



Reference: 230842

October 19, 2017

VIA EMAIL: mayor@victoria.ca

Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you for your letter of August 8, 2017, forwarding the City of Victoria Council's resolution to support optimizing community benefits of forest resources. I apologize for the delay in responding.

British Columbia has the largest and most diverse public forests in Canada. Managing forests for timber, water, wildlife, recreation and other values over the long term is very important and complex. Put simply, this means getting the best economic, recreational, cultural and spiritual use from our forests, while maintaining healthy forests. As part of our commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations in British Columbia, our government will also be fully adopting and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I will review ministry policies and programs to ensure the UNDRIP principles are incorporated. This is a high priority in this ministry given its responsibility for managing Crown land. Clearly defined goals and objectives, which were established in comprehensive legislation and regulation, for BC's forests assist forest managers in meeting public expectations for the sustainable management of this broad array of forest resources. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development has several programs and initiatives that relate to the priorities identified in your letter, including:

- **Community Forest Agreements:** Community Forest Agreements (CFA) are a valuable tenure for government in the management of Crown forest land and for providing economic benefits to local communities. As a priority, the ministry will continue to focus efforts in establishing CFAs in those communities where volume has been allocated and where CFAs have not yet been issued.
- **Log Markets:** Wood Source BC provides an opportunity for regional networking to those that work in forestry, process wood, and/or create value-added wood products. The [Wood Source BC](http://www.woodsourcebc.ca) website ensures a long-term commitment to developing and

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sustaining an international wood marketplace for buyers and sellers, both local and foreign, of BC wood products. Inquiries or proposals received anywhere by the government will be directed to one of the Fibre Officers based in communities across the province.

- Value-Added Production: The Government of British Columbia is actively working with the value-added and specialty wood manufacturing sector to advance a value-added plan and to explore policy and legislation options important to the continuation and expansion of this sector. In March 2017, the Wood Secretariat was formed to establish a single point of contact between government and the value-added specialty sawmilling sector. It is structured around an industry and government co-leadership model. The Terms of Reference are action oriented and focus on resolving operational issues, providing input into proposed legislation and policy, and engaging in strategic discussions to inform future government initiatives and decisions.
- Forest Stewardship: Forest stewardship encompasses province-wide forest health and silviculture strategies, regionally specific stewardship activities, and implementation of measures that support planning for species at risk and old growth protection. Stewardship activities are coordinated across regions to increase ecosystem resilience, fibre supply, wildlife, and resource sustainability. The implementation of Government Action Regulations orders under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* delineate and protect community watersheds; fish, wildlife and biodiversity; visual quality; and, heritage areas. Your resolution speaks to how “watersheds and ecosystems have experienced negative impacts due to existing forest practices”; however, I would disagree. While some past practices are no longer acceptable, our current management regime is designed to avoid those negative impacts that your resolution addresses. While my ministry is always open to new practices, methods and approaches, I think that any environmentally detrimental practices are the result of infractions rather than those occurring in accordance with the law.

Thank you again for writing and expressing your interest in optimizing community benefits of BC's forest resources. This ministry continues to seek opportunities to improve forest stewardship practices on our Crown land base and to support forest jobs in our communities.

If you require further information on this topic, please contact Nikki Lachance, Director of Operations, by phone at 250 356-9060 or by email at Nikki.Lachance@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,



Doug Donaldson
Minister

pc: Nikki Lachance, Director of Operations, Tenures, Competitiveness and
Innovation Division