
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range
Integrated Land Management Bureau

KTUNAXA NATION AND PROVINCE SIGN ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

CRANBROOK – The Province and Ktunaxa Nation Council have reached a strategic engagement agreement to guide ongoing government-to-government discussions on natural resource decisions, and build on the New Relationship commitment to First Nations, Minister Responsible for the Integrated Land Management Bureau Pat Bell announced today.

“This strategic engagement agreement is a significant step forward in strengthening our relationship with Ktunaxa Nation,” said Bell. “By working together we will improve B.C.’s investment climate and help close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.”

Under the agreement, \$1.65 million will be provided over three years to the Ktunaxa Nation to more effectively engage with the Province on land and resource development decisions in Ktunaxa Territory. This is anticipated to result in more co-operative decision-making and lead to increased certainty for resource activities in the area.

“Ktunaxa have been stewards of this territory for thousands of years,” said Kathryn Teneese, Ktunaxa Nation Chair. “This agreement with the Province allows Ktunaxa to better fulfill our continuing obligation and responsibility to manage the land within our territory. The Ktunaxa Nation would like to commend the Province for their commitment in developing this approach for land and resource management, and we look forward to demonstrating a co-operative relationship that can be a model for others to follow.”

“The Province looks forward to further developing the government-to-government relationship with Ktunaxa Nation, in order to advance our mutual interests in an open and respectful manner,” said Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister George Abbott. “This agreement supports the New Relationship vision of improving relations with First Nations so we can build a province where everyone can fully participate in a prosperous economy.”

“We have a great range of energy and mineral resources in the Southeast and this agreement ensures that any future resource development in this region will take everyone’s interests into account,” said Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister Bill Bennett and MLA for Kootenay East. “Ktunaxa Nation’s willingness to seek innovative solutions with industry and government will help to generate benefits for their community and all British Columbians.”

The Ktunaxa Nation Council is comprised of four communities: Akisq'nuk First Nation, Yaqan nu?kiy (Lower Kootenay), ?Aq'am (St. Mary's), and Tobacco Plains.

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