ALC Approves Raven Application

Burnaby, January 12, 2004 --- The Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) announced today that it has approved the exclusion of approximately 140 hectares of land within the City of Courtenay owned by Raven Forest Products from the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR).

The Commission also approved the inclusion into the ALR of 318 hectares owned by Raven in the Black Creek area.

Approval is conditional upon a commitment by Courtenay that all development of the lands be consistent with the Water Balance Model developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The Model was developed to address water run-off that might affect neighbouring agriculture operations. The ALC will also require Courtenay to commit to consultation with neighbouring farmers during the development approval process for these lands.

The approval follows several amendments to the application that reduced the amount of land to be excluded. The amended proposal retains in the ALR a buffer along the eastern and southern boundary of the Raven lands adjoining the Beaver Meadow Farm and the agriculture acreages on Philmonte Road.

"The Commission determined that, on balance, the long-term interests of agriculture in the area were enhanced by approval of both applications", said Colin Fry, Director - Regional Operations of the ALC.

"We considered the inclusion of more than twice the amount of land excluded to be a positive development", stated Mr. Fry. "We also viewed favourably the expressed interest in the Endall Road property by two adjacent agriculture operations."

Mr. Fry also noted that the City of Courtenay has been one of the municipalities at the forefront of adopting the principles of the Water Balance Model developed by the Ministry of Agriculture.

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