



Investment to create jobs for forestry workers and improve Alberta's forests

THE HONOURABLE Rob Merrifield, Minister of State for Transport and Member of Parliament for Yellowhead, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification, announced Government of Canada support to help the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA) strengthen economic opportunities in forestry communities throughout the province.

"Today's announcement is another example of our Government's commitment to Alberta's forestry sector," said Minister of State Merrifield. "This project is creating immediate jobs for our forestry workers, while helping to ensure the sustainability of our forests and the communities that depend on them."

This project will enable the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA) to increase work that is performed through its Community Reforestation Program. Funding will support additional silviculture activities (activities that support the care and development of forests) on 6000 hectares of cutblocks, which are forested areas on publicly owned land.

"FRIAA is excited at the opportunity to carry out additional field activities that enhance Alberta's forests and help to sustain forestry dependent communities," said Trevor Wakelin, President of FRIAA. "This is the type of initiative that provides direct employment in the forestry sector and makes tangible improvements to public forest."

In addition to creating immediate employment opportunities and contributing to the continued sustainability of Alberta's forestry sector, the project will also provide long-term economic benefits by increasing the productive value of the forests. Furthermore, environmental and ecological benefits, such as the enhancement of wildlife habitat and protection of watersheds, will also be realized

through the reforestation and afforestation activities.

Federal funding of \$6,825,000 is being provided through the Community Adjustment Fund (CAF) as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan.

The fund will provide \$306 million over two years to support the most affected western Canadian communities, such as those that are heavily reliant on resource-based industries, for instance forestry, mining, ag-

riculture and fisheries, and communities that depend on the manufacturing industry. Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is delivering the fund in the four western provinces.

Visit the Community Adjustment Fund (CAF) in the West or Canada's Economic Action Plan for more information.

Source: Government of Canada

New web portal helps increase businesses' productivity

THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT has launched www.productivityalberta.ca to help Alberta businesses assess and improve their overall productivity.

"Given the global economic downturn of today, it is important for companies to improve their productivity," said Ted Morton, Minister of Alberta Finance and Enterprise. "This online resource provides one convenient location for any Alberta business to start improving their productivity and global competitiveness."

The Productivity Alberta web portal will connect Alberta companies to tools and resources to help them tackle productivity challenges and improve their competitive position in international and domestic markets.

The website provides links to a wide variety of government and industry information and resources. It contains the most up-to-date information on best practices and productivity strategies, and there are assessment tools to help companies compare their processes with industry benchmarks.

The website is just one action government is taking to help increase provincial productivity. Government also provides on-site productivity assessments and training for firms wishing to improve their productivity, efficiency and overall competitiveness.

"Increasing productivity is part of government's approach to ensuring Alberta becomes one of the most innovative and competitive regions in the world," said Morton.

Improving productivity and competitiveness is part of the Government of Alberta's plan for a strong economic recovery. The Way Forward will bring Alberta back into a surplus position in three years by trimming government spending; using cash reserves to protect key programs; continuing to invest in public infrastructure; and ensuring that our province's industries are competitive and continue to attract investment to provide jobs and prosperity.

Source: The Government of Alberta
