	2011		2016		2021	
		Pop	Dwell	Pop	Dwell	Pop	Dwell
Electoral Area B	3.2	5,149	1,609	5,921	1,850	6,809	2,128
Electoral Area D	2.7	2,177	806	2,340	867	2,516	932
Electoral Area E	2.6	1,115	429	1,242	478	1,335	513
Total ROCP	--	8,481	2,844	9,503	3,195	10,660	3,573

The approximate location of existing dwellings is shown in the map below:

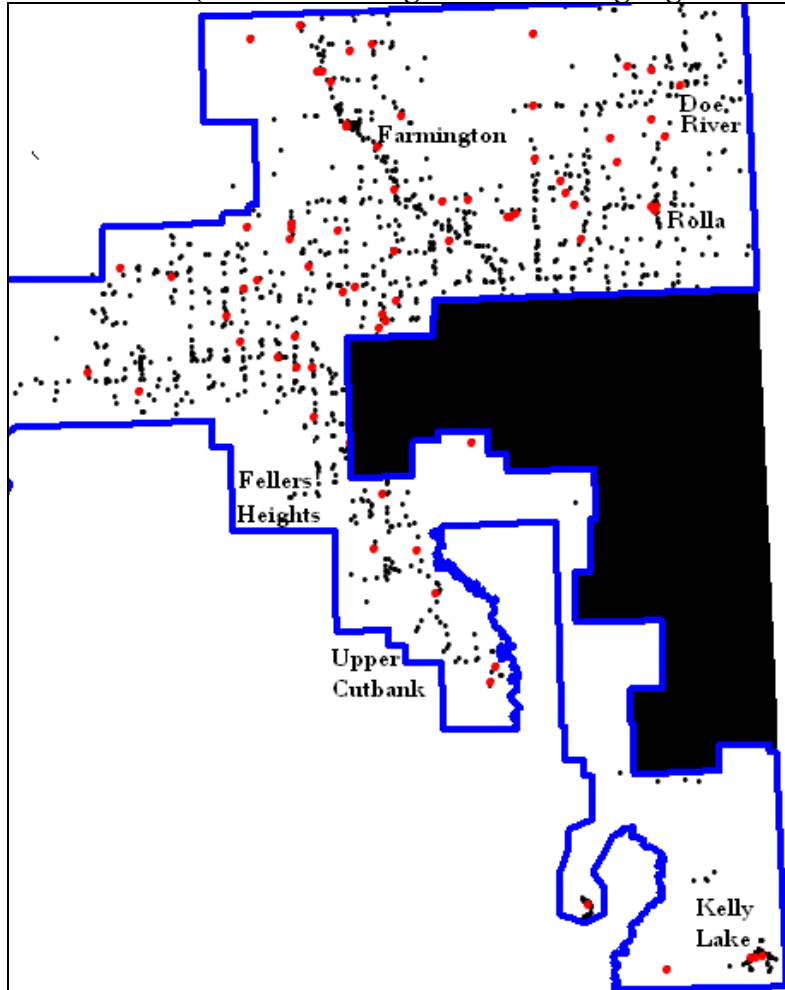


Since 2006, there have been about 261 new buildings erected in this area (this number is derived from new civic addresses, so it could include industrial facilities and other non-residential units).

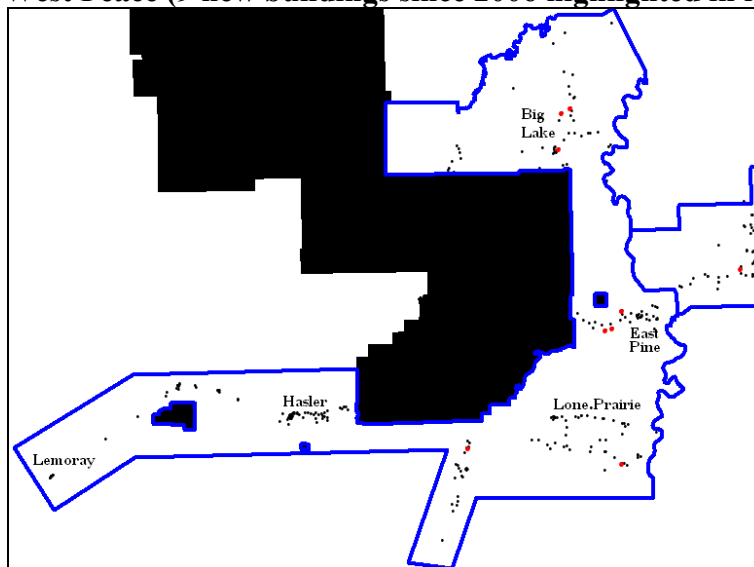
**North Peace (174 new buildings since 2006 highlighted in red)**



**South Peace (78 new buildings since 2006 highlighted in red)**



**West Peace (9 new buildings since 2006 highlighted in red)**



## 1.6 PRRD Housing Needs Study, 2001-2031

A housing demand study published in 2003 by The Real Estate Foundation of BC and the Canadian Land Centre estimated the Peace River Regional District's housing needs to 2031. The report projected an overall increase in population of about 0.6% annually between 2001 and 2031 for the entire Regional District (municipalities plus all rural areas). Given the existing demographic and housing profiles and trends, the report anticipates an average household size of 2.2 persons per household by 2031. To accommodate this population growth, as well as the existing population living with a smaller number of people in their household, the report concludes that there will be construction of 7,980 new owner-occupied dwellings (6,630 single-detached dwellings + 1,240 other ground-oriented dwellings + 110 apartment/condominiums) and 2,130 new rental units (1,150 apartment units + 570 single-detached dwellings + 410 other ground-oriented dwellings). Beyond these new units, individual dwellings within the existing housing stock may need to be repair or replaced.

This Housing Needs Study was conducted in 2003 and used demographic estimates by BC Stats. Since the report was written the 2006 census results have been released. While the report estimated an annual 0.56% population increase between 2001 and 2006, as well as an annual 1.6% increase in dwellings, the Statistics Canada census showed an annual 1.2% in people and 1.1% annual increase in dwellings. BC Stats estimated an annual 1.1% increase in people and an annual 1.2% increase in households.

## 2.0 Implications for Rural Official Community Plan

Pursuant to section 877(1) of the *Local Government Act*, the OCP must illustrate “the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years”.

Based on this demographics study, and using the high growth scenarios of 3% annual growth in Electoral Area ‘B’ and 1.5% in Electoral Areas ‘D’ & ‘E’, projections to 2016 and 2021 show there should be opportunity for 633 dwellings in 2016 and 1,011 dwellings by 2021. While this sustained growth rate, every year until 2021, is unlikely and has not occurred since the 2006 census, 3 years ago, this growth scenario is selected because it represents an extreme yet plausible scenario. It would mean that both rural areas of Electoral Areas ‘D’ and ‘E’ halt their de-population by attracting new residents, retaining existing population, and allowing for off-spring from local families to remain in the area.

This growth scenario does not consider the impacts a large project, such as the proposed Site C dam. Should such a project go ahead during the lifetime of this Rural Official Community Plan, an update to this demographic report or a separate impact study should be completed and the OCP be amended accordingly.

## 2.1 Accommodating Projected Population

### **North Peace**

There are several fast growing communities in the North Peace, like Prespatou and Upper Halfway. These areas also have a larger proportion of their populations being young people, relative to the slow-growing or declining populations in the southern areas. Additional lots that can accommodate rural residential uses are needed in these areas. Because there are multiple stakeholders in these areas, all those who are affected need to work together (these stakeholders can include the PRRD, community members, landowners interested in accommodating population growth on their land, and the Agricultural Land Commission). Other options that should be considered include small lots connected to a community sewage system and manufactured home parks.

### **South Peace & West Peace**

Population levels in these areas have been declining. While there are some new houses, there are also some households that have been bought out by resource extraction companies, declining household sizes, and a declining proportion of young people. To accommodate new residential growth, the communities must retain existing population and attract new-comers. To accomplish this quality of life factors must compete with the municipalities and other areas. Quality of life can be increased with new or improved services (e.g. telecommunications, transportation), and recreational opportunities. Economic development that provides jobs or income for residents could be encouraged while the factors that detract from quiet, rural lifestyles could be discouraged. When young people are willing to stay in the community they could be supported.