



Information Release

FROM: AVICC Executive

DATE: August 12, 2014

RE: Private Managed Forest Lands

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) is currently working with key stakeholders including the Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO), the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and Private Managed Forest Lands Council (PMFLC) to address a number of challenges and concerns regarding watershed protection on privately managed forest lands.

A meeting was held on July 3, 2014 with senior staff from FLNRO, MOE, PMFLC, Timberwest, Island Timberlands, and AVICC executive to discuss watershed protection issues. The meeting provided the opportunity for all stakeholders to openly identify concerns and provide input. The discussion was productive, and there was agreement to continue, with a follow-up meeting to be scheduled in early September 2014.

AVICC's focus moving forward includes exploring opportunities to educate and build awareness regarding; private managed forest land impacts on watersheds, the *Private Managed Forest Land Act*, and how it is implemented/enforced in British Columbia. There is interest and value in looking at the differences and similarities of how forests are managed on crown versus private land.

Another focus for AVICC is to improve communication and collaboration between stakeholders. An opportunity exists to re-establish a 'stakeholder group' that has met regularly to discuss regional and local issues focused on watershed health and protection. Under the Action Plan for Safe Drinking Water in BC, regional drinking water teams were established to address regional and local drinking water issues. While these groups have been less active in recent years, there is the opportunity to re-establish and re-focus these groups to address current regional drinking water and watershed issues.

The desired outcome is to have effective collaboration and communication that includes decision making involving input from key stakeholders, including local governments.

**President Larry Cross
Association of Vancouver Island & Coastal Communities**