

To the Minister and staff of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development:

I am concerned that the current Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Program enables landowners to cut as much privately lands timber as possible but appears to offer little incentive for owners to manage for long-term sustainability, (both environmental and economic).

Landowners are not obligated to process forest products locally. A brief search online indicates that Timberwest, apparently Vancouver Island's largest private landowner, has no lumber processing facilities in its operations on Vancouver Island. It is very likely that the Private Managed Forest Lands PMFL Program as it stands now is encouraging raw log exports, and over time seriously hampering the development of value-added lumber and wood industries.

The Province must face head on this difficult issue: the short term benefit of selling raw logs (creating short term jobs, profits, income) VS long term atrophy of secondary industry and the liquidation of old/ old growth forests especially on Vancouver Island. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development must apply its considerable expertise to these interconnected problems of economics and ecology, and reorient the Private Managed Forest Lands PMFL Program to contribute to long term sustainability of both environment and industry.

More transparency for the public is required about logging activities on Private Managed Forest Lands. The general public is increasingly concerned about climate change and species loss. Landscape level planning and Minister's orders are essential to preserve the increasingly rare remaining tracts of old-growth on Private Managed Forest Lands.

Additionally, Private Managed Forest Lands may include municipal drinking water watersheds - water quality and quantity must be better protected under the Act.

As is well known to all natural resource managers in BC, the E&N Land Grant moved vast tracks of eastern Vancouver Island to the private sector. This fact does not remove the Province's responsibilities regarding Indigenous rights and title. The Province of BC and all pertinent cabinet ministers must ensure that BC First Nations are at the table for decision-making for the planning and regulation of forestry activities, including those on private lands.

Thank you for considering my submission

Charlotte Bell, former BC civil servant (retired 2012- starting 1981 worked in Timber Harvesting Branch, Crown Lands, Ministry of Environment, Forest Inventory Branch, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation).