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Minister Thomson Announces \$1 Million Replenishment To The Forestry Service Providers Compensation Fund



PRESS RELEASE

Minister Thomson announces \$1 million replenishment to the Forestry Service Providers Compensation Fund

May 8, 2015, Vernon – Today Minister Steve Thomson, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, stood up for forest contractors and the communities they live in when he announced a \$1 million top up to the Forestry Service Providers Compensation Fund at the Interior Logging Association's 57th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Vernon, BC.

With leaders from the three BC logging associations in attendance, they took the opportunity to thank Minister Thomson in person. The three associations are working together to address issues of contractor sustainability to improve the business environment for contractors.

"Forest contractors are the economic backbone of BC's rural communities" said Reid Hedlund, Chairman on the Interior Logging Association (ILA). "This is a necessary step towards fortifying conditions for contractor sustainability and we thank Minister Thomson for recognizing the issue."

Forest contractors run locally owned businesses that create jobs throughout BC's rural communities. When these companies are left in the lurch by a tenure holder that becomes insolvent, the whole community suffers. "We've seen this happen more than once," said Hedlund. "And we know that the ripples are felt throughout our communities."

"There is a demonstrated need for this Fund," said Don Banasky, President of the Truck Loggers Association (TLA). "Since it came online in 2013 there have been a number of claims processed and more are expected. This increase of \$1 million to the Fund, for a total of \$6 million, shows the government values the role forest contractors play in BC's rural communities," said Banasky.

"By his actions, we know Minister Thomson understands that forest contractors are the economic backbone of BC's rural communities and values the jobs our members create," said Banasky. "We look forward to the future where the Fund will have an ongoing replenishment mechanism. However, our three associations—representing the majority of the fibre harvested in the province—sincerely thank Minister Thomson for his efforts today."

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Left to right: David Elstone, TLA Executive Director; Bill Sauer, NWLA Manager; Reid Hedlund, ILA Chairman; Minister Steve Thomson, MFLNRO; Don Banasky, TLA President; Jacqui Beban, TLA Vice President; Eric Foster, MLA Vernon-Monashee; Wayne Lintott, ILA General Manager

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