

*January 21, 2010*

## **Alberta passes the Olympic torch to British Columbia**

*Edmonton...* The Olympic Torch Relay left Alberta and entered British Columbia as it began its final journey to Vancouver for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The torch was welcomed by Cindy Ady, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, on behalf of Premier Ed Stelmach, and BC Premier Gordon Campbell at the Kicking Horse Pass.

“The Olympic Torch Relay has brought Albertans together to share in the glow of Canada’s Games,” said Premier Ed Stelmach. “As the torch completes its final journey, Albertans and Canadians are embracing the Olympic Spirit and being inspired with a feeling of national pride that will resonate long after the last medals have been awarded.”

Making its way through Yoho National Park, the Olympic Flame was carried by former Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed to the BC-Alberta border. Mr. Lougheed then passed the flame to Wally Bueno, general manager and head coach of the BC Lions Football Club.

“This handoff marks the start of the final leg of the Olympic Flame’s historic journey across Canada - a journey that has connected Canadians like never before,” said Premier Gordon Campbell. “The torch has touched the farthest points in our nation and spread the spirit of the Games to hundreds of communities and millions of people. Today, British Columbians are celebrating the return of the Olympic Relay and cheering it on as it heads towards BC Place Stadium to kick off the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in just 22 days.”

During the Olympic Torch’s journey in Alberta, the torch visited 76 communities with nearly 1,000 torchbearers. A total of 18 community celebrations took place to welcome the torch and showcase the diversity, people and culture of Alberta.

“I am honoured to participate in this inspiring Olympic torch relay,” said Peter Lougheed, former Premier of Alberta. “We in Alberta are proud of the impact the 1988 Calgary Olympics had on winter sport in Canada and I know that the 2010 Olympic Winter Games will do even more to strengthen the Olympic movement and our Canadian athletes.”

“I am both honoured and humbled to take part in the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay which has united Canadians from coast to coast,” said Wally Bueno, Head Coach, BC Lions. “As a former resident of Alberta, it is very exciting for me to have been selected to run this particular stage and help welcome the flame back to British Columbia. The Olympics will undoubtedly provide lasting memories for athletes, visitors and all British Columbians.”

Once the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay arrives at BC Place on February 12 for the Opening Ceremonies of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the flame will have travelled 45,000 kilometres across Canada, making this the longest torch relay in history to be contained within

the Host Country.

For more information about Alberta's involvement at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games, visit [www.alberta.ca/vancouver2010](http://www.alberta.ca/vancouver2010) .

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