



OMINECA BEETLE ACTION COALITION (OBAC)

News Release

OBAC Interim Executive Meets and Makes Progress on Setup

December 23, 2005

Burns Lake – The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) Interim Executive held a meeting on December 1st in Burns Lake following closely on the heels of the municipal election in late November. Commenting on the December 1st meeting, Interim OBAC Chair Len Fox said “we are making good progress on setting up a structure and direction for OBAC that promote regional thinking and action”.

Working with the Interim Manager hired in November, the Interim Executive established at their December 1st meeting the Committee’s decision-making procedure and the membership of the OBAC Executive Committee. Consistent with the OBAC’s proposal approved by the Provincial Government in September, the OBAC Executive membership will include each OBAC Mayor and the Chair of each of the two OBAC Regional Districts and three non-elected members representing land use, industry and the environment. The Interim Executive will also continue to explore with First Nations leaders the best arrangement for working together to find regional solutions and opportunities that promote prosperity throughout the OBAC area. The Interim Executive believes that “by acting collectively we can be more effective”.

The Executive Committee membership and its decision-making procedure are key elements that will be included in the OBAC’s Charter, to be formalized later this winter. Until that time, the Committee will continue to operate as an Interim Executive working on formalizing the OBAC, identifying regional needs and opportunities and initiating activities that meet these.

To this end, the Interim Executive is actively following up on a number of emerging opportunities and is already undertaking a few key projects that will inform OBAC’s future work and enable the Coalition to understand and respond to regional needs and priorities. Mayor Sharon Smith observes that OBAC will need to “look towards life after the beetle” and Mayor Jim Davidson notes that it will be important for OBAC to “learn about each other and about the region by doing”. The Interim Executive has begun gathering input and ideas on the role of OBAC and the Interim Executive is looking forward to working with community leaders, First Nations and key stakeholders in the New Year to facilitate their meaningful contribution to charting OBAC’s future direction. “The input that we have received so far reinforces that we must think and act regionally and I am encouraged by the Interim Executive members’ commitment to doing this together”, said Rosanne Murray, Interim Vice-Chair of OBAC.

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