

Speech from the Throne

The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, Lieutenant-Governor

at the Opening of the First Session

Thirty-Eighth Parliament of the Province of British Columbia

September 12, 2005

Re: mountain pine beetle [excerpt]

While our province strives to diversify its economy, we must never forget the traditional natural resources that create the foundation of our mutual prosperity.

Urban and rural families across British Columbia depend on those resources for their prosperity.

No single resource has contributed more to all of us than our forests.

Yet today, our forests are under an unparalleled attack from the mountain pine beetle.

That attack is more damaging than anything we have faced before and its effects will be felt for many generations to come.

Without unprecedented national action to thwart, contain, and recover from that epidemic, the pine beetle will cause even worse economic, environmental, and social damage.

The government's multi-pronged approach includes developing community partnerships, as well as two new separate partnerships with the Province of Alberta and the federal government.

New on-the-ground decision making, similar to an emergency response team, will be developed in the months ahead.

A 15-year partnership between the federal and provincial government is being pursued to provide:

- increased resources for economic diversification;
- improved silviculture to increase yields in immature but unaffected forest stands;
- immediate streamside, riverside, and fish habitat protection and improvements;
- increased reforestation and stream debris management programs;
- expanded science and research development into the best use of beetle-infested wood, and expanded product diversification; and,
- long-term land use opportunities with First Nations and other resource-dependent communities that have been directly impacted.