

Thank you Mayor, council and Staff for the opportunity to speak tonight.

The purpose of my discussion is to express sincere concern about the Government's intentions paper and specifically to harmonize stumpage rates for community forests consistent with the market-based timber pricing system. The success of community forests is only made possible by the existing community forest timber pricing policy of Tabular rates.

The Government is proposing to harmonize community forest timber pricing policy with the policy that applies to large corporations. Such a policy intention seems to disregard the fact that community forests are legally bound to accomplish the objectives set by the Province for the community forest program. These objectives are profoundly different than the strictly commercial objectives of large corporations and achieving them directly affects the cost structure of community forest operations. Changing the timber pricing policy to a market pricing system for community Forests would be detrimental to their ability to exist.

The Government has specifically identified the need to strengthen the social license, adopt the principles of UNDRIP and the development and implementation of community fire risk prevention and response. The Government is indicating the need to strengthen the social contract by changing the CF timber pricing. They suggest that this action will support local communities by ensuring the growth of good jobs and long-term economic opportunities, ensure that local communities, including indigenous communities, have opportunities to benefit from the resources coming from their own backyards, and maximize BC's benefit in terms of jobs and value from our resources.

The proposed timber pricing policy change undermines the ability of community forests to achieve these objectives and benefits that the Government, communities and First Nations partners seek and value to remain viable self-sufficient entities.

Specifically, the following areas will be negatively impacted if community Forests are placed under the market based timber pricing system:

- Forest management, innovation and flexibility will not be possible. Innovation is expensive short term, but the long term effects outweigh this cost. Ecosystem restoration (moose, deer, fisher, marten) partial harvesting, research and wildfire mitigation projects carried out in community Forests will be faced with either reducing or cancelling all together.
- Donations available for non-profit groups throughout the region will be impacted
- community Forests ability to be flexible and plan effectively for budgeting will become cumbersome as the rise and fall of the market-based timber pricing system will make long-term planning a “best guess”
- Forest Stewardship council certification, which is Internationally recognized, will no longer be a certification community Forests can afford.
- In communities where Regional Distracts and Village offices are stakeholders, the dividends returning to these areas to benefit the communities will diminish

- Scholarships to local high school students amounts to \$40,000. this year and community grants of \$100,000. will not likely exit.

We encourage your leadership to express your concerns with the proposed changes to timber pricing policy by writing to Minister Conroy expressing the desire to leave the pricing for community forest license (area base) tenure as they are. Without this system, many of our community forests will close their doors, negatively impacting First Nations and communities.

Honourable Katrine Conroy  
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4



Attention: Ministry Conroy

December 7, 2021

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**RE: Natural Resources of the North Thompson Valley**

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The District of Barriere is proud to be a center of excellence in supporting the sustainable harvesting of natural resources in our Region. Barriere is home for two thriving mills, Gilbert Smith Forest Products and Woodco Industries Ltd, as well as a number of supporting businesses and contractors including our own local Community Forest Society. A new and positive indicator for progress and development can be seen in the new business startups in our Louis Creek Industrial Park: Paradigm Building Solutions, Fort Modular Inc, Spray All and Sunny Springs Holdings, for example. These businesses provide finished products to the market and indicate that locations such as Barriere can become complete communities in our new environment of sustainable management of resources.

This complete micro-economic cycle from natural resource to finished products to market, illustrates a good news story for British Columbia. Small, rural communities such as ours, require sound decision making from the Province that will support and enhance our local economic stability within our community, as well as the greater Region of the North Thompson Valley within the traditional territory of Simpcw First Nation.

The *Allowable Annual Cut* in our region is a key economic driver of the local burgeoning economy. Our Region has endured pine beetle infestations, multiple forest fires, heat waves and floods. That being said, the BC economy has helped foster new opportunities for rural communities to get back on their feet. For these reasons, we fully support our forest industry and the many businesses that prosper within the industry.

The Barriere & Area District Chamber of Commerce now enjoys excellent growth with new members at over 50 businesses. The majority of its members are reliant on motivated decision makers within our Provincial leadership. Regional apportionment decisions will help to ensure that our local economy will continue to gain momentum and provide all the necessary supports and services for the families that call the North Thompson Region 'home'.

Respectfully,

Al Fortin, Acting Mayor  
District of Barriere