



Resource Municipalities
COALITION

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Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development

PO Box 9049, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

February 17, 2022

RE: Community Forests, Value Add

Minister Conroy,

The Resource Municipalities Coalition (RMC) brings together the communities of Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, City of Fort St John, District of Taylor, District of Tumbler Ridge, and the District of Mackenzie to collaborate and embrace opportunities that protect and enhance the quality of life and services for British Columbians.

Within the RMC, three of our communities have active and healthy community forests that provide sustainable benefits to the communities and to the partnerships, with two of the community forests partnerships being with local First Nations. The structure by which these community forests currently operate on, allow investment into community services, support local not-for-profit organizations through grants style programs, provide job growth, and long-term economic opportunities.

With a shift in government policy to harmonize stumpage policy for community forests with the market-based timber pricing system, it works to undermine the ability of community forests to achieve the objectives and benefits outlined within community forest agreements:

- provide long-term opportunities for achieving a range of community objectives, values, and priorities
- diversify the use of and benefits derived from the community forest agreement area
- provide social and economic benefits to British Columbia
- undertake community forestry consistent with sound principles of environmental stewardship that reflect a broad spectrum of values
- promote community involvement and participation
- promote communication and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and persons
- foster innovation
- advocate forest worker safety

(2)

The current pricing system for community forests is critical in achieving the objectives of the program, as they support community, provide economic opportunity, and innovation that further supports initiatives within the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy on fostering resilient ecosystems in a changing climate.

The RMC encourages government to discuss the impacts of the proposed pricing change with all community forests of British Columbia, to fully understand the impacts of a change in policy and adapt the policy to reflect a strong community forest structure that supports the achievement of the community forest agreement objectives.

Sincerely,



Mayor Lori Ackerman
City of Fort St John



Mayor Rob Fraser
District of Taylor



Mayor Keith Bertrand
District of Tumbler Ridge



Mayor Joan Atkinson
District of Mackenzie



Mayor Gary Foster
Northern Rockies Regional Municipality



Executive Director Mike Whalley
Resource Municipalities Coalition