
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2011JTI0056-000378
April 15, 2011

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

\$9 million for fight against mountain pine beetle

VICTORIA – The Province is continuing its fight against the mountain pine beetle epidemic with a \$9-million infusion to help B.C.’s three beetle action coalitions continue their front-line battle.

The three coalitions have been developing and funding projects to help mitigate the current and anticipated economic, environmental and social impacts of the pine beetle epidemic. Now, the Southern Interior, Omineca and Cariboo-Chilcotin beetle action coalitions will each receive \$3 million over three years to continue these regional efforts.

The mountain pine beetle has already affected an estimated 17.5 million hectares of pine forest, affecting economies and livelihoods all over the province. Since 2001, the Province has invested more than \$756 million to battle the mountain pine beetle, mitigate future impacts and promote regional economic development.

Quotes:

Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation –

“We’ve come a long way in fighting this infestation, but there’s still a long way to go. Industries and communities all over B.C. continue to suffer from the effects of the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and this funding will help that battle continue.”

Donna Barnett, Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA, and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Economic Development –

“The mountain pine beetle problem continues to be one of the biggest issues B.C.’s communities face, and when I fly over the Cariboo-Chilcotin, it’s not hard to spot the vast areas of dead forest. Our beetle action coalitions have done amazing work, and this funding will help ensure they can continue to reduce the impacts of the mountain pine beetle and help communities succeed.”

Rhona Martin, chair of the Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition –

“We’ve made a lot of progress on some of the issues associated with the mountain pine beetle epidemic, but we have to remain vigilant. It’s clear the Province recognizes this is a serious issue and I want to thank government for this funding, as it is going to help us continue to provide a co-ordinated voice for Southern Interior communities on this critical socio-economic and environmental challenge.”

Don Bassermann, chair of the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition –

“This funding means the coalition can continue to implement the strategies and projects that have been so important to this region, helping us achieve the long-term goals that will provide strength and resilience across all sectors and communities in the region.”

Kerry Cook, chair of the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition –

“This is great news for the Cariboo-Chilcotin region. This funding is going to help us continue to bring together the natural resource and economic development expertise we need to minimize the potential economic impacts of the beetle epidemic, and to make the best of the opportunities available for communities.”

Quick Facts:

- The life span of an individual mountain pine beetle is about one year.
- The mountain pine beetle in B.C. is as far-ranging as Fort St. John to the north, the Alberta border to the east, Smithers to the west and the United States border to the south.
- The Province and the beetle action coalitions have been working on a number of ways to lessen the impact of the mountain pine beetle epidemic on local economies, including projects that promote community forests and value-added wood production, green energy development, log-home and timber-frame sector expansion, and bio-energy sector development and promotion.
- The three coalitions were first formed in 2005 to help communities lessen the impact of the mountain pine beetle through projects that create partnerships, diversify local economies, restore forest resources and sustain key industries.

Learn More:

To learn more about the Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition, go to: www.sibacs.com

To learn more about the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition, go to: www.ominecacoalition.ca

To learn more about the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition, go to: www.c-cbac.com

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