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Ministry of Forests and Range
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

RESOURCE ROAD ACT INTRODUCED

VICTORIA - A comprehensive Resource Road Act introduced today will enhance safety and provide a more consistent, fair and flexible approach to regulating industrial use of resource roads, said Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister Richard Neufeld.

"This government is committed to improving safety for workers in all sectors, including forestry," said Coleman. "The act will apply common standards for resource road construction, maintenance, use and deactivation to all industrial users."

"This act delivers on government's goals for results-based regulation by consolidating the road-related parts of five separate acts into one single act, to create a more predictable, fair and cost-effective framework," said Neufeld. "We will engage stakeholders as we develop the regulations over the next year so that the act supports our vital resource industries."

The Resource Road Act will set out the standards that operators will be required to meet, and will hold them accountable for their performance. The act will:

- * permit consistent standards for road construction, maintenance, use and deactivation to improve safety and enhance enforcement;
- * create a single resource road permit for industrial users rather than requiring them to obtain several permits;
- * enable primary road authorization holders to recover their capital investment in roads as well as reasonable road maintenance costs from secondary industrial users;
- * allow road permit holders to work with each other to improve safety, reduce potential conflicts and reduce the potential duplication of road systems; and
- * establish a Resource Road Authority that will ensure consistent application of the act and regulations. The authority will resolve disputes and restrict the use of high-use resource roads in order to improve safety.

"We have been making progress in improving the safety of forest workers through initiatives like BC Faller Certification and the SAFE companies certification program," said Tanner Elton, CEO of the BC Forest Safety Council. "The introduction of this act sets the stage for making real improvements to the safety of all workers who travel on resource roads."

The act enshrines the rights of the public and commercial use by others, such as tourism operators, to use resource roads on Crown land. The act does not impact existing land-use planning and approval processes.

To view the proposed act, please refer to Bill 30, the Resource Road Act, online at www.leg.bc.ca/38th4th/1st_read/gov02-1.htm.