

Dear PMFL Program Review Board,

CC: Doug Donaldson, BC Minister of Forests, John Horgan, BC Premier, Adam Olsen, BC Green Party Forests Spokesperson

I am concerned as currently watersheds are being put at risk due to lack of protection regarding logging on private land. I request government attention to this threat to water, habitat, erosion and ultimately climate related issues.

For too long, the current regulations on private forestry operations have failed to safeguard environmental and community values. Minister Donaldson must update the Private Managed Forest Lands Act to, at a minimum, bring regulations in line with those on Crown land.

The Private Managed Forest Land Program must include:

- Local and Regional Governments have to be respected in their rights to introduce and enforce bylaws to protect riparian areas, sensitive habitats, culturally significant areas and community watersheds. This is true for Local and First Nations Government Authority Processes. Indigenous Nations.
- Public Consultation. Private land forest harvesting plans should be subject to a stakeholder referral and public consultation process.
- Consistent and Effective Environmental Standards. We need stream and water protections, requirements to maintain biodiversity in block and at the landscape level, visual quality objectives, sustainable harvest objectives (including annual allowable cuts) and cultural heritage protection.
- Cumulative Effects Land Management. As the demand for natural resources grows, we must consistently and effectively assess the combined effects that logging activities have on BC's environmental, social and economic values so that we make sound decisions for our future.
- Retention of Managed Forests. The province should reinstate The Forests Land Reserve Act to ensure privately managed forests remain managed forests, and are not sold for development. Cut levels must be set in order to sustain ecosystem health and forestry over time.
- Independent Oversight. Oversight and compliance and enforcement of private land harvesting legislation should be conducted by an independent body, such as the Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) or the BC Forest Practices Board. Private land harvesting should be held to the same level of enforcement and repercussions as crown land logging.

Local governments have repeatedly called on BC to better regulate private land logging. Communities in the Kootenays are raising funds to purchase key private land lots before they can be harvested, protecting them as a public park or conservation area. Now is the time to improve our practices.

As a concerned member of the community, I applaud your efforts to review the Private Managed Forest Land Program and I hope the results of this will bring forward better protections for privately managed forests. We must prioritize our communities, ecosystems, wildlife and future generations.

Thank you,