
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range
Ministry of Community Development

FOREST SAFETY & RECREATION IMPROVING AT HEFFLEY LAKE

KAMLOOPS – Funding totalling \$230,000 from the Community Development Trust’s Job Opportunities Program is employing nine forest workers to reduce the risk of forest fires and expand recreation opportunities around Heffley Lake, Community Development Minister Blair Lekstrom and Kamloops-North Thompson MLA Kevin Krueger announced.

“The Community Development Trust is one of our key tools to assist families and communities during these difficult economic times,” said Lekstrom. “We are pleased to be able to assist forest workers in the Kamloops area while improving fire safety and recreation in the region.”

A four-person project is reducing fire hazards on about 200 hectares of land that have been identified as high-risk in the Thompson Nicola Regional District’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The \$105,000 project will support the removal of excess forest fuels like fallen or diseased trees, branches, and woody debris in the area, which is about 40 kilometres north of Kamloops.

A \$125,000 recreation project is also employing five forest workers and follows the 2006 Heffley Lake Recreation Site Plan. The project includes the creation of 26 campsites and day use area improvements such as an upgraded boat launch, 13 new picnic tables, benches, fire pits, road, pad and gate improvements and the installation of two new outhouses, one of which is wheelchair accessible.

“The Job Opportunities Program is one way the Province is working with local governments to support projects the community has identified as needed,” said Krueger. “With the work currently underway, more families will be able to enjoy Heffley Lake this spring and summer.”

“The Community Development Trust is helping people back to work and making Heffley Lake safer for the groups and families who use and live near it,” said Pat Bell, Minister of Forests and Range. “The lake is a camping, fishing and day trip destination and the skills of these forest workers are making it a better place for years to come.”

“The Community Development Trust is really helping the area benefit from our residents’ forestry skills,” said Peter Milobar, regional district chair and Kamloops mayor. “Reducing the risk of forest fires is an incredibly worthwhile investment, as is providing residents with the access and infrastructure to enjoy the District’s magnificent outdoors.”

The \$26.25-million Job Opportunities Program is helping to reduce the impact of current layoffs on workers employed in the forest industry, retaining skilled forest workers for the anticipated future upturn, and preserving the characteristics of the labour force in forest-dependent communities.

A forest-dependent community or organization and forest licensees or forest contractors working in co-operation with a forest-dependent community, are eligible to submit a project proposal to the Job Opportunities Program. So far, 51 projects totalling more than \$8 million have been approved in communities across the province.

The Job Opportunities Program is one component of the Community Development Trust, which was announced in May. B.C.'s share of the federal trust is \$129 million over three years, with funds also directed to a Tuition Assistance program and Transition Assistance for Older Workers Program.

For more information about the Community Development Trust and Job Opportunities Program, go to: www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/

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