



BC's LANDS

Update



Honourable Pat Bell
Minister of Agriculture and Lands

Featuring News From the Lands Sector of B.C.'s Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

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FROM THE DESK OF PAT BELL

As we head into the cooler and wetter months, many British Columbians will be spending more time indoors and thinking about ways to maintain good health through the fall and winter.

Therefore, it's particularly timely that the Province has launched the "Conversation on Health." It's the largest and most comprehensive public discussion on the health system ever undertaken in B.C.

Government wants to hear your ideas about can be done to ensure our health system is there for our children and grandchildren. Visit www.conversationonhealth.ca for more information on how you can participate.

New UNBC research reveals mountain pine beetles can fly up to 800 metres off the ground. Researchers used a small plane with a net attached to one of its wing struts to catch beetles at different altitudes. This new

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ILMB ADM Dave Byng (far right) helps coordinate the evacuation of a colleague (far left) bitten by a Godman's pit viper

Above and Beyond, a Public Servant's Call to the Jungle

Dave Byng is ADM for ILMB's Regional Client Services division, a job that encompasses the entire province. A typical work week for ADM Byng can be a bit hairy, but it's nothing compared with hacking through the Honduran jungle with his 11-year-old son, Max.

They embarked on a four-week scientific expedition in Honduras's Cusuco National Park with the British-led Operation Wallacea to manage a remote wilderness camp operation. Led by scientists from around the globe, the expedition was established to help the Honduran government manage biodiversity in the park, and also monitor the impact its development has had on neighbouring villagers. A memorable experience for Dave occurred when a scientist sustained a potentially fatal bite from a pit viper. With time a critical factor, Dave and colleagues called on a U.S. military Blackhawk helicopter to conduct an emergency evacuation.

As the chopper hovered above the jungle, the downdraft created mayhem below from flying debris. When a rescue technician was lowered, the winch line tangled in a tree, anchoring the helicopter.

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evidence means the destructive little pests can use air currents to fly long distances.

The Province has just updated its \$500-million Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan. It includes 59 key actions for the coming year, as well as 13 multi-year actions, aimed at helping B.C. achieve sustainability for forests, communities and the provincial economy. For more information visit www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle

Early this month Minister of Environment Barry Penner and I flew to Kitkatla on Dolphin Island near Prince Rupert to sign historic land use planning and collaborative protected area management agreements with the Gitxaala First Nation. The agreements incorporate the First Nation's culture, ecological and economic interests and further the Central Coast and North Coast Land Resource Management Planning process.

Until next month,

Pat Bell

Minister of Agriculture and Lands

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Ministry of
Agriculture and Lands

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A quick-thinking guide hacked through the tree trunk with his machete to free the line and the helicopter. The scientist was carried to a hospital where he received anti-venom just two hours and 20 minutes after being bitten. He returned to camp three days later.

Limits of Acceptable Change

As recreational activities in B.C. continue to increase, we face the growing challenge of balancing two major needs: facilitating the public's use of natural resources and maintaining those same resources for our future use and enjoyment. A difficult task at the best of times!

To help with this, ILMB and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts are working with the commercial recreation industry and the public to test the application of the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) system in land use planning for tourism and recreation. The LAC process, used successfully in other jurisdictions worldwide, is a nine-step method of addressing recreation user conflicts and recreation management in public and protected areas.

Broughton/Johnstone Straits and the surrounding area near Golden have been chosen as pilot areas for the LAC process to answer questions about ways to manage our resources in the face of increasing public demand. If successful, this pilot project will help guide B.C.'s future recreational use management.

FrontCounter BC Offers Expanded Assistance

We are officially opening new FrontCounter BC offices this month in Williams Lake and Victoria. FrontCounter BC was highlighted in the latest issue of BC Forest Professional magazine with a huge picture of our team winning the Premier's Award. The publication goes to more than 6,200 forest professionals!

FrontCounterBC and Government Agents of the Ministry of Labour and Citizens Services have also been actively helping with the cattle age verification program. Producers who lack internet access are able to register the ages of their animals through these offices. Traceability of the age of cattle is vital to maintaining a strong B.C. cattle industry.

FrontCounter BC will also be showcased at the Union of B.C. Municipalities annual meeting in Victoria at the end of the month. For more information on FrontCounter BC visit www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca