

BRITISH COLUMBIA >>
**TAKING ACTION
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**



TABLE OF CONTENTS **»»**

INTRODUCTION 4

CLIMATE ACTION IN B.C. 4

PROTECTING OUR WATER 6

IMPROVING AIR QUALITY 7

**INNOVATIONS FOR
CLEAN ENERGY 9**

**PRESERVING OUR LAND
AND PARKS 10**

**PROTECTING FISH, PLANTS
AND WILDLIFE 12**

**SUPPORTING GREENER,
HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES 14**

**INNOVATIONS FOR
GREENER LIVING 15**

INTRODUCTION

B.C. is Canada's most biologically diverse province, with a wealth of natural resources, like clean water, air and land. The responsible protection of B.C.'s environment is critical to our quality of life, to addressing the global challenge of climate change, and for preserving the natural beauty our province is known for worldwide.

Since 2001, British Columbia has invested more than \$2 billion in climate change initiatives – either in projects that will result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions or in those that allow British Columbia to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

Protecting and improving our environment will require many different actions and strategies over the coming years – and everyone will have a role to play. Below are some of the key initiatives government has undertaken with international partners, industry, communities and individuals to not only help address climate change, but protect and enhance our environment for the generations to come.



CLIMATE ACTION IN B.C.

The B.C. Government is working aggressively to address global warming and climate change. Initiatives range from developing greener options for B.C.'s energy needs to establishing partnerships with Canadian and international jurisdictions to coordinate activities.

The first Canadian jurisdiction:

- » Legislating reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020.



- » Mandating carbon neutral government operations by 2010 with a \$130 million investment.
- » Using hybrid school buses.
- » Joining the Western Climate Initiative that will provide low-cost market-based solutions for industry to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Joining the Climate Registry, a reporting system to monitor greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Reducing emissions by making clean technology mandatory in older commercial diesel trucks.
- » Establishing a Citizens' Conservation Council to support carbon mitigation efforts through public education information and resources.
- » Providing \$440 million for a one-time Climate Action Dividend.
- » Investing \$31 million to support innovation in the pulp and paper industry to further reduce its carbon footprint and enhance the carbon storage potential of B.C. forests.

The first North American jurisdiction:

- » Requiring hybrid vehicles in government passenger fleets.
- » Requiring carbon sequestration for coal-fired power facilities.
- » Introducing a fully revenue-neutral carbon tax that applies to virtually all fossil fuels, making it among the broadest and most comprehensive in the world.



PROTECTING OUR WATER

B.C.'s rivers and waterways are the life blood of our environment, economy, communities and our health. Strategies for water are helping B.C. continue to benefit from this resource while protecting, enhancing and maintaining it with initiatives such as:

- » Providing \$10 million for hydrometric (measurement of water and stream flow) and other climate-related networks to improve our ability to monitor, predict and adapt to climate change.
- » Requiring sewage treatment for Victoria for the first time.
- » Investing \$14 million in a comprehensive Drinking Water Action Plan to improve water management and enhance testing and accountability.
- » Investing \$80 million in 87 drinking and wastewater infrastructure projects under the B.C. Community Water Improvement Program.
- » Tripling the B.C.'s Living Rivers Trust Fund to \$21 million to support watershed protection and restoration projects.
- » Implementing an innovative and successful wetland project and mine restoration with over \$4.5 million to repair damage to the Tsolum River and help restore fish stocks.
- » Funding a new water treatment plant at the historic Britannia Mine site to prevent 450 kg of copper sulphate from contaminating Howe Sound every day.
- » Committing \$3 million to clean up an abandoned garbage dump that was leaching pollution into the Pitt River.

- » Establishing the Riparian Areas Regulation to encourage environmentally responsible construction, and protect streams, fish and fish habitat.
- » Completing water-use plans for existing BC Hydro operations to ensure that usage reflects changing social, economic and environmental values.
- » Contributing to the development of the Waterbucket website, which showcases innovative tools and lessons for responsible water use.
- » Enacting Phase I of the Groundwater Protection Regulation to improve source drinking water protection in BC.
- » Signing the “Memorandum of Understanding on Pacific Coast Collaboration to Protect Our Shared Climate and Ocean”, with California and Washington State.

IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

All living things require clean air to breathe. B.C. is working with a range of local and federal partners to reach its goal of having the best air quality amongst industrialized countries by 2015 by:

- » Providing \$33 million in tax relief for the purchase or lease of qualifying conventional fuel-efficient vehicles - a reduction of up to \$2,000 per vehicle. This is in addition to existing tax relief of up to \$2,000 for hybrid vehicles and up to \$1,000 for alternative fuel vehicles.



- » Stopping the Sumas Energy 2 Project to protect air quality for Fraser Valley and Lower Mainland residents.
- » Helping launch the B.C. Air Quality Health Index, one of the first in the world, providing daily information on air quality in communities across B.C.
- » Funding the \$1.9 billion Canada Line which will help remove 100,000 vehicles from the roads everyday.

- » Retrofitting all B.C. school buses with diesel oxidation catalysts and other state-of-the-art technologies to reduce emissions and protect children's health.
- » Expanding the Scrap-It program with \$15 million and offering up to \$2,000 per vehicle to get pre-1993 cars and trucks with higher emissions off the road.
- » Introducing the Provincial Anti-Idling awareness campaign to demonstrate how less idling can reduce greenhouse gases and lower fuel consumption.
- » Investing \$14 billion in a provincial transit plan that will provide more public transportation choices in communities across B.C.
- » Providing PST exemptions for biodiesel fuel for heating and for aerodynamic devices for commercial tractor-trailer vehicles.
- » Establishing the Provincial Woodstove Change-out Initiative to encourage the use of cleaner burning alternatives, such as pellets, natural gas and propane.



- » Investing \$13.5 million in clean air initiatives to achieve air quality improvements in communities throughout the province.
- » Supporting the Green Ports Initiative to reduce emissions from commercial truck and ship traffic with a \$33 million investment.
- » Phasing out more than 50 per cent of B.C.'s beehive burners since 2001, and taking action on remaining burners.
- » Requesting that all approvals on taxi applications in the Greater Vancouver and Capital Regional Districts are for hybrid or other energy efficient vehicles.
- » Adopting California tailpipe standards so new vehicles are progressively more efficient and clean.



INNOVATIONS FOR CLEAN ENERGY

We need energy for transportation, to heat and light our homes and to help keep B.C.'s vibrant economy moving. B.C. is supporting secure, reliable and affordable energy by:

- » Ensuring clean or renewable generation accounts for at least 90 per cent of total electricity generation.
- » Using carbon pricing to encourage innovation, climate-friendly behaviour change and a transition to a low carbon economy.
- » Investing \$57 million to establish a Bioenergy Network, introduce biodiesel production, expand solar thermal energy systems, and support the Innovative Clean Energy Fund.
- » Initiating a pilot project to enable the broader use of zero emission electric vehicles across B.C.
- » Generating over 1.4 billion kilowatt hours of electricity annually for BC Hydro from 18 new, clean and renewable electricity facilities like run-of-river projects. That's enough energy to run over 127,000 average B.C. households for a year.
- » Capturing methane from landfills to generate electricity for B.C.
- » Approving wind power with the first projects for B.C. expected to commence construction in 2008.
- » Ensuring that all new electricity projects developed in B.C. have zero net greenhouse gas emissions, and existing thermal generation power plants reach this goal by 2016.

- » Using wood waste to generate energy and additional economic opportunities for communities.
- » Creating the largest hydrogen fuel cell bus fleet in the world by investing in 20 new fuel cell buses for BC Transit.
- » Developing a long-term action plan and strategy to reach the goal of 100,000 solar roof installations across B.C.
- » Funding of \$2 million to support hydrogen and fuel cell development under the BC Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Industry Strategy.



PRESERVING OUR LAND AND PARKS

B.C.'s parks and protected areas preserve biological diversity. Comprehensive land use planning in B.C. provides balanced solutions that address economic, environmental, and social needs. Government is protecting B.C.'s natural heritage through initiatives like:

- » Investing almost \$83 million in capital improvements and land acquisitions for BC Parks since 2004.
- » Investing \$94.5 million in the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions and the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium for research, and for feasibility analysis of carbon capture and storage technology for natural gas production.
- » Signing of 30 Collaborative Agreements for the management of parks with First Nations.

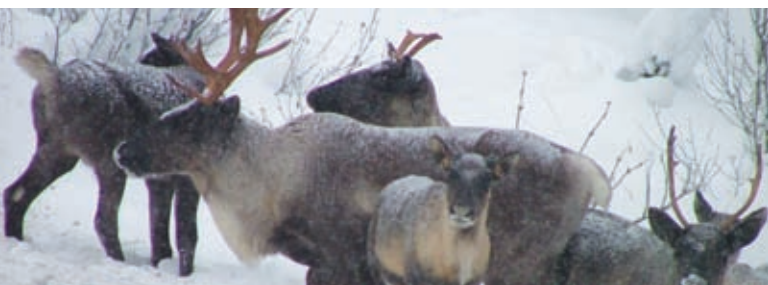


- » Establishing 121 new parks, conservancies, reserves and protected areas in B.C. since 2001.
- » Protecting 1.8 million hectares on B.C.'s Central and North Coast to preserve some of the world's largest intact temperate rainforests, and more than 200,000 hectares of habitat for the Spirit Bear, B.C.'s official mammal.
- » Creating an \$8 million BC Trust for Public Lands to help conserve ecologically important private lands for public benefit.
- » Ensuring forest resource development on the Central and North Coast of B.C. uses ecosystem-based management to support ecological integrity.
- » Dedicating \$91 million over four years to ensure contaminated Crown lands are identified, cleaned up and returned to productive use.
- » Signing land use agreements with six First Nations to protect cultural areas and create a framework for collaborative and sustainable land management.
- » Receiving an award in Feb. 2008 for the B.C. Conservation Data Centre for outstanding conservation impact out of 80 other international centres.
- » Completing the \$73 million agreement to purchase and protect Burns Bog in the Lower Mainland.
- » Improving flood protection with a new \$100 million program over 10 years.

PROTECTING FISH, PLANTS AND WILDLIFE

British Columbia is home to over 62,000 animal species and almost 16,000 plant species that live in a rich diversity of habitats. The provincial government works with communities, environmental and wildlife groups, the federal government and other partners on species protection and recovery initiatives, such as:

- » Appointing a provincial species-at-risk co-ordinator to develop scientifically based plans for the recovery of key species at risk.
- » Investing \$12 million to strengthen monitoring of forest and range management.



- » Protecting mountain caribou by preserving 2.2 million hectares of their range land.
- » Dedicating \$38.5 million for Project NEPTUNE at the University of Victoria, the world's first regional cabled ocean observatory that will help conduct offshore and deep-sea environmental experiments from land.
- » Developing an innovative provincial agricultural plan that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions through shifts in farm practices, new technologies and development of local markets.
- » Implementing a \$3.4 million five-year action plan to recover B.C.'s northern spotted owl through captive-breeding and conservation of 363,000 hectares of habitat.
- » Working with the federal government and communities to address the impact of the mountain pine beetle through the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan.



- » Supporting recovery of the Vancouver Island Marmot with \$1.8 million since 2001. There were about 80 of these animals in 1998 and now there are close to 255 today.
- » Implementing the *Forest and Range Practices Act* which sets objectives for conservation of the environment, that includes fish and wildlife habitat, biodiversity, soil and water.
- » Tougher penalties for violations of the *Wildlife Act*, the primary legislation for managing fish and wildlife in B.C.
- » Investing \$63 million a year in reforestation and managing areas impacted by wildfire and the mountain pine beetle under the Forests for Tomorrow program.
- » Providing funding of close to \$16.5 million for the Beaty Biodiversity Laboratory at the University of BC to study the origin and maintenance of biodiversity.
- » Funding of \$4 million to the Fisheries Ecosystems Research Lab at the University of BC, and \$2.2 million to Kwantlen University College for the Institute for Sustainable Horticulture.
- » Providing \$2.9 million to conserve green and white sturgeon in the Nechako, Fraser and Columbia Rivers.



SUPPORTING GREENER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

Local governments play a key role in supporting the health of their communities, people and the surrounding environment. The Province is working with B.C.'s local governments to take ground-level action to address climate change by:

- » Investing \$9 million for the greening of B.C.'s building code, creating emissions standards for landfills, new motor vehicles and other projects to address climate change.
- » Signing the Climate Action Charter with 63 local governments to develop steps to reduce greenhouse gases and improve the quality of life for residents.
- » Providing PST exemptions for production machinery and equipment for clean power production and cogeneration.
- » Dedicating \$74.5 million from the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund to help build efficient, green infrastructure.
- » Establishing the Green City Awards to recognize communities for demonstrating leadership in building greener, healthier and sustainable communities.
- » Providing \$40 million over four years to the LocalMotion program to help build bike paths, walkways, greenways, improved accessibility for people with disabilities, and support programs to get kids playing in parks and communities.
- » Providing over \$1.8 million in 2007 to 189 local government projects for green infrastructure planning.
- » Establishing the BC Conservation Corps with \$3 million annually, allowing 150 students and recent graduates to gain first-hand work experience every year in conserving and enhancing the environment.

INNOVATIONS FOR GREENER LIVING

All British Columbians have a role to play in addressing climate change. The B.C. government is helping British Columbians make more environmentally-friendly choices by:

- » Establishing B.C.'s first mandatory electronics recycling stewardship program.
- » Investing \$111 million for climate action including consultation, funding the Citizens' Conservation Council, and supporting public outreach to promote greener choices.



- » Providing \$98 million for the new LiveSmartBC: Efficiency Incentive Program and other initiatives to encourage more energy-efficient choices for homes, businesses and vehicles.
- » Installing smart meters for every B.C. Hydro customer by 2012 to give families new information and control over their power consumption.
- » Providing PST exemptions or reductions for:
 - ENERGY STAR®-qualified residential refrigerators, clothes washers and freezers.
 - Energy efficient residential gas fired water heaters, insulation for hot water tanks, hot and cold water pipes, and ductwork.
 - Bicycles, including electric-assisted two and three wheel cycles, non-motorized adult tricycles, and electric motorcycles.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

RELATED MINISTRIES

Ministry of Environment www.gov.bc.ca/env

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands www.gov.bc.ca/al

**Ministry of Energy, Mines and
Petroleum Resources** www.gov.bc.ca/empr

Ministry of Forests and Range www.gov.bc.ca/for

Ministry of Community Services
www.gov.bc.ca/cserv

Ministry of Transportation
www.gov.bc.ca/tran

Ministry of Education
www.gov.bc.ca/bced

Ministry of Advanced Education
www.gov.bc.ca/aved

Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services
www.gov.bc.ca/lcs

Ministry of Finance
www.gov.bc.ca/fin

Climate Action Secretariat
www.climateactionsecretariat.gov.bc.ca

USEFUL LINKS

Service BC (For information on any provincial
government service or program)

Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Victoria: 250 387-6121 • Vancouver: 604 660-2421

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 663-7867

Telephone device for the deaf (TDD)

In Vancouver: 604 775-0303

Elsewhere in B.C.: 1 800 661-8773

www.servicebc.gov.bc.ca

BC Parks www.bcparks.ca

Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
www.hctf.ca

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