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COUNTRY LIFE IN BC

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Province tightens rules in ALR

Second round of legislation expected in the new year

by PETER MITHAM

VICTORIA – BC agriculture minister Lana Popham has taken aim at land use in the first of a series of amendments to the Agricultural Land Commission Act.

Popham introduced legislation November 5 that places the Agricultural Land Reserve under a single zone, eliminating the two zones established in 2014. It also enshrines in legislation guidelines for residential construction in the ALR, limiting new homes to 5,400 square feet (save where the ALC believes there's a net benefit to farming).

A third element addresses illegal fill activities within the ALR, which the province says has increased

See ALR on next page ↪



Farming isn't what it used to be. A residential development turned what was once productive hayland into a drainage nightmare for Maple Ridge farmers Steve, left, and John Wynnyk. The land commission says it's viable once the city makes good on promises to fix the drainage. But the brothers have had enough. Their story is on page 16. RONDA PAYNE PHOTO

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Ag waste reg "nearly" done

by DAVID SCHMIDT

ABBOTSFORD – The BC Ministry of Environment plans to implement the new agricultural waste control regulation over several years, the ministry's clean technologies director Chris Jenkins and hazardous waste senior policy specialist Mike Schwalb told the Mainland Milk Producers Association at its fall meeting in Abbotsford, October 24.

Review of the regulation, originally adopted in 1992 and last amended in 2008,

began in October 2009. Jenkins told producers the new regulation aim for better clarity and enforceability, protect high-risk areas and better fit modern agricultural practices. She said the amendments are "nearly finished" and she expects them to come into force in February.

Nutrient management plans (NMPs) are a key component of the new regulation but they will be phased in over time.

"Farmers in the Hullcar Valley will need to create and

implement them right away; other livestock and poultry producers will need them starting in 2021 and all other farmers will have to have them in 2024," Schwalb said.

Initially, the NMPs will only cover nitrates but phosphorus will be added starting in 2025.

Farmers located above aquifers will have to do both post-harvest nitrate and phosphorus soil testing every one to three years, Schwalb said. Those requirements will

See WASTE on next page ↪

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