



## NEWS RELEASE

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# OBAC Releases Alternative Energy Strategy

**Prince George, BC** – The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) today released its Alternative Energy Strategy. The purpose of the strategy is to identify what actions need to be taken by the provincial and federal governments to support responsible and sustainable growth in the region's alternative energy sector. The strategy contains 6 objectives, 5 recommendations and 38 proposed action items aimed at supporting the goal of responsible and sustainable growth in the region's alternative energy sector.

The recommendations include:

1. Remove impediments to the flow of wood fiber and other fibrous fuels to biomass energy projects.
2. Conduct more applied research on alternative energy opportunities so that we can pour concrete on here in our region on projects and, make the knowledge that we gain readily available to industry, community and government decisions makers.
3. Encourage governments at all levels to provide 'Leadership by Example' on alternative energy.
4. Increase the regional use of alternative energy systems to provide overall economic, social and environmental benefits.
5. Provide training and certification for installation and maintenance of alternative energy systems for safe operation of those systems and to help build regional expertise in alternative energy.

In releasing the OBAC Alternative Energy Strategy on behalf of the Board, OBAC Chair, Mayor Len Fox stated "through the development of this strategy we have determined that there is a total of 150 MW of alternative electrical power generation capacity in place or planned for the OBAC region and roadside wood residue available for another 200 MW. This suggests there are many opportunities for further development of biomass energy projects. Based on the current estimated use of 400 MW, the region could become a net generator and exporter of electricity if other resources such as wind and small scale hydro were also developed. This is an especially important opportunity for communities in our region that rely upon very expensive fossil fuel imports to heat and power their communities. Alternative energy sources also present us with the opportunity to generate and keep wealth closer to home. Expanded development of the Alternative Energy sector in the OBAC region can also be used to leverage other valuable diversification opportunities but growing the sector faces some challenges. OBAC is convinced that with the help of the provincial and federal governments and the involvement of the private sector the challenges can be resolved and that this sector can grow to stabilize jobs and also provide new energy, new jobs and new prosperity."

OBAC proposes that the 'next steps' include: working with a focus group to quickly prepare an action plan for this strategy that gives more detail on implementation; working with senior governments and other implementation allies to implement the action plan; periodically assess if this strategy needs updating as the opportunities in this sector continue to evolve; and, integrate actions across the other OBAC strategies as they are developed.

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