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14-31

For immediate release

CRD's South Cariboo Regional Airport base for Ministry Spruce Budworm Treatments

108 Mile Ranch - The Cariboo Regional District's (CRD) South Cariboo Regional Airport at the 108 Mile Ranch will be used by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations again in 2014 as a base for its spraying to control local populations of Spruce Budworm. Timing of the work is dependent on weather conditions, but the Ministry expects to operate out of the airport for seven to ten days in mid to late June.

"I am pleased to see that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations will be using our facilities for the treatment of Spruce Budworm in the region," stated CRD Chair Al Richmond. "Not only do the prescriptive treatments help mitigate the impact of the Spruce Budworm on our forest industry, but it also provides an economic opportunity and awareness of our airport."

The treatment, which in past years has involved approximately 45 hours of flight, will require the purchase of significant amounts of aviation fuel from the airport. The crew of 12, which includes three spray loaders, two helicopter support workers and two engineers working on site at the airport, as well as two pilots flying two tanker airplanes and working with three block-based crew members, will spray the selected hectares.

In 2013, the Ministry was able to treat 6,800 hectares using the South Cariboo Regional Airport as a base. It is expected that approximately 20,000 hectares will be treated from the airport this year as many of the blocks in the Williams Lake timber supply area are closer to the South Cariboo Regional Airport than to the Williams Lake Airport.

The CRD's South Cariboo Regional Airport has long been a valuable asset in the south Cariboo, supporting medevac, RCMP and forest fire response flights and encouraging economic development and tourism in the area.

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