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## ELITE CLEANERS WINS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Elite Earth-friendly Cleaners of Victoria won the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment's pollution prevention award. Elite Earth-Friendly Cleaners earned this award by removing solvents from their dry-cleaning process. This company is a great example of the many B.C. businesses that are doing their part to improve the environment.

## LINKS:

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Discover your BC Parks by clicking on the logo above.

## MESSAGE FROM ENVIRONMENT MINISTER BARRY PENNER

Since the August issue of Environment Report, I've been able to visit a number of areas of our amazing province. This is an important part of learning more about the environmental initiatives that Ministry of Environment staff, as well as the private sector, is working on.

I visited Teck Cominco's Trail smelter where the company has added electronic waste recycling to its day-to-day operations. They grind up used electronics and place them into a furnace to extract and recycle numerous metals, instead of sending them to a landfill. Recycling processes like this will help electronics manufacturers establish a used electronics recycling program, which our government requires them to do by August 2007.

I also visited Agri-Green Biodiesel in Sparwood, where I met owner Gary Tomlinson. Gary showed me how Agri-Green makes biodiesel and how biodiesel blends can be used as a renewable fuel in standard diesel engines, without any engine modifications.

To encourage more British Columbians to use this renewable fuel, our government removed the provincial fuel tax on the biodiesel portion of biodiesel fuel blends. The community of Sparwood took advantage of this tax break by becoming the first community in B.C. to use biodiesel in its entire fleet of diesel vehicles.

While touring northwestern B.C., I met with the Haisla First Nation to discuss our collaborative management of the Kitlope Heritage Conservancy Protected Area. Across the province, First Nations are signing collaborative management agreements with the provincial government to allow them to take on a greater role in managing our parks and protected areas.

Boating down the Dean River was a real treat. This world famous river is about 70 kilometres north of the town of Bella Coola on B.C.'s Central Coast. I witnessed the valuable angling activity that

takes place on this river. Anglers come from around the world to fish for steelhead, salmon and trout.

I also took time to visit Kokanee Glacier Lodge in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park. For \$22 a night in the summertime, people can

hike into the lodge, which provides a kitchen for them to cook their food and a place to sleep. The lodge is powered by a zero-emission micro-hydro project, and provides a great opportunity for families to enjoy one of our 600 provincial parks.

I encourage all British Columbians to get out and visit a park. There are many spectacular places close to home where people of all ages can recreate and learn about our environment. Such activities are important to our health, and combined with provincial initiatives such as ActNow and the Conversation on Health, I hope to inspire more people to get out and enjoy our great outdoors. If you are interested in learning more about or participating in the Conversation on Health, please visit [www.bcconversationonhealth.ca](http://www.bcconversationonhealth.ca).



Environment Minister Barry Penner, Steve Mazur, Regional Manager for Environmental Stewardship-Cariboo (seated) and Mike Ramsay, Fish and Wildlife Section Head (background) boat up the world famous Dean River. Minister got an overview of the activity levels on the Dean River. The surrounding landscape is slated to be a new Conservancy in 2007.

In the Okanagan, Bill Barisoff, the MLA for Penticton-Okanagan Valley, joined me to tour the Vaseux Bighorn Sheep recovery project. Most of the bighorn sheep population in the Vaseux region died of pneumonia in 1999/2000, reducing the population from 450 sheep to only 150. In 2002, the ministry released a recovery plan. Working with the University of Sherbrooke and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, the population has rebounded back to 300 sheep.

Thanks to ministry staff and employees of various companies I met on this tour. I learned a lot about how the provincial government and B.C. businesses are working to reduce their footprint on the environment. I'm proud of the work we're doing together to improve the quality of our air and water, to recycle our electronics and to conserve our province's precious wildlife.

## COLUMBIA FUELS CLEARS THE AIR WITH NEW BIOHEAT FOR HOME HEATING

Victoria, B.C. - Columbia Fuels Inc., an Island Company, announced it is now offering BioHeat, an environmentally friendly blend of their ultra low sulphur heating oil with 20 percent biofuel, to Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast customers. Columbia Fuels launched the new plant-based line of heating fuel today in Oak Bay with its first residential BioHeat fill up.

Attending the launch were Jim Smith, CEO of Columbia Fuels, Barry Penner, Minister of Environment and Richard Neufeld, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

BioHeat has been used extensively in the US and Europe, and Columbia Fuels will be the first company in Canada to offer BioHeat. "All indications show that our customers want BioHeat and we want to respond to our customers' voice," said Jim Smith, CEO of Columbia Fuels. "Although biofuels tend to cost more, we are committed to ensuring BioHeat will be the same price as our other quality heating oil products. We want to demonstrate that Columbia Fuels is committed to innovation, our customers and the environment," added Smith. [\\*More >>](#)



The first delivery of BioHeat, a new environmentally friendly blend of traditional home heating fuel and a plant-based additive that helps reduce greenhouse gases, took place recently in Oak Bay. From left are Environment Minister Barry Penner, Columbia Fuels driver James Moore, Energy and Mines Minister Richard Neufeld, Oak Bay-Gordon Head MLA Ida Chong, the first Bioheat customer Barrie Hewstan and Columbia Fuels CEO Jim Smith.

\* To view the Environment Report online, go to [www.env.gov.bc.ca/pac/envrep/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pac/envrep/)

[www.gov.bc.ca/env](http://www.gov.bc.ca/env)

## GITXAALA INK MANAGEMENT, PLANNING PACTS WITH GOVERNMENT

KITKATLA – The Gitxaala First Nation met today with government officials on Dolphin Island, off the coast of B.C. near Prince Rupert, to sign land use planning and collaborative protected area management agreements as part of the historic Central and North Coast Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs).

Environment Minister Barry Penner and Agriculture and Lands Minister Pat Bell joined Chief Clifford White, band council members and hereditary leaders in the signing ceremony for agreements that will incorporate First Nations' culture, ecological and economic interests and allow the LRMP process to continue to move forward.

"Land and Resource Management Plans play an important role in the New Relationship between government and First Nations," said Bell. "We saw an unprecedented level of co-operation in developing the land use decisions for the Central Coast and North Coast. Today, that collaboration continues as we sign these government-to-government agreements and move forward with the framework for completing and implementing Land and Resource Management Plans for this area."

The government-to-government land use planning agreement outlines zoning for protection and Ecosystem Based Management and establishes the framework for continued implementation of the land and resource management plan for this region. The agreement is consistent with similar land use planning agreements already signed with other First Nations and is in keeping with the historic Central Coast and North Coast land use decisions announced Feb. 7, 2006.



Environment Minister Barry Penner and Agriculture and Lands Minister Pat Bell observe as Gitxaala Nation leaders sign land-use planning and conservancy collaborative management agreements with the provincial government. From left, Rev. Verne Jackson, Clifford White (elected Chief), Matthew Hill (hereditary leader), Clarence Innis (representative for hereditary Chief), and Melvin Tolmie (chairperson/MC).

Through the collaborative protected area management agreement, the Gitxaala First Nation and government will work together on conservancy planning, recommendations on economic activities, capacity building, and creating a forum for the parties to discuss issues and interests of common concern. [\\*More >>](#)



### CONSERVATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR HONOURED BY MINISTER PENNER

Debra Bresser (left to right), Conservation Officer Bill Bresser, Environment Minister Barry Penner and Bill's daughter Nicole Bresser were on hand recently at the B.C. Legislature to recognize Deputy Chief Bill Bresser as "Outstanding Conservation Officer of the Year."

The award for 2006 was presented to Bresser for good reason. While performing his regular duties, he was responsible for the creation of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), a big job in and of itself. The SIU was staffed and trained under the Deputy Chief's direction and during the past year was successful in bringing several major files forward. Bresser has always put the good of the Conservation Officer Service first on his agenda. The Deputy Chief has been a Conservation Officer in British Columbia since 1993 and has worked in Victoria since that time.

## BALANCED APPROACH PROVIDES MORE OPTIONS IN BC PARKS

In British Columbia, demographics are changing. Our population is aging and people's needs are no longer the same.

At the same time, there has been a huge increase in the number of provincial parks in B.C.

Since our government was elected in 2001, we have established 41 new parks, including four more this spring.

In fact, B.C.'s park system has more than doubled to more than 13 million hectares (32 million acres) since 1990. This is larger in size than the countries of Denmark, Switzerland and the Netherlands combined.

But while the park system has grown, very few new facilities have been added.

For those who prefer a tent, BC Parks does provide more than 11,000 campsites. However, not everyone who wants to enjoy a BC Parks experience is able to sleep on the ground in a tent.

That's why the provincial government requested proposals this month to build and operate fixed-roof accommodations in a handful of selected parks. Existing campsites will not be affected by any new facilities.

There are now more than 600 parks in B.C. We are seeking ideas for some type of new roofed accommodation in 12 of these parks.

BC Parks will continue to own the land and will be able to set stringent terms and conditions for how the facilities will operate through a park-use permit. Operators will have to pay annual fees to government for these permits, and all revenue will stay within the BC Parks system to help fund services and programs. [\\*More >>](#)

