

**Northern Managers
Report 2009-2011
On the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area**



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1a. The Origins of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area

In 1997 the provincial government accepted the multi-stakeholder Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) for Fort St. John and Fort Nelson which specified special management of the Muskwa-Kechika area. The Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan was adopted through Order-in-Council (1367/97) in October of that year. The management plan is to be implemented by all relevant government agencies through agency-specific management activities, local strategic plans, resource development permits as well as Crown land and natural resource dispositions. In 2000, area was added to the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area through a recommendation in the recently approved Mackenzie LRMP.

In June 1998, the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act was passed. The legislation included the creation of an advisory board tasked with advising government on management of the 6.4 million ha Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA) and the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund. In April 2002, matching funding for the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund was increased to \$1 million, for a potential public-private funding of \$2 million.

As of March 31st, 2006 the requirement for the provincial government to match contributions expired. As of 2006 funding for the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board flowed through government voted funds. In fiscal 2007-2008 \$500,000.00 was provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (Integrated Land Management Bureau), in fiscal 2008-2009 \$431,000.00 was provided and at the end of fiscal 2008-2009 a grant of \$400,000.00 was provided to Resource North Association for the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board with no commitment for funding in future years. In 2008 Minister Bell (then Minister of Agriculture and Lands) directed the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board to provide government with a plan to spend remaining funds in the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund within 3 years beginning in fiscal 2008-2009, thus funds were to be spent by 2011. Due to project elements and timelines not all funds were spent by March 31, 2011. Thus an expenditure plan was developed and approved for an additional fiscal for the remaining funds of \$75,900.00. On March 31, 2011 the grant to Resources North Association to support the operational activities of the M-KAB expired, a revised grant has been provided to allow funds to be spent to March 31, 2013.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board is to ensure that activities within the area are consistent with the objectives of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan. The Plan directed the Advisory Board to review the issuance of tenures and approval of operational activities to facilitate carrying out this oversight role. The Northern Region Interagency Management Committee has in the past provided the report. That committee is no longer in place however managers and directors across the Northern Area have taken on the responsibility of drafting this report.

1b. Goals of the Land and Resource Management Planning in the M-KMA

The management goal for the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area is to ensure that wilderness characteristics, wildlife and its habitat are maintained over time while allowing resource development and use, including: recreation, hunting, timber harvesting, mineral exploration and mining, oil and gas exploration and development. The integration of management activities, especially related to the planning, development and management of road access within the M-KMA, is central to achieving this intent. The long-term objective is to return lands to their natural state, as much as possible, as development activities are completed.

Objectives for the M-KMA were developed as part of the Fort Nelson, Fort St. John and Mackenzie LRMPs. Participants in these processes recommended that the objectives for the M-KMA be formally designated, thus establishing a separate jurisdiction to be known as the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area. The Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan identifies objectives for the management of the M-KMA and specifies an integrated and coordinated planning structure to meet those objectives. Provincial government agencies are responsible for implementing the objectives and strategies contained in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan as detailed in the LRMP's. The role of the agencies is to implement projects, issue tenures, approve operational activities that are within their mandate and carry out compliance measures in accordance with their legislated responsibilities.

1c. Changes to the Inter-Agency Management Structure

The *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act* sets out the responsibilities of the Inter-Agency Management Committee (IAMC) however since 1997 there have been changes in the structure and responsibilities of the IAMCs. Beginning in 2005, the business of land and resource agencies in British Columbia has been shifting to an integrated, regionally based, client focused model.

The responsibilities of the Inter-Agency Management Committee (M-KMA, 1997) in the *M-KMA Act* are as follows:

- (a) to assist in resolving conflicts between agencies and resource users;
- (b) to maintain a registry of plan documents and plan amendments, including the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan and local strategic plans, available to the public and any interested parties;
- (c) to review and provide recommendations to the Environment and Land Use Committee on any proposed amendments;
- (d) in partnership with the Advisory Board, provide for and coordinate public review and consultation as necessary;
- (e) in consultation with the Advisory Board, prepare an annual inter-agency work plan to facilitate the implementation of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan; and

- (f) to work in partnership with the Advisory Board to prepare an annual monitoring report on plan implementation, amendments and expenditures.

Annual Monitoring Report

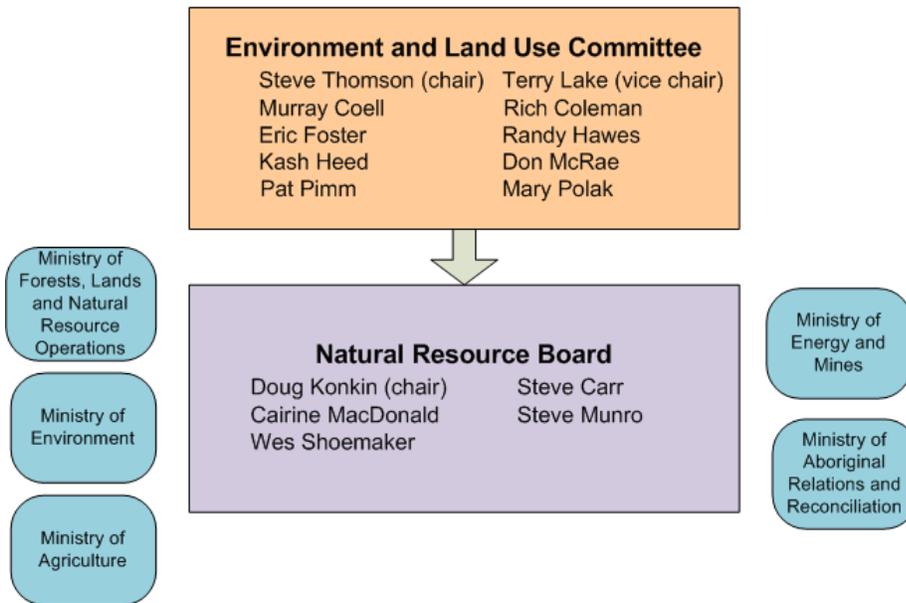
By November 1, 1998, and annually thereafter, the Advisory Board, in partnership with the Inter-Agency Management Committee, will prepare a monitoring report. The report will assess the degree to which the objectives outlined in the Management Plan are being met through management activities, local strategic planning and development plans and permits. The report will include all proposed updates and amendments to the Management Plan or any other recommendations made by the Advisory Board. All proposed amendments to the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan will be included in the annual monitoring report.

Although the IAMCs are no longer in place since the *M-KMA Act* was put in place in 1997, government will continue to provide the above responsibilities as required through new mechanisms.

In 2007 the Integrated Land Management Board initiated the Resource Management Coordination Project (RMCP). The project began as a pilot in the Northwest with the goals of identifying and delivering on interagency program coordination opportunities. Goals were coordinated service delivery, shared delivery of government priorities and greater effectiveness in management of Crown Lands and resources. This initiative is now at the core of a new ministry that will be discussed later in this report. While there is no longer formal sub regional managers committees associated with inter-agency coordination as seen with IAMCs and others there remains a Board at the Deputy level that ensures interaction between the various natural resource sectors in very much the same way that the Integrated Land Management Board did. In October of 2010 government went through a significant reorganization that fundamentally changed how government operates in terms of the management of resources. The change involved moving all natural resource ministries involved in making decisions on the land into one unit the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations (NRO) while the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Forests and Range and the Ministry of Environment retained non authorization activities and policy. In the spring of 2011 there was another change where the Ministry of Mines was separated (including the Oil and Gas Commission) and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations was formed that included the policy aspects of the former Ministry of Forests and Lands policy.

The illustration below shows the Natural Resource Sector governance and the representation all with the goal of integrated decision making and teamwork across and between Ministries.

A dedicated Cabinet Committee and a Deputy Minister Board



Under the new Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations the province was divided into 4 areas, the Northeast, North Central/West, Coast and South and further into regions as indicated in the map below. Each region has a management team and interacts with other ministries on a regular basis. There are ongoing discussions of whether to re-engage a Northeast Managers Committee (NEMC) for the Northeast given that the Ministry of Environment and the Oil and Gas Commission are large players in the region. The following is a map of the areas and offices under the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.



2. Report Highlights

Activities in the M-KMA have remained low from 2009-2010 through 2011 with limited on-the-ground activity. There was significant government reorganization in 2010 and 2011 that will be detailed in this document. This report includes reports from 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscals (to fall 2011).

Activity Reports

3a. Ministry of Energy & Mines

Overview of Ministry

During the reorganization of 2010-2011 the Ministry of Energy & Mines experienced numerous changes from the operational permitting moving out of the ministry to the Ministry of Natural Resources Operations to moving back to the Ministry of Energy & Mines in spring 2011. Currently the Ministry of Energy & Mines consists of the following divisions:

- Electricity and Alternative Energy Division
- Oil and Gas Division
- Titles & Corporate Relations Division
- Mines and Mineral Resources Division
- The Office of Housing and Construction Standards

Mining Activity

In the M-KMA between 2010 and fall 2011 3 Notice of Works were approved, a new gravel pit in Toad River for the Toad River Lodge Ltd. in 2010 and two mineral exploration permits in 2011.

Mineral and Placer Claims in the MK

New Mineral Claims: October 1, 2009 to August 31, 2011: **709**

New Placer Claims: October 1, 2009 to August 31, 2011: **1**

Oil and Gas Activities

The Titles Division of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources reports that since January 2008 there have been four Petroleum & Natural Gas Lease parcels granted. These four leases were selected from permits originally disposed in the Crown sale of June 2003. No new Crown sales either wholly or partially in the M-KMA have been issued between January 2008 and the date of this report, September 2009. Requests for disposition during this period were either not disposed or deferred.

Oil and Gas Regulations

The oil and gas sector in British Columbia is regulated by the Ministry of Energy & Mines. MEM regulates the sector in three ways: (1) the issuance of tenures, (2) the authorization of permits, and (3) various means of compliance and enforcement. While the Titles Division and Oil and Gas Commission (OGC) are the agencies that lead these areas, the overarching regulating framework that governs the sector is developed directly by the Ministry through its Oil and Gas Division.

To better serve the public interest and the sector's development a new Oil and Gas Activities Act (OGAA) was passed by the provincial government in 2008. OGAA came into effect on October 4, 2010 with formal implementation. OGAA better defines and clarifies the role of the BC Oil and Gas Commission, the regulatory agency responsible for overseeing petroleum and natural gas operations in BC. The commission now has stronger compliance and enforcement powers to govern a modern industry. A new appeal tribunal will respond to any challenges raised about the decisions made by the commission. Comprehensive environmental requirements are a key part of the new regulatory framework, with stronger, more consistent environmental guidelines and standards for industry, ensuring responsible management practices as the sector continues to grow. Landowners, First Nations and other stakeholder will also have an opportunity for input on the development of natural gas and petroleum activities. New consultation and notification requirements will ensure the concerns of landowners, First Nations and stakeholders are addressed and taken into consideration by industry operators who are seeking a permit to explore for petroleum and natural gas resources.

Sulphur/8 Mile Area

In order to facilitate the completion of Stone's sheep research in the Sulphur/8 Mile area, the Ministry of Energy and Mines will not be accepting requests for tenure within the High Elevation zone pending completion of the Stone's Sheep Project.

MEM supports the continued mandate of the Sulphur/8 Mile Stone's Sheep Project team to provide a recommended approach to oil and gas development in the High Elevation Zone. This will inform an amendment to the existing pre-tenure plan that will address Stone's sheep management in the area.

3b. Oil and Gas Commission

Goals

As the regulator of oil and gas activities, the Oil and Gas Commission's (OGC) regulates oil and gas activity; through fair, consistent, responsible and transparent stakeholder engagement; for the benefit of British Columbians; by balancing environmental, economic, and social outcomes. Management goals within the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA) are to:

- Ensure that oil and gas activities are consistent with the M-KMA Act and the objectives set out in the M-KMA Management Plan.
- Follow management direction from Oil and Gas Pre-Tenure Plans (PTPs).

Objectives / Strategies

To meet these goals the OGC has participated in government planning initiatives, such as PTPs, and has developed operational guidelines for oil and gas activities. The OGC also assisted ILMB and other government agencies on other oil and gas resource management related initiatives.

Operationally, the OGC reviews applications for their consistency with the PTP's and with the management direction from M-KMA Management Plan. The OGC also monitors field activities to ensure that they are in compliance with OGC approval documents and appropriate legislation.

Since 2009 there were 2 geophysical applications and 1 well application, all were declined.

3c. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

During the reorganization of government in late 2010 and early 2011 a number of ministries were combined under the above ministry. This includes the following:

- The Ministry of Forests and Range
- Water stewardship, Fish, wildlife and habitat divisions of the Ministry of Environment
- Integrated Land Management Bureau (all divisions with the exception of the First Nations division that moved to the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation)
- Recreation Sites and Trails (formally under the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and the Arts)
- Archaeology

The Ministry was created in March 2011 to deliver integrated land management services for British Columbians. It is the main agency responsible for establishing the policy and conditions for access to and use of the provinces forest, land and natural resources. The merger of Natural Resource Operations with Forest and Lands integrates policy with operational resource management, enabling us to effectively and sustainably manage BC's land base for a variety of uses.

Working with all stakeholders, the Ministry develops policies, programs and legislation to promote industry competitiveness and encourage investment in, and development of forest, land and natural resources. It also ensures that Ministry activities support sustainable development and protect the public's interest in these resources. By bringing provincial natural resource operations together into one ministry we can make more informed decisions that fully consider the environmental, social and economic factors of land use.

The Ministry holds the legislative authority for provincial permitting and licensing activities and use FrontCounter BC to coordinate a single-window service model for applicants. The Ministry also combines land and resource stewardship functions resulting in a 'one land manager' approach to natural resource decision making.

Ministry Functions



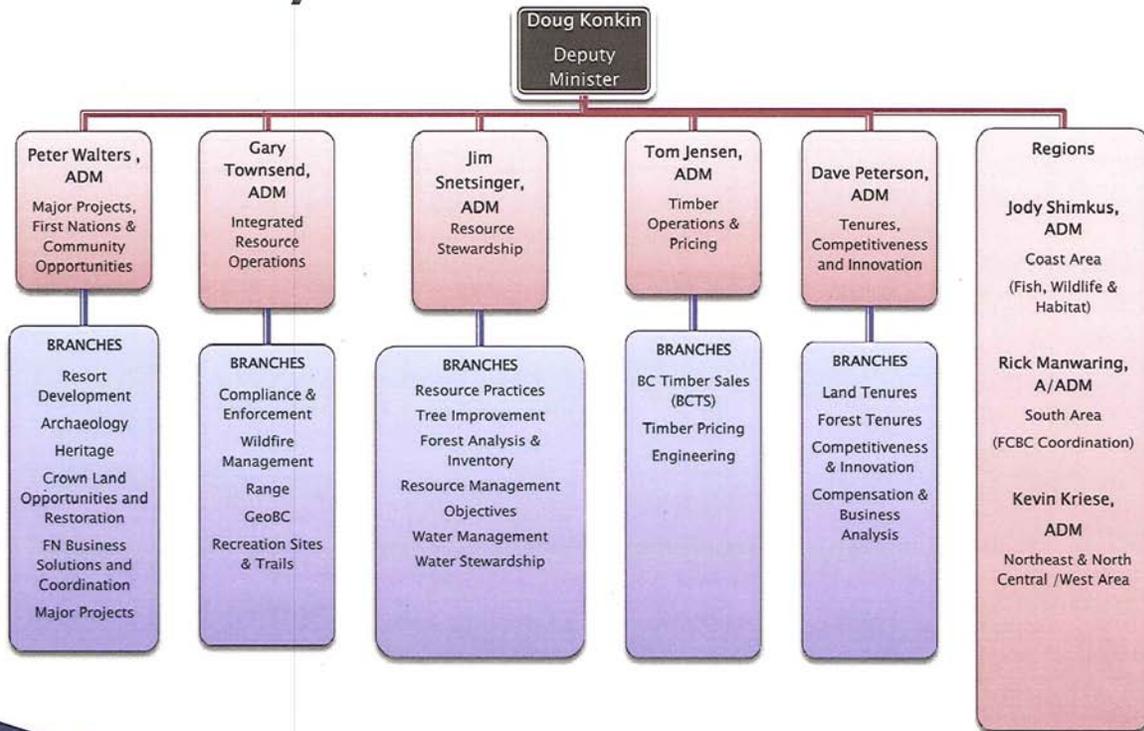
In the new organization the original districts remain such as the Fort Nelson District, Peace District and the Mackenzie District which cover the M-KMA. Regional Operations includes the following sections:

- District Managers (Director for each forest district, also delegated under the Land Act and the Water Act in some areas)
- Director Major Projects (project team that coordinates all activities for major, provincially significant projects, for example major mines)

- Director of Authorizations (former Service Centre Managers responsible for the Land Act, Notice of Work (gravel) and First Nations consultation)
- Director Resource Management (former Wildlife Manager, responsible for habitat, fish and wildlife, research and GIS)

The following chart illustrates the provincial operations

Ministry Executive



3c1. Fort Nelson Forest District

Only activities within the M-K are associated with range:

1. Rx fire and range management
2. Invasive plant treatment, Borders North project, oxeye daisy report at headwaters of the Muskwa,
3. Weed free forage and straw pilot project (MKMB is a partner) and signage
4. Success story of native plant revegetation in Liard Fire 084
5. Research: pyric herbivory – horses and Wood bison
6. MPB collaboration with the Yukon

3c2. Peace District

No activity to report.

3c3. Mackenzie District

No activity to report.

3c4. Authorizations

The responsibilities under the former Integrated Land Management Bureau now reside under the new Ministry this includes Land Act authorizations. The following indicates the new authorizations by type in the M-KMA from fall 2009 to fall 2011.

MK LAND TENURES

Includes all land tenure types, including Reserves/Notations.

“Tenures Commencing” includes both renewals and new tenures

Tenures Commencing between September 1, 2009 and August 31, 2011: **13**

LICENCE	COMMERCIAL RECREATION	2
LICENCE	COMMUNITY	1
LICENCE	QUARRYING	1
LICENCE	UTILITY	2
LICENCE	WINDPOWER	1
PERMIT	WINDPOWER	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	COMMERCIAL RECREATION	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION, & RECR	2
RESERVE/NOTATION	MISCELLANEOUS LAND USES	1
RIGHT-OF-WAY	UTILITY	1

Total Tenures in MK as of August 31, 2011: **118**

Breakdown of Total Tenures by Type

LEASE	7
LICENCE	31
PERMIT	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	76
RIGHT-OF-WAY	3

Breakdown of Total Tenures by Type and Purpose

LEASE	AGRICULTURE	1
LEASE	COMMERCIAL	1
LEASE	COMMERCIAL RECREATION	4
LEASE	COMMUNICATION	1
LICENCE	COMMERCIAL	2
LICENCE	COMMERCIAL RECREATION	19
LICENCE	COMMUNICATION	4
LICENCE	COMMUNITY	1
LICENCE	INSTITUTIONAL	2
LICENCE	UTILITY	2
LICENCE	WINDPOWER	1
PERMIT	WINDPOWER	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	COMMERCIAL	9
RESERVE/NOTATION	COMMERCIAL RECREATION	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION, & RECR	28
RESERVE/NOTATION	INSTITUTIONAL	1
RESERVE/NOTATION	MISCELLANEOUS LAND USES	10
RESERVE/NOTATION	QUARRYING	14
RESERVE/NOTATION	TRANSPORTATION	12
RESERVE/NOTATION	UTILITY	1
RIGHT-OF-WAY	ENERGY PRODUCTION	2
RIGHT-OF-WAY	UTILITY	1

In the future the NE will also be taking on responsibilities for issuing water authorizations.

3c5. Resource Management

- Ecosystems, Fish & Wildlife program areas are now under this Ministry, activities include licensing & permitting for angling, hunting and trapping, and fish, wildlife & habitat management.
- The programs collectively are found under Resource Management, GIS resources also fall within this program and the new Director of Resource Management is Chris Addison.
- Refer to the Appendix for further reports.

3c6. Recreation Sites and Trails

No activity to report.

3d. Ministry of Environment

The Ministry supports government goals and initiatives by:

- Managing and delivering a wide range of programs and services that support the Province's environmental, economic and societal goals.
- Leading the work in sustainable environmental management by ensuring clean and safe water, land and air, and healthy and diverse native species and ecosystems.
- Leading implementation of the Climate Action Plan through the Climate Action Secretariat.
- Promoting outdoor recreational opportunities, such as exploring BC's parks.

The Ministry includes the following core business areas:

- Environmental Protection
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and Protected Areas
- Conservation Officer Service
- Climate Action Secretariat
- Executive and Support Services

The Environmental Assessment Office is also found under the Ministry of Environment.

Below is a table with activity within parks, note that all Permit types are multi-year (usually 10 years) and renewable with the exception of Research Permits which are usually one or two years.

Year	2009	2010
Research	15	13
Land Use/Occupancy	7	7
Commercial Recreation	29	29
Trapline	22	22

3e. Public Works and Government Services Canada

The Ministry of Transportation does not have authority within the M-KMA. The responsibility of maintenance of the Alaska Highway between Tetsa River and Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park lies with Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

Report was not available at printing.

3f. Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR) is the centre of excellence for innovative approaches to Aboriginal policy. The Ministry takes the lead for the provincial government in negotiating treaties and implementing the transformative Change Accord and the Métis Nation Relationship Accord with commits BC to closing the closing the social and economic gaps between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians. The former First Nations Initiatives Division of ILMB is now within the MARR and represents the regional operations.

MARR provides strategic advice across government for building the New Relationship with First Nations in BC. It promotes integrated cross government partnerships among other ministries and Crown agencies, federal and local governments and other sectors to achieve the ministry's strategic goal.

Marr has 3 divisions:

- Negotiations & Regional Operations Divisions
- Partnerships & Community Renewal Division
- Strategic Initiatives Division

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations (MARR) has negotiating teams in all three of its divisions (Strategic Initiatives Division, Partnerships and Community Renewals, and Negotiations and Regional Operations Division). The Negotiations and Regional Operations Division (NROD) also has teams that are located in the regions, including a sub-regional team for northeast BC.

Negotiating and implementing agreements with Treaty 8 First Nations is ongoing in northeast BC. The northeast sub-regional team is primarily responsible for supporting the implementation of existing agreements, as well as providing support to negotiating teams. Sub-regional teams bring local expertise and connections to the other agencies, as well as First Nations and proponents. Strategic Initiatives Division and NROD negotiators in Victoria lead agreement negotiations in the northeast.

During 2011, the MARR NROD northeast team supported the implementation of the Treaty 8 Amended Economic Benefits Agreement and other completed agreements. These agreements are with three signatory communities, Doig River, Prophet River and West Moberly First Nations. Implementation work includes supporting the boards and forums that are established by the agreements, supporting the development of solutions for key issues, working closely with the other resource agencies, and providing implementation planning and other services. Government may negotiate similar agreements with other Treaty 8 First Nations in the future.

In 2011, the Strategic Initiatives Division, with MARR NROD, initiated negotiations with First Nations on new Consultation Process Agreements (CPAs) for oil and gas resource development in northeast BC.

Appendix 1

- A. Annual Report on Prescribed Burning (HCTF Project)
- B. Hunter activity in the Kechika Watershed September 9, 2010
- C. 2008 Wood Bison Annual Report
- D. 2009 Peace Wood Bison Report