



Media Release

For immediate release

East Kootenay Community and Heritage Credit Union Merger Approved By Members

BRITISH COLUMBIA, Dec 19 2022 – The member-elected Boards of both East Kootenay Community Credit Union (EKC) and Heritage Credit Union are pleased to announce that all of the special resolutions presented to members during November and December of this year, have been passed with the overwhelming support of members at both credit unions.

With multiple motions passed, the two credit unions will merge, effective January 1, 2023 – and will be operating under the legal name of “**StellerVista Credit Union**”.

"While both Boards supported this merger unanimously, and our B.C. regulator gave us consent to merge, it's the support of the members that matters most. That's a significant benefit of belonging to a credit union - you really do get a choice and that choice is made right here, not in some far away corporate tower", says Joleen Kinakin, Board Chair at Heritage Credit Union.

Lynnette Wray, Board Chair at EKC echoes Joleen's enthusiasm, "We have been bringing this vision to life for a long time now, and to know that our members support the move forward and are with us in the journey to keep local banking local... well, this is something we are very pleased to see".

The merger will bring together seven rural BC communities in the Kootenay and Boundary regions, including: Greenwood, Castlegar, Slocan Park, Cranbrook, Fernie, Sparwood, and Elkford.

"We see the connection between our communities, and in these rural areas, how interdependent we all are on one another. Our mission is to ensure that our communities not only keep what they have built, but that we can grow and improve it for generations to come," said Jody Burk, CEO at EKC.

While the merger is official as of the new year, the plan is to ease into the changes that will occur to ensure all staff and members have a reasonable and fair period of adjustment.

"Our staff and our members deserve a well-conceived, well-communicated process of reasonable change," concluded Doug Eveneshen, CEO at Heritage. "First up is to reconfirm that there will be no job losses due to this merger. What's more, our goal is to grow, to become the first choice of local families, business owners and young people moving into the region. That starts in 2023."

For more information and interviews, please contact:

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