

December 10th 2019

Attn: Old Growth Forests Strategic Review Panel

In response to your request for engagement from the public in relation to the ongoing Old Growth Forest Strategic Review I submit the following for your consideration.

The Coastal Region of BC is 15 million hectares in size, 56% of which (8.4 million hectares) is covered in forest. Of that 8.4 million hectares 42% (3.5 million hectares) are Old Growth forests (defined as >250 years old) equating to approximately 1/4 (23%) of the Coastal Region of BC land base.

Over half (55% or 1.9 million hectares) of the Old Growth forests on the BC Coast are already protected in parks and other reserves leaving 1.6 million hectares (<11%) of the Coastal Region of BC land base available for commercial activity (primarily Old Growth logging).

Furthermore, 2.8 million hectares (>80%) of Old Growth forest will **NEVER** be logged primarily due to physical constraints (ie accessibility).

Given we already have legislation in place protecting 55% of Old Growth forests, do we need additional legislation to restrict access to the remainder given the social and economic benefits it provides to the communities on the BC Coast and the families that choose to make it their home?

Forestry is the backbone of many small/rural communities on the BC Coast. There are greater than 21,000 total jobs in BC as a result of forestry, of which 10K (nearly 50%) are direct jobs. Forestry contributes 2.1 billion in GDP and generates approximately 1.4 billion in labour income. Forestry supports 39 lumber, value added, and pulp/paper mills on the BC Coast.

A further moratorium on Old Growth Forests for the remaining 11% of the BC Coastal land base potentially available for Old Growth logging would effectively cut the BC Coastal forestry industry in HALF, permanently eliminating approximately 4,500 direct jobs and 10,000 total jobs.

Given the above facts and considering the recent media coverage regarding the social and economic impact the 5+ month USW local 1937-1 strike is having on families and communities across Vancouver Island, as well as the numerous mill closures on the Mainland due to a lack of fibre supply, **I cannot help but wonder what will happen to these same families and communities with a permanent 50% reduction in coastal forestry as a result of the curtailment of Old Growth logging?** The headline "Economic Crisis on the BC Coast" sadly springs to mind...

Sincerely,

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