

---

# *News Release*

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 10, 2004**

## **WESTERN CANADA TOURISM INDUSTRY PARTNERS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND PROVINCE OF B.C.**

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – The Honourable Stephen Owen, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport), and Sandy Santori, British Columbia Minister of State for Resort Development, today confirmed their support for a Western Canada tourism strategy and four additional investments that will develop tourism opportunities in B.C.

Western Economic Diversification Canada will contribute \$2.4 million to the strategy, while the four western provincial governments and other industry partners will contribute more than \$3 million over two years.

Led by the Tourism Standards Consortium (Western Canada) Inc., the tourism strategy responds to reduced travel and tourism in Western Canada brought on by extraordinary events such as forest fires, flooding, BSE and lingering concerns about SARS and West Nile Virus.

Three tourism development initiatives will also receive funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada and the Province of B.C. Other partners for these initiatives include: The Resort Municipality of Whistler, The Council of Tourism Associations of B.C. and the Destination Osoyoos Development Society.

In addition, the West Coast Railway Association will receive \$210,000 from Western Economic Diversification Canada to improve its excursion tours across B.C.

“Western Canada has some of the most renowned tourism destinations in the world, as well as some of the best-kept secrets,” said Minister Owen. “These initiatives will help western communities work in partnership with local residents to increase tourism potential and take advantage of business opportunities arising out of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.”

- more -

"Tourism is a defining industry for British Columbia and will have an even bigger role in promoting the province as we build toward the 2010 Winter Olympics," said Minister Santori. "This investment supports the provincial tourism strategy and bolsters our efforts to diversify and strengthen this valuable industry."

Western Economic Diversification Canada supports tourism initiatives as part of its commitment to building sustainable communities. In addition to today's announcement, the department, together with the four western provincial governments, has provided approximately \$19 million to the Tourism Alliance for Western Canada to further its tourism marketing initiatives.

Western Economic Diversification Canada is the federal department mandated to support economic diversification in communities across Western Canada through activities that advance Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Communities. Funding for these initiatives was provided for in the March 2004 federal budget.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Susan Schooley  
Communications Manager  
Western Economic Diversification Canada  
(604) 666-1318  
[www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca)

Paul Woolley  
Communications Director  
Ministry of Small Business and Economic  
Development  
(250) 356-9428

Renée Gillen  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Minister,  
Western Economic Diversification Canada  
(613) 954-1110

***A stronger West. A stronger Canada***