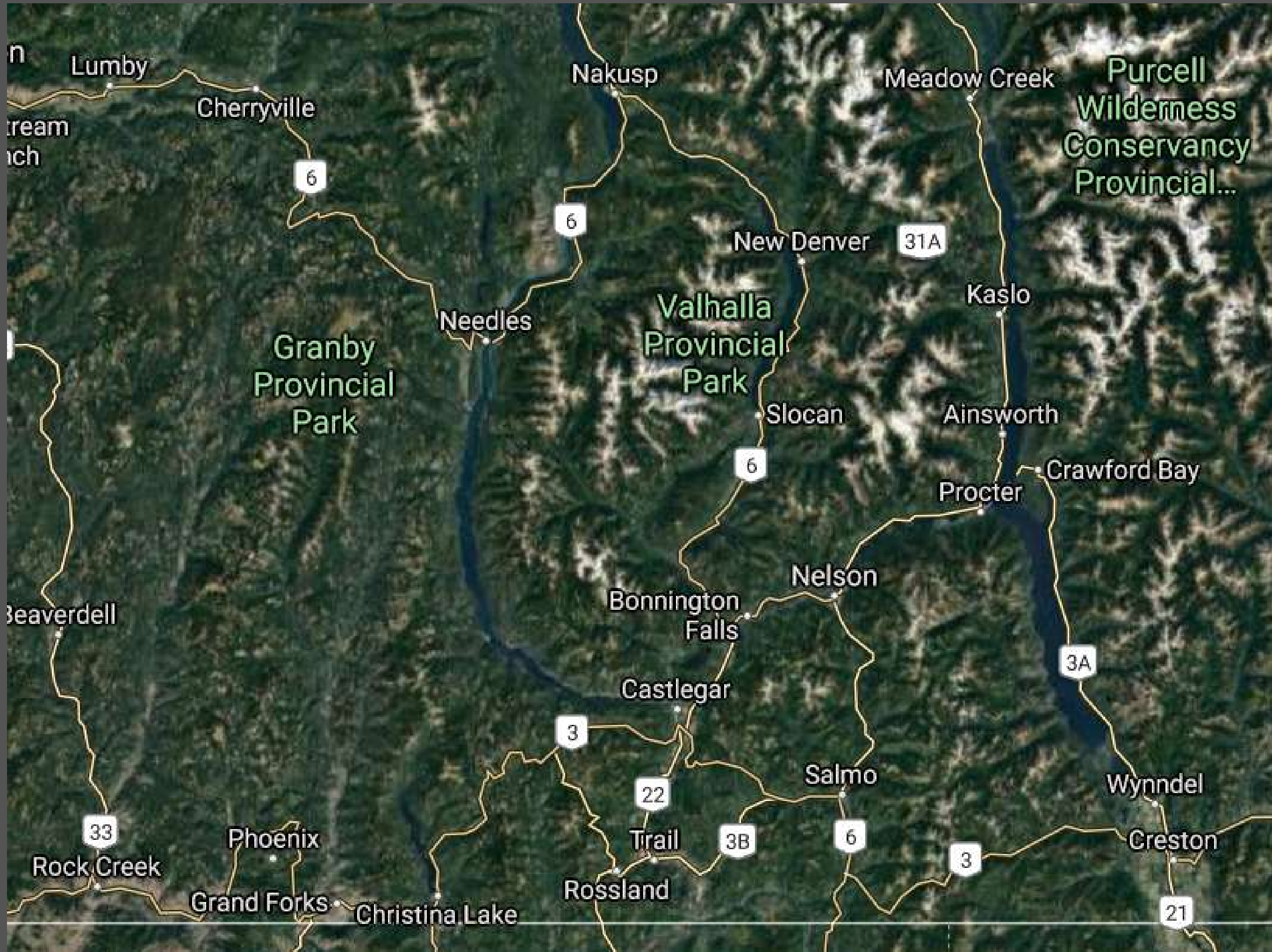


Peer Health Equity

**barriers to access
for people who use drugs
in the WKB region**



I gratefully acknowledge
that I live, work and play
as an uninvited settler
on the unceded territories
of the Ktunaxa,
Syilx, and
Sinixt peoples.

PAIN labelling stigma
SELF-MEDICATION

STONEWALLING judgment EXCLUSION

avoidance

minimizing inadequate services DISMISSIVE

trauma

NEGLECT

POOR COMMUNICATION

ABANDONMENT

allies/enemies

have you ever avoided seeking medical treatment because of fear of mistreatment?

"I know that if I am marked as a drug user then I will not be able to access opiates if I have chronic pain, and that I will just receive systematically poorer treatment. When I had a substantial coke habit, I never had pressing physical needs addressed, or just general concerns about arrhythmias or how my heart was doing. I just would not disclose that to the doctor, so I never went, even at points when my nose was acutely bad and I should have received care."

"Because of the treatment that I've had in the hospital and the way that the doctors or the nurses talk to me, that is one place I do not want to go ever. And it's very hard for me."

"always"

"Yeah...I hate going to doctors. I don't like talking to people I don't know about my problems"

"Ever since I became an IV user when I was 30, you just don't receive healthcare and you make sure to dodge the places where you do have to receive health care."

safety peers

dignity listening

communication

collaboration privacy trust

choice respect

**can you tell me about a time
you felt cared-for when receiving health care?**

"He talked to me about everything he was going to do and that made a big difference. He told me what he was going to do as well, before he touched me, and that's a big one with women."

"feeling normal, feeling important, and getting what I need"

"I'm so glad she does her job properly, she knows everything about me, I don't lie to her, even in regards to drug use...(with) other doctors, you basically have to tell them everything all over again, they don't even read your file. She does. Out of every doctor I've ever had, shes the best, hands-down...She phones me and asks me stuff that she finds out and asks me my opinions. I've never had somebody better than her"

what do you think would most **improve** the experiences of PWLLE accessing health care?

- transparency and respectful communication
- front-line advocates / peer workers
- better working conditions for health care workers
- trauma-informed spaces
- non-punitive / consensual information sharing
- second chances

”Just a little bit of kindness and human decency is transformational”

next steps...

participants will be invited to participate
in an upcoming workshop series in June 2021
to develop an information tool
for peers and/or providers