

December 17, 2019.

Province of British Columbia  
Old Growth Review Panel  
Attention: Garry Merkel & Al Gorley,  
oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca

Re: Old Growth Forests in Coastal British Columbia

I am currently employed in the Forest Industry residing on Northern Vancouver Island and have worked in the forest industry since 1975 (44 years) and I have seen a lot of good changes take place and continue to.

Old growth forests and the diversity of ecosystems have withstood the test of time and change. Logging history is intertwined in the development of this Province. The forests are shared with many resources that are juggled and balanced by forest professionals. Forestry is still one of the main economic drivers in this Province. Coastal BC forests over the years have been managed under a multitude of changes to legislation and protection measures. More retention harvesting is being applied. Protection of forests on Coastal BC have more than tripled since 1991. It is estimated that approximately 2.8 million hectares or 81% of the old growth on Coastal BC will never be harvested.

Some facts:

Coastal BC covers	~ 15.0 million hectares	
Coastal BC Forests cover	~ 8.4 million hectares (of 15.0)	56%
Old Growth Forests cover	~ 3.5 million hectares (of 15.0)	42%
THLB (timber harvesting land base)	~ 2.6 million hectares (of 8.4)	31%
OG Forests in Parks / Reserves offering protection	~ 1.9 million hectares (of 3.5)	55%
OG Other constraints offering protection	~ 2.8 million hectares	
Reforestation with tree seedlings (95%)	~ 29 million seedlings	
Seedling sequestration of carbon annually	~ 2.9 million tonnes Carbon/yr	
Coastal AAC decline (1990 to 2019)		30%

As we know and hear, climate change is a topic getting lots of attention. But let's look at some facts. It is understood by many that a well, managed forest, helps to mitigate climate change. Carbon is stored in wood products for the entire life of the product. When a tree gets cut down, 40% to 60% of the carbon stays in the forest. Harvesting in Canada releases less carbon dioxide than wildfires and other natural disturbances. As noted in the above table, Coastal BC plants about 29 million seedlings annually. This results in carbon being sequestered which translates to approximately 2.9 million tonnes of carbon/year. Wood as a building material has the least impact on the environment as compared to steel and concrete used in construction regarding CO2 sequestration.

Annual harvesting on Coastal BC is less than 0.5% of the regions crown forests that are harvested annually. The transitioning into second growth has been gradual over the past 25 years. This transitioning is very important to the Coastal Communities, especially the smaller rural communities. Let's look at some economic facts. Forestry in British Columbia has been a backbone of the Province resulting in approximately 21,000 + jobs of which about 10,000 are direct jobs. The GDP is estimated to be about \$2.1 billion. The labour income from forestry is estimated to be about \$1.4 billion. The Coastal Region produces about 25% of the Provincial harvest but it generates a much larger share of the

province's GDP at ~ 45%. On the coast, there are ~39 types of mills operating producing lumber, value added products, pulp & paper products. If Old Growth harvest should end now rather than continuing the trend of mixing Old Growth and Second Growth harvest and continuing to slowly phase out of old growth, there will be a very severe impact on many Vancouver Island / Coastal Communities. The cutting off of old growth harvest completely will have decimating impacts upon forestry jobs and the indirect jobs that help to support this industry. A structured transition will ensure community stability, maintain lumber / logs as a viable product, and ensure the industry continues to be part of the world's carbon solution.

As a Forest Professional, I support sound science-based practices that guide multiple layers of planning at all levels of industry and government. British Columbia has a long history of intensive forest management and forest stewardship guided by the Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters (ABC FP) since 1947.

Annual allowable cut calculations and assumptions made by industry are reviewed and approved by government and have never in the past suggested curtailment of harvesting old growth forests. Harvest levels are designed to provide long term economic stability and provide for long term forest management.

To just stop Old Growth harvesting, will have severe impacts British Columbia's economy. Old Growth forests are dying. They are not contributing to the carbon issues as the newer younger forests have a much better impact. The transitioning of harvest over the next 20 plus years is an important factor and must be considered and not just dismissed.

I urge you to consider what a sudden change like totally dropping old growth harvest will have. The economic impact will be felt immediately and not just locally, but Provincially, Nationally and Globally.

Trust the management of British Columbia's forests by the Professional Foresters who have staked their careers and livelihood on managing & balancing all stakeholders in the Forests of BC.

Thank you

Joe McDonald  
RFT #0320