



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Audit near Dawson Creek finds soil, water protected**

VICTORIA – An audit of cattle grazing, forest harvesting and road construction and maintenance practices on Crown land in the Kiskatinaw River watershed found that legal requirements to conserve soils and protect water quality were met, according to a report released today.

The audit examined forestry, oil and gas, and range operations in the Kiskatinaw River watershed. Companies examined were Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. for forestry practices; Apache Canada, Shell Canada and Encana Corporation for oil and gas practices; as well as range practices of the Bear Mountain Grazing Association and three individuals with range tenures.

The Kiskatinaw River originates in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and supplies drinking water for the City of Dawson Creek.

“While the board traditionally audits forestry and range activities, we also recognize that oil and gas companies carry out the same types of harvesting and road activities and can impact forest values,” said board chair Al Gorley. “We chose to include forest clearing and road construction for wells and pipelines to see how well legislative requirements were met. However, our audit was limited to the requirements of provincial forestry legislation, such as preventing sediment from entering streams. We did not have authority to look at other issues like water usage, which would fall under the provincial Water Act.”

While the audit found all the operators met legal requirements, it did note some grazing sites where cattle were congregating in streams and causing localized disturbance. This is a practice that could be improved.

The Forest Practices Board is B.C.’s independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices, reporting its findings and recommendations directly to the public and government. The board audits forest and range practices on public lands and appropriateness of government enforcement. It can also make recommendations for improvement to practices and legislation.

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