

systems in order to provide overall economic, social, and environmental benefits.

5. Provide training and certification for installation and systems operation to help build regional expertise in alternative energy.

The growth of this sector will rely upon the wealth of alternative energy resources in the OBAC region but it will also rely upon the rich human resources and ingenuity of the region. Further engagement with and between leaders of OBAC communities and First Nations to identify regional and local interests and opportunities and make new relationships a reality is a very high priority. Alternative energy projects provide excellent opportunities for positive and mutually beneficial engagement at the community level.

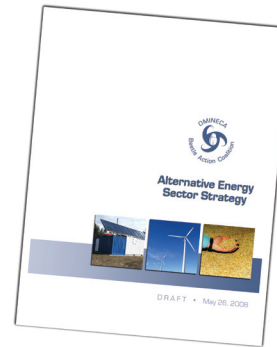
Important actions address the need for access to cost effective beetle-killed timber, research, and public and private public investment. A few of the 38 actions include:

- Consider allocating the various types of wood fibre to energy and non-energy industries based on the overall social and economic benefits;
- Establish new forest tenures that provide the opportunity to use roadside residue from ongoing forestry operations;
- Locate the new chair for Advanced Bioenergy Technologies at UNBC and survey the biomass energy industry to identify key research needs and priorities;
- Assess feasibility of planting fast-growing tree species on some parcels affected by MPB to grow a long-term biomass energy crop;
- Engage with First Nations communities and work on areas of mutual concern and interest relating to the use of alternative energy technologies;
- Develop innovative financing options to encourage new alternative energy projects and consider the creation of a regional alternative energy utility that would develop and operate energy projects throughout the region;
- Consider direct public investment in large scale alternative energy projects can provide a significant portion of the province's future electrical needs;

- Create innovative education and training opportunities to prepare technicians and professionals for the development of this new sector;
- Remove unnecessary barriers to the use of alternative energy from local government planning.

*These actions and overall implementation of this strategy will require key and timely decisions by the provincial and federal governments. Growing a robust alternative energy sector in the OBAC region as part of a stronger and more resilient future will rely upon the collaborative efforts of the many interests in this sector.*

To obtain a copy of the Minerals and Mining Sector Strategy please visit our web site at:  
[www.ominecoalition.ca](http://www.ominecoalition.ca)  
or contact us:

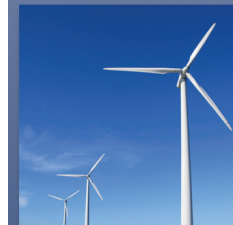


For information on the Coalition please visit our web site at [www.ominecoalition.ca](http://www.ominecoalition.ca) or contact us:

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## Alternative Energy Sector Strategy



June 4, 2008

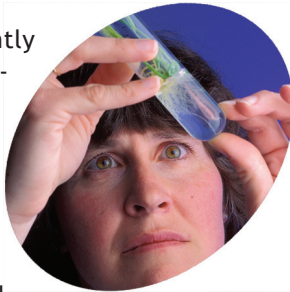
## What is OBAC?

In September 2005 the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) received financial support and mandate from the BC Government. OBAC is building a diversification plan and taking action that supports long-term sustainability for the Highway 16 communities and reduces the impacts of the mountain pine beetle. OBAC is led by and is accountable to local communities and the provincial government. OBAC works in partnership with First Nations, professionals, researchers, plus all sectors and levels of government.



## Why is OBAC Important?

British Columbia is currently experiencing the largest recorded mountain pine beetle outbreak in recorded history. This forest health epidemic is causing widespread mortality of lodgepole pine, the interior's most abundant commercial tree species. Strategies must be developed to mitigate the social, economic and environmental consequences of this epidemic now and in the future.



## What is the Alternative Energy Strategy?

The purpose of this strategy is to identify what actions need to be taken by the provincial and federal governments in order to support responsible and sustainable growth in the region's alternative energy sector. This strategy also identifies what actions local governments, First Nations, and industry leaders can take individually, collectively and in concert with senior governments

to achieve this goal. Alternative energy technologies that can be employed in the region include biomass for heat and power generation, wind power, small and micro-hydropower, geothermal power, geo-exchange systems, solar PV, solar thermal energy and energy from waste. The region is particularly well positioned to produce wood biomass based energy. We have very productive forests and excellent forest management and harvesting capabilities.



Currently the alternative energy sector in the region is small however; there is considerable potential for growth. At present there is a very high demand for energy worldwide and both demand and prices are expected to continue to increase. The Alternative Energy Strategy is one of the first strategies to be developed, in part because the sector can provide substantial economic and environmental benefits to the region.



Our hope is that this Alternative Energy Strategy inspires the private and public sectors to drive toward enhanced use of alternative energy for industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential applications. The communities look forward to working with the alternative energy sector and welcome the growth of this important sector in our region.

## Vision, Objectives and Recommendations

OBAC communities envision a future in which energy production from alternative sources is efficient, sustainable, uses local resources effectively, and provides substantial benefits to the economy and environment of the region. An Alternative Energy Sector Working Group

defined objectives, recommendations and proposed actions to support the growth of this sector. The six objectives are as follows:

1. Meet a significant proportion of the region's energy needs from alternative energy sources in order to reduce or eliminate dependence on imported fossil fuels for heating and power generation, and to retain wealth generated from energy related products and services in the region.
2. Develop regional expertise in research, development, manufacturing and installation of alternative energy technologies that can be used regionally and exported elsewhere in Canada and to the world.
3. Make use of available fibre, including the fibre resulting from the mountain pine beetle epidemic, to produce bioenergy.
4. Retain regional expertise in the forest sector by creating new forest product opportunities in the alternative energy sector.
5. Grow regional capacities to train and retain the required workforce.
6. Contribute to the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels.

Recommendations and actions have been developed based on these objectives. Five recommendations and 38 key actions are proposed that will support sustainable growth in the production and use of alternative energy in the OBAC region. Implementing the recommendations and actions in this strategy will position the OBAC region to be a leader in the development and use of alternative energy.

The five recommendations are:

1. Remove impediments to the flow of wood fibre and other fibrous fuels to biomass energy projects.
2. Conduct research on alternative energy opportunities and make relevant information readily available to industry and government decision makers.
3. Provide 'Leadership by Example' alternative energy programs and initiatives at federal, provincial, and local government levels.
4. Increase the regional use of alternative energy