

# B.C. FIRST NATIONS FORESTRY COUNCIL



## First Nations Forestry Council 2016-2026 Proposed Project Priorities

The mandate has been made to bring First Nations into the forest sector both in the *New Relationship of 2005* and again in the *Report of the Working Roundtable on Forestry in 2009*; it is now time to invest in the establishment, development and support of communities, business and organizations for advancing this mandate.

The First Nations Forestry Council was established ten years ago and has a mandate from First Nations leadership to support this participation in governance and economic development in the forest sector.

The BC Government manages forest sector governance and economic development through the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. An annual budget of \$500 million is spent in the governance of BC forest resources.

The Council of Forest Industries reports the economic development potential or the economic impact of the forest sector in BC as a \$12.4 billion dollar industry based on analysis of the 2013 calendar year.

Transformation of the forest sector is now upon us and First Nation's communities are a significant partner in a renewed forest sector and can be a strong link to adding forest product value and sustainability. A strong and abundant Aboriginal youth demographic is available for the new work force that is needed over the next ten years and meaningful participation in the sector could bring the political stability needed for renewed capitol investment in this sustainable natural resource sector.

Revenue sharing must continue with First Nations communities directly in order to see their title and rights accommodated and opportunities must continue for the Aboriginal forest industry.

The First Nations Forestry Council is seeking support for the purpose of offering technical advice to First Nations in the forest sector. Funding to the FNFC will be utilized to support the mandate provided to the FNFC by First Nations leadership.

The following is a summary of the key strategies that would be included in a five to ten year funding transfer agreement for the support of Aboriginal Forest Governance and Operations in the sector:

### **Organization Support (\$485,000/yr rising to \$2.3 million /yr)**

- Core operating costs for the FNFC covering the costs associated with: board of directors, administrative staff, finance staff and office.
- Development of regional representation to properly support communities

### **Communications and Engagement: (\$575,000/yr rising to \$675,000/yr)**

- Reporting regularly and effectively to First Nations is a significant challenge and requires an effective communications strategy and implementation.
- Engagement with Industry and Government is needed for ongoing exchange of knowledge and the development of joint solutions in the sector.

- Development of working groups for building relationships between industry, government and First Nations

***Aboriginal Forest Business Support (\$2.005 million/yr rising to \$5.49 million /yr)***

- Development of forest sector strategy for meaningful participation of First Nations. Governance and operational participation as a solution of the future forest sector
- A direct support fund for Aboriginal forestry business established for the development and growth of aboriginal forestry business
- Financing program to support forest sector business with access to financing
- Forest product development and marketing program for supporting the transition of increased product development by aboriginal business.
- Increased direct support towards first nations training and skills development to increase Aboriginal participation in the forest sector work force
- Work with First Nations, FLNRO and silviculture sector in the development of silviculture opportunities and participation by First Nation business
- Development of mechanisms to support value added and other manufacturing interests of First Nations including awareness of aboriginal business and attraction of investment through partnerships.

***Forest Policy and Planning (\$750,000 rising to \$4.39 million/yr)***

- Develop process for improved engagement of policy issues like Timber Supply Reviews or Silviculture Assessments or Land Use Plans
- Work with FLNRO to support policy for partnerships with industry and BCTS.
- Work with FLNRO to coordinate First Nation input to forestry policy affecting First Nations forestry businesses. (eg. tenure/safety/timber supply/investment).
- Work with communities to build programs for decision making in natural resource sector, including monitoring and reporting tools
- Build regional support through FNFC offices, tribal councils and regional first nations organizations

A summary of specific resources required to implement this plan is attached. The First Nations Forestry Council is seeking a budget of \$3.815 million per year rising to \$12.885 million per year over 4 year period with a commitment of support for 10 years. The Forest Sector is going through a significant transformation over the next decade and this investment will significantly support First Nations as partners with the BC Government.

