

Ministry of
Community and
Rural Development

2009/10
Annual Service Plan Report



Ministry of Community and Rural Development

For more information on how to contact the British Columbia
Ministry of Community and Rural Development,
see Ministry Contact Information on Page 30 or contact:

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

PO BOX 9490
STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA BC
V8W 9N7

or visit our website at

www.gov.bc.ca/cd

Published by the Ministry of Community and Rural Development

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



The last fiscal year has been one of the most turbulent on record. We started in the midst of one of the worst economic downturns we've seen in generations, and ended on the high note of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the first signs of economic recovery.

Twelve months ago, our priority was to create immediate jobs, to take direct action to deal with the sudden onset of a global economic meltdown. We had to respond quickly, decisively, with both the short-term and long-term health of our communities in mind. I'm proud of the Province's efforts to support our communities throughout this difficult time.

We partnered with local and federal governments to accelerate and maximize our investment dollars, funding infrastructure projects through programs like Building Canada and the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. In September 2009, we made the single largest infrastructure investment announcement in the history of British Columbia – 174 projects valued at \$719 million, to be cost-shared by all three levels of government. Our goal was not just to meet pressing infrastructure needs, but to create immediate jobs that would fuel the revitalization of local government economies.

We provided on-the-ground support to our most vulnerable rural communities through the RuralBC Secretariat to help them weather the economic downturn and identify opportunities for growth and development. Regional managers continue to work closely with community leaders to help them diversify local and regional economies and become more resilient. In addition, Communities First Agreements are being piloted in a number of these communities to give them the opportunity to collaborate with the Province on achieving their goals through targeted resource allocation and partnerships.

Through initiatives like the Community Development Trust, we provided an immediate helping hand to forest and resource workers and resource-dependent communities. The Community Development Trust is now in its third and final year, and has assisted more than 9,700 workers with transition, training, and job opportunities.

As Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery, Donna Barnett continued to oversee the hard work being done by the Province and the three Beetle Action Coalitions to support communities impacted by the epidemic.

We also established a joint Local Government Elections Task Force led by former Community and Rural Development Minister Bill Bennett and Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM)

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

president Harry Nyce. The Task Force recently made public 31 recommendations for improving local government elections, which we will be working hard to implement in time for the 2011 municipal elections.

To better support local governments, we launched a joint provincial-UBCM major industrial property taxation review. The aim of the review is to make property taxes more conducive to investment, while ensuring local government services are fairly provided for all taxpayers.

In my previous role as Minister of Citizens' Services, I had the pleasure of travelling throughout the province this past year, and witnessed first-hand the incredible resilience of British Columbians; the willingness to do what it takes to survive and prosper in one of the most beautiful corners of the world. More and more we are witnessing an economic recovery. Mills are re-opening, new deals are being struck, and we're anticipating great long-term results from the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, which propelled British Columbia onto the world stage. Perhaps most importantly, however, I believe our recent challenges have made us stronger and better prepared as a province.

The last twelve months have taught us valuable lessons about how to endure the booms and busts of economic cycles. We have learned the importance of diversifying economies, of supporting our rural communities – the cornerstones of this province, and of expanding foreign markets.

So where do we go from here? Ultimately, our goal is to develop livable, environmentally sustainable and financially competitive communities. We want to make sure local governments throughout the entire province are as well prepared as possible to take advantage of the advent of a new economy; an economy based on green energy, innovative technology and trade with Asia.

We have the resources; we have the skilled labour; and we have the determination to become world leaders in this emerging economy. Though we're not out of the woods, we have turned a corner, and I'm excited to see what tomorrow will bring in my new role as Minister of Community and Rural Development.

The Ministry of Community and Rural Development's *2009/10 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's *2009/10 - 2011/12 Service Plan Update*. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Ben Stewart
Minister of Community and Rural Development

June 23, 2010

Table of Contents

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement	3
Highlights of the Year	6
Purpose of Ministry	8
Strategic Context	10
Report on Performance	11
Performance Plan Summary Table	11
Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results	12
Report on Resources	28
Annual Service Plan Report Appendices	29
Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information	29

Highlights of the Year

During the 2009/10 fiscal year, spanning the period from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010, the Ministry targeted smaller, more vulnerable communities to help them respond to immediate needs and lay a foundation for future growth, while continuing to support larger communities. The Ministry also announced a record level of funding for local infrastructure around the province and provided communities with other grants to help them create jobs, stimulate their economies, and support a wide range of local priorities. These and other major achievements are described below in more detail.

Enhanced Support for Rural Communities

The Ministry's [RuralBC Secretariat](#) negotiated six Communities First Agreements in 2009/10. These agreements represent a new, more community-centred approach to development, where local governments identify their key priorities for development and prosperity, and the Ministry works to focus government resources on meeting these priorities.



Community Development Trust programs help displaced resource workers and contribute to a healthy forest sector.

Since its inception, the [Community Development Trust](#) has provided funding opportunities to over 9,700 resource workers to help them find temporary employment, upgrade their skills, or transition to other opportunities. The Trust was an immediate government response to the downturn in the forest sector but when the global economic recession hit other resource industries as well, the Trust quickly leveraged over \$30 million in additional federal funding, expanded its Job Opportunities Program (JOP) and opened it to unemployed workers from all resource industries. Since its inception the JOP has helped over 3,000 resource workers find temporary employment at 287 projects in 90 communities around B.C. Many of these projects contributed to improvements in their communities such as the development or improvement of hundreds of recreation sites and thousands of kilometres of trails; making parks safer by removing pine beetle-killed, hazardous trees; and contributing to the conservation of historic sites.

The Ministry's [Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Team](#) is continuing to work with regional Beetle Action Coalitions and over fifty other partners to coordinate the Provincial Government's response to the beetle epidemic. Because of its work with the Beetle Action Coalitions, in 2009/10, for the first time, 100 per cent of B.C. communities impacted by the pine beetle epidemic had mitigation plans in place.

Record infrastructure and other funding support

In 2009/10, the Ministry announced a record level of infrastructure project funding across the province. These projects helped build priority local infrastructure, create jobs, and address local environmental challenges.

The Ministry continually supports improvements to local governments' drinking water infrastructure. Last year, because of these efforts, nearly an additional 15 per cent more British Columbians gained access to drinking water that meets or exceeds emerging, higher standards for drinking water quality.



The Ministry funds the construction of water treatment plants, like this one in Port Edward, all around the province.

The Ministry also provided all local governments with Strategic Community Investment Fund payments, which are a temporary restructuring of Small Community and Regional District Grants and the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program. Under this program, communities received three instalments of funding over two years, providing them with more funding sooner, leading to greater certainty and improved financial flexibility in local government operations.

Strengthening Local Governance

The Ministry played a key role in supporting the work of the joint provincial-Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Local Government Elections Task Force. The Task Force worked from December 2009 to May 30, 2010 to develop recommendations on issues relating to local government elections, such as improvements to campaign finance rules. The Task Force's 31 specific recommendations are intended to improve local government elections by ensuring accountability, enhancing transparency, strengthening compliance and enforcement, increasing accessibility, and expanding education and advice. You can learn more about the Task Force and its recommendations at www.localelectiontaskforce.gov.bc.ca.

Ensuring a Competitive and Fair Property Assessment System

The Ministry also administered the annual [Property Assessment Review Panel](#) program, which consists of approximately 270 panel members sitting on 70 review panels around the province. In 2009/10 the panels reviewed nearly 16,000 property assessment complaints regarding properties valued for the 2010 assessment roll. Additionally, the Ministry successfully completed a comprehensive review of its farm assessment regulations and policies to ensure that the farm assessment process is fair, equitable, and streamlined. The review included province-wide consultations by the Farm Assessment Review Panel which submitted its final report to the Ministry on July 31, 2009. The Ministry has begun implementing some of the panel's recommendations.

Purpose of Ministry

The purpose of the Ministry of Community and Rural Development is to equip communities across British Columbia to build strong, competitive economies that support sustainable and socially-responsible communities. The needs of urban and rural communities differ from one another and it is important for government to tailor its work to the individual needs of all communities. The Ministry supports communities in reaching their full potential by providing a broad range of services, tools, and resources including:



The growing City of Dawson Creek in north-eastern B.C. is just one of the Ministry's 160 municipal clients, all of which have distinct needs and priorities.

- A legislative framework enabling local governments to govern effectively and be accountable to their citizens.
- Tools that foster effective government structures, services, land-use planning and engagement in consultation with municipalities, regional districts and First Nations to achieve local goals.
- Programs, funding, and strategic support to enable communities to grow economically, construct needed infrastructure, improve air and water quality and enhance policing and community safety.
- A place for rural communities to access the resources, advice, and funding they need to help them diversify their economies, overcome barriers to development, and realize their full economic potential.
- Investment in local and regional infrastructure that is flexible in meeting the priorities of urban and rural communities.
- Assistance for forest workers and their families through opportunities for transition to retirement, retraining and temporary employment that supports their local economies.
- Coordination of the provincial government's response to the social, economic and environmental effects of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.

Ministry services and supports are aligned to make them effective and easy to access for rural communities. The [RuralBC Secretariat](#) works to link rural communities to government programs and services.

The Ministry also works to build and strengthen ties between local governments, First Nations, federal and provincial bodies, the private sector, community groups and economic development

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

trusts like the [Northern Development Initiative Trust](#), the [Island Coastal Economic Trust](#) and the [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#).

The Ministry is committed to ensuring transparent, flexible, fair and equitable property assessment and review services. This is achieved by working with the [BC Assessment Authority](#) to support policy development and the Province's property assessment processes to ensure the system is competitive and affordable while enhancing economic growth for B.C. property owners.

The Ministry oversees three Crown corporations – the [Columbia Basin Trust](#), the [Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#), and the [BC Assessment Authority](#) – as well as three boards – the [Property Assessment Appeal Board](#), the [Islands Trust Fund Board](#), and the [Board of Examiners](#). The Ministry provides oversight to the [University Endowment Lands](#), and administers the annual [Property Assessment Review Panel](#) process.

The Minister is assisted in acting to mitigate the impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic by Donna Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery.

Strategic Context

The Ministry works in a complex economic and social environment. This section outlines the most significant external factors that affected the Ministry's work over the past fiscal year.

Preliminary estimates show that British Columbia's real GDP contracted by 2.3 per cent in 2009. Despite the economic downturn, most B.C. local governments fared quite well, managing to maintain operations and services with the aid of targeted provincial and federal assistance for local priorities, as well as stable operational funding. Communities also benefited from B.C. being one of the most investment-friendly environments in Canada. In addition, they were able to borrow money at lower rates than their counterparts in other parts of Canada because of the excellent AAA credit rating of the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia, which pools municipal borrowing and investment needs.

However, the economic downturn did have negative impacts for communities with resource-based economies. The downturn exacerbated an ongoing crisis in the forest sector, contributing to industry closure and increased unemployment in some communities. Additionally, several communities faced litigation over their industrial tax rates as major industrial employers faced increasing strain under a tough economy. Other resource sectors, such as energy and mining, also remained relatively weak as commodity prices only started to recover the ground they lost the previous year. Many rural communities were further challenged by the economic and environmental impacts of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic.

Many B.C. communities benefited from increased exposure to national and international audiences resulting from the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The Games showcased the natural beauty and hospitality of this province to the world at a time when new tourism markets are budding around the globe.

The property market also began to recover in 2009/10 and the Province was able to resume using its regular methodology for assessing property values. In the preceding year, most property assessments had been temporarily frozen to give property owners greater certainty and confidence in the property assessment system during a period of significant market volatility.

Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Communities and regions are empowered to achieve their visions for the future	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
For greater detail see pages 12 to 15		
1.2 Local governments have the capacity to meet the service needs of their residents		144
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes	146	SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
Goal 2: Wealth creation from rural B.C. is supported	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
For greater detail see pages 15 to 20		
2.1 Rural communities have access to programs and services that support their economic development		2
Number of community agreements signed	6	SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED ¹
2.3 Local government and community capacity to manage change is strengthened		100%
Percentage of mountain pine beetle-impacted communities covered by a mountain pine beetle socio-economic adjustment plan	100%	ACHIEVED
Goal 3: Forest-dependent and pine beetle-affected communities are assisted in adapting to a changing forest sector	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
For greater detail see pages 21 to 23		
3.1 Opportunities are created for workers and their forest-dependent communities		9,761
Number of workers in resource-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust	7,950 ²	EXCEEDED
Goal 4: Communities are equipped with innovative tools that enable them to work toward environmental sustainability	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
For greater detail see pages 23 to 28		
4.1 Local governments and communities are able to create jobs now, while meeting community needs for water quality and quantity		1,515,609
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality	1,546,780 36.4% ³	35.6% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

¹ Two Communities First Agreements were formally signed, and the remaining four were successfully negotiated and awaiting signature at the end of the fiscal year. See page 16 for details.

² Figures in this measure have been restated as running totals. See page 22 for details.

³ The percentages of the population represented by the absolute numbers reported in this measure have been recalculated since the [2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update](#). See pages 24-25 for details.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: Communities and regions are empowered to achieve their visions for the future

Supporting communities as they pursue their priorities is an important role of the Ministry. The Ministry will continue to deliver programs and services that provide accessible, flexible tools for communities so they can be accountable to their citizens, diversify their economies, make sustainable decisions, and provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians to live.

Objective 1.1: Community governance is open, flexible, and effective

British Columbians expect their local government to provide a sense of community, sustainable infrastructure and to deliver day-to-day services they need and desire. The Ministry supports local governments in serving their citizens effectively by providing broadly empowering local government legislation: the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*. These include important checks and balances to ensure local decision-making is open, effective and inclusive of opportunities for ongoing citizen involvement.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Providing a modern and empowering policy, legislative and regulatory framework to meet local government needs. For example, the Ministry and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities co-chaired the [Local Government Elections Task Force](#) to make recommendations for legislative changes to improve local government elections.
- Encouraging local governments to build citizen capacity and engagement in local decision-making.
- Assisting local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, boundary extensions, planning and restructuring.
- Reviewing the regional district governance framework for opportunities for improvement.
- Giving communities the tools they need, like permissive tax exemptions and phased development approvals, to build their economies.

Sun Peaks Incorporation

Last year, the Ministry helped to facilitate the incorporation of the community of Sun Peaks as a mountain resort municipality. This puts the community of Sun Peaks in a better position to make important decisions for its future, and to grow sustainably.

Objective 1.2: Local governments have the capacity to meet the service needs of their residents

British Columbians expect their local governments to provide essential services such as safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment, policing, crime prevention and other community safety initiatives. With economic challenges and the need to renew aging infrastructure, the Ministry contributes expertise and targeted funding to B.C. communities for infrastructure planning and construction, community safety and local government restructuring.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Providing the tools and resources to help local governments maintain the human and fiscal capacity needed for self-government, including an efficient and well-functioning property assessment system.
- Administering [Small Community and Regional District Grants](#) to deliver funding to local governments in a timely way.
- Providing locally appropriate infrastructure funding and planning support through a range of Ministry [programs](#). In 2009/10, this included support for more than 270 community infrastructure projects.
- Promoting targeted funding for policing, crime prevention and community safety by returning net [traffic fine revenues](#) to local governments.
- Supporting the administration of the [University Endowment Lands](#) and the achievement of its goals.
- Continuing to work with local governments to create healthy, active, green, and age-friendly communities and build respectful relationships with First Nations.

A Record Year for Community Infrastructure Projects

In 2009/10 the Ministry committed more than \$220 million for local government infrastructure priorities and supported more than 270 local infrastructure projects. Since 2008/09, the Ministry has supported more than 475 infrastructure projects, and an additional 275 Infrastructure Planning Grants, which help local governments develop sustainable infrastructure solutions.



Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes	147	149	146	144 ¹ SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Local governments provide the Ministry with their financial data at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry's reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received is highly accurate.

¹ This figure is an estimate based on 88 out of 160 municipalities reporting as of June 9, 2010. Final numbers are expected by late July 2010.

Discussion of Results

Property taxes constitute the majority of municipalities' annual revenue. The above targets are set to demonstrate the Ministry's efforts to maximize the number of resilient municipalities that are collecting their current year taxes to provide key services to their residents.

The Ministry assists communities with financial management and in assessing and identifying opportunities to modify the community tax base. By monitoring the number of municipalities that may be unable to collect at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes, the Ministry is able to identify those communities that may need support from the Ministry in assessing their financial capacity and addressing challenges. The result for the 2009/10 year reflects continuing difficulties in the forest industry, which constitutes a major part of the tax base for many rural communities.

Objective 1.3 Communities and regions are playing their role in growing their economies

To keep the provincial economy strong, the Province collaborates with communities and regional districts, the federal government and other partners to build effective local and regional economic strategies that work. This means engaging communities to strengthen their economies by enhancing the assets that make them attractive places to live, work and invest. It also means ensuring local and regional economies are able to withstand, manage and respond to a shifting economic climate while positioning themselves for future economic opportunities. The Ministry has implemented and continues to implement several initiatives so that communities and regions in British Columbia can put their plans for economic growth into action.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year have included:

- Initiating the major industrial property taxation project which brings together the Province, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, and industry to address concerns over industrial taxation rates and the need for stable and sustainable tax revenues to support community services.

- Providing resort municipalities in British Columbia with the tools to assist them in building their tourism-based economies through the [Resort Municipality Initiative](#). Last year the Ministry substantially completed work to help incorporate Sun Peaks as a resort municipality, giving that community greater autonomy and putting it in a better position for sustainable economic development.
- Encouraging and supporting the building of new economic relationships between communities in B.C. and communities in the Asia Pacific through the [Asia Pacific Twinning Initiative](#).
- Facilitating the initiation and enactment of [Regional Growth Strategies](#) and regional economic development networks.
- Promoting harmonization of regulatory requirements across B.C. communities to reduce the regulatory burden on citizens and businesses.
- Supporting the development of sustainable infrastructure and amenities.
- Collaborating with government ministries and agencies to support public investments in community health and livability.

Goal 2: Wealth creation from rural B.C. is supported

The resource-rich areas of B.C. contribute a great deal to the economic well-being of the entire province. Their role as generators of approximately 50 per cent of all provincial exports makes them indispensable to the provincial economy¹. By equitably investing in and building infrastructure throughout our province we can strengthen our resource and trade economy, thereby strengthening our overall economic vitality.



A logging truck on highway 29 near Tumbler Ridge.

The Ministry's [RuralBC Secretariat](#) works with rural communities throughout the province to find the right community-centred solutions to strengthen and diversify their economies. This work directly supports the Province's Great Goal to "create more jobs per capita in B.C. than anywhere else in Canada".

¹ Baxter, Ramlo and Ramlo, "Changing People, Changing Places," (2009), p. 27.

Objective 2.1: Rural communities have access to programs and services that support their economic development

The Ministry is working to bridge gaps between our rural communities and the provincial and federal programs available to them. Further, the Ministry is working with communities to identify existing or new programs and services that could support them in reaching their vision.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Working closely with rural communities to identify priorities through the RuralBC Secretariat and its regional staff.
- Based on priorities identified with rural communities, tailoring and aligning government resources to support these priorities through flexible, integrated Communities First Agreements.
- Working with provincial ministries and federal departments to plan and implement socio-economic initiatives, and to link rural communities to government programs and services.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Number of community agreements signed	N/A	3 under development	6	2 SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED ¹

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

¹ At the end of 2009/10 two Communities First Agreements were formally signed while the remaining four were successfully negotiated but awaiting signature. For this reason the Ministry considers its target for the year to have been substantially achieved. The above figures represent cumulative totals.

Discussion of Results

The Ministry is taking a new approach to working with individual communities to strategically prioritize their economic development initiatives. Communities First Agreements demonstrate the Ministry’s intention to tailor and align government resources to be more flexible in meeting rural community needs. Through these agreements, local governments identify their key priorities for development and prosperity, and the Ministry focuses government resources to meet these communities’ unique requirements and to help them achieve their visions for the future.

Communities acknowledge the value of this innovative approach to community development by providing the time and resources needed to develop the agreements, and by committing to achieve agreed-upon results. The Ministry works with communities to articulate a list of specific results within each agreement, and monitors communities’ progress towards achieving them.

In 2009/10 the Ministry's RuralBC Secretariat negotiated six such agreements. Two of these, between the Ministry and the municipalities of Prince Rupert and Port Alberni, were formally signed. Four others, with Clinton, Vanderhoof, Cranbrook and Grand Forks, were negotiated to the satisfaction of all parties, but were awaiting signature at the end of the fiscal year. As a result, the Ministry's target for the year was substantially achieved. The remaining four agreements were subsequently signed by the Province and the respective municipal councils. Over the next two years, the RuralBC Secretariat expects to conclude eight additional agreements with communities around the province as part of this pilot initiative.

Communities First Agreements (CFAs)

The City of Port Alberni is intent on diversifying its economy in the wake of the global recession's impact on the forest industry – historically the community's largest employer.

Last year, the city and the Ministry negotiated a CFA that sets out specific actions each partner will take in support of the city's development goals. The 12 priority projects identified in the agreement include waterfront redevelopment;

revitalization of the city's historic downtown core; expansion of recreational trails; the creation of a gateway tourist information centre; expansion of the town's multiplex; and development of a sustainability plan to guide future economic development.



Port Alberni's historic pub, and marina

Objective 2.2: Rural communities and regions identify, attract and retain investment

Rural communities and regions have significant natural assets that position them well to attract investors, diversify into non-traditional resource-based industries and enhance economic sustainability. Through strategic investments in B.C. communities, the Ministry supports the growth of emerging industries such as alternative and clean energy (geothermal, bio-fuels), bio-products, value-added agriculture (food and beverage processing and organic produce), and non-resource-based industries. The Ministry is also working with communities to find ways for them to retain existing major industrial employers in an increasingly competitive world economy.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Providing resources to facilitate the development of community and regional initiatives to identify sector opportunities, attract new investment and retain existing businesses. For example, the RuralBC Secretariat has worked with the City of Prince Rupert, the Northern Development Initiative Trust, and other partners to develop an investment-attraction package that profiles the community, its economy, and specific investment opportunities.
- Expanding the Forest Community Business Loans Program to enable other businesses, in addition to forest sector businesses, to access existing debt capital. Legislation to expand the program to support investment in emerging industries such as clean and renewable energy, innovative technologies, and cultural and eco-tourism was tabled in the Legislature in April, 2010.
- Working with the economic trusts to ensure local government needs are aligned with program criteria. These trusts include: [Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#), [Northern Development Initiative Trust](#), [Island Coastal Economic Trust](#), [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#), and the [Columbia Basin Trust](#).

Objective 2.3: Local government and community capacity to manage change is strengthened

The significant challenges in the forest industry are having real impacts on communities across the province and the pine beetle epidemic presents huge near-term challenges as well.

The *Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan* provides a long-term, cross-government approach to mitigating the impacts of the mountain pine beetle epidemic and supports the long-term economic sustainability of British Columbia. Both federal and provincial governments contribute funding to various components of this plan. For more information on the *Action Plan*, please visit www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle.

Mills in resource-dependent communities are often the largest employers and contribute to a significant portion of the local government's tax revenue. When a large employer shuts down operations, communities are supported in implementing change strategies through the Ministry's [Community Transition Services](#).

Communities challenged by industry closures and by the mountain pine beetle epidemic require strategies to re-employ workers, encourage economic growth and replace lost tax revenues for local governments. To ensure the long-term well-being of our rural communities, it is imperative these strategies foster sustainability at the same time.

Partnering to Mitigate Beetle Impacts

The Ministry's Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Team works with a wide variety of partners to develop, fund and implement projects that assist with mountain pine beetle impact mitigation. For example, in 2009/10 the team partnered with the Community Futures Development Corporation of Cariboo-Chilcotin, the three regional Beetle Action Coalitions, the B.C. Community Forests Association, the University of British Columbia, and the Northern Development Initiative Trust to develop and fund the "Bridges – Linking Resources for Community Forests" project. This project will enhance collaboration between the province's community forests and value-added wood manufacturing sector resulting in stronger community forests and value-added operations in rural British Columbia, as well as in more resilient communities. For more information about the project visit the B.C. Community Forests Association website at www.bccfa.ca.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year have included:

- Implementing the *Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan* in collaboration with other provincial, federal, and local government partners, regional Beetle Action Coalitions and other stakeholders to mitigate the economic impact of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.
- Collaborating with Community Beetle Action Coalitions in the completion and implementation of strategies to mitigate the economic, environmental and social impact of the beetle epidemic.
- Providing an integrated and rapid response to resource-based communities requesting assistance in adjusting to the effects of industry closure.
- Providing local government and First Nation leaders with ongoing outreach, advice on best practices, and networking opportunities to build both leadership and change management capacity.



A beetle-attacked area in the Bulkley-Stikine region.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Percentage of mountain pine beetle-impacted communities covered by a mountain pine beetle socio-economic adjustment plan	15%	56%	100%	100% ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development. Percentages in this table are based on the current 34 mountain pine beetle-impacted communities in B.C.

Discussion of Results

The provincial government’s response to the pine beetle epidemic is guided by the *Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan*. Under this plan, the Ministry’s Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Team has been tasked with working with the three regional Beetle Action Coalitions to develop regional mitigation plans that identify the unique pine beetle challenges facing each impacted region and how best to address them.

Mountain Pine Beetle Mitigation Plans

You can read the [Cariboo-Chilcotin](#), [Omineca](#), and [Southern Interior](#) mitigation plans by clicking on the links. You can read more about the Province’s response to the pine beetle epidemic on the Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic Response Team’s [website](#).

During 2009/10, the Omineca and Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalitions completed and submitted their final mountain pine beetle mitigation plans to the Minister of Community and Rural Development. As a result, all three regional Beetle Action Coalitions’ mitigation plans are now complete, significantly improving B.C. communities’ capacity to respond to the epidemic. Since these plans were submitted, the Ministry provided

additional funding to the Beetle Action Coalitions and worked with them to implement priority actions identified in their mitigation plans.

Goal 3: Forest-dependent and pine beetle-affected communities are assisted in adapting to a changing forest sector

Creating jobs, educational opportunities, and support systems for British Columbians are important goals of the Province. The challenges in British Columbia’s forest sector impact more than the forest land base; they affect the lives of forest workers, their communities and their families.

Objective 3.1: Opportunities are created for workers and their forest-dependent communities

The Ministry is working with multiple partners to provide assistance to workers who have been affected by the changes in the forest sector. The Ministry’s focus is on creating jobs for displaced resource workers through short-term projects that benefit the broader community and on working with the federal government to maximize funding available to support this priority. The Ministry also assists forest workers in diversifying their existing skills through retraining so they can transition into other opportunities.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Providing funding through the [Community Development Trust](#) to:
 - create job opportunities for resource workers in resource-dependent communities;
 - provide learning opportunities to forest workers through tuition assistance; and
 - allow older forest workers to transition toward other opportunities through financial assistance.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Number of workers in resource-dependent and mountain pine beetle-affected communities assisted by the Community Development Trust ¹	N/A	4,242	7,950 ²	9,761 ³ EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

¹ In 2009/10 the Community Development Trust’s (CDT) Job Opportunities Program (JOP) expanded to include resource workers other than forest workers. For this reason, the term “resource-dependent” rather than “forest-dependent” is used in this year’s report. Also, the reporting format for this measure has changed since the [2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update](#) to better capture the Ministry’s results. The figures now being reported are running totals, rather than yearly totals reported previously. The 2009/10 target therefore represents the 4,250 workers assisted in 2008/09 plus the 2009/10 target of 3,700 workers contained in the [2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update](#).

² This target has been adjusted to reflect the transfer of the Industrial Transition Program out of the Ministry of Community and Rural Development to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development in 2009/10. In the [2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update](#) the Industrial Transition Program’s portion of the 2009/10 target was 800 workers.

³ Resource worker numbers for 2009/10 include five major JOP funded projects that carry over into fiscal year 2010/11. Because these projects span two years, and rotate workers every six months, the estimated 559 job opportunities created in 2009/10 by these projects will also be counted in 2010/11 as they will benefit more than one worker.

Discussion of Results

[Community Development Trust](#) programs support workers and their families who wish to remain and work in the communities where they live. Whether by providing workers with retraining, or short-term employment, these programs broaden the range of choices available to workers as they make critical decisions for their future. By helping to retain skilled workers in their communities, Community Development Trust programs also make an important contribution to the sustainability of our rural communities, enabling them to continue to be great places for British Columbians to live, work and invest. As of the end of the 2009/10 fiscal year, the Community Development Trust had supported around 9,761 individuals: 3,062 through its Job Opportunities Program (JOP) and over 2,418 through its Transitional Assistance Program; and had approved over 4,281 laid-off workers for tuition assistance.



Displaced resource workers carry out repairs and upgrades at provincial historic sites under a JOP-funded project.

Innovative JOP Projects Benefit Communities.

Many JOP projects use funding in innovative ways to maximize the benefit to workers and communities. For example, a partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts allowed workers to gain short-term employment and learn new skills while helping to address maintenance needs at provincial heritage properties. JOP projects have also: engaged nearly 1,100 workers on improving recreation infrastructure around the province, including 504 recreation sites and 4,716 kilometres of trails; helped mitigate the pine beetle epidemic by removing thousands of beetle-killed trees; helped reduce wildfire hazard around 35 communities; applied silviculture treatments to 15,200 hectares of forest; and helped combat invasive species on 14,000 hectares more. Read more about how JOP and other CDT programs are making a difference at www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt.

Goal 4: Communities are equipped with innovative tools that enable them to work toward environmental sustainability

Leading the world in sustainable environmental management is one of the Province's highest priorities. Tackling the critical issue of global warming and making progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions will require concerted and collaborative actions by all levels of government.

Objective 4.1: Local governments and communities are able to create jobs now, while meeting community needs for water quality and quantity

To meet the current economic challenges, it is especially important for communities to retain and create jobs so they can sustain their programs and services. Infrastructure projects are known to be effective at creating jobs, and the Ministry’s grant programs play a key part in stimulating local infrastructure development. Local governments can stimulate their economies while at the same time meeting their communities’ priorities for drinking water, waste water, sewer, and other important infrastructure.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year have included:

- Providing targeted funding to local governments to help them achieve provincial [drinking water objectives](#).
- Providing tools and resources to local governments to assist them to conserve and protect our water resources.
- Supporting local government efforts to use liquid waste as a resource.
- Working with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport to ensure drinking water quality standards support the use of best, lowest life-cycle cost approaches to the provision of safe drinking water.²

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality ¹	N/A	884,808 20.8%	1,546,780 36.4%	1,515,609 35.6% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Quarterly progress reports by grant recipients.

¹ This measure presents a conservative estimate of the percentage of the provincial population served by systems meeting emerging standards, as the Ministry does not collect data relating to private drinking water systems, populations being served by groundwater drinking water sources, or those served by public systems not receiving Ministry funding. Also note, that the percentages given above for 2008/09 and the 2009/10 target have been recalculated since the [2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update](#) using an improved methodology for calculating the percentage of the provincial population served by systems receiving Ministry funding. The absolute numbers for 2008/09 and the 2009/10 target remain the same as in the *2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan Update*.

² Life-cycle costing is an internationally accepted approach whereby assets, such as drinking water, wastewater, and storm water infrastructure, are assessed over their entire lifetime rather than just on their initial capital costs. This approach can significantly strengthen fiscal performance, improve efficiencies in investment, as well as contribute to wide-ranging environmental and social benefits.

Discussion of Results



A water treatment facility in Kamloops provides clean drinking water for the city's residents.

The majority of British Columbians are served by public drinking water systems that already meet or exceed regulatory requirements for drinking water quality. However, some regional health authorities are encouraging service providers to achieve even higher water treatment standards in order to increase certainty about our drinking water quality. Meeting these emerging standards may require local governments to upgrade their existing water treatment facilities or construct new ones. The Ministry provides communities with funding for new and improved water and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as for

other water quality and quantity projects, through a number of grant programs. These include [Building Canada Fund](#), [Towns for Tomorrow](#), [Infrastructure Stimulus Fund](#) and [Infrastructure Planning Grants](#).

In 2009/10 an additional 630,801 persons, or nearly 15 per cent of the provincial population, gained access to improved drinking water through Ministry-funded projects. This is approximately 30,000 persons less than originally targeted. Although the Ministry oversees the funding of drinking water infrastructure projects, it has limited ability to ensure funding recipients complete projects on time.

Objective 4.2: Local governments work together to be innovative and collaborative in how they deliver services to their residents

With population growth, fluctuations in construction costs and the technical complexity of some projects, infrastructure projects often challenge the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. The Ministry makes it a priority to encourage local governments to find innovative and collaborative solutions to delivering services to British Columbians.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year have included:

- Ensuring program criteria encourage innovation and integration in the development and implementation of local government infrastructure projects.
- Providing tools and resources to local governments to support best-management practices that promote sustainability and address regional infrastructure challenges.

- Partnering with local governments to promote innovative and sustainable planning and land-use approaches through [Smart Development Partnerships](#) to encourage green development initiatives.
- Through the new [BC Climate Action Toolkit](#), providing the latest news, best practices and practical advice to help B.C. local governments successfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Undertaking activities aimed at streamlining provincial approval processes to fast-track local government actions that contribute to environmental sustainability.
- Ensuring local government planning activities balance local and provincial priorities.
- Ensuring local decisions pursue local and regional integration in areas such as growth and water planning.

Objective 4.3: Local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take other climate change action

The Ministry provides funding and a modern policy, legislative and regulatory framework to help local governments implement climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within B.C. communities. The Ministry’s infrastructure funding programs promote environmental sustainability, a key component of which is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Assisting local governments in signing on to, and meeting their commitments under, the [British Columbia Climate Action Charter](#), including commitments to the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2012 and working to create compact, energy-efficient communities.
- Continuing to work with partners to develop tools, best practices and advice to help local governments mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as to address other environmental priorities. Materials and tools include the [BC Climate Action Toolkit](#), the [Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment Guide](#), the Planting Our Future toolkit, the Urban Forests and Climate Adaptation Guide, the water conservation calculator, and the [Community Energy & Emissions Planning Guide](#), among others.



Sustainability and family fun converge in Campbell River

- Ensuring Ministry infrastructure funding programs prioritize those local government projects that deliver environmental benefits such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water and air quality, conserving energy, using alternative energy sources, or promoting compact, walkable communities.
- In partnership with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, implementing the [Federal Gas Tax Transfer and Transit Agreements](#), which provide communities with funding to support environmentally-sustainable municipal infrastructure.
- Ensuring the local government legislative and regulatory framework supports local government efforts to be environmentally sustainable.
- Actively supporting cross-ministry climate change initiatives.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Actual
Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the <i>British Columbia Climate Action Charter</i> ¹	N/A	93%	93%	94% ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Union of British Columbia Municipalities records and tracks those local governments that sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. The Ministry further determines, through BC Stats, what percentage of British Columbians this represents.

¹ Population percentages were calculated using BC Stats 2008 projections - regional district populations only include persons living within the regional district but outside of municipal jurisdictions.

Discussion of Results

Local governments from across B.C. have joined the Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to find ways to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. This measure demonstrates the efforts taken to increase the number of local governments that have signed the [British Columbia Climate Action Charter](#). In doing so, these communities are committing to developing strategies and taking action to achieve three goals: becoming carbon neutral with respect to their operations by 2012; measuring and reporting on their community's greenhouse gas emissions profile; and creating compact, more energy-efficient communities. The 2009/10 result of 94 per cent represents 178 local governments, including the Islands Trust.

Objective 4.4: Local governments and communities invest in their urban forests and take a proactive approach to planning, planting and stewardship

Urban forests are the trees and treed landscapes in B.C. communities. Planting trees to bolster urban forests and educating British Columbians about the value of treed environments will contribute to the health of our communities for generations to come.

Strategies

Key strategies over the past year included:

- Implementing the [Trees for Tomorrow](#) program which supports communities in achieving their visions for healthy treed landscapes. Funding was provided to communities in March 2009 for the 129 projects implemented in 2009/10.
- Providing resources to communities to understand the role of treed environments in the social, economic and environmental health of the community.
- Developing opportunities for communities to build their capacity to enhance and maintain healthy treed landscapes.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations ²	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Local Government	133,900	24,800	158,700	158,693	(7)
RuralBC Secretariat	32,951	0	32,951	33,080	129
Pine Beetle Response Division	521	0	521	514	(7)
Property Assessment	593	0	593	594	1
Executive and Support Services	8,810	0	8,810	8,694	(116)
Northern Development Fund – Special Account	500	0	500	500	0
University Endowment Lands – Special Account	6,442	0	6,442	5,733	(709)
Total	183,717	24,800	208,517	207,808	(709)
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Executive and Support Services	150	1,238	1,388	1,388	0
Total	150	1,238	1,388	1,388	0

¹ The amounts in the “Estimated” column correspond to the Estimates as presented to the legislative assembly in September 2009.

² “Other Authorizations” include the results of TB-directed Savings Targets and access to Contingency Funds. Amounts in this column are not related to the “estimated amount” under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

P.O. Box 9490, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9N7
www.gov.bc.ca/cd/

Minister's Office

Honourable Ben Stewart
P.O. Box 9056 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
Telephone: (250) 387-2283
Fax: (250) 387-4312

Deputy Minister's Office

Dale Wall
Deputy Minister
Telephone: (250) 387-4104
Fax: (250) 387-7973

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/

Governance and Structure Division

P.O. Box 9839, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T1
Telephone: (250) 387-4022
Fax: (250) 387-7972

Infrastructure and Finance Division

P.O. Box 9838, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T1
Telephone: (250) 387-4060
Fax: (250) 356-1873

Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division

P.O. Box 9841 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T2
Telephone: (250) 387-4037
Fax: (250) 387-8720

Policy and Research Branch

P.O. Box 9847, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9T2
Telephone: (250) 387-4050
Fax: (250) 387-6212

University Endowment Lands

5495 Chancellor Blvd.
Vancouver, BC V6T 1E2
Telephone: (604) 660-1808
Fax: (604) 660-1874

RURALBC SECRETARIAT

www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca

VICTORIA CONTACTS

RuralBC Secretariat
P.O. Box 9824 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9W4
Telephone: (250) 387-0220
Fax: (250) 387-7973
E-mail: ruralbc@gov.bc.ca

REGIONAL CONTACTS

Vancouver Island/Coast

Peggy Grant, Administrative Assistant
Suite 142-2080 Labieux Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 6J9
Telephone: (250) 751-3227
Fax: (250) 751-3245
Email: Peggy.Grant@gov.bc.ca

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

Cheryl McLay, Regional Manager
Suite 142-2080 Labieux Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6J9
Telephone: (250) 751-3217
Cell: (250) 713-5261
Fax: (250) 751-3245
Email: Cheryl.Fortin@gov.bc.ca

Khris Singh, Regional Manager
201-1 2435 Mansfield Drive
Courtenay, BC V9N 2M2
Telephone: 250-897-3276
Cell: (250) 713-7649
Fax: (250) 331-0220
Email: Khris.Singh@gov.bc.ca

Northwest

Rick Braam, Regional Manager
3726 Alfred Avenue, Bag 5000
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
Telephone: (250) 847-7797
Cell: (250) 847-0856
Fax: (250) 847-7556
Email: Rick.Braam@gov.bc.ca

Dale Richardson, Regional Manager
125 Market Place
Prince Rupert, BC V8J 1B9
Telephone: (250) 624-7499
Cell: (250) 631-2959
Fax: (250) 624-7479
Email: Dale.Richardson@gov.bc.ca

Northeast

Tamara Danshin, Regional Manager
1201-103 Avenue
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4J2
Telephone: (250) 784-2296
Telework: (250) 787-2716
Fax: (250) 784-2211
Email: Tamara.Danshin@gov.bc.ca

Thompson-Okanagan

Myles Bruns, Regional Manager
Suite 210, 301 Victoria Street
Kamloops, BC V2C 2A3
Telephone: (250) 377-2171
Cell: (250) 318-5150
Fax: (250) 377-2150
Email: Myles.Bruns@gov.bc.ca

Cariboo

Leslie Lax, Regional Manager
200-1488 Fourth Avenue
Prince George, BC V2L 4Y2
Telephone: (250) 565-6685
Cell: (250) 612-8141
Fax: (250) 565-4279
Email: Leslie.Lax@gov.bc.ca

Kootenay

Diana Brooks, Regional Manager
101-100 Cranbrook Street North
Cranbrook, BC V1C 3P9
Telephone: (250) 426-1301
Cell: (250) 919-3325
Fax: (250) 426-1253
Email: Diana.Brooks@gov.bc.ca

MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE EPIDEMIC RESPONSE DIVISION

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/pine_beetle_epidemic_response/

510 – 175 2nd Ave.
Kamloops, BC V2C 5W1
Telephone: (250) 371-3725
Fax: (250) 371-3942

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/

P.O. Box 9595, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9K4
Telephone outside of Victoria: 1-877-238-8882
Telephone in Victoria: (250) 387-5349
Fax: (250) 387-4425

Job Opportunities Program (JOP)

Email: jop@gov.bc.ca
Telephone: 1-877-238-8882
Fax: (250) 387-4425

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT SERVICES

P.O. Box 9361, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9M2
Telephone: (250) 387-1195
Fax: (250) 356-6924

Property Assessment Review Panels (PARP)

Property Assessment Complaint and Appeal Information Line
Toll-free telephone: 1-877-356-9313

Property Assessment Review Panel
Office of the Administrator
P.O. Box 9361, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9M2
Telephone: (250) 356-7535 or (250) 356-5268
Fax: (250) 356-6924
Email: parp@gov.bc.ca