



HOMALCO FIRST NATION

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Old Growth BC

By email : oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca

Homalco recognizes the importance of maintaining sustainable forests in our Territory and, while we recognize the importance of good science, we need government to recognize that for time immemorial First Nations managed the forests in a sustainable way and, given the opportunity, we would continue to do that. It's important that our cultural needs are met through good forest management. Our Territory does not provide us the cultural resources we require.

Tenure holders that have operated in unceded territory have not managed the forests the way we would have. Our tenure does not support our community and that is not acceptable to the Homalco. We have seen the BC Government run programs and services for years that were funded by forestry yet, in our own Territory, we do not have access to the same volume to be able to run equivalent programs and services for our community. The Province has given away our ability to foster our own economy. We must now develop a government to government relationship whereby the Province of BC supports First Nations in getting access to more tenure assets that they can manage on a sustainable basis that meets our social, cultural, economic needs.

We acknowledge the work done to date in managing old growth forests, however, we are not happy with the rate of harvesting. Not having access to appropriate cultural wood is an infringement of our Aboriginal Rights under Section 35 of the Constitution Act. As part of our healing journey we must get access to large cultural cedar trees. We are currently in discussion with our local First Nations RCMP officer who is willing to carve a dugout canoe with our youth as part of a relationship, community safety program and are struggling to find an appropriate cedar.

Homalco is very interested in being part of the work BC is doing to look at how old growth forests are managed for future generations in BC.

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