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Discover your BC Parks by clicking on the logo above.

PROVINCE BOOSTS LIVING RIVERS TRUST FUND TO \$21 MILLION

VICTORIA – The B.C. government is tripling funding to preserve and restore B.C.'s rivers with a \$14-million contribution to the Living Rivers Trust Fund, bringing the Province's total contribution to \$21 million.

"B.C.'s rivers and waterways help define us as a province. They are the lifeblood of our environment, our economy and our communities," said Premier Campbell.

"The Living Rivers Trust Fund serves as our commitment to protecting and improving B.C.'s rivers, watersheds, and fish habitats for generations to come." [More >>](#)



PROVINCE SIGNS PARKS AGREEMENT WITH 'NAMGIS NATION

VICTORIA – The Province of British Columbia and the 'Namgis First Nation signed an agreement to collaboratively manage parks and protected areas within 'Namgis traditional territory.

"This government-to-government agreement between the Province and the 'Namgis will allow us to work together to manage parks as effectively as possible," said Environment Minister Barry Penner. "In keeping with the spirit of the New Relationship, the agreement paves the way for future discussions between First Nations and the Province regarding the collaborative management of parks in First Nations' traditional territories." [More >>](#)

Notes from Environment Minister Barry Penner

Welcome to the first issue of Environment Report. I hope you find it both enjoyable and informative.

The idea behind the report is to update you on what the provincial government has been doing to ensure British Columbia continues to lead the world in sustainable environmental management.



Since the day I became British Columbia's Minister of Environment, it's been an exciting time.

[More >>](#)



HARTLEY BAY RECEIVES FIRST EVER COMMUNITY AWARD

HARTLEY BAY – Residents of Hartley Bay received the first ever B.C. Award for Achievement by a Community, presented by Premier Gordon Campbell on behalf of the British Columbia Achievement Foundation.

The award is a special initiative of the foundation and was created in response to the events of March 22, 2006, when the Queen of the North ran aground and sank near Hartley Bay. Residents helped transport passengers and crew to safety after hearing the ferry's distress call and provided food and shelter for those on board. [More >>](#)



PROVINCE LAUNCHES NEW B.C. CONSERVATION CORPS PROJECTS

NORTH VANCOUVER – Post-secondary students and recent graduates are getting set to work on environmental and conservation projects across the province as part of the British Columbia Conservation Corps (BCCC), Environment Minister Barry Penner announced.

"The Conservation Corps is one of our most exciting programs because it gives students and new grads the opportunity to learn from the most seasoned experts in the field," said Penner. "This program gives young people a chance to make an important contribution to our goal of leading the world in environmental sustainability."

The BCCC was launched in February 2005, when the Province announced an investment of \$9 million over three years to run the program. This year, the Ministry of Environment has approved 27 new projects across the province, employing approximately 150 students and recent graduates in projects ranging from two to nine months in length. Project selection criteria included consistency of the project with the ministry's service plan, quality and diversity of the work, and involvement from partner environmental agencies. [More >>](#)



BOY RECOGNIZED FOR QUICK THINKING IN COUGAR INCIDENT

GOLD RIVER – A six-year-old boy from Gold River has been presented with some keepsakes to remind him of the day he led his little brother to safety after discovering they may have been seconds away from a cougar attack.

Environment Minister Barry Penner presented Bryce Forbes, a Grade 1 student at Ray Watkins Elementary School, a cap and badge from the B.C. Conservation Service, as mementos in recognition of his quick thinking and concern for the safety of his five-year-old brother, Tucker, a kindergarten student at the same school.

On Easter Sunday, the Forbes family returned to their Gold River home after an outing to their cabin. The Forbes children went out to the fenced yard to play. They had been outside for more than an hour when Bryce noticed some movement from the corner of his eye. Then he realized there was a cougar in the yard just a few feet away. [More >>](#)



BRITISH COLUMBIA LEADS IN CREATION OF PROTECTED AREAS

VICTORIA – The government of British Columbia has developed legislation to establish a new designation of protected area that is vital to implementing the Central Coast and North Coast land use decisions.

"This is a historic day for British Columbia," said B.C.'s Environment Minister Barry Penner, who introduced the legislation in the legislature. "By establishing the conservancy designation under the Park Act, the government of B.C. is well on its way to protecting some of the most spectacular and ecologically diverse areas of the province.

"In addition, by making the approximately 103,000-hectare Kitasoo Spirit Bear Conservancy one of the first conservancies established by amendments to the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act, we have protected the primary habitat of our official provincial mammal, the Spirit Bear," said Penner. [More >>](#)



B.C. INVESTS MORE THAN \$13 MILLION TO IMPROVE PARKS



VICTORIA – The B.C. government is investing \$13.3 million this year to upgrade BC Parks infrastructure and to acquire additional park land to improve the camping and day-use experience for park visitors, Environment Minister Barry Penner announced.

"These improvements will help BC Parks provide first-class outdoor recreation opportunities," Penner said. "We made a commitment to upgrade our parks and we're following through on that commitment to make our parks system even better."

In 2005, the Province made a commitment to invest \$20 million for park capital improvements over three years, including \$12.2 million in the 2005/06 budget. With this investment in the 2006/07 budget, that commitment is being fulfilled a year early, with additional investments still to come.

[More >>](#)

PROVINCE SUPPORTS \$550,000 OKANAGAN WATER STUDY

KELOWNA – The Province and the Okanagan Basin Water Board are joining in a \$550,000 partnership to complete the second phase of a water supply and demand study for the Okanagan Basin, Environment Minister Barry Penner announced.

"The B.C. government is pleased to provide funding and staff resources to support this critical project in the Okanagan Basin," said Penner, who presented a cheque for \$350,000 while attending a meeting of the Water Stewardship Council of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Thursday in Kelowna. "In areas like the Okanagan, where water availability is a concern, it is essential to work together to manage our water wisely and conserve the resource for a sustainable future."



The Okanagan Basin is a vital and rapidly growing region in British Columbia. This growth leads to increasing demand for water, resulting in an immediate need to assess current and future water availability, as well as demand. [More >>](#)

PENNER LAUNCHES ENVIRONMENT WEEK WITH 10 TIPS

Ten things you can do to help the environment:

1. Bike to work, car pool, use mass transit, or walk.
2. When driving, keep tires well inflated and organize trips to reduce driving distances—never let your car idle.
3. Conserve water – don't leave taps running when brushing your teeth.
4. Run dishwashers, washers and dryers with full loads during low energy hours, late in the evening or early in the morning. Choose short cycles, low water levels and low heat settings whenever possible.
5. When shopping, avoid products that are packaged for single use (i.e., drinks, school lunches, candy, cat and dog food, salad mixings, etc.). Instead, buy in bulk and transfer the products to your own reusable containers.
6. Separate and recycle your garbage – paper, plastics and bottles and compost perishable waste.
7. Use sensor lights or solar lights if you need outdoor lights on at night.
8. Use natural methods to fertilize and protect plants from pests and conserve water by covering plant beds with composted leaves or grass to help retain moisture.
9. Conserve water by cutting lawns less frequently and watering less.
10. Manage hazardous wastes such as paint and batteries by taking them to a proper disposal facility.

[More >>](#)

BURROWING OWLS RELEASED

Burrowing owls raised in captivity are introduced to their new homes in the grasslands of the Kamloops and Nicola Valley areas on April 22, 2006 by volunteers. In the photo below, young Matthew Surgenor admires one of the juvenile birds held by Environment Minister Barry Penner just before it's introduced to its new artificial burrow in the Bereford area, south of Kamloops.

