BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2006FOR0021-000383
April 5, 2006

Ministry of Forests and Range

FOREST OFFICIALS DELIVER SAFETY MESSAGE AT SPOT-CHECKS

VICTORIA – Ministry of Forests and Range staff raised awareness about road safety during a series of recent logging truck inspections across B.C., Minister Rich Coleman said.

Compliance and Enforcement officials stopped nearly 950 vehicles during February, giving drivers information about the safe use of forest roads and advice about common infractions of forestry regulations governing the transportation and marking of timber.

"Spot-checks are an excellent opportunity to educate truckers about safety, particularly given the rise in traffic caused by increased harvesting of pine beetle timber," said Coleman. "Regular reminders reinforce the importance of following the rules and make forestry roads safer for everyone."

The February crackdown is part of the government's ongoing effort to improve forest safety. Since fall 2005, the Province has provided funding for a forest safety coroner and additional WorkSafeBC safety inspectors. The ministry is also conducting a comprehensive review of legislation, regulations and policies with a safety lens and supporting BC Forest Safety Council initiatives such as SAFE Companies and the TruckSafe Action Plan.

Ministry staff stopped trucks at 90 checkpoints on Forest Service roads and highways. Speed checks were conducted at five additional sites. Ministry of Transportation safety officials participated at some checkpoints, issuing seven tickets for overweight vehicles, poor brake performance and use of another driver's National Safety Code.

Most of the 236 infractions of forestry regulations involved inadequate transport documentation and resulted in verbal warnings. About 80 per cent of stopped vehicles passed inspection. Enforcement officials issued 45 warning tickets, 14 violation tickets and two compliance notices.

Compliance and Enforcement staff are responsible for upholding forest management laws and deterring crimes in the woods such as theft, arson and mischief. More than 16,000 inspections are conducted annually. If there is evidence of a contravention, an investigation follows, which could result in violation tickets, penalties or other actions.

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If you have any information about a forestry contravention or crime, call your local Ministry of Forests and Range office, or call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (callers may remain anonymous).

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Note: Regional statistics and the brochure Forest Service Road Use and Timber Transportation are available on request. A guide for the public, “Forest Roads: Guide for Safe Travel,” is available online at www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/engineering/documents/brochures/Guide-for-Safe-Travel.pdf.

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