

**Speaking Notes for the Honourable Minister Stan Hagen of Sustainable Resource  
Management**

**WORKING LANDSCAPES/WORKING FORESTS**

**A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

**Prince George Chamber of Commerce**

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**Prince George, BC**

**Check against delivery**

- Thank you for the kind and generous introduction.
- Chamber President, let me begin by saying it is a great pleasure to be back in Prince George and I bring greetings from our Premier.
- I should also acknowledge right off the top here, the serious situation many are facing due to the forest fires burning in our province.
- Thousands of people had to evacuate their homes – there are tragic stories of family losses and still fires burn around the province, the largest being the Chilko Lake fire covering more than 30,000 hectares.
- Premier Gordon Campbell has said our first priority will always be public safety.
- But he’s also expressed – and I’d like to echo – the tremendous support we have for the firefighters and people on the front lines of this battle.
- There’s been a huge volunteer effort and communities have really come together.
- And something that ties in with why I’m here today, is the incredible support the forest industry has shown in battling these blazes.
- The fires will have an economic impact but the industry has really stepped up to the plate in helping protect one of BC’s most valuable assets – its forested land – and it speaks to the kind of responsible stewardship we expect.
- I know that you all appreciate this better than most as the pine beetle infestation continues to spread at alarming rates covering an area five times the size of Vancouver Island.
- Your insight and persistence with this crisis and your ingenuity in the marketplace is also greatly valued as we endeavour to stop this voracious insect.
- Before I go any further, I would like to take a minute to acknowledge your MLA’s - Shirley Bond, Minister of Advanced Education, and Pat Bell, who unfortunately could not be here today.
- Minister Bond, and Pat, along with MLA’s Bill Bennett, Bill Belsey, Tom Christensen, Dave Chutter, Walt Cobb, Roger Harris, Dennis Mackay, Wendy McMahon, Gillian Trumper, Rod Visser, John Wilson and Blair Suffredine will

act as ambassadors on our Working Forest initiative and will be speaking to their various regions across the province.

- Many of these folks will also be attending a “Resource Forum” in November, organized by MLA Pat Bell, which brings mining, forestry, tourism types and MLA’s together for a few days to discuss sustainable business practices and focus on the opportunities for sustainable development.
- Before I launch into the Working Forest, What it is..., Why it’s important... and What it means today and what it will mean to our children and grandchildren.... I would like to put this initiative, this land use designation...into perspective.
- Being in government has been an exciting and interesting experience ... but even more important, it has given me a unique opportunity to understand the incredible potential of our province ... a place almost as big as Western Europe ... or three times larger than my family’s homeland of Norway.
- I mention the size and scope of our province because when it comes to my ministry and the sustainable future of our land ... water ... and natural resources, I have to tell you ... this is an enormous challenge.
- Fundamentally, my Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management ... is doing the sort of land planning and zoning that municipalities do ... but on a provincial scale.
- The aim is to generate economic opportunities ... investment ... and jobs, while ensuring the quality and long-term viability of our environment and natural resources.
- Local planning at the municipal level includes taking into account a community’s business and residential objectives ... getting neighbourhood consensus on priorities ... and finding workable solutions to competing interests.
- Now, imagine if you were to try and do all of that in a place the size of Washington ... Oregon and California ... combined.
- A province where provincial interests, regional views ... local objectives ... and geography can be as diverse as night and day.
- A province where resource-based businesses and jobs are still the single biggest drivers of the economy.

- Add to that land use planning equation the competing interests of our forest, mining and energy companies ... the interests of local communities and First Nations ... conservationists ... ranchers... recreational users ... and the interests of our growing tourism sector.
- And just to make sure the Minister and the government are on their toes, throw in years and years of red tape and over regulation.
- And, how about including the biggest backlog ever in land and water tenure and license applications.
- As well as a decade's worth of negative economic trends ... and a half billion dollars spent on treaty negotiations without one success.
- During the 90s, these things helped to turn BC into a "have not" province that became known for scaring away businesses and new jobs.
- And to make things even more complicated ... add a good dose of uncertainty ... the kind of investment uncertainty that has its roots in land claims ... competing interests ... and environmental conflicts.
- That's how we found our province just over two short years ago.
- And when our forest ... mining ... or energy sectors aren't working ... the rest of the economy is stuck in neutral.
- As part of our New Era commitment ... the Premier asked us to look long and hard at what needed to be done to re-build our economy.
- And, when we looked at the issues ... and talked to British Columbians and potential investors ... we kept hearing one thing over and over.
- Everyone ... everywhere was concerned about ... UNCERTAINTY.
- When I became minister, over two years ago, uncertainty was at the root of most of the conversations and meetings I had with business leaders ... local communities ... First Nations bands or interested investors.
- Since then, we have been working to provide the sort of land use and investment certainty that builds strong economies.
- So how are we managing this shift from uncertainty to certainty?

- There are FIVE steps to achieving certainty about our land and water resources.
- Those five steps look like this:
- Access to land. This is key.
- Defining clearly ... intelligently and in a timely manner what land can be used for what commercial purposes.
- Land use certainty is the key to restoring wealth and prosperity to British Columbians - that's what sustainable resource management is all about.
- Secondly...Meaningful First Nations consultation and accommodation.
- Restoring wealth to the land base means sharing the economy with all British Columbians.
- We need to build trust and respect ... and eliminate conflict...by finding workable accommodations to mitigate their interests in land and resources. Period.
- Next we need tenure security ... the kind that ensures that investors and businesses have enough land use certainty to invest in the future.
- Tenure security starts with business security... That means when you apply to use our Crown land and water resources through Land and Water BC, you will get a yes or no in a timely manner... There won't be an endless process that leaves you in limbo and your business plans on hold.
- This leads right into step four ... an improved business climate.
- Quite simply, we need to make it easier to do business in BC ... and we need to ensure BC businesses are competitive in the world markets.
- The fifth step to certainty is access to markets.
- We work and live in a global economy, so we need to demonstrate our commitment to biodiversity and sustainable ... ethical ... land and resource management.
- A demonstration of these five steps is the Working Landscape – Working Forest initiative.

- In simple terms, this means we need to determine what's to be permanently protected ... and what's open for businesses ... communities ... and First Nations to use for economic development and job creation.
- Once we've defined the protected areas, the balance of BC's Crown land is open for business.
- This is what we call the Working Landscape – it is a land designation.
- It is all the Crown land outside of protected areas, private land and land held by the federal government.
- Remember, this is a big province - it is 95 million hectares.
- The Working Landscape is 81% of the province's area. 77 million hectares of both forest and non forest land and the Working Forest comprises 45 million hectares, strictly forest land, within those 77 million hectares.
- The Working Landscape of British Columbia will be available for development of our natural resources by industries that drive our provincial economic and our long term prosperity.
- And what about the Working Forest? The 45 million hectares of forested land represents 48% of the province's area.
- Let's clear up some misconceptions that have been generated by groups who do not support the Working Forest concept.
- The Working Forest was initiated by the government in response to concerns from resource based communities like Prince George, the forest industry and workers about whether they would be able to continue to operate on the land.
- To ensure the needs of the people of British Columbia, the Premier made a "New Era" commitment to establish a working forest.
- Considering the comments I have heard from some quarters, I think "Working Forest" may have been a confusing title.
- The responses indicated confusion and concern and for this, I am sorry – but I'm thankful too. I want to know when we are missing the mark so that we can become clearer in our communications. Some tough decisions lie ahead and I take that responsibility very seriously.

- That's why I am here today – to clear up the misconceptions and build greater certainty.
- It's important that we understand the Working Forest – It's important because the definition is critical to a brighter future full of promise for our communities, our families and our children.
- The objective of the Working Forest initiative is to maintain access to Crown land and to clearly and responsibly identify opportunities for investment.
- Let me explain this another way. In order to attract investment, we must determine what economic activities can take place on the land – which ones, and how much and for how long.
- It's called "land use certainty" and it's the key to restoring wealth to the land base – to communities and families throughout British Columbia.
- We must also base this certainty on science and sustainable resource management.
- At the same time, we're not selling off the province to the highest bidder. I can assure you of that.
- Certainty has to be accountable to the future. And our land use planning that is taking place all around the province is doing that. Our land use planning is guided by user groups representing resource industries, tourism, agriculture, First Nations, backcountry recreation and conservation. It's also guided by science and resource evaluations to determine the highest and best uses in order to ensure sustainable resource management throughout British Columbia.
- Land use certainty will bring investor confidence that will re-vitalize the forest industry, encourage new industry investment and provide new employment opportunities in communities throughout the province.
- People need to know where they can work and where the jobs are....the jobs we all depend on to provide for our families and to create bright futures for our children in a growing economy.
- Whether its agriculture, oil and gas, tourism, backcountry recreation or mining, the working landscape – and working forest - recognizes all uses.

- To be clear, the Working Forest is NOT only about industrial activity – namely forestry. It is about the best use of land whether it is set aside for industrial development or environmental protection, the land will be assessed scientifically for highest and best use options economically, socially and environmentally.
- We are making decisions to determine the highest and best use options for the land, based on a comprehensive land management policy framework.
- This land management approach will ensure that all economic activities on the land base will be accountable to our land use plans – plans that are based on science, conservation values, economic values and social values.
- The Working Forest is NOT about privatization of the Crown forest lands or resources. Period.
- The Working Forest will be maintained as Crown land and will guarantee public access.
- The Land Act, section 23, outlaws the sale of crown land for forestry purposes.
- The Working Landscape – Working Forests also accommodates the 2 zone mineral policy – this means that all land outside of parks and protected areas are open to mineral exploration and development, subject to applicable legislation.
- This same policy applies to oil and gas activity.
- Nothing in the Working Landscape/Working Forest initiative limits treaty negotiations or affects the province’s legal obligations to consult on First Nations interests. It is extremely important not to compromise opportunities for First Nations and create land base certainty for everyone.
- To protect biodiversity and to ensure sustainability, we will set access targets for resource uses in forestry, tourism, and agriculture as well as targets for conservation objectives.

- Resource use targets will be compatible where joint use of the land base will be the highest and best use. In other cases the targets will set priorities for uses that are incompatible... such as agricultural development and forests on the same parcels of land, or protecting views for the tourist sector to increase investment in four season resorts.
- Conservation targets will encompass all the requirements for conservation required in legislation... such as, wildlife management areas, riparian zones for fisheries, species at risk, visual protection areas for cruise ships and around lakes, drinking water protection and unstable zones where logging and access is unsafe or will result in soil erosion.
- We must protect biodiversity and preserve our spectacular natural heritage for future generations.
- Super Natural British Columbia's international tourism reputation is secure.
- Access targets will give resource industry a firm understanding of where and how it can conduct business in a sustainable manner.
- This approach is supported by highly disciplined science and resource evaluation as well as the global marketplace.
- We will be completing the key remaining protected area designations around the province by June 2004.
- This will provide the overall certainty on the land base that investors have been seeking for over a decade.
- Sustainable resource management – and part of that is the working landscape/working forest - is a strategy for sustainability. The key attributes are:
  - ✧ Shared responsibility and innovation: This requires the resource sector to step up resource planning and stewardship in order to maintain market share.
  - ✧ Accountability: Setting and monitoring indicators that ensure sustained use of the land base...investment...jobs...protection of key ecosystems...certification of industry and First Nations.
  - ✧ And finally, certainty.

- To get a better understanding of sustainable resource management – and the Working Landscape/Working Forest.... here are some local examples of improved certainty for this community and this region affecting all of British Columbia.
- The photo you see here thanks to Michael Nash is taken near Dome Creek. My Ministry has recently established old growth management areas in this Interior Cedar-Hemlock zone. In doing so, we worked with local communities, industry and conservationists to ensure we manage the responsibility of supporting the forest economy as well as the conservation need for this specialized old growth habitat. This is balanced decision making.
- We are working to make planning information more accessible with a new web-based tool being developed called Planlink.
- In this case our partner is The University of Northern BC and we are developing a leading edge technology that will make it much easier for people to locate, search and understand the various land use plans that are available.
- The image you see here is the main screen where you can indicate your area of interest and the program will automatically search all the plans and report back what parts of those plans apply to a specific area.
- One of the companies working on this is Noratek here in Prince George. We don't know of another jurisdiction anywhere that has this tool or application.
- Another example is the collaboration between my ministry, Land and Water BC, the Ministry of Forests, and your MLA, Minister Bond, access to land at Canoe Mountain, near Valemount, was resolved by balancing commercial tourism and forestry.
- As a direct result, planning of a major project is nearly complete.
- We are talking about a significant commercial tourism investment by a Canadian investor estimated at \$80 million dollars. in the area is pending.
- And of course, the spin off benefit of such development is jobs.
- Another example of the Working Forest includes agriculture. By identifying agriculture development areas in Fort St James, Vanderhoof and Prince George, we have established an inventory of crown land suitable for growing crops opening up new opportunities for agricultural development.

- Through a partnership between the BC and Yukon Chamber of Mines and my ministry we are also exploring opportunities for improving mineral exploration and development in the North.
- It's important to note that mineral exploration in BC is up 25% totaling \$40 million, and the First Nations bands in Northern BC are at the table sharing in the jobs and opportunities for their people.
- One third of the jobs at the Eskay Creek mine are held by members of the Tahltan First Nations.
- You know, as we improve our relationships with First Nations, it is important to recognize that treaties are not the only way to move forward.
- Treaties are important ... but government and First Nations are getting more creative in BC when it comes to resolving economic issues.
- But, progress IS being made.
- For instance, over the past 23 months we have signed more than 26 planning agreements and 66 economic agreements with First Nations bands ... and our ongoing economic measures fund is helping to build capacity and infrastructure for First Nations throughout the Province.
- Let me give you another historic example.
- Five months ago the provincial government and the Haida Nation signed a framework agreement to co-manage land use planning on the Queen Charlotte Islands... the Haida Gwaii.
- We're co-developing a land-use plan that is ecosystem-based, opens up local economic opportunities ... protects the environment ... and maintains spiritual and cultural values.
- But, more work is needed and more trust needs to be built.
- However, we're moving in the right direction
- As you can see, the Working Landscape/Working Forest and sustainable resource management encompass much more than just forestry.

- The Working Forest also takes into account something like the pine beetle crisis that has greatly impacted this area.
- As I mentioned briefly at the beginning of my speech, the local ingenuity that has arisen from the pine beetle epidemic is extremely impressive.
- You have created your own market niche by branding pine damaged by the Mountain Pine Beetle as, “Denim Pine”... and turned a possible story of tragedy into a story of ingenuity and success.
- This is where adaptive management comes into play.
- Within a comprehensive land management policy framework, adaptive management sets conditions around conservation, forestry and agriculture to allow for a higher and better use of land. The result... increased access for people such as the manufacturers of Denim Pine.
- Now let’s look at the new frontier ... oil and gas and the Muskwa Kechika.
- The Muskwa Kechika Management Area is located in the Northern Rockies.
- It’s the size of Nova Scotia and one of the most significant ... intact wilderness areas in North America.
- The Muskwa Kechika land and resource management plan is now complete and it’s designed to protect the international wildlife and recreation values in this area ... just as it also allows resource development.
- The potential is incredible.
- There’s as much as 8.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in place.
- And, each trillion cubic feet is worth \$4 billion ... including \$1 billion to the provincial treasury.
- I have recently approved two more results based pre-tenure plans that will provide the certainty that allows industry access to this tremendous provincial resource while protecting the spectacular natural assets for which the Muskwa Kechika area is renowned.
- When you look at all of these plans ... and look at the competing interests ... do you see the common thread that runs through all of this?

- It's PERSISTENCE.
- It is recognizing the range of values that we need to manage and working collaboratively with all interests to find solutions that are supported and therefore lasting, durable, stable.
- The stable land use decisions create the certainty necessary to enable investment in the longer term, leading to employment and economic activity.
- The SINGLE biggest thing my Ministry and I can do is get BC to a level of land-use certainty that becomes a springboard for NEW investment, NEW jobs and a STRONG and stable economy.
- Land use certainty also means providing access to markets.
- And the most important aspects of access to markets are meeting our environmental stewardship and First Nations responsibilities.
- Without this level of integrity and transparency, we'll lose the confidence of our customers and the all-important access to their markets.
- We need to show in fact ... and deed ... that British Columbia is maintaining in perpetuity its natural resources and wildlife.
- This is a big province ... and the economic hole we were in was a deep one.
- Yes, there are some incredible challenges that need to be managed by all of us.
- But, like the Premier, I believe government's role is to provide the right climate for all British Columbians to prosper.
- Achieving certainty over our land ... water ... and resources is the foundation for that province-wide prosperity.
- I have listened to many in the province, some of them my colleagues, telling me that this planning stuff and consultation has been going on for too long – enough sharing and gathering of information. Make the tough decisions Hagen and move on.
- Truthfully, if I could wave a magic wand and make it all better right away, I would.

- Since this is not possible, I am staying the course to certainty. Its long term certainty - it's worth it and the turnaround is happening.
- We've seen almost 22,000 new jobs this year, more than double the national average.
- Business incorporations are at their highest rate since 1997.
- B.C. home sales totalled \$2.3 billion in June, an increase of 38.8% over the same month last year.
- And the number of well approvals issued by the Oil and Gas Commission in the first two months of 2003 was up more than 50% from the same period in 2002, thanks to reductions in red tape.
- By providing CERTAINTY ... government can encourage and inspire businesses to make BC a major destination for new investment dollars and new jobs.
- It's those jobs and investment that underwrite our government's commitment to health care and education.
- I know British Columbians will see this new level of certainty as THEIR chance to channel their energy and ideas into building a better British Columbia.
- The future of British Columbia does not lie in confrontation and confusion on the land. What BC needs is long term certainty....communities, conservation groups, First Nations, industry and recreation can and must co-exist for the overall benefit of the Province.
- Thank you for listening today - For caring enough to come to learn about the Working Landscape and the Working Forest
- We will be legislating this initiative in the fall and it's important that you understand the increased certainty that this legislation will bring.
- You know, I'm 63 years old ... and this particular portfolio is the biggest challenge I've ever had.
- At the same time ... this Ministry's results on behalf of our province are also the most rewarding.

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