



OMINECA BEETLE ACTION COALITION (OBAC)

News Release

Omineca Beetle Action Coalition Prepares For Discussions with Communities and First Nations

January 27, 2006

For Immediate Release

Burns Lake – At its January 21st meeting, the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) Interim Board agreed upon the draft framework for the organization and continued to make progress on operating principles, goals and objectives. These are important foundations for the OBAC to be able to work together with local communities, First Nations and supporting partners to build an economic diversification plan and take action that supports long-term economic sustainability for the region.

The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition has been established to enable the communities of the Highway 16 west region to coordinate their response to the challenges and seize the opportunities created by the bark beetle epidemic in our forests. A coalition led by and accountable to local communities and working in partnership with all sectors and levels of government is well positioned to address these challenges and to create a bright future together. The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition looks forward to working with all partners to build an economic diversification plan and take action that supports long-term economic sustainability for the region. The Coalition believes that by acting collectively we can be more effective.

Consistent with this belief, in the very near future the Interim Board will be inviting First Nations leaders and organizations to discuss where there might be opportunities to work together and to find arrangements that can lead to shared benefit and prosperity for all citizens throughout the Coalition area. The Interim Board will also be convening discussions in February and March to seek input from community leaders across the Coalition area on the needs and priorities that should be addressed in an economic diversification plan that can support long-term economic sustainability in the region.

In September 2005 the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) received an \$800,000 grant from the Provincial Government to build an economic diversification plan that supports long-term economic sustainability for the Highway 16 west communities and region and reduces the economic impacts of the mountain pine beetle. The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition includes the communities and region between Prince George and Smithers, currently led by an Interim Board of the regions Mayors, Regional District Chairs, and a land-use planning, environmental stewardship and industry representative. For more information about the OBAC contact the OBAC Interim Manager in Prince George at 564-4115 ext 260 or, your local Mayor or Regional District Chair.

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