



City of Powell River

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File No. 0410-20-0001

July 17, 2019

Via-Email: PMFLProgramReview@gov.bc.ca

Honourable Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
PO Box 9049 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Donaldson:

Re: Private Managed Forest Land Program Review

Thank you for the information session and the opportunity to provide written input to the Private Managed Forest Land Program Review.

There is a significant amount of Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) within and adjacent to the City of Powell River. The local government and community would benefit significantly from the PMFL landowner sharing the management commitment, operations map, harvesting plans and supporting assessments and long-term disposition or development intentions for their land. Consultation from landowners of PMFL regulated by the Private Managed Forest Land Act and Regulations and the Managed Forest Council that administers the Managed Forest Program is not considered adequate and does not meet the expectations of local government or the community. The benefit of sharing such information would be the coordination of PMFL landowner activities and plans with community planning initiatives such as official community plans, integrated community sustainability plans and economic development initiatives. Sharing information should be welcomed by the landowners and the Managed Forest Council, particularly given the benefits of lower taxation and the right to harvest trees largely unrestricted by local government bylaws.

Approximately 245 hectares of private land within City boundaries are classed as managed forest land under the Assessment Act. These lands are being harvested at a rate suggesting they are not being managed for long-term production and harvesting of timber but rather short-term liquidation and disposition. This is arguably inconsistent with the intent of the managed forest property classification to encourage private landowners to manage their lands for long-term forest production. If disposition is intended, it is certainly unfair to the remaining landowners within the municipality that will have shouldered an unfair taxation burden in previous years given the exit fee adjustment factors that would apply as outlined in the Private Managed Forest Land Regulation.

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Amendments to the Private Managed Forest Land Act are required to provide more local government authority regarding uses of Private Managed Forest Land within municipal boundaries. Section 21 of the Act is an unacceptable restriction on the authority of local government to adopt bylaws or issue permits that would regulate activities on PMFL. Residents of municipalities reasonably expect that their local government should be able to regulate activities on PMFL, particularly given the reduced taxation benefits.

Amendments are also required to the PMFL Regulation with respect to the exit fee adjustment factors. The timelines and adjustment factors are not reasonable given the intent of the managed forest property classification to encourage private landowners to manage their lands for long-term forest production.

Amendments should also be made to require annual consultation and sharing of the management commitment, operations map, harvesting plans and supporting assessments and long-term disposition or development intentions for land within municipal boundaries.

Amendments to the Act and Regulations are also recommended that would result in requirements and standards for forestry practices that are equivalent to those in the Acts and Regulations for forestry practices on Crown land.

Yours truly,
CITY OF POWELL RIVER



Russell Brewer
Chief Administrative Officer

RB/mcs

Ec: Mayor and Council