

CLIMATE LEADERSHIP PLAN

Public Consultation Submission

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This submission is in response to the BC Ministry of Environment request for comments on the Climate Leadership Plan. It includes my personal comments based on 40 years of experience working in the forest sector with a focus on the management of BC forests and more recently issues of concern to communities. Climate change has been an issue for me since my work with Lignum Ltd in the late 1990s which was instrumental in the company receiving the Minister of Environment 2002 award for championing carbon management in the forest industry. A brief bio is included as an Appendix to this submission.

My comments focus on points to improve upon the Climate Leadership Team recommendations as they relate to BC forests and moving towards community resiliency in a climate change environment. I have taken the liberty to expand on the five (5) main points to provide clarification and assistance in implementation, if Government chooses to accept the recommendations.

MAIN POINTS

Based on my experience in listening to communities regarding their issues, the following should be included in the Climate Leadership Plan.

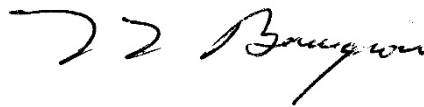
- 1) **Communities need to be an integral component** of the Climate Leadership Plan.
 - a) Community identified issues, such as the following, should be recognized in the Climate Leadership Plan:
 - i) Are feeling the brunt of climate change,
 - ii) Want to be a partner in adapting to climate change,
 - iii) Require knowledge regarding climate change and forest management,
 - iv) Are demanding opportunities for economic development and diversification,
 - v) Have demonstrated innovation when encouraged to do so,
 - vi) Have experienced abandonment by Governments in post-catastrophic event adaptation, and
 - vii) Are looking to Governments for leadership in the form of real partnerships in implementing climate change adaptation.

- b) Building healthy and resilient communities goes beyond just reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change, integration with other forest related activities is essential.
 - i) We need to integrate climate change adaptation with the practice of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM); this will not only contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions but also move towards creating resilient communities.
 - ii) The Climate Leadership Plan should include providing support for integration of activities that reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change while practicing SFM and increasing economic development and forest sector diversification.
 - iii) The question: “Is this a decision that would benefit from integration?” should be applied to all decisions prior to finalizing.
 - c) Flexibility is required in the implementation of the Climate Leadership Plan to meet specific conditions, needs and priorities of communities – one size does not fit all!
 - d) Pilot integration projects in communities are encouraged to provide examples and lessons learned for use in other communities.
- 2) **A 2050 forest related goal** is required in the Climate Leadership Plan, specifically:
- a) 100% of the forest is in a condition that meets the specific objectives of managing for carbon sequestration, wood products, fish and wildlife habitat, ecosystem services and/or protection of social values in an integrated manner that includes:
 - i) Identifying the values in each area to which management will be applied, and
 - ii) A robust monitoring program and independent audit to report to the public and ensure compliance.
 - b) Full, practical and economic utilization of wood residue with its direction to the products of highest value, including ecosystem services.
- 3) **An additional guiding principle** must be added to those of the draft Climate Leadership Plan, specifically:
- a) Climate change related decisions, relative to forests, need to include a test of whether the benefits (environmental, economic and/or social) from proposed activities would be improved through integration with current and future forest management and land use decisions.
 - b) Applying this principle to decision-making will realize the full benefits from reducing carbon emissions.
 - i) This may require a change in determining justification or prioritization of activities but the initiative is focused on “leadership” suggesting innovation and new approaches are fundamental in decision-making.
 - ii) Care is needed not to fall into the trap of rationalizing this is being done now when clearly it is not; activities continue to be decided upon in silos rather than in an integrated manner; denial should not be part of the leadership plan.

- 4) **Priority forest related integration actions** that need to be referenced in the Climate Leadership Plan are:
- a) The MFLNRO needs to adopt forest carbon sequestration as a priority Government forest value and product within the Forest and Range Protection Act to:
 - i) Require the forest licensee to establish strategies to meet the objective, and
 - ii) Be consistent with the third party forest certification requirements used by most licensees.
 - b) Wildfire burned and Mountain Pine Beetle impacted areas that do not meet the criteria for classification as being within the Timber Harvesting Land Base (THLB) should be regenerated as part of the Climate Leadership Plan.
 - i) Forests in these areas will have the primary management objective of carbon sequestration and need to be reforested as soon as possible to begin contributing to the BC targets.
 - ii) Regeneration costs should be categorized as climate change costs and not timber supply costs.
 - iii) Regeneration activities will contribute to building resilient communities through job creation and returning the areas as contributors to ecosystem services.
 - c) The forest industry focus of reducing energy production through reduction in fossil fuel use is limits the Climate Leadership Plan, which should include:
 - i) Integration of carbon emission reduction with community economic development and diversification,
 - (1) The secondary wood manufacturing sector becoming a major contributor to reducing carbon emissions through utilizing the residue in producing products that limit or omit emitting carbon and providing additional benefits of increasing jobs, contributing to community economic development and diversification and preventing deterioration of community air shed quality,
 - ii) Recognition that although burning wood is considered carbon neutral it still results in carbon going into the atmosphere within a short time rather being eliminated or stored in wood products; producing other products allows BC to claim they are reducing actual carbon emissions,
 - (1) Work is being done on this within the Thompson Rivers Forest District where the proposal is to capitalize on existing value-added products and commercialized technologies to utilize roadside logging residue rather than burning it.
 - d) Using wood residue for production of heat and electricity and in some cases substituting for diesel power generation is a valid argument and should be part of the matrix of uses that reduce carbon emissions but not the sole or primary reason as currently inferred in the Climate Leadership Plan.
 - e) Providing support to communities and the secondary wood manufacturing sector relative to residue utilization through activities that encourage:
 - i) Investments in commercially proven wood residue utilization technologies that produce limited or no CO₂ emissions,

- ii) Installation of technology that reduces current fossil fuel CO₂ emissions in wood related manufacturing facilities, and
 - iii) Research energy efficient equipment for forest management, forest harvesting and product transportation.
- 5) **Urban forestry must be recognized** as an important contributor to climate change adaptation in the Climate Leadership Plan.
- a) The Climate Leadership Plan should acknowledge the BC forest is not just that which the forest industry operates.
 - b) The values of the urban forest include moderating the environment we live in as well as providing the health benefits which are strongly supported by peer reviewed international research.
 - c) The urban forest mental health benefits to individuals need to be recognized and integrated into the support for the climate change adaptation plans and their justification.

I would like to thank the Minister for the opportunity to comment on the Climate Leadership Plan. If you have any questions or need more information regarding my comments, please feel free to contact me at 604 924-0765 or through e-mail at wwb@telus.net.





APPENDIX – Brief Bio

Bill Bourgeois PhD, RPF

President

New Direction Resource Management Ltd

Bill Bourgeois has focused his career on improving forest management in BC. He has worked in both the coast and interior forest industry, on a Government Commission and as a consultant. He has been a research scientist, a terrain stability specialist, a forest company manager and executive and an Associate on the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) to “end the war in the woods.”

Bill has been referred to as the “big picture guy.” His current consulting focuses on providing advice related to:

- 1) Long-term forest stewardship policies and practices
- 2) Community forest resources economic diversification
- 3) Community and student forest education

He has recently been working on projects/initiatives such as:

- 1) Rejuvenating the forest sector in the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality
- 2) Promoting the creation of secondary wood manufacturing regional clusters
- 3) Promoting the use of technologies to utilize wood residue
- 4) Integrating climate change adaptation with forest management and community diversification
- 5) Advising communities on how to increase their involvement in local forest decision-making
- 6) Building community forest knowledge through such information as a video/website links database for laypersons and the National Forest Week events
- 7) Assisting K-12 teachers in accessing information to educate students on forests and the forest environment