



For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

Northern Bioenergy Partnership Established in Northern British Columbia

Prince George, BC – December 3, 2010 - The BC Bioenergy Network (“BCBN”) announces \$100,000 in funding over three years to support the development of the Northern Bioenergy Partnership (“NBP”) as an independent organization dedicated to building a knowledge-based bioenergy industry in Northern British Columbia. Industry has also committed \$50,000 for the first year of operation, and the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition has committed \$60,000 over 3 years. Further private sector and public funding will be solicited through annual membership fees, sponsorships and other activities. The NBP will become a self-sustaining and self-funded organization over the next three years.

BCBN, a provincially-funded leader supporting the growing bioenergy sector in British Columbia, previously contributed \$52,500 to Initiatives Prince George (“IPG”) in order to develop a business plan for the Northern Bioenergy Partnership. Developed by the NBP steering committee, the plan sets out a strategy that will see the region emerge as a forest-based bioenergy ‘centre of excellence’ home to world-class research in partnership with industry. With this new funding and partnerships now secured, NBP will establish as a not-for-profit, recruit an Executive Director, and deliver on the objectives of the business plan.

“The Clean Energy Act was designed to help create opportunities for investments, jobs and economic growth in every region of the province,” said Minister of Energy, Steve Thomson. “The Northern Bioenergy Partnership will accelerate new opportunities for clean, renewable energy projects which are a fundamental part of B.C.’s energy mix.”

“We are pleased to see our initial investment lead to the formal establishment of the Northern Bioenergy Partnership, a northern bioenergy cluster led by industry members, and supported by the community and UNBC to develop a world class bioenergy industry in British Columbia” says Michael Weedon, Executive Director of the BC Bioenergy Network. “We recently cost shared with the Wood Pellet Association of Canada, a BC project evaluating best in class torrefaction technologies to develop the next generation biomass solid fuels. We hope the BC members of WPAC and the Northern Bioenergy Partnership will join in to support the development of this collaborative. “

“We are delighted with the support provided by the BCBN”, says Dr. Charles Jago, interim chair of the NBP. “We are confident in our ability to develop a diverse and robust cluster of innovative forest-based bioenergy companies of world class standing.”

“We are very pleased to see the Northern Bioenergy Partnership moving forward with the task of building Prince George and the North as a world-class, forest-based bioenergy cluster”, stated Tim McEwan, President and Chief Executive Officer of Initiatives Prince George Development Corporation.

“Initiatives Prince George is pleased to have played a lead role in the formation of the Northern Bioenergy Partnership, and we look forward to its evolution into an industry-led organization under an independent governance model with a full-time Executive Director”, McEwan continued.

Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) Chair, Don Bassermann stated, “OBAC is pleased to be able to be a part of the acceleration of the growth and benefits from an alternative energy sector in the region. The collaboration with the Northern Bioenergy Partnership on supporting the capacity building for an Alternative Energy Office will provide communities with much needed information and assistance on the complex options, feasibility, technologies and programs impacting the development of the industry. The office is integral to the Alternative Energy Strategy’s envisioned future.”

The NBP is now recruiting for the position of Executive Director; interested applicants should contact Initiatives Prince George at 250-564-0282.

About the BC Bioenergy Network

Established in April 2008 with a \$25 million grant from the BC government, the BC Bioenergy Network is an industry-led association that acts as a catalyst for deploying near-term bioenergy technologies and organizing mission-driven research for the development and demonstration of sustainable to build a world class bioenergy capability in BC. For more information about the BCBN, visit www.bcbioenergy.ca

About Initiatives Prince George Economic Development Corporation

Initiatives Prince George aims to be the creative, energizing force that makes Prince George an integrated and sustainable, manufacturing, transportation, supply and service centre, and the inland gateway to Asia and North America.

About the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition

The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition includes the region between Prince George and Smithers, led by a Board of the region's Mayors and Regional District Chairs. In 2005, Federal Mountain Pine Beetle Recovery dollars were conveyed to the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition for the member local governments to begin building a diversification plan for the region’s communities – a response plan that would enable the forest dependent communities of the OBAC region to work together and to work with senior governments and others to build resilience and diversify the region’s economy for the future.

--30--

For Further Information Contact:

Michael Weedon, Executive Director
 BC Bioenergy Network -
www.bcbioenergy.ca
 Tel: 604-891-1257 or 604-805-2115
Michael.Weedon@bcbioenergy.ca

Tim McEwan, President and Chief Executive Officer
Initiatives Prince George-www.initiativespg.com
To speak with Tim McEwan, contact:
Melissa James, Manager, Marketing & Communications
Initiatives Prince George
Tel: 250-649-3206
james@initiativespg.com

Omineca Beetle Action Coalition
www.ominecacoalition.ca
To speak with Don Bassermann, contact:
Sharon Tower, Corporate Officer
Omineca Beetle Action Coalition
Tel: 250-960-6712
stower@ominecacoalition.ca