



CITY OF  
PRINCE GEORGE

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# BACKGROUND

Development Services Department  
1100 Patricia Boulevard, Prince George, BC V2L 3V9

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July 25, 2007

**(Backgrounder to be provided with the Service Canada and City of Prince George joint news release for July 25, 2007)**

**History:** In 2004 the City of Prince George and the Prince George Citizens Beetle Advisory Group (formerly the Citizen's Forum on Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic), worked with Service Canada (formerly HRSDC) on a proposal to utilize work experience program funding to complete slash clean up after beetle tree removal operations on private and City-owned land in 2004. The result was two very successful Job Creation Partnership Projects (JCP). The first program operated from March 2005 to February 2006, the second program operated from March 2006 to February 2007.

**City Goal: Assist Residents and Tree Debris Removal from Parks and Greenbelts**

The first two programs helped reduce beetle-killed pine tree removal costs (slash removal is the second largest cost of the program after tree removal) to the City and to residents. The first program serviced 531 residential properties and 24 City parks. The second program serviced 738 residential properties, 39 City greenbelts and 40 City parks.

**Service Canada Goal: Employment Training Opportunity in JCP and Participants Gaining Full Time Employment**

These programs helped participants (people that were hired to work on the project crews) become trained and experienced in forestry work, which allowed them to find full time jobs and leave the program. The first program provided 46 participants with work experience and training with the 21 program spaces, 45% of the participants found full time jobs. The second program had 38 participants in the 17 program spaces, 35% went on to full time jobs during the program as a result of the training and work experience they gained.

**2007-2008 Service Canada and City Joint Forest Fire Fuel Reduction JCP Project:** The forests in and around Prince George are now very much showing the devastation of the mountain pine beetle. The hot dry summer conditions are a reminder of the obvious elevated risk of wildfire to the City of Prince George and the Central Interior.

Although there have been years of beetle tree removal and fire fuel reduction work completed, there is much more work to be done. The City's fire fuel reduction program reduces forest fire hazards between the City and forested areas extending outside the City as a priority, and also in parks and greenbelts within the City. Although parks and greenbelts within the City may not be directly linked to the vast areas of uninterrupted forest, these areas also have a significant wildfire potential. When a large fire burns near a community, the fire brands (small pieces of

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burning ember) can fly kilometers into a community, greenbelts within the community are at risk of being ignited. This is known as “spotting”. Human caused or local ignition of high fire hazard parks and greenbelts within the City may also occur during fire season. Treatment of all high fire risk areas under the guidance of the wildfire protection plan are necessary.

Since the Community Wildfire Protection Plan was adopted, the areas ranked high or very high for forest fire hazard on City or Crown land have been the subject of detailed fire fuel treatment prescriptions. These prescriptions outline the forestry related work required to reduce the fire fuel hazards. Crown land areas will be treated under the City’s Community Forest License.

The methodology used to reduce the fire hazard in the prescription areas is:

1. complete the dead pine removal as per the regular pine ‘beetle’ tree removal program,
2. remove wind-throw susceptible trees with high failure hazard rating,
3. forest fire fuel reduction work consisting of pruning and thinning of remaining tree species and vegetation in areas of high fire hazard, to reduce the forest fire hazard. This is the labor intensive work that will benefit from this joint program.

Due to the loss of pine trees in the City, removal of other tree species is only considered in areas of very high forest fire hazard, to reduce the fire hazard to a lower level, not to completely remove the hazard. The treatments are done in such a way as to keep as many healthy and non-hazardous trees as possible. Re-planting plans are created for areas where many dead pine will be removed for less fire prone future forests. The work is intended to reduce the fire risk over the long term while preserving aesthetic and recreational values of the parks and greenbelts.

The significant difference between this Service Canada – City JCP project and the previous two joint projects is the main goal for the program. The first two programs had a priority to assist residents. This third program has a priority goal to reduce forest fire fuels. In this current program assistance to residents is a second priority and will be completed between working on priority fire fuel reduction sites, resident wait times may be a few weeks to more than a month.

### **Assistance to Residents**

**(Where to call if you would like assistance with your beetle tree debris removal)**

Assistance to private residence land involves crews removing fences prior to beetle trees being removed by professional companies, which are hired by the residents. After the tree removals, crews return to clean up slash and re-install fences. This assistance reduces beetle tree clean-up costs to residents. **Residents interested in the service are asked to contact IFS at 564-4115 local 237 for information prior to cutting any trees on their property, and to be put on the service schedule. This service is a second priority in this program and wait times may be a few weeks. Please call for information prior to planning tree removals.**

**Employment Service Providers for this Project**  
**(Where to call if you would like a job working on the project crews)**

Persons interested in being hired as crew members in this program should contact local the employment agencies listed below for information on program requirements and qualifications:

**M. Turner & Associates**

1360 5th Avenue,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3L4.... 250 563-6181  
Contact: Myrt Turner  
E-mail: [myrt@mturner.bc.ca](mailto:myrt@mturner.bc.ca)

**Terra Cognita (The Source)**

1272 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3E7....250 564-8377  
Contact: Garth Frizzel  
E-mail: [garthfrizzel@terracognita.ca](mailto:garthfrizzel@terracognita.ca)

**Northern Family Health Society**

2666 Queensway Street  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 1N2....250 561-2689  
Contact: Stephanie Curtis  
E-mail: [stephanie@nfhs-pg.org](mailto:stephanie@nfhs-pg.org)

**Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society**

1633 Victoria Street,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 2L4 ....250 562-2900  
Contact: Baljit Sethi  
E-mail: [baljit.imss@shawcable.com](mailto:baljit.imss@shawcable.com)

**Northern John Howard Society**

1150 4th Avenue,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3J3 ....250 561-7343  
Contact: George Harding  
E-mail: [george.njhs@shawcable.com](mailto:george.njhs@shawcable.com)

**P.G. Native Friendship Centre**

1600 3rd Avenue,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3G6 ....250 564-7440  
Contact: Frank Siegrist  
E-mail: [fsiegrist@pgnfc.com](mailto:fsiegrist@pgnfc.com)

**Educacentre**

1752 Fir Street,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 1E7 ....250 561-9197  
Contact: Francine Bussieres  
E-mail: [francinebussieres@telus.net](mailto:francinebussieres@telus.net)

**C.N.I.B.**

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Environment Manager  
Ph: 561-7698  
Fax: 561-7721  
Email: [mfercho@city.pg.bc.ca](mailto:mfercho@city.pg.bc.ca)

100 - 490 Quebec Street,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 5N5 ....250 563-1702  
Contact:: Brad Waghorn  
E-mail: [brad.waghorn@cnib.ca](mailto:brad.waghorn@cnib.ca)

**Employment Action**

300-1268 Fifth Avenue,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3L2 ....250 564-8044  
Contact: Lorna Dittmar  
E-mail: [lorna@employment-action.bc.ca](mailto:lorna@employment-action.bc.ca)

**Jump On Board**

550 - 4th Avenue,  
Prince George, B.C. ....250 564-9325  
Contact: Sandra Day  
E-mail: [sandra@sanslimites.com](mailto:sandra@sanslimites.com)

**T.R.A.D.E.S.**

Contact: Heather Flood  
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E-mail: [heather.tradescentral@shawcable.com](mailto:heather.tradescentral@shawcable.com)

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