

NEWS RELEASE

MCGREGOR MODEL FOREST PROPOSAL ACCEPTED FOR NEW 5-YEARS FEDERAL FUNDING

July 10, 2007
For Immediate Release

PRINCE GEORGE – The proposal “Applying Community Needs to Managing the Land”, submitted by the Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Partnership and the McGregor Model Forest Association was approved and will be funded for the next 5 years by Natural Resources Canada’s Forest Communities Program. This new program replaces the Canadian Model Forest Program, which is scheduled to wrap up at the end of September 2007 after 15 years in operation. The FCP program was announced July 7th by the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, on behalf of the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of Natural Resources. NRCan stated that the FCP is intended to help forest communities develop stable local economies as they deal with the impacts of economic challenges facing Canada’s forest sector. “NRCan received 58 proposals, and we’re proud to be one of the 11 successful applicants across the country, and one of two approved in BC” stated Dan Adamson, General Manager of the McGregor Model Forest.

The McGregor Model Forest Association acts as a member and host organization for the IRM Partnership of Northern British Columbia. Building on the past success of the McGregor Model Forest, this expanded partnership will **work with forest-based communities in northern BC in their efforts to diversify their economies**. The goal of the proposed work is to improve coordination between the different resource sectors (e.g. forestry, mining, tourism, oil & gas), and between these sectors and the communities they operate around.

The IRM Partnership was established in 2002 as a forum for business-oriented dialogue on resource development. The members include: Council of Forest Industries (Northern Operations); Association for Mining Exploration; Mining Association of BC; GeoScience BC; Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers; Muskwa- Kechika Management Board; McGregor Model Forest Association; Omineca Beetle Action Coalition, University of Northern BC; Council of Tourism Associations of BC; and the Province of British Columbia (Northern Interior Inter-Agency Management Committee).

Within northern BC, there are three identified local project areas (Peace, Mackenzie, and Omineca) where local partnerships will begin to address critical IRM issues of community, First Nations, and industry importance. Communities and First Nations will, thus, be better able to meet their social, cultural and economic needs without risking their forest and resource capital.

"This is excellent news for the IRM Partnership and for resource-dependant rural communities" says Doug Routledge, VP Forestry and Northern Operations with the Council of Forest Industries. "The potential for these pilot programs to pave the way for further improvements in BC's already world class Integrated Land Use Planning regime is significant."

Negotiations with NRCan will be conducted over the summer towards finalizing agreements for program funding. A signed agreement will be announced as soon as early this fall.

To review a copy of the proposal, visit McGregor’s website at www.mcgregor.bc.ca. The full NRCan announcement can be viewed at www.nrcan.gc.ca/media.

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