



Useful Web Links

December 12, 2008



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Hello Everyone,

Last Friday our government announced its intention to introduce legislation which, subject to the approval of the legislature, will extend the Mining Flow-Through Share Tax Credit to the end of 2009, retroactive to Jan.1, 2009. There will also be a new economic mining task force to help B.C.'s mining industry weather the worldwide economic downturn. Mining exploration companies are structured so that eligible expenses are passed on to investors. The provincial government currently allows a 20 percent tax credit for investors who are required to pay these expenses. It is this exemption that will be extended. The Economic Task Force for Mining will bring together industry leaders to monitor the economic situation and recommend measures to mitigate the effects of the global downturn on the mining industry. The mining industry in BC has been strong. BC's mineral exploration activity reached a record high of nearly \$416 million on 472 exploration projects in 2007. Of this, nearly \$95 million was spent on 88 projects in the Central region of the province. Mining is an important industry in BC. We are all aware of the downturn in the forest sector and mining offers hope for an increasingly diversified northern economy. It is through measures such as these that we can ensure a strong northern economy in the future.

Last Friday also marked another important announcement intended to help keep British Columbia's economy moving forward during these uncertain economic times. Full labour

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Useful Phone numbers

BC Nurse line: 24 hour,
Toll free 1-866-215-4700

Pharma Net Hotline:
Mon-Fri (8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-387-4700

Health Info Line: Mon-Fri
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-465-4911

Victim Link: 7 days a week,
24 hours, 1-800-563-0808

mobility between provinces was confirmed by agreement among Canada's labour and trade ministers, breaking down economic barriers and allowing Canadians and their families to move freely throughout the country. As of April 2009, people with specific professional or occupational certification in a province or territory will be recognized as qualified to practise their profession in all provinces and territories where that profession or occupation is regulated. This agreement is partly the result of the hard work we did through the Trade Investment Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) of this government to break down labour mobility barriers with Alberta.

In recent weeks I have highlighted many initiatives that will support the forest sector through this temporary economic downturn. One of these initiatives is the promotion of wood products in the Asia-Pacific region. On Wednesday Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd. released its annual call for proposals to boost demand for B.C. wood products in Asia-Pacific and other key markets. Forestry Innovation Investment is the international forest-products marketing agency for the Province of British Columbia and is providing \$11.5 million in total for market and product development and research to the forest sector to successful applicants. As part of the announcement, Forestry Innovation Investment issued a strategy outlining priorities for market research and development, as well as procedures for submitting proposals. If you would like to find out more, please visit the BC Bid webpage at www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca and www.bcfii.ca.

Prince George as a city is actually weathering the economic uncertainly quite well. Many of us remember the late 1990's when unemployment was around 15 or 20 percent. Statistics released this week show that the jobless rate actually went down in November – to 5.3 per cent from 6.9 per cent. The city's unemployment rate is also a full percentage below the national rate. October's selling price for real estate was also up 1.2 per cent. As an editorial from the Prince George Citizen on December 8th stated in regards to the economic indicators, "It's a sign that efforts to reduce the city's resilience on the forest industry are working. The news may be bleak elsewhere, but this time around we're doing just fine, thank you." This is clear evidence that by working together and with a focus on diversification we can lessen the impact of the current global economic uncertainty

This is such a busy time of year. My calendar is full of Christmas events, such as the Filipino Christmas Dinner and Dance, Elder Citizens Christmas Association (ECRA) Christmas Concert and the Prince George Cougars Teddy Bear and Toque Toss at the Cougars game on Wednesday. As we celebrate during this Christmas season let's be sure to look for ways to support those who are less fortunate than we are. For many, the Christmas season can be lonely and difficult. Why not think of a way that you can brighten someone's day during the holiday season! You'll be glad you did. See you out and about...

Until next week.

Shirley

Question of the week:

HOW DOES BC TIMBER SALES BENEFITS MORE LOGGERS, WOOD PROCESSORS

Recent regulatory changes to BC Timber Sales (BCTS) will streamline administration, reduce transaction costs for the organization and its customers, and encourage more value-added producers to register with BCTS.

Effective immediately, the BC Timber Sales Regulation lifts the freeze on registration in Category 2 that has been in place since June 2003. Category 2 is a class of registration in BCTS for value-added and independent lumber producers, but excludes major quota holders.

Lifting the Category 2 freeze creates and opens up new opportunities for independent lumber and value-added producers to bid on timber sales licenses and fiber supplies that were previously unavailable to them. It is now easier for these entrepreneurs to register and compete for timber opportunities provided by BCTS.

In addition to unfreezing Category 2, the following changes to the BCTS registration system were made:

- New registrants no longer need to pay an initial registration fee of \$250 and existing registrants no longer have to pay the fee to renew their registration every two years.
- Individuals or companies no longer need to have at least one year of logging experience or a timber processing facility to qualify for registration in Category 1.

This regulatory change also consolidates advertising and deposit management regulations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of BC Timber Sales and the quality of service provided to its customers.

Advertising and deposit management rules for BCTS timber sale licenses were previously set out by the Advertising, Deposits, Disposition and Extension Regulation. They are now rolled into the BC Timber Sales Regulation, resulting in a single, more understandable regulation that will also help reduce program delivery costs.

BC Timber Sales was founded in 2003 with a mandate that includes competitively auctioning timber from public land across British Columbia. In its first five years, BCTS offered more than 73 million cubic meters of timber to the market, sold 63 million cubic meters and generated \$430 million in net revenue for the Province.

Complete information about the BC Timber Sales program is available online at www.for.gov.bc.ca/bcts/.

News Around the Province

FUNDING SUPPORTS WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BC Hydro announces successful proposals in phase one of Bioenergy Call for Power

BC Hydro has selected four proposals submitted in phase one of BC Hydro's Bioenergy Call for Power.

Bioenergy provides clean and reliable electricity year-round, so this is another step on the road to achieving electricity self-sufficiency by 2016. These projects are a tremendous opportunity to create new jobs and diversify the forest economy for B.C. communities through better utilization of the wood waste resource.

These bioenergy facilities will use forest-based biomass, including sawmill residue, logging debris, trees killed by mountain pine beetle, and other residual wood, to generate electricity. The four projects will generate a combined total of 579 gigawatt hours of electricity annually, or enough to power more than 52,000 homes. The selected proposals were submitted as part of a competitive process and are from Canfor Pulp Ltd. Partnership's PGP Bio Energy Project in Prince George, PG Interior Waste to Energy Ltd.'s proposal also in Prince George, Domtar Pulp and Paper Products' Kamloops Green Energy Project in Kamloops, and Zellstoff Celgar Ltd. Partnership's Celgar Green Energy Project in Castlegar.

“BC Hydro is pleased that industries are taking the initiative to provide an innovative source of made-in-B.C. electricity, utilizing a carbon-neutral fuel,” said Bev Van Ruyven, BC Hydro Executive Vice President, Customer Care and Conservation.

Once approved by the selected proponents and BC Hydro, the electricity purchase agreements will be submitted to the British Columbia Utilities Commission.

BC Hydro, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Ministry of Forests and Range continue to work together on plans to develop phase two of the Bioenergy Call.

For more information visit www.bchydro.com

This week’s bouquet of recognition goes to...

Izaak Smith

*Congratulations on your time spent on
“You Think You Can Dance”
And Welcome back home!*

Community Announcements

The Community Arts Council proudly presents
Winter Fest and the “Angels Among Us”
Awards
December 19, 2008

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Northern BC Business and Technology  
Awards  
Call for Nominations  
Deadline January 9/2009  
For More Information Call Michael Kerr  
250-960-5938

## **Mark your calendar...**

- ❖ December 13 – Gospel concert at Prince George Playhouse – **Sacred songs of Elvis Presley**- tickets at Studio 2880 for info call 250-563-2880
- ❖ December 13 – **Free Press Annual Food Drive**, 10am-4pm Bring a minimum of 6 cans of non-perishable goods or new unwrapped toys to 1773 South Lyon St. For more info call 250-564-0005

- ❖ December 13 – **Latino Christmas** party at the Art Space above Books & Co. Cost to non-members is \$10; free to Members
- ❖ December 13 – Special **Christmas indoor market** by the vendors of the Farmers Market at St Michael's Church Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> & Victoria between 9am-2pm
- ❖ December 14- **Maureen Washington** at the Waddling Duck at 7pm tickets \$15 available at Books 7 Co.
- ❖ December 14 – **ECRA Old fashion Christmas** Concert at 2pm and join us for tea. Admission by Donation.
- ❖ December 15 – **Maureen Washington** at the Artspace (cash bar) at 8pm tickets \$15 available at Books 7 Co.
- ❖ December 18 – **Fiddler's Christmas Jam at ECRA** 1692- 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. Come and jam or come and listen. Bring a plate of goodies to share with everyone. Doors open at 7pm.
- ❖ December 18-24 - **PG Railway Museum** is presenting its Celebration of Lights with Santa, a Christmas village and rides on the Cottonwood Railway. Chocolate and hot dogs around the bonfire- open 11-8pm.
- ❖ December 19-21 – **Hansel and Gretel with UBC Opera**, tickets available at the PGSO office on 15<sup>th</sup> for info 250-562-0800
- ❖ January 24 to Feb 1 – **The Coldsnap Festival**; six main stage events are \$25 or three for \$60. Tickets go on sale Nov15 at Studio 2880, Books and Co, and Meow Records.
- ❖ February 12-15- **Disney High School Musical** ice tour at the CN Centre, tickets on sale at Ticket Master.

***If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email [Shirley](#)***

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter. If you would like to see something specific in the next edition of Ask Your MLA, please [email me](#). If you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter, email their name so we can add them to our list.



My second e-newsletter, **People, Places & Projects** showcases great people and projects in our area. To subscribe to **People, Places & Projects**, [click here](#). To read past editions to go: [People, Places & Projects online](#).

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