

Wilderness Tourism Association



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News Release: Clark government makes commitments to strengthen BC's Tourism Industry

(April 27, 2011; Cumberland, BC) In a speech delivered to tourism industry leaders recently, Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation vowed to work towards greater business security for the tourism industry.

"Premier Clark has asked me to address issues around the compensation file for tenure taking and land use conflicts," said Minister Bell. "We will work toward a clear compensation process that will give operators a level of security. If a tourism operator needs to go to the bank and finance their activities, or if they were to acquire a tenure from another operator, we want to have the confidence that they will be appropriately compensated."

"Compensation for a tenure taking has been a long outstanding issue for the tourism industry as well as other land based industries," said Evan Loveless, Executive Director of the BC Wilderness Tourism Association. "Government could potentially make a decision on a tenure taking for a host of reasons including a First Nations treaty negotiation or an activity around species at risk protection, or other reasons. Under our current tenuring process, takings would happen without any compensation and this situation decreases business certainty, reduces the likelihood that tenure operators will invest further in their business, creates barriers for the selling of businesses and decreases the willingness of lending institutions to finance such operations."

Minister Bell will be consulting with tourism stakeholders and other land-based industry sectors over the next couple of months.

"By collaborating with stakeholders, we can work toward creating security and certainty for the industry," said Minister Bell. The Minister also committed to work with the tourism industry to develop land-use strategies to address conflicts such as the interaction between heli-skiing and snowmobiling in the backcountry. Minister Bell said he would be a strong advocate for the tourism industry.

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