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COUNTRY LIFE IN BC

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Joy ride! Driver Jana Lutz puts Belle and Doc through their paces during a sleigh ride on a sunny afternoon at The Ranch in Pritchard. PATTI THOMAS PHOTO

Critics urge licence delay

Province's retired water engineer weighs in

by **PETER MITHAM & TOM WALKER**

KELOWNA – The deadline for registering wells and obtaining groundwater licences, an initiative aimed at establishing priority for water rights in BC, is fast approaching.

But a growing chorus is calling on the province to postpone the deadline yet again due to ongoing issues getting everyone on board,

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ALR committee files report

by **PETER MITHAM**

VICTORIA – The nine-member advisory committee appointed last winter to undertake a province-wide consultation and recommend ways to revitalize the Agricultural Land Commission has completed its work.

The committee submitted its final report by the end of December as scheduled, BC Ministry of Agriculture staff confirmed to *Country Life in BC* last month.

“Staff are now reviewing the independent committee’s

recommendations,” ministry communications staff said. “Once the review process is complete, the final report will be released to the public.”

Recommendations in the final report will lay a foundation for legislation expected this spring. Speaking shortly after the legislature ended its fall sitting, BC agriculture minister Lana Popham said the bill would address governance of the commission.

The fall sitting of the legislature addressed the reserve itself, ending the two

zones created in 2014 and tightening regulation of activities within the reserve.

Outlining key issues for consideration in its final report, the advisory committee’s interim report in July flagged the need to create an “agriculture-first” mindset in BC.

“At the centre of all future recommendations is the need for a broad government-wide recognition of agriculture as a key natural resource sector – and economic generator – in

See **ALR** on next page ↗

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