



# *Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition*

## Media Release

April 15, 2011

### **SIBAC Continues to Mitigate Pine Beetle Impacts with Provincial Funding**

Yesterday, the Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition (SIBAC) was presented with a cheque for \$3 Million in funding by Donna Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Economic Development (to the Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation). This funding will be used by SIBAC (\$1Million/year over the next 3 years) to continue its efforts to mitigate the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the mountain pine beetle. SIBAC has an ambitious plan to make a difference in the sustainability of rural, forest-dependent communities in the southern interior of BC. To date, SIBAC has managed to leverage funds by approximately 20 times its investment by partnering on projects with other funding organizations. In addition to leveraging funds, SIBAC is focused on supporting projects that further the implementation of SIBAC's mitigation plan recommendations and priorities, and those projects that assist the communities most at risk of mountain pine beetle related impacts.

Director Randy McLean (Okanagan-Similkameen Regional District) said "This funding is great news for the Southern Interior and will assist SIBAC in our ability to help those communities, most hard-hit by mountain pine beetle impacts, to help themselves by supporting their diversification initiatives."

SIBAC has broad representation throughout the southern interior including nine regional districts, six Tribal Councils and the Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations (CFDC-CIFN). Director Geri Collins (CFDC-CIFN) added "I am very pleased with this funding that will support both First Nations and non-First Nations communities with beneficial local project initiatives."

SIBAC is one of three Beetle Action Coalitions in BC's Interior created in 2005-2006 to develop and implement mitigation plans in order to help affected communities endure the impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic. The funding is intended to support projects approved by the Beetle Action Coalitions that will create business partnerships, diversify local and regional economies, find innovative and value-added uses for forest resources and explore new industries to assist rural interior communities through this transition.

For more information please contact:

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