



BACKGROUND

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Office of the Premier
Office of the Governor of Washington

AGREEMENTS SIGNED ON BORDERS, CLIMATE ACTION, TOURISM

With six agreements signed today at the third annual B.C.-Washington Joint Cabinet meeting, the province and the state have reached 17 new agreements since 2005.

Border Action Plan

B.C. and Washington will work together to reduce border delays and improve traffic flows for legitimate travel and trade under the Border Action Plan signed by Premier Gordon Campbell and Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond, on behalf of Washington Governor Chris Gregoire.

Premier Campbell and Governor Gregoire will send a joint letter to Prime Minister Harper and President Bush setting out the action plan, and are planning a joint mission to Ottawa and Washington D.C. to secure prompt and effective action by both federal governments.

The agreement calls for both jurisdictions to work together and engage the two federal governments to improve staffing levels at border crossings and increase hours of operation; improve border waits and processing; increase use of NEXUS and FAST; expand and extend Enhanced Drivers Licences; take action to reduce emissions at the border through anti-idling measures; and improve compatibility of cross-border public safety radio communications systems for emergency situations.

More information: Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat: 250 356-7373

Work-plan on Public Safety and Transportation Radio Communications Systems

B.C. and Washington will deepen their ongoing co-operation on public safety and emergency response by identifying opportunities to ensure first responders can communicate effectively in emergency situations on both sides of the B.C.-Washington border. The jurisdictions will also investigate ways to harmonize transportation communication systems.

More information: Public Safety and Solicitor General: 250 356-6961

Memorandum on Greening the Border

New measures to reduce vehicle idling at border crossings will aim to save fuel for travellers and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. B.C. and Washington will work together to develop an anti-idling program, first targeted to the Peace Arch border crossing. Part of the program will include improving communication of wait times and line-up conditions for border crossings to help drivers make informed decisions about where and when to travel. The jurisdictions will also work with border agencies to identify practical solutions to reduce idling while maintaining safe and efficient border flow.

More information: Tourism Sport and the Arts: 250 356-9869

Memorandum on Alternative Fuel Distribution

The Highway 99-Interstate 5 corridor will become the backbone of an alternative fuel distribution network, as B.C. and Washington develop strong and viable clean transportation fuels and technologies that will benefit both the environment and the economies of the two jurisdictions. Under the agreement, the state and the province will promote the establishment of stations that provide the public with access to alternative fuels; enhance public awareness of clean transportation choices; attract investment and share information on standards and best practices for biofuels, hydrogen as a fuel, and plug-in hybrid vehicle technology; and collaborate on studies and analyses on biofuels and electric vehicle technology.

More information: Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources: 250 952-0628

Memorandum on Coastal Climate Change Adaptation

B.C. and Washington will work together to better understand and respond to the potential impacts of climate change on their coastlines under an agreement to collaborate on coastal climate change adaptation. The Province and the State will share data and research on the regional impacts of climate change, particularly sea level information; collaborate on the development of scenarios for projected sea level changes for our common Pacific coastline; work together to develop communication and outreach initiatives to engage potentially affected coastal communities to promote understanding and build capacity to adapt; and share best practices on policy development, policy options and implementation of actions to protect our coastal communities and resources.

More information: Environment: 250 953-4577

Memorandum on Collaboration on Tourism

B.C. and Washington will work to promote the Pacific Northwest as a tourism and travel destination during the 2009 World Police and Fire Games, Skate America and the United States Figure Skating Championships, and the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. The state and the province will also work to identify future joint hosting opportunities for major events, and collaborate on the promotion of tourism sectors, including Pacific Northwest wine country tourism, aboriginal and tribal cultural tourism, two-nation scenic byways/circle tours, and green and sustainable tourism.

The state and the province will also support and encourage the development of a two-nation walk-on ferry pass that could be valid along the Pacific coast of the two jurisdictions.

More information: Tourism Sport and the Arts: 250 356-9869

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