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The Province,

Editorial Opinion: October 24, 2013 - Response from Critic – Norm MacDonald

290 words

We are surprised to see the negative response from BC's Forest Critic, Norm MacDonald on Steve Thomson's letter on area-based tenures, suggesting that his comments are not true.

As forest professionals engaged in the ongoing management of BC's natural resources, we support the need to engage the public on the pros and cons of moving towards more area-based tenures in BC. Be they Community Forest Licences, Woodlots, First Nations Woodland Tenures or the roll-over of Forest Licences to Tree Farms, the sustainable forest management benefits to the province that come with area-based tenure management are undeniable.

As consulting foresters, we are proud to be a part of BC's sustainable forest sector. The survival of our member companies and the local jobs generated in the forest industry are dependent on the sustainability of BC's working forests. As the British Columbia forest industry emerges from perhaps the greatest recession in history and the prospects of burgeoning growth fueled by improving US housing sector statistics and growing demand for wood globally, the importance of strategic leadership being shown by Minister Thompson to achieve an improved supply of timber for BC, has never been so important.

And despite Mr. MacDonald's comment indicating that, "*The committee did not recommend rolling over timber supply areas to tree-farm licences*", the Special Committee on Timber Supply report "*Growing Fibre, Growing Value*" clearly supported an increase in area-based tenures when they indicated "*On timber tenures, there was support for a shift to more area-based tenures for efforts to diversify the economies of forest-dependent communities*". Why the change in position now?

The public discussion around more area-based tenures, and diversification of tenure ownership in BC is of significant importance to our industry and CFBC members who look forward to participating in solutions.

Yours sincerely,

The Society of Consulting Foresters of BC

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