Contradictions in hinterland development: challenging the local development ideal in Northern British Columbia

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Abstract

Northern British Columbia, Canada, has undergone a considerable economic, social, and cultural transformation over recent decades. Specifically, economic and political restructuring processes have destabilized commitments to community infrastructure and exacerbated the variability of boom and bust patterns across the north. This paper, drawn from ongoing regional research, provides a critique of emerging arguments that advocate for greater levels of local control over northern development to address these development challenges. Our research reveals strong sentiments from northern people and agencies to construct ‘made in the north’ solutions. Findings illustrate, however, that the assumptions inherent within such calls for local and regional development require critical review.