



BC Pulp & Paper Coalition



September 4, 2026

The Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
Via email: Premier@gov.bc.ca

RE: Immediate Provincial Action Required to Address the Deepening Crisis in British Columbia's Forest Sector

Dear Premier Eby,

We are writing on behalf of organizations representing workers, manufacturers, contractors, communities and businesses across British Columbia's highly integrated forest sector.

BC's forest sector is at a breaking point. Immediate action is required.

We are calling on your government to urgently establish a **Forestry Crisis Action Group**, led by the Premier's Office and bringing together senior government decision-makers and representatives from across the forest sector.

Its mandate should be clear: **get economically viable wood moving, reduce costs, remove regulatory barriers, stabilize fibre supply, protect operating businesses, and retain—not retrain—British Columbia's skilled forestry workforce.**

The federal Forest Sector Transformation Task Force confirmed what industry has been saying for some time: many of the most serious challenges confronting Canadian forestry are “homegrown.”

While international trade pressures are beyond the Province's direct control, many of the conditions determining whether BC companies can continue operating are not.

The Province has both the authority and the responsibility to act.

The Task Force also recommended establishing a Canadian Forest Management Office. A BC Forestry Crisis Action Group could provide a coordinated mechanism to advance British Columbia's priorities with that office and ensure federal initiatives respond to the immediate realities facing BC producers, workers and communities.

An International Trade Crisis Requires a Provincial Economic Response

The breakdown of Canada-U.S. trade discussions and the imposition of new 50% Section 338 tariffs make provincial action even more urgent.

Canadian softwood lumber is already subject to combined U.S. duties and tariffs exceeding 45%. Section 338 now extends this high-tariff environment to a much broader range of Canadian forest products and building materials, including plywood, engineered wood products, pulp, paper and other value-added products.

BC companies cannot control U.S. trade policy. But British Columbia can control many of the costs, regulations, policies, permitting processes and fibre-access decisions that determine whether those companies survive it.

The sector cannot absorb these pressures indefinitely.

This is no longer a challenge facing one segment of forestry. **The entire value chain is at risk—from harvesting and transportation through primary manufacturing, pulp and paper, engineered wood and value-added manufacturing to silviculture and forest management.**

We are in the middle of a major international trade crisis. Government must respond with the urgency that crisis demands.

Forestry Can Also Help Address BC's Fiscal and Wildfire Challenges

At the same time, British Columbia is facing a significant new fiscal challenge.

The Province has acknowledged an error in its natural-gas revenue forecasts that is expected to reduce government revenues by approximately \$300 million annually and about \$1.46 billion over five years.

British Columbia's forest industry can help offset that revenue loss.

The Province's current fiscal plan assumes a Crown timber harvest of approximately **29 million cubic metres annually**. Industry believes that, with immediate government action, British Columbia can move toward an economically sustainable harvest of approximately **45 million cubic metres**.

Your government has already recognized the importance of this work by identifying **the path to a 45-million-cubic-metre annual harvest as a major project**. On April 9, 2025, your Minister of Forests confirmed in the Legislature that this objective was being advanced alongside the Province's other priority projects through a deputy ministers' committee. We are asking your government to translate that commitment into immediate decisions, coordinated action across ministries and measurable results.

COFI has estimated that increasing the harvest to approximately 45 million cubic metres could generate **almost \$600 million in additional annual government revenue**, while putting British Columbians back to work, supporting contractors and communities, maintaining manufacturing capacity and generating additional economic activity throughout the Province.

That is potentially twice the annual revenue now expected to be lost because of the natural-gas forecasting shortfall.

This is an important point.

Furthermore, the forest sector has the capabilities to help address the dramatically increasing wildfire risk across the province and to make our forest landscapes and communities more resilient.

But it needs to function effectively and efficiently to do so – starting with expedited salvage permits to quickly make use of wildfire damaged timber. And even more importantly, to invest in silviculture and forest management activities to prevent catastrophic fires in the first place. Prevention is much cheaper than response.

The forest industry is not simply asking government for financial assistance. We are asking government to reinvest in this important asset and remove the barriers within its own control so that this industry can generate additional government revenue, support a healthy forest, protect communities and thousands of jobs, and strengthen British Columbia’s economy.

At a time when government urgently needs revenue, it makes little sense to leave burnt and economically viable Crown timber standing because of avoidable permitting delays, administrative barriers or policies that make harvesting uneconomic.

The First Priority: Do No Further Harm

The immediate first step should be straightforward.

Freeze any new provincial fees, taxes, charges or government-imposed cost increases affecting British Columbia’s forest sector while this international trade crisis continues.

Companies are already absorbing extraordinary trade-related costs that are beyond their control. This is not the time to add further domestic costs that make BC operations less competitive.

Government should undertake an immediate review of planned cost increases and defer those that would further weaken companies already fighting to remain operating.

The Second Priority: Get the Wood Moving

Government must then immediately **triage permitting and fibre opportunities across the Province.**

There are economically viable timber opportunities capable of supporting existing mills, manufacturers, contractors and workers that are being delayed by permitting, approval processes and unresolved administrative barriers.

Government should establish a senior, cross-ministry permitting and fibre triage team empowered to identify those opportunities, resolve barriers and make decisions quickly.

The objective should be simple:

Identify the wood that can economically and responsibly be harvested—and get it moving.

This should include accelerating ready-to-sell BC Timber Sales volumes, advancing permits capable of producing near-term fibre, expediting wildfire salvage permits, addressing delivered log costs, administrative bottlenecks and prioritizing opportunities that protect existing manufacturing and employment.

This does not mean lowering environmental standards, diminishing consultation obligations or compromising responsible forest management.

It means **bringing urgency, coordination and accountability to decisions that are essential to British Columbia’s economic survival.**

Immediate Action

We therefore ask your government to:

- **Immediately convene a Forestry Crisis Action Group**, led by the Premier's Office and involving representatives from across BC's forest sector and all ministries and agencies whose decisions materially affect forestry operations, competitiveness and fibre supply.
- **Deliver on the Province's existing major-project commitment by increasing the economically viable harvest from the current projection of approximately 29 million cubic metres toward 45 million cubic metres.**
- **Immediately freeze new provincial fees, taxes, charges and government-imposed cost increases affecting the forest sector** while the current international trade crisis continues.
- **Establish an immediate permitting and fibre triage process**, led by senior officials with industry and First Nations to identify and resolve barriers preventing economically viable wood from reaching BC manufacturers.
- **Within 30 days, release a public Forest Sector Crisis Action Plan** identifying specific measures, responsible ministers and firm implementation timelines—beginning with actions that can be completed within the first month and those that will be implemented before the end of the year.
- **Report publicly and regularly on progress**, including additional timber brought to market, permits advanced, barriers removed, facilities kept operating, jobs protected and additional government revenues generated.

Retain Workers—Do Not Wait to Retrain Them

This moment requires more than supporting workers and communities after another mill, manufacturing facility or contracting business closes.

It requires action **before those closures occur.**

Our priority must be to retain the skilled workers, contractors, manufacturers, businesses and industrial infrastructure British Columbia will need for the future.

Once that capacity disappears, rebuilding it will be extraordinarily difficult.

Every day without stable, predictable access to economically viable wood increases the risk to BC businesses, workers, families and forest-dependent communities.

Long-term transformation of the forest sector remains important. But **the time for relying primarily on incremental measures, studies and long-term transformation plans has passed.**

We are in the middle of a major international trade crisis.

The immediate priority must be keeping British Columbians working, getting economically viable wood moving, keeping BC manufacturing facilities operating and generating revenue for the Province.

We stand ready to work constructively with you and your Cabinet to stabilize the sector, protect employment and restore BC's global competitiveness.

We request an urgent meeting with you to establish the Forestry Crisis Action Group. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work.

British Columbia has the wood. We have the skilled workforce. We have world-class manufacturers, contractors and technology. And we have customers who want the essential forest products made here in BC.

At a moment when our industry is confronting an unprecedented international trade challenge, and the Province is facing growing fiscal pressures, **forestry can be part of the solution to both.**

Forestry helped build British Columbia. Now British Columbia must act to secure forestry's future.

Sincerely,

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