

Draft Letter to the Premiere as requested by EKRD

Madame Premier:

We are writing to express our continued support for the independent, specialty, value-added manufacturing sector in our forest industry and specifically the local mills that belong to the Interior Lumber Manufacturers' Association (ILMA).

The East Kootenay Regional District Board on July 8, 2016 adopted the following resolution in support of the ILMA and specialty, value-added manufacturing in our province.

"That the Board supports the Interior Lumber Manufacturers' Association request for the provincial government to take action immediately to encourage and incent the distribution of existing provincial timber supply to optimize the "Right Log to the Right Mill" ensuring maximum opportunity for economic growth and the creation of jobs."

In view of the increasing need to support the growth of this sector, especially given shrinking annual allowable cuts and industry consolidation, resulting in mill closures and the ongoing loss of jobs for rural BC, there is an urgent need for direct involvement on this issue. To ensure it receives the priority it deserves in the coming year, we ask that a **specific objective** be included in the upcoming Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations Mandate letter. We offer the following statement to be considered for this purpose.

"Promote diversity, sustainability and resilience in our forest sector by implementing explicit measures to increase specialty, value-added and independent wood manufacturing in our province, and ensuring at the same time the principle of the "Right Log to the Right Mill" is being optimized".

The forest sector is essential to the economic well being of our communities. Maximizing the level of manufacturing on every log that comes from our forests is the only way we can realize the full can be realized for our rural communities and the people of BC.

With the reality of a shrinking fibre basket, increasing environmental concerns and the over-lying shadow of the Softwood Lumber implications, we ask that you consider taking a direct role in this matter. Providing this direction to the new Minister will ensure the growth of this sector is given the priority it requires across the province.

Sincerely

Chair, Regional District Board