

Old Growth Strategic Review January 24, 2020

The forests of British Columbia and our varied ecosystems are significant motivators to persons wanting to visit or live our province. Particularly our old growth stands located primarily in the coastal regions of our province. Frankly this majestic beauty is the primary motivator in my lengthy residency in this province.

Historic logging and now sustainable logging as well as milling are well ingrained in the history of this province. They have provided long time steady employment to many British Columbians. Certainly, this adds to a significant economic driver for the province. The tax revenues derived for the companies who utilize & manage harvesting public lands coupled with personal tax and other economic contributions for the tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs are a significant driver in making this province what it is today. Many communities in the province rely on this industry as their primary economic driver and would likely become part of history with significant changes in available land to manage.

Our province has a significant component of forested land. Of that component there is approximately 3.5 million hectares of old growth. My understanding is that in the area of 30% of the 3.5 million hectares of old growth is available as harvestable land. That leaves 70 % unavailable due to inaccessibility or legislative reasons.

On the limited portion of old growth available to harvest various companies and contractors work to harvest timber, make profits as well as provide employment. The companies and contractors employ science based, sustainable and ecologically sensitive harvesting practices, regulated by the provincial government. This limited land base is providing materials to BC based manufacturing facilities and overseas markets all the while providing stable communities and significant economic revenues to the province. The provincial revenues contribute to the social programs all British Columbians are accustomed to.

The coastal timber harvest land base has progressively been eroded over the years. Numbers are in the area of 30% reductions in allowable harvest since 1990. The impact of reduced capacity has been focused unequally on the coastal industry even though the BC interior has had significant natural events contribute to its reductions. These reductions to the coastal forest industry have already had impact on the viability of many small coastal communities.

Historic patterns of harvest on the coast have led to our current designed approach to managed forest harvest programs. Kudos to the people before us who got us to this sustainable level. Those people helped build many of the communities that may be threatened by further harvest reductions. Shame on myself and fellow British Columbians if we allow this to happen. For me it is crucial we protect the working forests as we have them today. For my family, my neighbours and for generations of British

Columbians yet to come. They are entitled to the same quality of life present British Columbians are accustomed to.

It is with personal protest I see us allowing the influence of well funded and organized international environmental groups shaping the future of the forest industry in coastal regions of our province. This is not rite. The potential impact of further erosion of the coastal forest industry has to potential to put thousands more on the unemployment line. The burden on the provincial social support programs coupled with lost tax revenues is unacceptable. I support sustainable logging and the long-term sustainability of coastal communities and the families that reside there.

Phil Salter

Average citizen of British Columbia.