



Reference: 273556

March 15, 2023

VIA EMAIL: yoursilga@gmail.com

Aimee Grice, President
Southern Interior Local Government Association
PO Box 27017 Cityview PO
Kamloops, British Columbia
V2E 0B2

Dear Aimee Grice:

Thank you for your letter of January 31, 2023, regarding fibre supply for BC's pulp and paper sector.

The industry plays an important role in supporting community stability throughout the province and is vital for a strong forest sector. The ministry has been working closely with the Pulp and Paper Coalition which is comprised of pulp company representatives and Ministry of Forests staff. The coalition is identifying economic opportunities to deal with the declining Allowable Annual Cut and the closure of sawmills in the province through sourcing residual fibre from harvest. The list below represents only a few of the actions government has undertaken to improve access to fibre for BC's pulp mills:

- The Pulp Fibre Task Force, originally set up to deal with sawmill closures in 2019, was re-started in 2022 and is comprised of pulp company representatives and ministry staff. Its mandate is to identify operationally feasible actions to source residual fibre and burnt timber able to reduce the pulp fibre shortfall.
- In January 2022, the CleanBC fund granted \$21.3 million to pulp companies as an additional resource.
- In November 2022, government introduced the Wildfire Salvage Opportunity Agreements which will enable the timely direct award of forestry licences to First Nations for salvaging timber damaged by wildfire. By working with First Nations and pulp companies on new ways to utilize fire damaged timber for fibre, we are opening avenues for the use of fire damaged wood that were previously not utilized by the pulp sector.
- The development of a range of policy tools designed to reduce waste. For example, a new waste measurement system has been implemented with alternate methods of scale for secondary users.

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- The introduction of Fibre Recovery Zones on the coast which are designed to improve harvest performance and ensure more fibre is available for domestic mills including the pulp and paper sector. It covers portions of Vancouver Island and the mainland coast where enhanced fibre recovery has been determined to be economical.
- BCTS is offering competitively-bid timber sales licenses with a high pulp log content. BCTS has also begun including “pile nicely” requirements in timber sales license agreements to improve access to harvesting residuals for pulp mills and also reduce burning.
- On January 20, 2023, Premier David Eby announced a \$50 million grant to the Forest Enhancement Society of BC to increase access to fire damaged timber and increase recovery of harvest waste residual fiber. This will allow pulp mills to expand their access to fibre by reducing the costs to transport fibre greater distances to their mills and was one of key asks of government.

I remain committed to working collaboratively with the pulp and paper sector to increase access to residual fibre and burnt timber. I am proud to say that working together we have developed, and are developing, new approaches and tools to stabilize fibre access for BC’s pulp and paper mills which will support their workers, families, and communities.

Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,



Bruce Ralston
Minister

pc: Honourable David Eby, Premier of British Columbia
Richard Manwaring, Deputy Minister of Forests
Melissa Sanderson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Timber, Range and Economics Division
Peter Jacobsen, Executive Director, Compensation and Business Analysis Branch,
Timber, Range and Economics Division