BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: September 11, 2019

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

ISSUE: Update on proposed amendments to the *Wildlife Act* to support reconciliation and provide advice to improve B.C. government's administration and management of wildlife and habitat values

BACKGROUND:

- Both the "Together for Wildlife" strategy and Reconciliation are priorities in the Ministry's action plan.
- The Ministry has facilitated the creation of a provincial wildlife "Forum" for First Nations communities to address the challenge of collaborating at the provincial level.
- The Forum is comprised of participants from First Nations across the province (appendix 1) to support reconciliation and to advance implementation of the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions 'calls to action'.

s.13; s.16

- Extensive engagement has also occurred with stakeholders and the public on this Initiative. A key recommendation made through that process was the creation of a Minister's Advisory Council (MAC.)
- Advancing indigenous amendments and legislating the MAC demonstrates balanced, tangible outcomes of collaboration and engagement to date, as the province finalizing a new Wildlife and Habitat Strategy.

DISCUSSION:

s.12; s.13; s.16

SUMMARY/ NEXT STEPS:

s.12; s.13; s.16

Appendices

Appendix 1: Current Indigenous Communities/Nations Participating in the Wildlife Forum

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REVIEWED BY:

	Initials	Date
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Associate DM		
ADM	TE	September 13, 2019
Exec. Dir.	NL	September 12, 2019
Program Dir/Mgr.	JP	September 11/2019

Appendix 1: Current Indigenous Communities/Nations Participating in the Wildlife Forum

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MEETING BULLETS

DATE: September 6, 2019

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

REGARDING: Meeting with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada regarding transitioning economies in British Columbia.

SUMMARY:

- The Government of British Columbia is committed to enhancing rural economic opportunities and quality of life through our three key priorities: making life more affordable, delivering services people count on and building a robust and sustainable economy.
- Innovative tools and technology are essential for transitioning and diversifying rural economies. Rural communities need digital access and the related capacity to effectively participate in a global economy.
- Economic transition is not the work of a single ministry or level of government, but rather requires collaboration across ministries and all levels of government.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION AND MESSAGES:

s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16

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MEETING BULLETS

DATE: September 6, 2019

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

REGARDING: Meeting with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada regarding rural development in British Columbia.

SUMMARY:

- The Government of British Columbia is committed to enhancing rural economic opportunities and quality of life through our three key priorities: making life more affordable, delivering services people count on, and building a robust and sustainable economy.
- Advancing rural development is not the work of a single ministry or level of government but requires collaboration across federal, provincial and municipal governments.
- Supporting connectivity, innovation and economic diversification are important rural development priorities shared by all levels of government. Given the escalating number of mill closures and curtailments across the province due to a declining timber supply, federal-provincial collaboration is critical to improving rural community resilience.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION AND MESSAGES:

- As BC's Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), part of my role is to ensure that rural needs and issues remain at the forefront of discussions and decisions within Cabinet and between governments.
- In 2018, FLNRORD conducted a provincial rural engagement process. Ten priority themes were identified for rural BC: community services and infrastructure; natural resources; access to capital and funding; youth and demographics; governance; education; indigenous reconciliation; housing technology and innovation, and small business and entrepreneurship.
- Prioritization of these themes differed across the province, demonstrating the uniqueness of rural community needs and that a one-size-fits-all approach to rural development will not work.
- Rural BC communities rely on natural resources. Recently, the forest sector in BC has experienced challenges due to timber supply impacts of the Mountain Pine Beetle and record wildfire seasons which is resulting in an escalating number of mill curtailments and closures.

s.13; s.16

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MEETING BULLETS

DATE: September 3rd, 2019

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

REGARDING: Managing through Allowable Annual Cut Reductions: General Information

SUMMARY:

- The interior of the province experienced a significant Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic between the years 2000 and 2012. The outbreak ultimately killed over 700 million cubic metres of mature timber volume on the timber harvesting land base (THLB) or about 54% of the provincial THLB pine volume.
- Most severely impacted management units included the Lakes Timber Supply Area (TSA), Vanderhoof District within the Prince George TSA, Quesnel TSA, Williams Lake TSA and 100 Mile House TSA.
- The ability of licensees to use beetle-killed timber is nearing an end and Allowable Annual Cuts (AAC) are being reduced to reflect the mature timber losses. Opportunities to maintain the harvest in non-conventional profiles are being explored along with strategies to reduce the AAC in steps rather than all at once, to allow for communities to adjust to reduced AAC levels.
- AAC reductions combined with difficult lumber markets and softwood lumber tariffs have resulted in significant mill curtailments and in some cases permanent closures.
- The Regional Economic Operations Branch of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) is working with local governments, forestry companies, unions and other government ministries and agencies to coordinate support for workers and communities affected by mill closures. This work includes facilitating information sessions, organizing job opportunities, coordinating job fairs, accessing retraining programs, and economic development assistance.
- The Rural Dividend Program (RDP) administered by FLNRORD, includes a Special Circumstances provision to support communities facing economic disruption as a direct result of a major economic shock, crisis, or loss of a key economic driver. Funding is administered outside of intake periods and applications are reviewed on an expedited basis to support time-sensitive projects that directly link to a significant economic disruption.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION AND MESSAGES:

- BC's forest industry is facing difficult times and supporting communities and workers impacted by reduced AACs and mill closures is a key priority for FLNRORD.

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