

For Immediate Release
February 16, 2007

MOU SIGNING MARKS HISTORIC COLLABORATION

(Columbia Basin) – A memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed today by 16 federal, provincial, regional and First Nations agencies represents a strong commitment to increase collaboration on a number of water-management initiatives in the trans-boundary reach of Canadian Columbia River Basin. This initiative is known as the Canadian Columbia River Forum (CCRF).

The Columbia River Basin in Canada has economic, environmental, cultural and social importance to all Canadians. There are existing issues in the Basin that need collective attention now, and a growing list of new and emerging issues. This initiative brings together the necessary governments and decision-making agencies to collaborate on water management initiatives.

Under the terms of the MOU, the 16 agencies have agreed to four main objectives. They are:

- Enhance the working relationship among federal, provincial, First Nation and regional organizations;
- Aid governments (including First Nations) in sharing perspectives and developing a common understanding and set of values for dealing with trans-boundary issues;
- Develop mechanisms to maintain this common understanding and to help agencies stay abreast of and active in relevant ongoing and emerging trans-boundary issues; and,
- Identify tangible initiatives that warrant collaborative attention.

Among the activities designed to strengthen the work of all agencies, the CCRF has also made education and public participation in water management issues a priority. The first step towards this is to hold an educational workshop on May 30, 2007 in Cranbrook. The details of this workshop will be publicized in March.

The work of the CCRF will be carried forward with action plans that will identify specific areas for cooperation and information sharing on items such as Climate Change impacts on the region, transboundary water management agreements, current and future transboundary water issues, increasing dialogue and information sharing with US agencies, and creating mechanisms for open and equitable access to information on the Columbia River Basin for agencies and citizens.

View the [Canadian Columbia River Forum background paper](#) and the [Memorandum of Understanding](#).

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For more information contact:

Rachel Lucas
Manager, Communications
1-250-426-1103
1-800-505-8998
rlucas@cbt.org

Kindy Gosal
Manager, Water Initiatives
1-250-344-7015
1-800-505-8998
kgosal@cbt.org