

## Letter to the Editor

Re: 'Interior Lumber Mills Appeal for Incentives' (WK Advertiser, June 23, 2016): After reading this article, I am not clear what 'right log to the right mill' means. Is it simply an exchange of logs between mills, or does it entail a relaxation of important issues like riparian zones, old growth areas, or logging practices in watersheds?

The article mentions the 'competitive market' that these 'medium sized family-owned sawmills' face: it appears this competitive market is paying off! *Kootenaybiz.com* lists the Top 50 businesses (2015): Out of nine ILMA members (Interior Lumber Manufacturer's Association), five are on the list! In millions of dollars in *sales*, Kalesnikoff made \$57 million, ATCO \$37 million, Porcupine Wood \$30 million, Brisco Wood \$26.2 million, and JH Huscroft \$16 million.

Mr. Kalesnikoff's states that "our position is that the wood is a public resource". If it actually is a public resource shouldn't the public have greater input on how and where these public resources were managed? Why are ATCO and Kalesnikoff proposing to clear cut in the Glade Watershed, as well as many other watersheds in the Kootenays? Well, there is consensus that timber resources in other areas are running out!

And the reason for failing timber resources? Despite all assurances that timber cutting policies are 'sustainable', that does not seem to be the case. This could be why today and in 2013, ILMA requested support to petition the BC government for an easing of timber regulations.

China and Japan need more wood, so BC trees have to be cut... Most of the BC pulp and logs in BC go to China: for 2013, China received 61% of all BC pulp exports and 54% of raw logs.

Maybe replanting of clear cut areas is not keeping pace with cutting? When Canal Flats mill closed, one of the reasons was "a lack of *economically* available fibre". Or maybe they are running out of timber because to stay profitable, mills are more efficient, and "greater efficiency means consuming a *higher volume of lumber*." (ILMA website).

Logging companies are now 'self-regulated'. (Although it is not being called that anymore, the new term is 'Professional Reliance') Their strategies to date have culminated in the current situation: seeking to log, with the government's sanction, the stands of valuable trees within Community Watersheds.

While our trees may be valuable to Kalesnikoff and ATCO, they are invaluable to our community. Unlike the logging companies, we don't get money for cutting them down and sending them overseas to Japan or China. Instead, they provide us, free of charge, with clean, safe water. That is why we need to protect them: for our homes, our neighbours, and our community.