

Community Futures to provide advice and assistance to beetle funding applicants

By Times Staff

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"Community Futures Thompson Country (CFTC) stands ready to help local agencies and businesses wishing to apply for a piece of the federal government's \$33 million pine beetle funding," says CFTC CEO, Phil Lindsay.

Designed to foster economic development projects in communities suffering from the mountain pine beetle epidemic, the program is open to not-for profits, Aboriginal groups and First Nations, academic institutions, cooperatives, community development organizations and governments (local, regional and provincial), as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (conditions apply).

"We've been involved with managing the curbside pick-up program for beetle-killed wood in Kamloops from the beginning," Lindsay says.

"Now we're on standby to provide advice and assistance to Community Economic Diversification Initiative applicants in our region."

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) will deliver the initiative on behalf of the federal government.

Funds will be invested in projects that support economic growth, job creation and future sustainability of communities adversely affected by the widespread beetle infestation. All projects must be completed by March 31, 2009.

"People need to review the web site www.wd.gc.ca/ced/mpb/ for the details of the program and how to complete an Expression of Interest, Lindsay says.

"Deadlines are tight. Expressions of Interest must be in Western Economic Diversification Canada's hands by 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 19, 2007."

Support for beetle-related projects and the Community Economic Diversification Initiative is an integral part of CFTC's community economic development mandate.