

**Ministry of
Community and Rural Development**

**2010/11 – 2012/13
SERVICE PLAN**

March 2010



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



In 2010, the world came to British Columbia to help us celebrate the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and our beautiful province will benefit from the experience for decades to come. We should be proud of the job we did in hosting the world and we must work hard to take advantage of all the benefits that will flow from the opportunity.

Since my tenure as Minister of Community and Rural Development began in June 2009, the province has been experiencing one of the most economically-challenging years in recent history, one that has been particularly difficult for many resource-based communities like Mackenzie, Kitimat, Castlegar and others. For decades, rural communities have anchored the provincial economy in lucrative natural resource industries, and it is our job to assist when they need our help.

I take great personal pride in our government's response to the impact of a hard-hitting global recession, and in our unwavering support of rural B.C.

The work of the RuralBC Secretariat - an on-the-ground team that assists local governments in developing economic sustainability - has been and continues to be fundamental to the recovery of rural communities.

The Province's \$14-billion capital infrastructure program is also helping. We anticipate that up to 88,000 jobs will be generated and vital public infrastructure will be created everywhere from Campbell River to Coquitlam to Cranbrook to the Cariboo as a result of our government's accelerated investment in public sector assets.

In September 2009, we made the single largest infrastructure funding announcement in the history of British Columbia, a combined provincial, federal and local government commitment of \$719 million. As a result, 2010/11 will be a record-breaking year for construction of government-funded infrastructure projects.

The Province has started the environmental assessment process and First Nations consultation on the Northwest Transmission Line along Highway 37. This is the first step towards building a power line that has the potential to generate billions of dollars in capital investment, create thousands of new jobs and open economic opportunities on a global scale in the Northwest.

In the meantime, our Ministry, in collaboration with our federal partners, will continue to provide support to displaced resource workers through the Community Development Trust's programs, which have been incredibly successful in helping thousands of real people in real communities. It has been heartwarming for me to meet the laid-off workers around the province who are gainfully employed on a JOP project, or taking training, or who have transitioned out of the industry to do other things.

These programs and investments, and others like them, have been made in response to priorities identified by local governments across the province, but they reinforce the entire economy of British Columbia.

2010/11 presents tremendous opportunities for this Ministry to help shape the future of the province. As economic growth resumes, private sector investment will take over and B.C. communities will be well-positioned to exploit the emerging economy with our competitive investment climate, our trained workforce and the livability of our diverse communities.

Whether it's amending legislation to improve the investment climate, collaborating with business and communities on industrial taxation, or working with our regional development trusts, our crown corporation BC Assessment, or partners like the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the pine beetle action coalitions, this Ministry will play a key role in re-defining the Province's approach to economic growth and development at the local level.

It is my honour to lead the ministry in capitalizing on these many opportunities and to work with superlative Ministry staff members who are dedicated to helping our government make B.C. an even better place to live, work and play.

The Ministry of Community and Rural Development *2010/11 - 2012/13 Service Plan* was prepared in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared, and for achieving the specific objectives of that plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Bennett', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Honourable Bill Bennett
Minister of Community and Rural Development
February 16, 2010

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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 economies that support sustainable and socially-responsible communities. The needs of urban and rural communities differ from one another and it is important for government to tailor its work to the individual needs of all communities. The Ministry supports communities in reaching their full potential by providing a broad range of services, tools, and resources including:

- 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 to enable communities to grow economically, construct needed infrastructure, improve air and water quality and enhance policing and community safety.
- A place 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.
- Coordination of the provincial government's response to the social, economic and environmental effects of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.



New Westminster is just one of the Ministry's 160 municipal clients.

Ministry services and supports are aligned to make them effective and easy to access for rural communities. The [RuralBC Secretariat](#) works to link rural communities to government programs and services.

The Ministry also works to build and strengthen ties between local governments, First Nations, federal and provincial bodies, the private sector, community groups and the economic development

trusts like the [Northern Development Initiative Trust](#), the [Island Coastal Economic Trust](#) and the [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 oversees three Crown corporations – the [Columbia Basin Trust](#), the [Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#), and the [BC Assessment Authority](#) – as well as three boards – the [Property Assessment Appeal Board](#), the [Islands Trust Fund Board](#), and the [Board of Examiners](#). The Ministry provides oversight to the [University Endowment Lands](#), and administers the annual [Property Assessment Review Panel](#) process.

The Minister is assisted in acting to mitigate the impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic by Donna Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery.

Strategic Context

Our province is a place rich in both natural and human resources that provide strong foundations for prosperous and vibrant communities. While many communities have been tested by adverse economic circumstances over the past year, economists now expect economic growth to resume in B.C. in the year ahead.¹

Rural communities' role as generators of a large share of provincial exports makes them indispensable to the economic health of the province as a whole.² While there are signs that the forest industry, on which many rural communities rely, is stabilizing, it is also likely the industry will continue to be challenged by a strong Canadian dollar, and a U.S. housing market that is only beginning to recover from historically depressed levels.³ The picture is brighter for other key commodities produced in rural B.C., including natural gas, coal, oil, metals and minerals. Driven by a resilient Chinese economy, commodity prices have already returned to 2007 levels and are expected to remain strong.⁴



Golden is one of many rural communities served by the Ministry.



A mountain pine beetle-attacked area in the Bulkley-Stikine region.

Despite this brightening outlook, a significant number of rural communities may continue to be challenged in the years ahead by relatively high unemployment, out-migration to urban centres, and, in some cases, diminished tax bases resulting from industry closure. Additionally, the mountain pine beetle epidemic will continue to present challenges to the forest and tourism sectors.

On the positive side, B.C. communities operate in one of the most investment-friendly environments in Canada, with planned tax reductions that will make B.C.'s corporate income tax rate one of the lowest

¹ BMO Capital Markets, *Provincial Monitor* (Dec. 2009), p.3, www.bmonesbittburns.com/economics/monitor/2009q4/monitor.pdf.

² David Baxter, Andrew Ramlo and Erin Ramlo, "Changing People, Changing Places: Demographic and Economic Change in British Columbia" (2009) p. 27, www.bcbc.com/Documents/2020_200909_Baxter.pdf.

³ BMO Capital Markets, *Provincial Monitor* (Dec. 2009) p.3, www.bmonesbittburns.com/economics/monitor/2009q4/monitor.pdf.

⁴ BMO Capital Markets, "Passing the Economic Baton" (Jan. 15, 2010) p.7, www.bmonesbittburns.com/economics/focus/20100115/feature.pdf.

among the world's major industrialized economies⁵, a streamlined regulatory system, a competitive oil and gas royalty system, and significant mining exploration credits. Additionally, B.C. communities have access to cost-effective financing through the Municipal Finance Authority, which pools municipal borrowing and investment needs across the province. Because the Municipal Finance Authority maintains a very strong, AAA credit rating, local governments are able to access capital at low rates of interest.

Many communities are also likely to draw benefits from projects such as the Northwest Transmission Line that will electrify a large part of Northern B.C., opening up opportunities in mining and clean power generation. Further, many communities will continue to profit from increased exposure to national and international audiences resulting from the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The Games are showcasing the natural beauty of this province to the world at a time when new tourism markets are budding around the globe. For rural communities especially, tourism provides a real opportunity for economic diversification.

In the longer-term, B.C. communities are very well-positioned to take advantage of some key global trends. One of these is the expected rise in the demand for energy products as the world population and living standards continue to grow. A related trend is the increasing demand for alternative, clean sources of energy, such as wind, tidal, hydro, geothermal, or bioenergy, which are plentiful in our province. Already, B.C. is recognized as a leader in green power generation. Thirdly, our geography ideally positions us as Canada's gateway to the large and growing economies of the Asia-Pacific. In the years to come, building the infrastructure, like the ports, airports, road and railway networks needed to fully realize this opportunity, will bring real benefits to communities throughout the province.



A container ship is being unloaded at the upgraded Port of Prince Rupert facilities.

⁵ Government of B.C., Your B.C. Government website, www.gov.bc.ca/yourbc/business/.

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 *2010/11 – 2012/13 Service Plan* outlines the Ministry's strategies for achieving 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. 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.
- Support the growth and development of local communities

Municipal Boundary Extensions

Typically, municipal boundary extensions help properties access important local services such as water, sewer, and fire protection. Municipal incorporation reflects a community's readiness to take on more responsibility for local services and governance. Extending these services often provides the opportunity for a community to further embrace the principles of sustainable economic development.

and their economies by assisting local governments with timely and effective incorporations, amalgamations, boundary extensions, planning and restructuring.

- Give communities the tools they need, like permissive tax exemptions and phased development approvals, to build their economies.
- Revitalize regional district governance.

Permissive Tax Exemptions

The Community Charter gives municipalities authority to exempt certain lands and improvements from municipal taxation. Many communities are using these powers to help revitalize their town centres by attracting businesses, increasing livability, or encouraging green development.

Port Alberni has recently adopted a broad [Revitalization Program](#) to encourage building beautification and property upgrades in its commercial Uptown area. Participating businesses are exempted from municipal taxes that would normally have resulted from increased property values caused by the renovations or improvements. Find out more on [the Ministry's website](#).

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 improve infrastructure, the Ministry contributes expertise and targeted funding to B.C. communities for infrastructure planning and construction, community safety and local government restructuring.

The Province's three-year, \$14-billion capital infrastructure program will help create up to 88,000 jobs and build vital public infrastructure across B.C. As part of that program, the Ministry supported more than 270 local government infrastructure projects in 2009 – a record number. As these projects are built-out over the next few years they will bring a broad range of economic and social benefits to communities throughout the province.



A Ministry-funded water treatment plant in Salmon Arm.

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 deliver funding to local governments in a timely way.
- 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 net [traffic fine revenues](#) to local governments.
- Support the administration of the [University Endowment Lands](#) and the achievement of its goals.
- Continue to work with local governments to create healthy, active, and sustainable 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	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes	144 ¹	144	144	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 is highly accurate.

¹ In 2009/10 B.C. had 160 municipalities. The 2009/10 result of 144 represents 90 per cent of all municipalities.

Discussion

Property taxes constitute the majority of municipalities' annual revenue. The above 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 that may need support from the Ministry in assessing their financial capacity and addressing challenges.

Since the September 2009 *Service Plan Update*, the Ministry has had to decrease its 2009/10 forecast for this measure from 146 to 144. This adjustment reflects continued difficulties of the forest industry, which comprises some of the largest industrial taxpayers in many B.C. communities. These difficulties are expected to impact progress on this measure until 2012/13. To reflect that fact, targets

for 2010/11 and 2011/12 have also been lowered from 146 to 144. To mitigate this impact, the Ministry is working in partnership with local governments, Union of British Columbia Municipalities and other partners to address challenges related to major industrial property taxation.

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

To keep the provincial economy strong, the Province collaborates with communities and regional districts, the federal government and other partners to build effective local and regional economic strategies. This means assisting 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 has empowered municipalities with significant flexibility when it comes to industrial taxation. There is room for improvement in many municipalities to work with the Ministry and industry to set property tax rates in a way that ensures financing for local services while creating a healthy climate for existing businesses and new investment.

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

Strategies

- Work with Union of British Columbia Municipalities, local governments and the business sector to find improved ways of applying the property tax to industrial and business properties.
- 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](#).



Fernie is one of the communities benefiting from the Ministry's Resort Municipality Initiative.

More Flexibility for Multi-Phase Development Projects

Legislative amendments in 2007 provided local governments with the authority to enter into agreements with developers to prevent zoning changes during a multi-phase development, providing greater certainty for an approved development, while ensuring transparency and public accountability. These phased development agreement provisions have been cited as an important component of encouraging sustainable investment in communities.

- 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.
- Collaborate with government ministries and agencies to support public investments in community health and livability.

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. Their role as generators of approximately 50 per cent of all provincial exports makes them indispensable to the provincial economy⁶. By equitably investing in and building infrastructure throughout our province we can strengthen our resource and trade economy, thereby strengthening our overall economic vitality.

The Ministry's [RuralBC Secretariat](#) works with rural communities throughout the province to find the right community-centred 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.



A tug boat and a log barge at work near the Village of Port Alice.

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

- Collaborate with rural communities to identify local priorities, and align government resources to support these priorities through flexible, Community First Agreements.

⁶ Baxter, Ramlo and Ramlo, "Changing People, Changing Places," (2009), p. 27.

- Forge close partnerships with and facilitate connections between various rural B.C. stakeholders like community groups, businesses, local, provincial, and federal governments, non-governmental organizations, and academia.
- Ensure economic development and diversification tools across the Provincial government are tailored to meet the needs of small communities.
- Align the strategies of provincial ministries and federal departments to provide communities with better 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. In its first six months the website received over 6,000 visits.

Performance Measure 2: Number of Community First Agreements signed

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Number of Community First Agreements signed	6	10	14	N/A ¹

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

The above figures represent a cumulative total, with six agreements to be signed in 2009/10, and four more in each of 2010/11 and 2011/12.

¹ This three-year pilot program concludes in 2011/12. Whether additional agreements will be signed in subsequent years will be determined by the results of the program evaluation.

Discussion

The Ministry is taking a different approach to working with individual communities to strategically prioritize their economic development initiatives. Community First 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 and help achieve their visions for the future.

Communities recognize the value of this innovative approach to community development by providing the time and resources needed to develop the agreements, and by committing to achieve agreed-upon results. The Ministry works with communities to articulate a list of specific results within each agreement, and monitors communities' progress towards achieving them. In 2010/11, the first pilot agreements will be evaluated and future measures and targets will be developed based on the outcome of this evaluation.



Clinton is one of the rural communities the Ministry is assisting through a Community First Agreement.

Objective 2.2: Opportunities are created for workers and their forest-dependent communities

The challenges in British Columbia's forest sector impact more than the forest land base; they affect employers in the industry, the lives of forest workers, their communities and their families. The Ministry is working with multiple 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 that benefit the broader community and on working with the federal government to maximize funding available to support this priority. The Ministry also assists forest workers in diversifying their existing skills through retraining so that they can transition into other opportunities.

Strategies

- Use the [Community Development Trust](#) to create job opportunities for resource workers in forest-dependent communities, and provide forest workers with learning opportunities through tuition assistance.

Performance Measure 3: Number of workers in forest-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Number of workers in forest-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust ¹	9,356 ²	11,796	N/A	N/A

Data Source: The Community Development Trust is collecting statistics on each of its programs as they are delivered.

¹ This measure no longer includes workers assisted by the Industrial Transition Program as that program transferred out to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development in April 2009.

² This Service Plan is for the first time reporting numbers for this measure as cumulative totals, rather than as yearly totals. This change is being made to more fully illustrate program results. The 2010/11 figure of 11,796 includes 3,749 workers assisted in 2008/09, 5,607 workers assisted in 2009/10, and 2,440 workers projected to be assisted in 2010/11. No targets are currently in place for 2011/12 and 2012/13 as the Community Development Trust is a three-year program that concludes in March 2011.

Discussion

Community Development Trust programs support workers and their families who wish to remain and work in the communities where they live. Whether by providing workers with retraining, or short-term employment, these programs broaden the range of choices available to workers as they make critical decisions for their future. By helping to retain skilled workers in their communities, Community Development Trust programs also make an important contribution to the sustainability of our rural communities, enabling them to continue to be great places for British Columbians to live, work and invest.



A healthy forest sector is key to the health of many of our rural communities.

This measure demonstrates the Ministry's success in supporting workers through the current challenges in the forest sector. As of December 31, 2009, initiatives funded by the Community Development Trust have helped 2,462 older workers transition from forest sector jobs to retirement or other activities, while 3,394 laid-off workers have been approved for tuition assistance, and over 2,900 short-term employment opportunities have been created in 90 rural communities around B.C.

Initiatives funded through the Community Development Trust's Job Opportunities Program have resulted in the development or maintenance of 511 recreation sites and 4,863 kilometres of trails. Additionally, 10 provincial parks have been made safer and more accessible through the removal of dangerous trees, and the wildfire danger has been reduced through fuel management treatments on 1,692 hectares of land around 25 communities. Silviculture treatments have been applied to 9,391 hectares of forest and the falling and burning of over 6,000 beetle-killed trees has taken

place to reduce the beetle's spread and impact.

Resource Workers Get Training in Heritage Conservation

An innovative project funded by the Community Development Trust is helping displaced resource workers gain short-term employment and learn new skills while helping address maintenance needs at Provincial Heritage Properties.

Through the College of New Caledonia's Heritage Building Trades Training Program, 56 workers are carrying out repairs and upgrades at 6 provincial historic sites while gaining experience that will allow them to join British Columbia's expanding home renovation sector.



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.



A pine tree stripped of its bark reveals a labyrinth of tunnels carved out by the mountain pine beetle.

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 the 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.

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 are supported in implementing

change strategies through the Ministry's [Community Transition Services](#). Communities challenged by industry closures and by the mountain pine beetle epidemic require strategies to re-employ workers, encourage economic growth and replace lost tax revenues for local governments. To ensure the long-term well-being of our rural communities, it is imperative these strategies foster sustainability at the same time.

Strategies

- Implement the provincial Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan in collaboration with provincial, federal, and local government partners, regional Beetle Action Coalitions and other stakeholders to mitigate the economic impact of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.
- Work with the regional Beetle Action Coalitions to implement mountain pine beetle mitigation projects and encourage economic diversification in mountain pine beetle affected regions.
- Provide an integrated and rapid response to resource-based communities and work with other ministries to address the impact of industry closure.
- Facilitate an exchange of lessons learned and best practices between communities facing similar obstacles.
- Provide local government and First Nations leaders with ongoing outreach and networking opportunities to build leadership and the capacity to manage economic change.

Performance Measure 4: Number of mountain pine beetle mitigation projects implemented to date by the Beetle Action Coalitions

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Number of mountain pine beetle mitigation projects implemented to date by the Beetle Action Coalitions	N/A ¹	12 ²	24	36

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

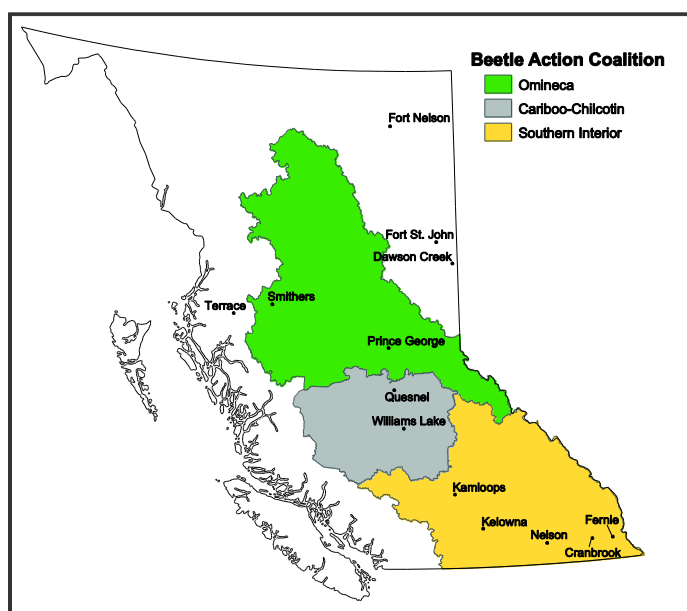
¹ Beetle Action Coalitions will begin to implement their socio-economic adjustment plans in 2010/11.

² Targets represent cumulative totals, with 12 projects to be implemented per year.

Discussion

The provincial government's response to the pine beetle epidemic is guided by the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan. Under this plan, the Ministry's Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division has been tasked with working with the three regional Beetle Action Coalitions to develop socio-economic adjustment plans that identify the unique pine beetle challenges facing each region impacted by the epidemic and how best to address them.

These regional adjustment plans were completed in 2009/10 and the Ministry's



attention now turns to working with the regional Beetle Action Coalitions and various stakeholders to implement the priority projects identified in the plans. These projects will serve to enhance community resilience and support socio-economic development in beetle-impacted communities. The Ministry has provided each of the three Beetle Action Coalitions with additional funding in order to begin implementation of their mitigation plans, and will also work to implement some of the projects through existing government programs. To develop the highest impact projects, the regional Beetle Action Coalitions will focus on regional scale projects that maximize the leveraging of funds from other sources. Given the additional time and resources required to develop larger scale projects, it is projected that each Beetle Action Coalition will implement four projects per year.

More information on the [Omineca](#), [Cariboo-Chilcotin](#), and [Southern Interior](#) Beetle Action Coalitions and their socio-economic adjustment plans can be found on their respective websites.

Performance Measure 5: Ratio of funding leveraged in support of Beetle Action Coalitions' mountain pine beetle mitigation projects

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Ratio of funding leveraged in support of Beetle Action Coalitions' mountain pine beetle mitigation projects	N/A ¹	1:1	1:1	1:1

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

¹ Beetle Action Coalitions will begin to implement their socio-economic adjustment plans in 2010/11.

Discussion

The Ministry has provided the regional Beetle Action Coalitions with funding to support the implementation of mountain pine beetle mitigation projects identified in the Coalitions' socio-economic adjustment plans. The Ministry's Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Division will now work with the Coalitions to leverage that funding by identifying partners for the implementation of these projects. The target of a one-to-one ratio identified above specifies that for every Ministry dollar contributed to the Beetle Action Coalitions, a matching dollar is being sought from other partners. Given the limited project dollars controlled by the Beetle Action Coalitions and challenging economic conditions the target of a one-to-one ratio of funding leveraged has been established. The ability to acquire this additional funding is important to the speed with which projects can be implemented, as well as their number and success. Potential partners include local governments, First Nations, regional economic development trusts, provincial and federal governments, as well as non-profit organizations.

Objective 2.4: Rural communities and regions identify, attract and retain investment



Pulp mills, like this one near Prince George, are the largest employers in many rural communities.

Rural communities and regional economies have significant natural assets that make them well-positioned to attract investors and, 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, value-added agriculture (food and beverage processing and organic produce), and non-resource-based industries. The Ministry is also working with communities to find ways for them 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 opportunities, attract new investment and retain existing businesses.
- Expand the Forest Community Business Program to enable other businesses, in addition to forest sector businesses, to access existing debt capital.
- Partner with industry sector associations and business development agencies to support rural business retention and expansion, as well as business succession programs.
- Work with the economic development trusts to support the alignment of priority investments with community needs. Trusts include: [Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#); [Northern Development Initiative Trust](#); [Island Coastal Economic Trust](#), [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#); and the [Columbia Basin Trust](#).

Community Economic Development Toolkit

The Community Economic Development Toolkit, available on the [RuralBC website](#), provides practical and easy to use resources for rural communities.

Goal 3: Communities are equipped with innovative tools that enable them to work toward environmental sustainability

One of the Province's highest priorities is to lead the world in sustainable environmental management. Concerted and collaborative actions by all levels of government are needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle the critical issue of climate change.

Objective 3.1: 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 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.

Strategies

- Provide targeted funding to local governments to help them achieve provincial [drinking water objectives](#).
- Provide tools and resources to local governments to assist them to conserve and protect our water resources.
- Support implementation of local government efforts to use liquid and solid waste as a resource.
- Work with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport to ensure the application of drinking water quality standards supports the use of best, lowest life-cycle cost approaches to the provision of safe drinking water.⁷

⁷ Life-cycle costing is an internationally accepted approach whereby assets, such as drinking water, wastewater, and storm water infrastructure, are assessed over their entire lifetime rather than just on their initial capital costs. This approach can significantly strengthen fiscal performance, as well as contribute to wide-ranging environmental and social benefits.

Performance Measure 6: Percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality ¹	36.4%	37.9%	39.5%	39.8%

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.

¹ This measure presents a conservative estimate of the percentage of the provincial population served by systems meeting emerging standards, as the Ministry does not collect data relating to private systems, populations being served by groundwater, or those served by public systems not receiving Ministry funding. Also, due in part to a change in the method used to estimate the B.C. population for the purpose of this measure, numbers in the above table are slightly higher than those projected in the September 2009 *Service Plan Update*.

Discussion

The majority of British Columbians are served by public drinking water systems that already meet or exceed regulatory requirements for drinking water quality. However, some regional health authorities are encouraging service providers to meet even higher water treatment standards in order to achieve increased certainty about our drinking water quality. Meeting these emerging standards sometimes requires that local governments upgrade their existing water treatment facilities or construct new ones.

The Ministry provides communities with funding for new and improved water and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as for other water quality and quantity projects, through a number of grant programs, including [Building Canada Fund](#), [Towns for Tomorrow](#) and [Infrastructure Stimulus Fund](#).

The year-to-year percentage changes shown above translate into an additional 66,174 British Columbians being served by the new water systems in each of 2010/11 and 2011/12. These numbers exceed the September 2009 [Service Plan Update](#) targets of 54,000 additional British Columbians being served by the new systems in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The higher targets partly reflect the expected completion of the Ministry-funded Seymour-Capilano water treatment plant later this year. When the water distribution system for this plant is also completed in the summer of 2013, Seymour-Capilano will provide improved drinking water to an additional 69 per cent of Metro Vancouver's population.



A water treatment facility in Kamloops provides clean drinking water for the city's residents.

The higher targets for the next two years also reflect more projects being completed in that period due to additional funding made available in September 2009 through the Building Canada Fund and the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. To ensure these funds had an immediate stimulus effect on the economy they were made available to projects expected to be completed no later than March 2011. These criteria will result in more projects being completed in 2010/11 and 2011/12, and fewer in 2012/13. The 2012/13 target translates into an additional 14,833 British Columbians served by systems that meet the emerging standards.

Objective 3.2: 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. The Ministry makes it a priority to encourage local governments to find innovative and collaborative solutions to delivering services to British Columbians.

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 through [Smart Development Partnerships](#) to further innovative and sustainable planning and land-use approaches, fast-tracking 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, speeding up local government actions that contribute to environmental sustainability.
- Ensure local government planning activities balance local and provincial priorities.
- Ensure local decisions pursue local and regional integration in areas such as growth and water planning.

Objective 3.3: 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, a key component of which is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Strategies

- Assist local governments in signing on to and meeting their commitments under the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*, including commitments to the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2012 and working to create compact, energy-efficient communities.
- Continue to work with partners to develop tools, best practices and advice to help local governments mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as to address other environmental matters. Materials and tools already developed include the [BC Climate Action Toolkit](#), the [Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment Guide](#), the Planting Our Future toolkit, the Urban Forests and Climate Adaptation Guide, the water conservation calculator, and the [Community Energy & Emissions Planning Guide](#), among others.
- Ensure that Ministry infrastructure funding programs prioritize those local government projects that deliver environmental benefits such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water and air quality, conserving energy, or using alternative energy sources.
- 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.
- Ensure that the local government legislative and regulatory framework supports local government efforts to be environmentally-sustainable.



Sustainability and family fun converge in Dawson Creek

Performance Measure 7: Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*

Performance Measure	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the <i>British Columbia Climate Action Charter</i> ¹	93%	95%	97% ²	98%

Data Source: The Union of British Columbia Municipalities records and tracks these local governments that sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. The Ministry further determines, using BC Stats population statistics, 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.

² Since the last Service Plan, this target has been revised down from 98 per cent to 97 per cent following a reassessment of the factors that influence this measure.

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.

Resource Summary

Core Businesses	2009/10 Restated Estimates ¹	2010/11 Estimates	2011/12 Plan	2012/13 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government	138,668	298,724	209,750	209,750
RuralBC Secretariat.....	33,316	3,316	3,316	3,316
Pine Beetle Response Division	446	426	400	400
Property Assessment	593	587	574	574
Executive and Support Services	6,163	6,010	5,983	5,983
Totals	179,186	309,063	220,023	220,023
Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	1,388	1,020	1,197	2
Totals	1,388	1,020	1,197	2

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the 2009/10 *Estimates*. The 2009/10 restated estimates reflect a change in funding model for corporately provided operations support such as accommodation, most information technology, freedom of information, corporate accounting services, payroll, and corporate sustainability. Funds previously held in Ministries for these activities were centralized into Shared Services BC, the existing service delivery body for these services.

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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 Epidemic Response Division

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/pine_beetle_epidemic_response/

Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan

www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle

Ministry Infrastructure Grant Programs

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

Ministry Agencies, Boards and Commissions

(includes Crowns and Regional Development Trusts)

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