

**Ministry of
Community and Rural Development**

**2009/10 – 2011/12
SERVICE PLAN UPDATE**

September 2009



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



Equipping local governments with the tools they need to create more livable and economically resilient communities is at the heart of Ministry of Community and Rural Development's *2009/10-2011/12 Service Plan Update*. This Ministry is tasked with meeting the diverse needs of communities, whether large or small, urban or rural, in every corner of British Columbia.

Though the current economic challenges that emerged in the fall of 2008 have required a quick and decisive response across government, as well as a shifting of priorities, our objectives remain the same as those we identified in our original service plan. We aim to empower communities and regions to achieve their visions for the future; to keep rural communities strong; and to assist forest-dependent and pine beetle-affected communities in adapting to a changing forest sector.

By working with all levels of government and through valued partnerships with organizations such as the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and regional development trusts, we take a collaborative approach to community development. We must work together as communities, and as governments, to achieve our shared vision of a strong and healthy province in the face of global economic uncertainty and growing competition from emerging economies.

One of this Ministry's top priorities is to ensure that rural communities, as a primary source of wealth generation in B.C., continue to be good places to live, work and raise a family. Although our obligation is to both rural and urban elements of the B.C. economy, this Ministry focuses on fostering successful, competitive economies outside the lower mainland with a view of maintaining the primary wealth generation that fuels the provincial economy. By helping rural communities achieve their full social and economic potential, we are supporting the whole economy, the whole province.

Forest-dependent communities being impacted by the current challenges in the forest sector are also a primary concern for us, as are communities that will soon have to deal with the impacts of diminished timber supply due to the pine beetle epidemic. In an effort to help these communities survive and thrive, we have instituted programs that support individual displaced workers and assist local governments with economic diversification.

These include the Job Opportunities Program (JOP), which to date has helped over 1,800 displaced resource workers find temporary employment in sectors facing skills shortages. The JOP keeps laid-off forest workers working while doing important work for rural regions and communities. Examples of JOP programs include: ecosystem restoration; interface fire protection; trail construction and maintenance; invasive plant control; and providing certificate training to participants hired to upgrade and restore heritage tourist attractions, to name a few.

Donna Barnett, our recently appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery will further enhance our ability to meet the needs of affected communities.

We are also working hard to assist communities in developing and improving infrastructure through projects that support economic growth, minimize environmental impact, provide cleaner air and

water, and keep British Columbians working. By accelerating the distribution of a number of funding streams to local governments, as well as having met our four-year commitment to double small community and regional district grants, we have helped create a foundation of resilience and prosperity on which to build as we move forward.

My hope is that the strategies outlined in this plan will further empower local governments across this province to bring their visions to life – visions that are as diverse as they are significant. Whether the goal is to build local economies, reduce greenhouse gas emissions or improve community infrastructure, this Ministry strives to support every community in developing better places to live, work and invest.

The *Ministry of Community and Rural Development 2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update* was prepared under my direction, in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.



Honourable Bill Bennett
Minister of Community and Rural Development
August 24, 2009

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Purpose of the Ministry

The purpose of the Ministry of Community and Rural Development is to equip communities across British Columbia to build strong, competitive local and regional economies that support sustainable and socially-responsible communities. The needs of urban and rural communities differ from one another and it is important that the way in which government works with all communities is tailored to their individual needs. The Ministry supports communities in reaching their full potential by providing a broad range of tools and resources. These include:



Photo: Picture BC

- A legislative framework enabling local governments to govern effectively and be accountable to their citizens.
- Tools that foster effective government structures, services, land-use planning and engagement in consultation with municipalities, regional districts and First Nations to achieve local goals.
- Programs, funding and strategic support that enable local communities to grow economically, construct needed infrastructure, improve air and water quality and enhance policing and community safety.
- A single point-of-contact for rural communities to access the resources, advice, and funding they need to help them diversify their economies, overcome barriers to development, and realize their full economic potential.
- Investment in local and regional infrastructure that is flexible in meeting the priorities of urban and rural communities.
- Assistance for forest workers and their families by creating opportunities for transition to retirement, retraining and temporary employment that supports their local economies.
- Leading and coordinating the provincial government's response to the social, economic and environmental effects of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.

The Ministry has realigned its services and supports for rural communities to make them more effective and easier to access. The recently created position of Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery to the Minister of Community and Rural Development will strengthen the Ministry's ability to act on behalf of residents of those parts of the province impacted by the pine beetle epidemic.

The relationship between urban and rural B.C. is one of inter-dependence and the Ministry aims to facilitate and strengthen that relationship. Likewise, the Ministry works to build and strengthen other ties, such as the relationship between local governments, First Nations, federal and provincial bodies,

the private sector, community groups and regional development trusts which include: [Northern Development Initiative Trust](#), [Island Coastal Economic Trust](#) and [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#).

The Ministry is committed to ensuring transparent, flexible, fair and equitable property assessment and review services. This is achieved by supporting policy development and the Province's property assessment processes to ensure the system is competitive and affordable while enhancing economic growth for B.C. property owners.

The Ministry governs three Crown corporations, the [Columbia Basin Trust](#), the [Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#), and the [BC Assessment Authority](#). Further, it administers the [University Endowment Lands](#), an unincorporated community of nearly 4,000 people located between the City of Vancouver and the University of British Columbia. The Ministry also administers the annual [Property Assessment Review Panel](#) program and is responsible for the [Property Assessment Appeal Board](#), the [Farm Assessment Appeal Board](#), the [Islands Trust Fund Board](#) and the [Board of Examiners](#).

Strategic Context

Economic decline in B.C. is expected to continue through 2009 with a return to modest growth in 2010. Risks to B.C.'s economic outlook include a prolonged U.S. recession, continued turmoil in global financial markets, slower global demand for B.C. products, further appreciation of the Canadian dollar, volatility in financial and commodity markets as well as ongoing moderation of domestic demand in B.C.

A slower economy impacts the fiscal capacity of all levels of government. Communities and the Province must work together constructively to find ways to deliver important services for less cost. At a time when our provincial population is expected to grow by over a third in the next three decades¹, it is important that communities retain the capacity to finance the services that are critical to citizens. The Province will be there to help, but the current economic reality will include some hard choices for local government and for the provincial government.

This being said, B.C. communities are better positioned than many others in Canada to endure these adverse economic conditions and to build on their strengths. In recent years, our provincial economy has been outpacing the national average, and the fiscal position of the province is strong, with a triple-A credit rating and a very good ratio of debt to Gross Domestic Product. B.C. communities are fiscally strong, therefore the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia, which pools municipal borrowing and investment needs, also maintains a triple-A credit rating.

For communities across B.C., successfully navigating a challenging economic period will be important. Positioning ourselves to recover quickly will be equally important.

Rural B.C. communities have many advantages, assets and opportunities to build on in areas such as tourism development, film production and green energy, in addition to traditional resource extraction industries that continue to power the provincial economy. British Columbia is emerging as Canada's gateway to the Asia-Pacific. Building on this, the development of the northern transportation corridor further opens the door for increased trade with the Asia-Pacific. For example, the recent port expansion in Prince Rupert will bring real economic benefits to North Coastal communities.

The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games also present an economic opportunity for many B.C. communities, and not just for those hosting Games events. In addition to boosting recognition of B.C. as a prime destination for tourism, immigration and business, the Games also present an opportunity for entrepreneurial communities to showcase their products and services to the world – as well as to build long-lasting business contacts.

We have witnessed in recent years a growing commitment by both citizens and local governments around the province to limit greenhouse gas emissions. To date, 175 B.C. communities, representing over 93 per cent of British Columbians, have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*

¹ BC Stats. *British Columbia Population Projection - P.E.O.P.L.E.* Vol. 33. (July 2008). Page 1.
www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/Project/P33BCIntro.pdf.

since it was presented at the 2007 Union of British Columbia Municipalities annual convention². This level of support across communities for climate action is an important step towards creating a greener British Columbia.

Managing staffing costs has always been one of the prime considerations in maintaining overall government affordability, and since 2001 this government has been diligent in reviewing staff spending each year. This is particularly true in these current economic times. All governments are in the similar position of having to balance spending and service levels against revenues that have declined over the past year in this extraordinary fiscal climate.

Staffing costs can be managed through removal of unfilled positions, retirements, staff efficiencies gained through coordination and collaboration across government, administrative program changes and, if necessary, a reduction in the staffing budget. In the 2010/11 budget, we will be managing staffing costs in the context of the current economic climate, examining all opportunities to continue to reduce these costs where possible. In the 2009/10 budget every effort has been made to preserve high staffing levels for frontline services.

In future years, government will continue to review its staffing budget to ensure those resources are allocated prudently, efficiently and towards government's key priorities.

² BC Stats. *British Columbia Population Projection - P.E.O.P.L.E.* Vol. 33. (July 2008). Page 1.
www.cd.gov.bc.ca/ministry/whatsnew/climate_action_charter_update.htm.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

The Ministry is comprised of the [Local Government Department](#), the [RuralBC Secretariat](#), the [Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division](#), the [Community Development Trust](#), the Property Assessment Services Branch, and the Management Services Division. The *2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update* focuses on supporting communities to achieve the following goals:

1. Communities and regions are empowered to achieve their visions for the future.
2. Wealth creation from rural B.C. is supported.
3. Forest-dependent and pine beetle-affected communities are assisted in adapting to a changing forest sector.
4. Communities are equipped with innovative tools that enable them to work toward environmental sustainability.

Goal 1: Communities and regions are empowered to achieve their visions for the future

Supporting communities as they pursue their unique goals is an important role of the Ministry. The Ministry will continue to develop programs and services that provide accessible, flexible tools for communities so they can be accountable to their citizens, diversify their economies, be environmentally responsible, and provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians to live.

Objective 1.1: Community governance is open, flexible, and effective

British Columbians expect their local government to provide a sense of community, sustainable infrastructure and the day-to-day services they need and desire. The Ministry supports local governments in serving their citizens effectively by providing broadly empowering local government legislation, the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*. These include important checks and balances to ensure local decision-making is open, effective and inclusive of opportunities for ongoing citizen involvement.

Strategies

- Provide a modern and empowering policy, legislative and regulatory framework to meet local government needs.
- Encourage local governments to build citizen capacity and engagement in local decision-making.

- Assist local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, boundary extensions, planning and restructuring.
- Revitalize the regional district governance framework.

Objective 1.2: Local governments have the capacity to meet the service needs of their residents

British Columbians expect their local governments to provide essential services such as safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment, policing, crime prevention and community safety. With economic challenges and the need to renew aging infrastructure, the Ministry contributes expertise and targeted funding to B.C. communities for infrastructure planning and construction, community safety and local government restructuring.

Strategies

- Provide the tools and resources to help local governments maintain the human and fiscal capacity needed for self-government, including an efficient and well-functioning property assessment system.
- Administer [Small Community and Regional District Grants](#) to local governments.
- Provide locally appropriate infrastructure funding and planning support through a range of Ministry [programs](#).
- Promote targeted funding for policing, crime prevention and community safety by returning 100 per cent of net [traffic fine revenues](#) to local governments.
- Continue to work with local governments to create healthy, active, green, and age-friendly communities and build respectful relationships with First Nations.

Performance Measure 1: Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes	149 ¹	146	146	146

Data Source: Local governments provide the Ministry with their financial data at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry's reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received are highly accurate.

¹ This is an estimate based on responses by the 85 per cent of municipal governments that have provided their data to the Ministry as of July 15, 2009. As such, this figure is subject to amendment as new data becomes available. The final tally is expected in fall 2009. In 2008/09, B.C. had 160 municipalities, therefore the 2008/09 result of 149 represents 93.1 per cent of municipalities.

Discussion

Property taxes constitute the majority of municipalities' annual revenue. These targets are set to demonstrate the Ministry's efforts to maximize the number of resilient municipalities that are collecting their current year taxes to provide key services to their residents.

The Ministry assists communities with financial management and in assessing and modifying the community tax base. By monitoring the number of municipalities that may be unable to collect at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes, the Ministry is able to identify those communities who may need support from the Ministry in assessing their financial capacity and addressing challenges.

Objective 1.3 Communities and regions are playing their role in growing their economies

To keep the provincial economy strong, the Province will collaborate with communities and regional districts, the federal government and other partners to build local and regional economic strategies that work. This means engaging communities to strengthen their economies by enhancing the assets that make them attractive places to live, work and invest. It also means ensuring local and regional economies are able to withstand, manage and respond to a shifting economic climate while positioning themselves for future economic opportunities.

The Ministry is implementing several initiatives so that communities and regions in British Columbia can put their plans for economic growth into action.

Strategies

- Provide resort municipalities in British Columbia with the tools to assist them in building their tourism-based economies through the [Resort Municipality Initiative](#).
- Encourage and support the building of new economic relationships between communities in B.C. and communities in the Asia-Pacific through the [Asia-Pacific Twinning Initiative](#).
- Facilitate the initiation and enactment of [Regional Growth Strategies](#) and regional economic development networks.
- Promote harmonization of regulatory requirements across B.C. communities to reduce the regulatory burden on citizens and businesses.
- Support the development of sustainable infrastructure and amenities.

Goal 2: Wealth creation from rural B.C. is supported

The resource-rich areas of B.C. contribute a great deal to the economic well-being of the entire province. By equitably investing in and building infrastructure throughout our province we can strengthen our resource and trade economy, which is important to both our rural and urban economies.

One size does not fit all, and the Ministry's RuralBC Secretariat will work throughout the province with rural communities to find the right community-centric solutions to strengthen rural economies.

By helping to build and diversify B.C.'s rural economies, the Ministry's work directly supports the Government's Great Goal to "create more jobs per capita in B.C. than anywhere else in Canada".

Objective 2.1: Rural communities have access to programs and services that support their economic development

The Ministry is working to bridge gaps between our rural communities and the provincial and federal programs available to them. Further, the Ministry is working with communities to identify existing or new programs and services that could support them in reaching their vision.

Strategies

- Work closely with rural communities to identify priorities through the RuralBC Secretariat and its regional staff.
- Based on priorities identified with rural communities, tailor and align government resources to support these priorities through flexible, integrated community agreements.
- Work to integrate the strategies of provincial ministries, federal departments, and regions to plan and implement socio-economic initiatives, providing communities with one-stop access to programs and services.

www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca

The RuralBC Secretariat's website was created to provide easy reference to resources and program funding information designed to assist rural communities and regions.

Performance Measure 2: Number of community agreements signed

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of community agreements signed	3 under development ¹	6	10	14

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.
 The above figures represent a cumulative total, with six agreements to be signed in 2009/10, four more in 2010/11, and four more in 2011/12.
¹ In 2008/09, the Ministry forecasted it would sign three community agreements that fiscal year. Negotiations on these agreements were underway by March 31, 2009 and the Ministry maintains its original target of signing a total of six agreements by the end of the 2009/10 fiscal year.

Discussion

Community agreements demonstrate the Ministry's intention to tailor and align government resources to be more flexible in meeting rural community needs. Through these agreements, local governments identify their key priorities for development and prosperity, and the Ministry focuses government resources to meet these communities' unique requirements. By providing the time and resources

needed to develop these agreements, and by committing to achieve a list of expected results, communities show they recognize the value of this innovative approach to community development.

The Ministry is taking a different approach to working with individual communities to strategically prioritize their economic development initiatives. This allows the Province to provide tailored support to help these communities achieve their vision for the future. The Ministry works with communities to articulate a list of specific results expected to be achieved within each agreement, and monitors communities' progress towards achieving those results.

In 2009/10, the first pilot agreements will be evaluated and future measures and targets will be developed based on the outcome of this evaluation. A new measure may be included in future service plans.

Objective 2.2: Rural communities and regions identify, attract and retain investment

Rural communities and regional economies have significant natural assets that make them well-positioned to attract investors, where practical, diversify into non-traditional resource-based industries and enhance economic sustainability. Through strategic investments in B.C. communities, the Ministry supports the growth of emerging industries such as alternative and clean energy (geothermal, bio-fuels), bio-products, agriculture value-added (food and beverage processing and organic produce), and non-resource-based industries. The Ministry is also working with communities to find ways for communities to retain existing major industrial employers in an increasingly competitive world economy.

Strategies

- Provide resources to facilitate the development of community and regional initiatives to identify sector opportunities, attract new investment and retain existing businesses.
- Expand the Forest Community Business Program so that other businesses, in addition to forest sector businesses, are eligible for borrowing.
- Provide resources to facilitate the development of community and regional strategies to identify, attract and retain investment.
- Work with the economic trusts to ensure local government needs are aligned with program criteria. These trusts include: Nechako-Kitimaat Development Fund Society, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Island Coastal Economic Trust and Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust.



Photo: Picture BC

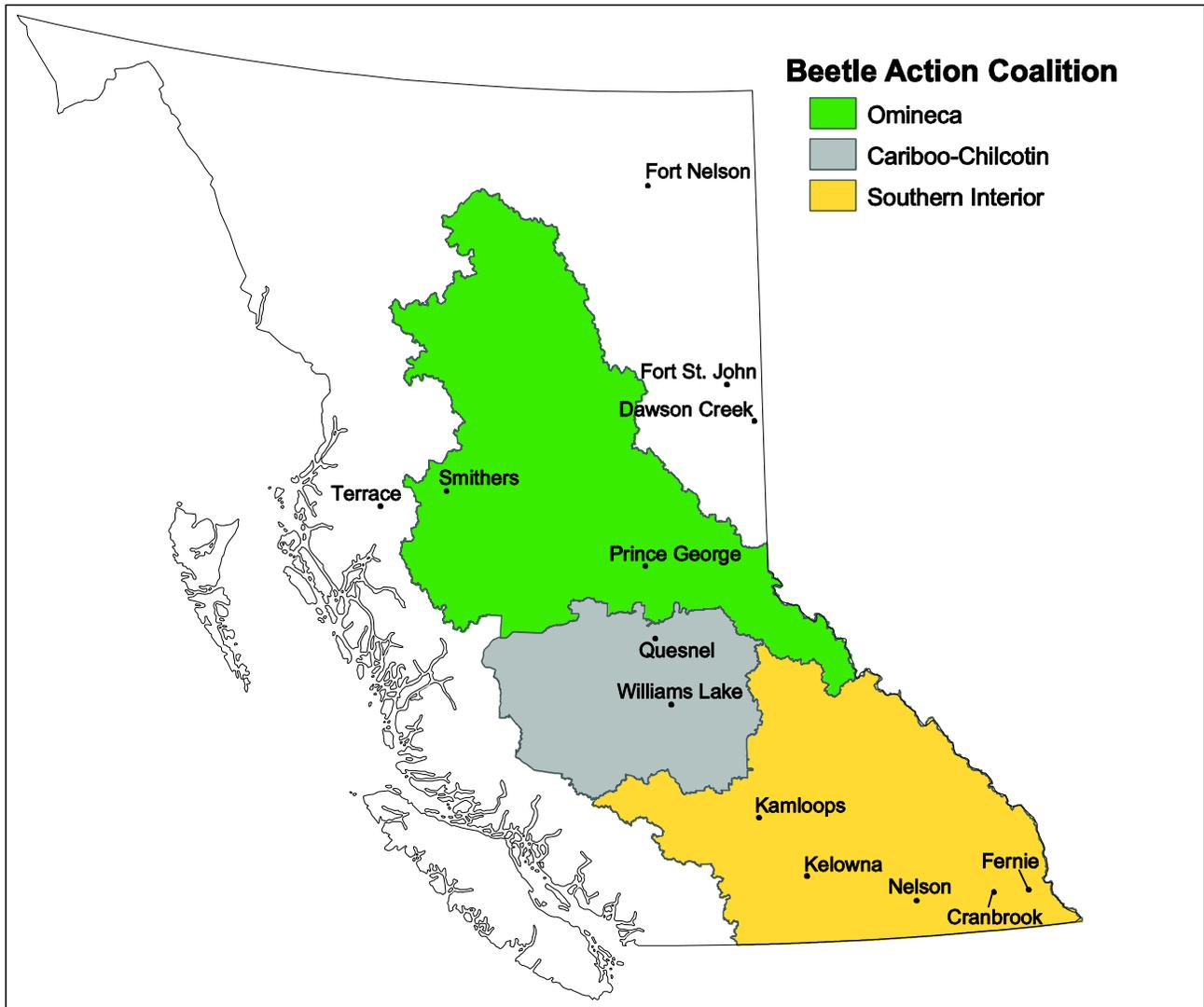
Objective 2.3: Local government and community capacity to manage change is strengthened

The significant challenges in the forest industry are having an immediate impact on communities across the province and the pine beetle epidemic presents huge near-term challenges as well. Mills in resource-dependent communities are often the largest employers and contribute to a significant portion of the local government's tax revenue. When a large employer closes, communities require immediate attention and support in implementing change strategies through the Ministry's [Community Transition Services](#). Communities challenged by the mountain pine beetle epidemic require both immediate and longer-term attention and assistance in implementing change strategies that will re-employ workers, encourage economic growth and replace lost tax revenues for local governments.

The Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan provides a long term, cross-government, approach to mitigating the impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic and supports long term economic sustainability of British Columbia. Both federal and provincial governments contribute funding to various components of this plan. For more information on the Action Plan, please visit www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle.

Strategies

- Provide an integrated and rapid response to resource-based communities requesting assistance in adjusting to the effects of industry closure.
- Provide local government and First Nation leaders with ongoing outreach, advice on best practices, and networking opportunities to build leadership and change management capacity.
- Implement the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan in collaboration with other provincial ministries to support communities affected by the mountain pine beetle epidemic.
- Collaborate with Community Beetle Action Coalitions (identified in the diagram on the next page) in the completion and implementation of strategies to mitigate the economic impact of the beetle epidemic.



Performance Measure 3: Percentage of mountain pine beetle-impacted communities covered by a mountain pine beetle socio-economic adjustment plan

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target
Percentage of mountain pine beetle-impacted communities covered by a mountain pine beetle socio-economic adjustment plan ¹	56%	100% ²
<p>Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.</p> <p>¹ This performance measure was transferred from the Ministry of Forests and Range to the Ministry of Community and Rural Development as of June 2008 and is being monitored by the Ministry until 2009/10.</p> <p>² This percentage is based on the current 34 mountain pine beetle-impacted communities in B.C.</p>		

Discussion

The socio-economic adjustment plans are specific to the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan and are being coordinated and delivered by the Ministry’s Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division. The three regional socio-economic plans are expected to be completed by 2009/10 and will identify the unique pine beetle challenges facing each region and how each region will be addressing these challenges.

This measure demonstrates the importance of making sure all mountain pine beetle impacted communities have the opportunity to participate in creating a socio-economic adjustment plan. These plans provide impacted communities with important information that helps to better their understanding of the potential impact of the mountain pine beetle epidemic and provide an opportunity to advise government on specific mountain pine beetle mitigation measures to undertake. Once government receives and reviews these plans, decisions on future government initiatives and actions can be made.

As the epidemic spreads, the number of communities impacted by the mountain pine beetle will change, however, it is expected that the 2009/10 target of 100 per cent of pine beetle-affected communities being covered by a socio-economic adjustment plan will not change, as these communities are included in one of the identified Beetle Action Coalition regions.

The Province will consider all recommendations contained in the socio-economic plans. However, given the current economic challenges, the Province will initially implement some recommendations made in the socio-economic plans through existing government programs and also will strive to adapt existing provincial programs and measures where possible.

Goal 3: Forest-dependent and pine beetle-affected communities are assisted in adapting to a changing forest sector

Creating jobs, educating and building systems of support for British Columbians are important goals of the Province. The challenges in British Columbia's forest sector impact more than the forest land base; they affect the lives of forest workers, their communities and their families.

Objective 3.1: Opportunities are created for workers and their forest-dependent communities

The Ministry is working with several partners to provide assistance to workers who have been affected by the changes in the forest sector. The Ministry's focus is on creating jobs for displaced resource workers through short-term projects and working with the federal government to maximize funding available to support this area of focus. The Ministry also assists with retraining to diversify existing skills or build new skill sets to support forest workers transitioning into other opportunities.



Photo: Picture BC

Strategies

- Provide funding through the [Community Development Trust](#), creating job opportunities for resource workers in forest-dependent communities, providing forest workers with learning opportunities through tuition assistance and with financial assistance to allow them to transition toward opportunities best suited to their individual needs.
- Facilitate skills training, education and employment services to displaced or self-employed forest workers and other individuals in mountain pine beetle-affected communities who are ineligible for employment insurance, through the Industrial Transition Program.

Performance Measure 4: Number of workers in forest-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust and the Industrial Transition Program

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of workers in forest-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust and the Industrial Transition Program	4,450 ¹	4,500 ²	2,300 ³	800 ⁴
<p>Data Source: The Community Development Trust is collecting statistics based on each of the programs as they are delivered. The Industrial Transition Program's service provider will collect recruitment data and the Ministry will collect participation-in-employment data at three and 12 months after the intervention is completed.</p> <p>¹ Represents 4,250 workers assisted by the Community Development Trust and 200 workers assisted by the Industrial Transition Program.</p> <p>² Represents targets of 3,700 workers for Community Development Trust and 800 workers for the Industrial Transition Program.</p> <p>³ Represents targets of 1,500 workers for Community Development Trust and 800 workers for the Industrial Transition Program.</p> <p>⁴ Represents target of 800 workers for the Industrial Transition Program.</p>				

Discussion

Workers who receive assistance by participating in these Ministry programs are directly impacted and able to make critical decisions for their futures. Encouraging people and their families to stay and work in the communities where they live is a priority of the Ministry and the Province. Retaining skilled workers to participate in new economic opportunities will contribute to the resilience of our rural communities and enable them to continue to be great places for British Columbians to live, work and invest.

The measure demonstrates the Ministry's success in supporting workers and forest-dependent communities through the current challenges in the forest sector. In order to address immediate needs, the Community Development Trust has been designed to have the greatest impact in its first year of operation. This front-loading of the program means that program targets decrease over time as progress is made in assisting workers through retraining or transition.

The performance results and performance targets for this measure have been adjusted upward since the publication of the *2009/10 - 2011/12 Service Plan* in February 2009. The new figures reflect recent data on the performance of the Community Development Trust, accelerated federal funding for 2008/09, and the new provincial-federal commitment of an additional \$60 million in funding for the Job Opportunities Program, one of the three components of the Community Development Trust.

Goal 4: Communities are equipped with innovative tools that enable them to work toward environmental sustainability

Leading the world in sustainable environmental management is one of the Province's highest priorities. Tackling the critical issue of global warming and making progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions will require concerted and collaborative actions by all levels of government.

Objective 4.1: Local governments and communities are able to create jobs now, while meeting community needs for water quality and quantity

To meet the current economic challenges, it is especially important for communities to retain and create jobs, so that they can accelerate economic recovery. Infrastructure projects are known to be effective at creating jobs, and the Ministry's infrastructure grant programs are playing a key role in getting local infrastructure development underway. Local governments can stimulate their economies, while at the same time, meeting their communities' growing needs for plentiful, clean drinking water.



Photo: Community and Rural Development

Strategies

- Provide targeted funding to local governments to help them achieve provincial [drinking water objectives](#).
- Provide tools and resources to local governments to improve water conservation practices and support integrated resource management by linking water stewardship and liquid and solid waste management resources among adjacent local governments.

Performance Measure 5: Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality ¹	20.2% of total population served	34.8% of total population served	35.5% of total population served	36.2% of total population served
	884,808 total population served	1,546,780 total population served	1,600,780 total population served	1,654,780 total population served
	Additional 53,490 people with new system	Additional 661,972 people with new system	Additional 54,000 people with new system	Additional 54,000 people with new system
<p>Data Source: Contractual requirements between the Province and grant recipients include quarterly progress reports, tied to quarterly claim payments, which are tracked within a grant database. Population data calculations are based on BC Stats population projections (http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/popproj.asp).</p> <p>¹ The measure does not include groundwater, nor does it capture the provincial population using privately-owned infrastructure.</p>				

Discussion

The Ministry provides funding to communities for new and improved water treatment facilities through a number of grant programs, including [Building Canada](#), [Towns for Tomorrow](#) and [Infrastructure Planning Grants](#).

This measure provides an indication of those populations served by new water treatment facilities that meet emerging standards. It provides evidence that communities are building the infrastructure using current North American regulatory standards for the treatment of surface water.

In the February 2009 *Service Plan*, the Ministry forecasted that a significant increase in the percentage and number of British Columbians served by new drinking water systems would take place between 2008/09 and 2009/10. That forecast was largely based on the assumption of Metro Vancouver’s Seymour-Capilano water treatment plant and associated water distribution system coming online in 2009/10. While the water treatment plant has been substantially completed and will partially come online by the end of 2009/10, Metro Vancouver’s work to complete the tunnels and distribution system to bring the entire service online is estimated to be completed in 2012/13. The Ministry has adjusted its targets for the following three years to reflect this fact, and will continue to review and update these targets based on Metro Vancouver’s progress in bringing its new water distribution system fully online.

Objective 4.2: Local governments work together to be innovative and collaborative in how they deliver services to their residents

With population growth, increasing construction costs, and the commitment to take action on climate change, infrastructure projects often challenge the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. Encouraging local governments to find innovative and collaborative solutions to delivering services to British Columbians is a priority for the Ministry.

Strategies

- Ensure program criteria encourage regional innovation and integration in the development and implementation of local government infrastructure projects.
- Provide tools and resources to local governments to support the best management practices that promote sustainability and address regional infrastructure challenges.
- Partner with local governments to further innovative and sustainable planning and land-use approaches through [Smart Development Partnerships](#) to fast-track green development initiatives.
- Through the new [BC Climate Action Toolkit](#), provide the latest news, best practices and practical advice to help B.C. local governments successfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Undertake activities aimed at streamlining provincial approval processes to speed up local government actions that contribute to environmental sustainability.
- Ensure that local government planning activities balance local priorities with provincial priorities and that local decisions pursue local and regional integration.

Objective 4.3: Local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take other climate change action

The Ministry provides funding and a modern policy, legislative and regulatory framework to help local governments implement climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within B.C. communities. The Ministry’s infrastructure funding programs now encompass environmental sustainability, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as a key component.



Photo: Picture BC

Strategies

- Help local governments develop communities that encourage increased density, walkability, good cycling access and reduced traffic congestion as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing local quality of life.
- Encourage local governments to sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*, which includes committing to the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2012 and working to create compact, more energy-efficient communities.

- Develop a policy, legislative and regulatory framework that provides the right mix of tools to support local government climate change actions.
- Ensure that infrastructure funding programs value those local government projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- In partnership with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, implement the [Federal Gas Tax Transfer and Transit Agreements](#), which provide communities with funding to support environmentally-sustainable municipal infrastructure that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Provide local governments implementing climate change initiatives with tools, best practices information and advice.
- Actively support cross-ministry climate change initiatives.

Performance Measure 6: Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual ¹	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the <i>British Columbia Climate Action Charter</i> ¹	93%	93%	95%	98%

Data Source: The Union of British Columbia Municipalities records and tracks those local governments that sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. The Ministry further determines, through BC Stats, what percentage of British Columbians this represents.

¹ “Communities” are defined as those municipalities and regional districts that have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. Population percentages were calculated using BC Stats 2008 projections - regional district populations only include persons living within the regional district but outside of municipal jurisdictions.

Discussion

Local governments from across B.C. have joined the Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to find ways to tackle the challenges posed by climate change.

This measure demonstrates the efforts taken to increase the number of local governments that have signed the charter. In doing so, these communities are committing to developing strategies and taking action to achieve three goals: becoming carbon neutral with respect to their operations by 2012; measuring and reporting on their community’s greenhouse gas emissions profile; and creating complete, compact, more energy-efficient communities. Since the inception of the *Charter*, a Joint Provincial-Union of British Columbia Municipalities [Green Communities Committee](#), and three Working Groups (Carbon Neutrality, Small Communities Strategies and Actions, and Urban Strategies and Actions) have been established and are co-chaired by Ministry of Community and Rural Development staff. The Green Communities Committee and Working Groups have worked to

provide a range of practical strategies and actions, share information, and build local government capacity to support climate change activities.

The [BC Climate Action Toolkit](#) has been created as the means to deliver advice and information to help B.C. local governments successfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, strengthen their communities.

The Community Energy Association, in partnership with the Ministry of Community and Rural Development, has developed a [guide](#) to assist B.C. local governments with calculating greenhouse gas emissions reductions for various types of infrastructure. In addition, the Ministry has partnered with the association to develop a planning guide that describes the purpose and content of a [community energy and emissions plan](#) as well as how to go about creating one.

These activities will continue to support local governments across British Columbia in reaching their carbon reduction goals and objectives.

Objective 4.4: Local governments and communities invest in their urban forests and take a proactive approach to planning, planting and stewardship

Urban forests are the trees and treed landscapes in B.C. communities. Planting trees to bolster urban forests and educating British Columbians about the value of treed environments will contribute to the health of our communities for generations to come. The [Trees for Tomorrow](#) program encourages community organizations, First Nations and local governments to collaborate and add new treed landscapes within their communities across the province to help lock away greenhouse gases that would otherwise contribute to climate change.

Strategies

- Implement the [Trees for Tomorrow](#) program which supports communities in achieving their visions for healthy treed landscapes.
- Provide resources to communities to understand the role of treed environments in the social, economic and environmental health of the community.
- Develop opportunities for communities to build their capacity to enhance and maintain healthy treed landscapes.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

Full Time Equivalents (FTE) numbers for each Ministry are currently being reviewed across government and therefore are not reported in this Service Plan Update. FTEs are routinely reported in the Public Accounts and more detailed information will now be publicly reported in a new Annual Report on the Corporate HR Plan, released each Fall. For more information, see the Budget and Fiscal Plan documentation.

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government	216,120	133,900	239,952	211,478
RuralBC Secretariat	4,154	32,951	3,951	2,951
Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division	173	521	501	475
Property Assessment	660	593	587	574
Executive and Support Services	9,339	8,810	8,769	8,705
Northern Development Fund	500	500	500	500
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	6,442	6,442	6,442	6,442
Total	237,388	183,717	260,702	231,125

¹ 2008/09 budget amounts have been restated for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2009/10 Estimates.

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Local Government	725	-	-	-
RuralBC Secretariat	175	-	-	-
Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division	-	-	-	-
Property Assessment	-	-	-	-
Executive and Support Services	1,046	1,388	383	383
Total	1,946	1,388	383	383

Ministry Contact Information

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

P.O. Box 9806, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9N7
www.gov.bc.ca/cd

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/

Policy and Research Branch

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Governance and Structure Division

P.O. Box 9839, Stn. Prov. Govt.
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Fax: (250) 387-7972

University Endowment Lands

5495 Chancellor Blvd.
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Telephone: (604) 660-1808
Fax: (604) 660-1874

Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division

P.O. Box 9841 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T2
Telephone: (250) 387-4037
Fax: (250) 387-8720

Infrastructure and Finance Division

P.O. Box 9838, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T1
Telephone: (250) 387-4060
Fax: (250) 356-1873

RURALBC SECRETARIAT

www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca

Regional Economic Development Offices

Cranbrook

101 – 100 Cranbrook St. North
Cranbrook, BC V1C 3P9
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Fax: (250) 426-1253

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201 – I 2435 Mansfield Dr.
Courtney, BC V9N 2M2
Telephone: (250) 897-3276
Fax: (250) 331-0220

Dawson Creek

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Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4J2
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8415 – 94th Ave.
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210 – 301 Victoria St.
Kamloops, BC V2C 2A3
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Nanaimo

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Prince George

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Prince George, BC V2L 4Y2
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Fax: (250) 565-4279

Prince Rupert
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Prince Rupert, BC V8J 1B9
Telephone: (250) 624-7499
Fax: (250) 624-7479

Smithers
3726 Alfred Ave. Bag 5000
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
Telephone: (250) 847-7797
Fax: (250) 847-7556

Community Adjustment Office
P.O. Box 9837, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T1
Telephone: (250) 387-0220
Fax: (250) 386-9467

Strategic Initiatives Office
P.O. Box 9853, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria BC V8W 9T5X
Telephone: (250) 356-6386
Fax: (250) 387-7972

MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE EPIDEMIC RESPONSE DIVISION

www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle

510 – 175 2nd Ave.
Kamloops, BC V2C 5W1
Telephone: (250) 371-3725
Fax: (250) 371-3942

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

<http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/>

P.O. Box 9595, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9K4
Telephone outside of Victoria: (877) 238-8882
Telephone in Victoria: (250) 387-5349
Fax: (250) 387-4425

Job Opportunities Program (JOP)

jop@gov.bc.ca

Telephone: 1-877-556-2748

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT SERVICES

P.O. Box 9361, Stn. Prov. Govt.

Victoria, BC V8W 9M2

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Fax: (250) 356-6924

Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

www.gov.bc.ca/cd/

Ministry Organizational Chart

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/ministry/org_chart/orgchart.htm

RuralBC Secretariat

www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca

Community Development Trust

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/

Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan

www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle

Ministry Infrastructure Grant Programs

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/finance/grants.htm

Ministry Key Legislation

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Ministry Agencies, Boards and Commissions

(includes Crowns and Regional Development Trusts)

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/ministry/agencies_boards_commissions/agencies_boards_commissions.htm

