



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fraser Lake, BC - January 24, 2024

RE: West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd. Announces Permanent Closure of Fraser Lake Sawmill

On January 22, 2024 West Fraser Timber declared the permanent closure of its operations at the Fraser Lake Sawmill. The decision is attributed to West Fraser's inability to access economically viable fibre in the region.

The announcement has stunned communities throughout the region, including Municipal, Regional, and First Nations governments. The substantial consequences of this development on the local community, which is impacting friends, neighbours, and families, is deeply disconcerting.

In response to this situation, the surrounding area is mobilizing efforts to explore viable alternatives that will ensure economic sustainability for the affected communities. A key focus is on preserving the fibre resources within the region.

Despite the challenges, the Fraser Lake area stands resilient and vibrant. Chief Michell of Stellat'en First Nation, Chief Louie of Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, Chair Parker (Electoral Area D Director) Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, and Mayor Storey from the Village of Fraser Lake have engaged in discussions with Provincial and Federal Government officials, seeking various forms of government support.

The impacted communities are uniting their efforts to find solutions and resources for those most affected by the closure. This collaborative approach involves regular communication and an intensified economic partnership to address the challenges posed by this development.

As the region faces this significant change, stakeholders are committed to working together to mitigate the impacts and forge a path towards a sustainable and prosperous future. All levels of government are committed to a strong communication of relevant developments and supportive initiatives.

Together we will get through this challenging time in our history and find a pathway forward.

Sincerely,

Sarrah Storey
Mayor
Village of Fraser Lake

Martin Louie
Chief
Nadleh Whut'en

Robert Michell
Chief
Stellat'en

Mark Parker
Chair/Director, Electoral
Area D, Regional District
of Bulkley-Nechako

CC: Premier David Eby
Bruce Ralston, Minister of Forests
Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship
Brenda Bailey, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation