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## MEDIA ADVISORY

May 9, 2006

Ministry of Forests and Range

### **ATTENTION: ASSIGNMENT EDITORS**

MERRITT – Media are invited to see what it means when forest firefighters “hit hard, hit fast” as part of training boot camp for new recruits on May 11.

About 150 candidates for seasonal forest firefighting positions are participating in one of three, eight-day training sessions at the Ministry’s training camp, just outside of Merritt. The training program consists of both classroom and field training, with Thursday’s agenda featuring demonstrations of air tankers in action.

Forest fires are Canada’s most frequent and expensive natural emergencies, costing an estimated \$1 billion per year. British Columbia is a world leader in wildfire management, fighting an average of 2,000 fires a year, and providing technical assistance to communities on how to reduce their risk for interface fires.

**Date:** Thursday, May 11, 2006

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – Tour of boot camp, briefings with safety and training leaders, forest protection staff, access to new recruits  
10:30 a.m. – Airtankers conduct demonstration of retardant drop

**Location:** Media should meet at the **Nicola Training Centre located at the Merritt Fire Zone Office**, about 8 km north of Merritt on Highway 5A.

**RSVP:** If attending, please RSVP with Forest and Range Communications, 250 387-8486. A map will be made available.

Note: Pictures will be made available to the media following the conclusion of boot camp on the Ministry’s media room at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/pab/media/>.

-30-

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