

## BACKGROUND

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September 2005

Ministry of Forests and Range

### **MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE AND REFORESTATION**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to mitigating the environmental and social impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic. This includes ensuring that damaged forests are returned to a productive state over time.

By law, licensees are required to reforest all harvested areas; however, there will remain large areas of beetle-impacted stands that will not be harvested for environmental or economic reasons. While most will regenerate naturally over time, areas that are valuable for wildlife habitat, water, fisheries, timber production or other forest values will require help to speed the reforestation process.

The province has committed \$86 million over four years to *Forests for Tomorrow* – the reforestation plan designed to speed the recovery of forest values in areas affected by the catastrophic mountain pine beetle infestation.

Work under *Forests for Tomorrow* has already begun, with activities including:

- surveys to identify the highest priority areas for treatments and planting,
- reforestation projects in areas damaged by wildfire or in areas within the infestation where young forests are struggling due to competing vegetation,
- research into environmental concerns and reforestation strategies to reduce risk of recurrences of the beetle epidemic, and
- mapping and inventory work to identify affected areas that will not be salvage logged but that will require planting or other assistance to ensure the establishment of thriving new forests.

The Mountain Pine Beetle Emergency Response: Canada-B.C. Implementation Strategy is also contributing to the task of reforestation by focusing expenditures on ecosystem restoration for wildlife, fisheries, watershed and biodiversity values. Over the next three years the implementation strategy is expected to direct \$7 million to these areas.

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