



# Softwood lumber industry funding package targets BC's mountain pine beetle epidemic

The Government of Canada announced in early October a \$246.5 million funding package to support softwood lumber workers and communities. Among a range of measures included is a 5-year, \$40-million program to address the mountain pine beetle epidemic in British Columbia. Natural Resources Canada Minister Herb Dhaliwal, Industry Minister Allan Rock, Human Resources Development Minister Jane Stewart, and International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew developed the mountain pine beetle initiative as a partnership among departments of the federal government, the BC Government, national research institutes, First Nations, and industry.

Canadian Forest Service staff and researchers at the Pacific Forestry Centre in Victoria will play a lead role in the mountain pine beetle initiative, which is designed to complement provincial government efforts in response to the mountain pine beetle epidemic. "The BC Ministry of Forests has worked hard to meet its responsibilities on Provincial Crown land. The goal of Natural Resources Canada will be to address areas of federal jurisdiction," explains Dr. Paul Addison, Director General at the Canadian Forest Service research facilities in Victoria.

The mountain pine beetle initiative is divided between rehabilitation of federal and private (non-industrial) forest lands ravaged by the mountain pine beetle, and conducting research to quantify the impacts and reduce the risk of future mountain pine beetle epidemics. The 5-year research agenda is designed to answer forest land management questions. In the short term, dealing with the current epidemic and getting the best value from affected forests is critical. Looking ahead, research is needed on quantifying the economic and ecological impacts of beetle infestations, and on developing options to reduce the risk of future epidemics.

The Federal Lands Program will address mountain pine beetle impacts in national parks, First Nations reserve lands and the Chilcotin Military Reserve lands in cooperation with Parks Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Department of National Defence. The focus will be on containment of the infestation in parks, on control, rehabilitation and forest management capacity in First Nations reserves, and on forest rehabilitation on military lands. The

Private Forest lands Program will target private, non-industrial landowners. These landowners will be encouraged to participate in efforts to deal with the beetle through early identification and intervention as well as the clean up of those forest stands already infected.

Endemic in lodgepole pine stands throughout western North America, the mountain pine beetle is normally limited to highly stressed trees within the pine forest ecosystem. However when the right circumstances align, such as large areas of mature pine, fire suppression, and several years of warm winters, outbreaks make it the most destructive insect pest of mature pine forests.

The mountain pine beetle infestation in the west-central interior of BC, present for approximately 10 years, has increased rapidly in recent years. At over 1.46 million hectares of infested trees, the infestation is the largest in BC's history. Dr. Bill Wilson ([bwilson@pfc.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:bwilson@pfc.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca)), Director of the Industry, Trade and Economics Research Program at the Pacific Forestry Centre, will lead the mountain pine beetle initiative for the Canadian Forest Service. Wilson estimates the potential impact of the mountain pine beetle infestation at \$4.03 billion in lost lumber alone, or 34% of the total value of Canadian softwood production in 2000/01.

As this management plan unfolds, scientists, stakeholders, industry representatives and members of the general public have the opportunity to collaborate with the Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative, share expertise, and contribute to managing beetle-related problems. Look for program updates in subsequent issues of Information Forestry.

For more information on the mountain pine beetle epidemic and research at the Pacific Forestry Centre see our website at [www.pfc.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/entomology/mpb/index\\_e.html](http://www.pfc.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/entomology/mpb/index_e.html). For breaking news see the Natural Resources Canada website at [www.nrcan.gc.ca/inter/index\\_e.html](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/inter/index_e.html) or the Ministerial news release at [www.nrcan.gc.ca/media/newsreleases/2002/2002117\\_e.htm](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/media/newsreleases/2002/2002117_e.htm). The response of the BC provincial government to the mountain pine beetle epidemic is at [www.for.gov.bc.ca/PAB/News/Features/beetles/index.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/PAB/News/Features/beetles/index.htm).



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# Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative • Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative?

It's a partnership committed to delivering a research and forestlands management package designed to:

- identify options to improve the economic, ecological and social efficiency of efforts to control the current mountain pine beetle epidemic
- reduce the risk of future beetle epidemics
- assist with the rehabilitation of federal and private forestlands impacted by the beetle infestation
- work with Parks Canada to assess, demonstrate and communicate options to respond to beetle outbreaks in non-commercial forestlands managed for multiple values

## Who are the partners?

Partners include the federal and provincial government agencies, national forest sector research institutes, First Nations, academic institutions and industry.

## Where does the money come from?

Funding – specifically \$40-million over 5 years – was included in the \$246.5 million package that was announced in October 2002 to support softwood lumber workers and communities.

## How will research help?

Since the magnitude of the current infestation is on a scale that control options are limited to major cold weather events, research is targeted to help in two main ways.

In the short term, research will make it possible to identify adjustments to improve the environmental and economic efficiency and effectiveness of the ongoing management response.

Over the long term, research will provide a better understanding of the factors that influence the magnitude and geographic distribution of the mountain pine beetle so that, in future, control options can be deployed quickly and effectively in order to reduce the risk of major beetle infestations. Enhanced R&D will also address the beetles' epidemic dynamics (detection, mapping and prediction), forest ecology (responses and impacts), risks associated with transporting infected timber and management options at both the landscape and stand levels.

## What about forestlands rehabilitation?

A **Federal Forest Rehabilitation** program, led by Natural Resources Canada and jointly delivered by Parks Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Department of National Defence, will deliver a beetle control response on federal forestlands that have the greatest concentration of beetle-infested forest.

The program will support rehabilitation activities on beetle-damaged stands in First Nations' reserve lands, the Rocky Mountains national parks in both Alberta and British Columbia and on other federal forestlands in BC. Activities will include harvesting, restoration, control burns, sanitation harvesting, site preparation, inventories and forest management plans.

## How will First Nations' with reserve lands in infested zones receive assistance?

The program will work with First Nations to build capacity and provide training in forest management and planning skills with the focus on forest rehabilitation (harvesting and restoration). This program will have an advisory committee with First Nations' members.

## And private landowners?

A **Private Forestlands Rehabilitation** program, managed by Natural Resources Canada in cooperation with regional woodlot owners and their associations, will assist non-corporate private landowners in early intervention efforts and rehabilitation of their affected forestlands. Rehabilitation could include sanitation harvesting (felling and burning of infected timber) and the re-establishment of productive forests damaged by the mountain pine beetle.

## Does this new money tie into existing programs?

Yes. It will, for example, enhance and complement work being done by the British Columbia Forest Service as well as other federal programs such as the Value-Added Research Initiative for Wood Products and the Canada Wood Export Program (both announced May 16, 2002); the federal Softwood Industry and Community Adjustment Fund (announced on October 8, 2002) and the Canada Infrastructure Works Program.

## How do I access research funding?

Research priorities have been established through a series of meetings with land managers, regulators, policy-makers and First Nations actively battling the mountain pine beetle. These priorities, the procedures for applying for research assistance, and the process for the review of requests will soon be available on the Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative website at [mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca](http://mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca)

## I have land that may be infested with the beetle. How do I get help checking my property?

Both First Nations and private forestland owners that are eligible under the Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative programs will have access to professional foresters who will assist in assessing response options to beetle attack. Information will be available through the website at [mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca](http://mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca) and from Canadian Forest Service published reports on the beetle. These reports are specifically written for use by First Nations and private forestland owners.

## Is there money for me to get rid of the beetle?

Assistance is available, where applicable, to control the mountain pine beetle and, in other instances, to rehabilitate forestlands damaged by the beetle. Details on the programs, eligibility, how to apply, and the conditions for assistance will be available at [mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca](http://mpb.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca)

## Contacts:

### Who do I call if I want to know more?

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