

3.3.5 Electoral Area D (Falkland and Area)

The terrain of Electoral Area D is unique, in that it offers a countryside ambiance, rather than a lakeside setting. In addition, there are strong economic links with the North Okanagan, as many people in Falkland commute, or shop, there. Forestry and agriculture dominate the regional economy, and several residents of Falkland work at the Riverside sawmill in Armstrong. In Rancho, there is a mix of rural and suburban lifestyles, with a growing proportion of retirees and summer home owners. Generally speaking, the communities of Falkland and area are very cohesive, and characterized by a high degree of community service and volunteerism.

The area is very scenic and pastoral, but still offers few tourism attractions to those passing through. Some visitors camp at small local campgrounds or nearby forestry campsites, and there are several trails for horseback riding and hiking, but they are not well-publicized. The annual Falkland Stampede and sled dog races generate seasonal interest by non-locals, and in the past local sports fishing was relatively popular, although it appears to have waned.

Falkland is an attractive town, however, with good signage and interesting appeal. The town is bisected by Highway #97, but as most attractions such as the museum, are located south of the highway, this does not have a negative impact in terms of tourism. The Kelowna Pacific Railway also passes through Falkland on the CN rail line, however it offers cargo service only.

In the absence of a visitor information centre, public washrooms or other tourism amenities, the residents of Falkland and the other communities of Area D need to undertake significant and concerted development, if they want to attract tourism. Community perception may stand in the way of this, however, as Falkland and area does not have a historical dependence on tourism, and many residents still do not see it as a viable source of economic growth.

Table 3.3-5: Tourism SWOT Summary of Area D and Falkland

| |
|--|
| STRENGTHS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural setting is attractive, and offers opportunities for riding and hiking.• Falkland town center is condensed and offers natural focus for visitors.• Good drive-by market.• Festivals include the Rodeo, Dog sled race, Snow Pitch day, Daisy days and the Farmers market.• Largest flag in Canada, the Pillar. |
| WEAKNESSES |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Major transportation corridor limits road use (a lot of trucks).• Lacks important tourism amenities.• No coordinated tourism initiatives to boost tourism and recreation.• Little access opportunities to the alpine/sub-alpine.• "Hidden" features such as trails are not well publicized. |

OPPORTUNITIES

- Hang gliding location is noted as challenging and ideal for competition.
- Events, craft and market-related venues.
- Agricultural tours.
- Annual dog sledding races.

CHALLENGES

- Perception as a farm and forest sector community.
- Community perception that tourism and recreation does not contribute to local economy.