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Independent Panel  
Old Growth Strategic Review  
Province of British Columbia  
[Oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Panelists:

**RE: Old Growth Strategic Review**

I am writing to encourage the panel to recommend to the government that British Columbia abandon its historic forest policy that aimed to liquidate the natural capital inherited in the old growth forests of this province, and shift entirely to a forest management policy focused on the support of forest ecosystem health first, and timber and fibre production second. Specifically, the industry must shift to rely entirely on sustainable fiber yield from second growth forests, with an aim to add value to every board foot of timber and gram of fibre produced. The historic and ongoing practice of liquidating old growth forests must stop entirely, and old growth forest that remains preserved as a long term ecological endowment providing wildlife habitat, cultural values, ecosystem services, and a bank of biodiversity as a hedge against climate change.

My first job after I finished high school was working with Weyerhaeuser Canada in Kamloops. This was in the mid-1970s at time, as it turns out, that was the end of the golden years of forest sector jobs in the province. Shortly afterward, the deep recession of 1981 and the retooling of the industry that followed, cut roughly 50% of the jobs from the industry, closed in-efficient mills, and focused the industry on capital intensive production. This process has continued over the near 40 years since which has also seen increased raw log exports, further mill closures, and massive climate change impacts on forest ecosystems most notably the Mountain Pine Beetle outbreak. It was evident to anyone with eyes to see, that BC should have begun the transition to a smaller forest industry 40 years ago, with a focus on a sustainable yield of second growth fibre, with a greater emphasis on value-added forest products. We need to make this shift now if we are to have any old growth forests remaining, or an industry of any kind in future.

I do not believe that we should be cutting any of the old growth forest that remains. It is all that remains of the spectacular endowment of ecological richness that once blanketed the province. Apart from careful indigenous cultural use and minimal management focused on maintaining old growth forest health and biological integrity, BCs remaining old growth forests should be preserved in perpetuity. This is important for the ecosystem services these forests continue to provide, but also as a hedge against environmental uncertainty in this age of climate change. BCs remaining old growth forests must be passed on intact as a living legacy to future generations.

In immediate practical terms fulfilling this intention means:

1. Implementing old growth protection legislation to protect all of BCs remaining old growth forests whether on public or private land;
2. Working with rural communities, First Nations communities, and the forest industry to shift the forest industry to a sustainable footing, focused on managing second growth forests and value added forest products;
3. Take immediate steps to stop old growth logging by placing a moratorium on old growth logging, implementing the Bit Tree Protection Order, discontinuing the issuance of BC Timber Sales permits in old growth forests, and creating a provincial land acquisition fund to protect old growth forests on private lands;
4. Establish old growth forest protection reserves on crown land areas not currently contained with provincial parks, national parks, or ecological reserves; and,
5. Ban raw log exports and provide financial incentives to encourage the development of value-added second growth wood manufacturing in the province.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Hornell', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Hornell

CC: The Hon. John Horgan, Premier of BC  
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The Hon. Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests  
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