



NEWS RELEASE

October 24, 2008

New Chair appointed as OBAC holds its Annual General Meeting

Prince George, BC – Councillor Don Bassermann from the City of Prince George has been appointed the Chair of the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition. The move comes as a result of the OBAC Annual General Meeting, which took place recently in Prince George. Bassermann takes over from Vanderhoof Mayor Len Fox who previously announced he would not be seeking re-election in this November. Mayor Rob MacDougall of Fort St. James was appointed Vice Chair.

“I’m delighted to take over from Len who has done an outstanding job in keeping the Board focused on our goal of building sustainable communities across the OBAC region,” says Bassermann. “We have already released two of our strategies and have more planned for release this fall as we continue our strategic planning efforts.”

Also appointed to the OBAC Executive are Burns Lake Mayor Bernice Magee, Mackenzie Mayor Stephanie Killam, and Councillor Cress Farrow of Smithers. OBAC includes twelve communities and the Regional District’s of Fraser-Fort George and Bulkley-Valley.

OBAC also reflected on the support it provided for the effort to electrify the Highway 37 corridor. Electrification of the Highway 37 corridor was one of a number of recommendations in OBAC’s Minerals & Mining Strategy released in June 2008. “It is a significant initiative and it was great to hear the Premier make the positive announcement during the UBCM in September,” says Bassermann. “We were pleased to lend our voice to the many who wanted to see this move forward.”

In other news, the Board endorsed moving ahead with the “Community Transition Toolkit”. This toolkit will help community leaders and senior staff prepare for community transition in response to changes in local resource industries and local economies. The toolkit has been developed in partnership with the Community Development Institute at UNBC and the BC Ministry of Community Development.

The Board will also be working to strengthen alliances with First Nations community leaders across the region including participating in a Joint Economic Development Forum that the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako is hosting on October 27th. OBAC will be supporting follow up to this event and will also host a similar session for the eastern and central OBAC region in January 2009.

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