

## **University of Alberta Speech FINAL - Nov. 2, 2005**

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Ladies and gentlemen: Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here today. I would like to thank the University of Alberta, and specifically, the Department of Renewable Resources, for this opportunity.

I would like to acknowledge the Honourable David Coutts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, and the Honourable Stephen Mandel, the Mayor of Edmonton, who are in attendance today. Thank you for joining us.

I would also like to introduce a few West Fraser employees that have traveled to Edmonton for this

presentation: Murray Summers our Chief Forester, Alberta; Jim LeLacheur, Fibre Manager, Alberta; Rick Bonar, Chief Biologist and Planning Coordinator, Hinton; Brian Davies, Woodlands Manager, Alberta Plywood; Gord Sanders, Woodlands Manager, BlueRidge, and Eduarda Hodgins, Manager, Communications.

I would also like to acknowledge Janice Rennie, a member of West Fraser's Board of Directors, who is here this afternoon.

In preparing my remarks, I noted that this Forest Industry Lecture Series – which West Fraser has been proud to help sponsor over the years - has been running since 1976. The late Des Crossley was

identified as being one of the first in a long line of distinguished speakers.

Mr. Crossley became the first Chief Forester in Hinton in 1955 and served for 20 years in the Hinton operation – which recently became part of West Fraser when we acquired Weldwood.

During his tenure, Mr. Crossley developed and implemented a science-based forest management program that has defined the Hinton operation since the beginning and continues strongly today.

During my presentation, I will spend some time discussing our leading forest management activities and approach, particularly in Hinton, where we are under the intense scrutiny of various activist groups.

Many of the professionals working in our Hinton operation believe that our modern practices and operating principles are linked directly to Mr.

Crossley's leadership in sustainable forestry and his unshakable commitment to the Hinton landbase.

Thirty years after he first addressed an audience as part of this lecture series, I am pleased and proud to carry forward his legacy and his messages.

Being forceful in the delivery of this information is important – especially now. As you may know, today is a so-called “day of action” proclaimed by a group of activists focused on bringing attention to the what they say are negative impacts in the Boreal Forest, caused primarily by the forest industry - and of

course West Fraser – as the largest forest products company in Alberta.

We don't support the tactics of these groups  
(mention you were married to the premier this afternoon.....if in fact you were....)

But we do share one important thing: a concern that forestry is sustainable and that non-timber values are considered in all of our management activities.

Unfortunately, these activist groups have been creating misinformation about the West Fraser Hinton operations.

They have harassed our customers and urged them to more closely scrutinize our forest practices –

which we encourage by the way. They have also taken the bold step of encouraging them to switch to another supplier.

Today, I would like to present a set of facts so that you can see that there are two sides to every story.

Before moving on, let me quickly outline my presentation today.

First, I will talk about West Fraser's commitment to sustainable forest management. I will focus my comments on the Hinton operations where some activists have been particularly critical of our performance.

I'm not a forester or biologist – so I won't go into great detail – but I hope I will give you enough information to demonstrate that we are leaders in forest management.

Then I will provide a brief overview of West Fraser in Alberta. West Fraser is now the largest forest products company in the province – as a result of acquiring Weldwood of Canada from International Paper in December 2004.

I will spend the bulk of my presentation focusing on the key issues and challenges facing our industry in Canada – and more precisely Alberta.

I will conclude with the premise that we must face these challenges boldly and aggressively if we are to

ensure our long-term competitiveness and realize the potential that is available to us as the producers' of the most widely-used, desirable and environmentally-responsible products on earth.

Before moving forward, let me start by going back in time. This is a particularly relevant thing to do as 2005 marks a series of anniversaries: West Fraser's 50<sup>th</sup> year of operation; the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the Hinton Pulp Mill; and of course, the province of Alberta's 100 year anniversary.

By looking back in time, I can reinforce an important point and a central theme in my presentation this afternoon.



Between 1896 and the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, more than one million settlers from Europe, the United States and other parts of the Canadian Dominion poured into the prairies - including Alberta - in the single greatest wave of immigration in Canadian history.

While these immigrants were all different, they shared a common dream: the promise of a better life and the opportunity to establish a homestead.

Today, people still have this dream. They want what most of us have and take for granted – a home at a reasonable cost; a place where they can raise their families and build a sense of community.

As affordable shelter will always be one of mankind's most basic needs; wood is the most sensible and environmentally-sound choice for home construction.

Although you'd expect me to have this opinion as the CEO of Canada's second largest lumber producer, in fact, there are studies that prove wood is a superior product for building in all respects.

Wood has consistently shown itself to be an excellent environmental choice in studies by not-for-profit research agencies such as CORRIM - the Consortium for Research on Renewable Industrial materials, and the ATHENA Sustainable Materials Institute, which examine the environmental impact of different construction materials, from extraction to disposal, and compare energy use.

In a report issued in 2004, CORRIM compared the environmental benefits of homes built primarily with wood and steel in a northern U.S. climate and homes built with wood and concrete in a southern climate.

It concluded that wood uses less overall energy, and causes fewer air and water impacts.

ATHENA has developed a complex, scientific system that provides a life-cycle analysis that professionals can use to calculate the environmental impacts of homes based on different materials and construction methods.

The ATHENA model found that wood is a more environmentally conscious building material than steel or concrete in terms of energy use; production of greenhouse gases; air and water pollution;

production of solid waste and overall ecological resource use.

Wood is the obvious choice as a building material.

But it is also the clear choice for other products that people around the world use every day. Products that people take for granted: toilet paper, paper towels, computer paper...and the list goes on. And for the same reason – they are derived from a renewable resource.

If wood-products are the most environmentally responsible – then Canadian-made forest products are the smartest environmental choice in the world.

Canada has 91% of its original forest cover and requires 100% reforestation of harvested areas.

Canada has one of the world's strongest regulatory regimes. We are a leader in certifying operations for sustainable management and our country offers customers more fibre from certified operations than any other country in the world.

In Alberta, 99.5% of the province's forests are certified under third-party audited environmental standards making this province a leader in the commitment to responsible and sustainable forest management.

In Canada, we are moving closer to full utilization of every log that we harvest from our sustainably-managed operations. This slide shows us the progress West Fraser has made in 10 years.

Thanks to key investments, West Fraser has been able to get more lumber – about 7% more - out of each log – in this case our Smithers mill. We have turned what was once waste into bio-energy and raw material for our paper mill in Kitimat.

So when you combine the natural properties of wood and our commitment to effective forest management with the integrated nature of our business, we can take pride that our industry produces the world's most environmentally-sensitive and sensible products.

But we are being criticized as part of the Boreal forest campaign.

Before I talk about the activist campaign in the Boreal – and particularly the focus on West Fraser – let me spend a few minutes giving you an overview of our company.

West Fraser is the largest forest products company in Alberta.

We have 2,100 employees working across a total of 11 facilities. According to the Alberta Forest Products Association, West Fraser is the single largest employer in the Alberta forest products industry.

West Fraser is also the third largest industrial land manager, with responsibility for four FMAs totalling approximately 2.9 million hectares.

West Fraser is Alberta's largest lumber producer; the only plywood, MDF and LVL producer, and paper manufacturer in the province.

Big picture – West Fraser is North America's third largest lumber producer. In 2004, West Fraser reported sales of \$2.4 billion and earnings of \$212 million. In addition to operations in Alberta, we have operations throughout the BC interior and the U.S. South.

Let me now talk about the environmental campaign targeting West Fraser. We believe plain and simple that it is wrong.



The messages about our company, and particularly about our operations in the Hinton region, are oversimplified and often do not contain facts.

West Fraser doesn't pretend to be perfect or to have all of the answers when it comes to managing the land base that we all depend on.

But I do know that we are committed to responsible and sustainable forest management. In Hinton, we have a 50-year legacy of success as managers. Our approach is written directly on the landbase.

After a half-century of activity on the Hinton FMA, we are proud that our working forest allows for the continuous production of wood products, while maintaining an abundance of wildlife and other key

biodiversity indicators that signal a healthy and natural habitat.

All of our Alberta Forest Management Areas have implemented an Environmental Management System and have had their EMS third-party audited to the internationally-recognized ISO 14001 standard.

In addition, in 2004, West Fraser confirmed its commitment to sustainable forest management by achieving third-party certification at all of its Canadian woodlands. This was a major accomplishment for our company – and one that we are very proud of.

Customers that purchase products from West Fraser's Alberta operations can be confident that

they are sourcing wood products from responsibly and sustainably-managed forests as verified by independent, third-party auditors.

The campaign against our company claims that we are reducing the presence of old-growth forest on the Hinton FMA.

The truth is there has been no reduction of old-growth habitat on the Hinton FMA. In fact, there is more old-growth today than there was in 1950.

In the Hinton region, trees live to a maximum of about 250 years. Within this timeframe, independent scientists conducting research on the Hinton FMA have defined trees older than 180 years to be old-growth.

Prior to organized forest management activities, the area was subject to frequent fires that killed most of the trees in the burned areas. Over time, the amount of old-growth varies significantly within the FMA, depending on how often fires burned.

Since assuming management responsibility for the FMA, we have been able to increase the level of old-growth by reducing the occurrence of fire, and setting our harvest rate to below what would have naturally burned.

Look at these slides. In 1900 – there was about 10% old growth on the FMA. In 1950 – there was about 4% old growth on the FMA. In 1995 – there was 12% old growth on the FMA.

So to suggest that there is less old-growth on the Hinton FMA does take into account the dynamic nature of the forest and the constantly changing landscape.

The campaign against West Fraser also claims that our company is harming the habitat that caribou and grizzly bears live in.

There are no simple answers when it comes to issues surrounding wildlife management, particularly as it relates to caribou and grizzly bears.

As you are aware, some caribou herds are in decline in Alberta – including one called the Little Smoky – which lives just north of our Hinton FMA.

Some of our critics believe that the best way to protect declining caribou herds is to simply lock land away in protected areas and go away.

We believe this is a mistake. Forests are dynamic. They will eventually die-off or more likely, be affected by pests or forest fires, which have the potential to catastrophically impact caribou populations.

Just look at what's happened in British Columbia. We have a disastrous situation with the Mountain Pine Beetle. It has ravaged its way through mature pine forests in the province. It is a disaster – and the same thing could happen in Alberta if we do not aggressively respond.

So we believe that managing caribou habitat disturbance with caribou conservation in mind is the preferable solution.

Science is our driver in this effort and our focus is to work in partnership with industry, government and other parties.

West Fraser recently spearheaded the establishment of the Caribou Land Management Association, bringing together members of the forest industry, oil and gas sector, aboriginals and government.

Our goal is to help conserve the Little Smoky and the A La Peche caribou herds by reducing the collective industrial footprint on the landscape. Our primary focus is a coordinated road-building plan.

With respect to grizzly bears, West Fraser has been a partner in the world's leading grizzly bear research program. This ongoing study has an annual budget of \$700,000 and uses state-of-the-art technology to gather data that will help ensure the long-term conservation of grizzlies in the foothills of Alberta.

Research from this study suggests that forest harvesting is not a source of bear mortality.

Bears like harvested areas and young forests as the food is plentiful and easily accessed.

As our Chief Biologist Rick Bonar says, young forests are like a well-stocked grocery store for the bears.

But what does represent a threat to grizzlies is human access. For example, bears that spend more



time near roads have a higher risk of being killed by vehicular traffic or poachers who gain access via the available roads.

Through this project, we are working on a plan in cooperation with the Alberta government to manage public access and land use on the FMA to minimize the human interface with grizzlies.

For example, in the past, roads on our FMA were built by various parties at various times depending on a particular need.

These roads could often lead to nowhere – or in the same direction. Today, we are engaged in a more effective, co-operative planning process that will reduce road-building on the FMA by about 30%.

Here is another example of how we are working together to minimize human/grizzly interface. Data provided by GPS collars the bears wear as part of this study has given us a good idea of the habitat that bears prefer. With this information, parties on the FMA can avoid these areas, while still carrying out their operations.

This is a lot of information- I know. So if you take away anything from what I just said – there are three key messages I want you to focus on.

First, there are two sides to every story. The activists communicate over-simplified messages and do not take into account the massive effort we are directing into managing our forests in a responsible and sustainable way.

The second point I want to leave you with is this: science and research are critical to the decisions that we make and the practices we implement on an ongoing and consistent basis.

West Fraser is actively working with government, industry and key partners to advance our practices and performance.

We believe one of the most crucial partnerships that we maintain is with the Foothills Model Forest, one of the world's largest model forests with more than 100 partners who are committed to advancing sustainable forest management.

The Foothills Model Forest provides a home and administration for the Caribou Landscape Management Association and spearheads the world-class grizzly bear project.

West Fraser supports its commitment to research and science-based solutions with significant dollars.

In 2004, our company directed funds to research in over 60 projects – including the ones I mentioned - representing approximately \$2.5 million.

Over a five-year period, West Fraser will invest half a million dollars in research conducted through the University of Alberta. This includes a \$50 thousand graduate scholarship in forestry and a \$50 thousand

co-sponsorship of the Enhanced Forest Management Research Chair.

I would like to invite the activists who spend a great deal of their resources on public demonstrations and advertisements in the New York Times, to redirect their investment to finding solutions to the complex issues we face.

When it comes to the environment, it shouldn't be about who wins and who loses.

It should be about the progress we can make working together to protect our forests and the wildlife that live there. I urge these activists to work with us to create a sustainable future for our province and the generations that will follow us.

The third message to communicate – and really the over-riding message I want to leave you with – is that West Fraser does the “right things” for the “right reasons”.

2005 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our company’s decision to relinquish all harvesting rights in the Kitlope Valley on the Coast of B.C., which is considered to be the largest coastal temperate rainforest on earth – approximately 3,175 square kilometers in size.

This wasn’t an easy decision – but when a scientific report confirmed its status, we realized we needed to do the right thing – so we gave up all of our cutting rights in this jurisdiction.

Now - I'm not suggesting that this is the answer in all cases and in all areas. What I am saying is that we look at the scientific evidence, work with partners engaged in developing solutions and base our decisions on those facts.

We must follow this model going forward – otherwise our decisions will shift like the wind depending on who is making the criticism and what preferences they have.

So we must be diligent. We must ensure that we take care of our environment using good science and research, while supporting an economically vibrant and world-class forest industry both in Canada – and in this province.

Forestry may not be the largest industry in Alberta, but it is a major player in the province and it has a sustainable future.

The forest industry is the third largest sector of the Alberta economy. The industry generates almost 50,000 direct or indirect jobs, and paid a combined \$645 million in federal and provincial taxes in 2003, and \$62.5 million in municipal taxes. Forestry is a significant contributor to the wealth of almost 50 communities in the province.

Today, our industry faces many challenges. The campaign focused on the Boreal is only one. But there is no question – it is a high profile challenge with the potential to affect our marketshare.



But there are other challenges that we must manage if we are to remain a healthy and vibrant industry that is able to compete effectively in an increasingly difficult global marketplace.

What are these issues?

Let's start by looking at the issue of competition.

30 years ago, demand for softwood lumber in the United States was growing substantially. Canadian producers boosted production to meet this demand, eventually establishing themselves as the sole foreign supplier to the United States. In doing so, Canadian producers created the world's most efficient and competitive industry.

Over the last decade, this dynamic has changed dramatically. Canada is still the largest exporter of softwood lumber to the U.S., but it faces stiff and increasing competition from producers in Europe, South America and the Pacific region, specifically Australia and New Zealand.

Imports from these sources have soared, rising almost zero in 1991 to 1.9 million board feet in 2004.

These imports have become a significant factor and have the potential to rise considerably in the future.

How has this happened?

First, after more than 50 years of importing wood products from North America, the countries of the European Union are now net exporters. They have increasing volumes available for export due to post-war maturing forests, and the increasing log supply availability from Russia and the Baltics.

Russia presents a daunting picture in terms of its competitive potential. Russia's forest is three times larger than Canada's – and about 40 times larger than Sweden's. Russia accounts for about 50% of the world's softwood timber.

In 1995, Sweden, Finland, Austria and Germany focused their attention on expanding their offshore exports. They retained the West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau to instruct their producers how to grade to ALS standards.

Countries in Latin America and the Pacific Rim are formidable competitors. Their industry is based on fast-growing tree species like eucalyptus and radiata pine, and their capacity to increase exports is virtually unlimited.

While losing U.S. marketshare to offshore competitors, we have also faced tough competition from substitute product manufacturers here in North America.

In this slide, you can see that between 1997 and 2000, wood use in U.S. residential construction was on a declining trend. It has now stabilized at about 86% of marketshare.

But the threats remain. The use of concrete has continued to grow. In 1997, concrete accounted for 10.3% of the U.S. residential housing market – that number increased to 12.9% in 2003.

And it's not only in the residential market that substitute products are making inroads. Wood use in commercial and light/industrial construction in the U.S. has been on a declining trend since 1994.

And - the combination of concrete and steel has already eroded most of the market in commercial and light industrial buildings. We must re-establish wood as a material of choice.

How have competitors expanded their presence and marketshare?

Substitute product manufacturers have become increasingly bold. The steel industry, for example, is funding a \$25 million advertising campaign aimed specifically at wood products.

Concrete and plastic are aggressive rivals as well. In its communications, concrete builders call their product “the natural building material”.

Plastic product producers are also positioning themselves as a superior environmental choice and touting the benefits over wood.

No doubt - our competitors have been aggressive and focused and smart.

But the reality is that we have let them in. We put out the welcome mat by creating an environment where they can grow aggressively.

How have we done this?

The U.S. has waged a trade war against Canada to protect their industry from more efficient Canadian producers.

The battle has been simmering since 2001, when the Softwood Lumber Agreement between Canada and the U.S. expired.

The pressures of increased competition from global producers and substitute product manufacturers remind us of the need to ensure that we maintain a

highly efficient and competitive industry in Alberta; one that is supported by a streamlined regulatory and operating infrastructure.

Recent research by the Alberta Forest Products Association confirms that over the past four years, the competitive position of the forest products industry in Alberta has slipped.

This is a serious predicament –particularly as we deal with the additional challenges that compound the pressures of global competition – like the escalating Canadian dollar and massive increases in energy costs.



No discussion of threats to our industry would be complete without a look at the health of our pulp sector.

As I mentioned earlier, our industry is an integrated one. 40% of every log we process is sold to pulp mills in the form of chips. Without our pulp mills to consume chips, we would be faced with the serious predicament of what do to with this significant residual material. Lumber mills also derive about 10% of their revenues from the sale of woodchips, and without this income, our lumber mills would not be viable.

The bottom line is: without a vibrant and profitable pulp industry our sawmill industry will decline.

Thirty years ago, Canada was recognized as a leader in pulp manufacturing. We were recognized as one of the low-cost producing regions in the world. Today, the opposite is true.

If you take a look at this slide, you'll note that Canada's pulp manufacturing costs are the highest relative to competitors in Latin America, Europe, the U.S. and the Asia Pacific region. In addition, the pulp sector has not earned its cost of capital. This has resulted in a reluctance on the part of the pulp mill owners to reinvest in their mills in Canada.

We've seen the implications of this in almost daily headlines across the country. Mill after mill has shut its doors, including: Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Port Alice, B.C., Prince Rupert, B.C.

This situation has dire implications for our more robust lumber business. Without a healthy pulp sector, we are in trouble.

Another challenge we face is the Mountain Pine Beetle. As you know, the Mountain Pine Beetle has reached epidemic proportions in British Columbia.

The outbreak represents the largest forest insect infestation in North American history. As of the fall of 2004, it is estimated to have affected 283 million cubic metres of timber spread over seven million hectares, an area larger than the size of Sweden.

And it is expanding dramatically – at a rate of about 40% a year.

The challenge from Alberta's perspective is to learn from the B.C. experience. We must deal very aggressively with the Mountain Pine Beetle to the point of being over zealous. We must attack the beetle with the same energy and resources as if we were dealing with an out of control fire. Among the options we should consider is an increase of our Annual Allowable Cut.

We know what's happened in British Columbia. We've seen the impact of the devastation. If you've haven't seen it – I invite you to take a look. You will quickly be convinced of the need to act boldly.

The final threat I want to address today is the issue of training and education. Studies of the forest industry workforce have concluded that there is a

looming skill shortage in the labour force that could potentially affect the productivity, product quality and receptiveness to technological change.

To compound the threat, we have seen a trend of declining enrollment in forestry schools across Canada in recent years. According to research conducted by Professor Marty Luckert at the University of Alberta, forestry enrollments in Canada have declined by approximately one-third between 1999 and 2003.

People my age will remember how working in the forest industry was the place to be.

In B.C. – where I got my start - we were proud to work for the economic engine of the province – and believe it or not – we were appreciated and admired.

Today – that has changed. Young people do not see our industry as a place to build a career. They have an image of forestry as low-tech and environmentally unfriendly. It is not viewed as an exciting, growing and vibrant business.

In fact – it is viewed as quite the opposite. A recent image research exercise conducted by the University of British Columbia’s forestry faculty confirmed these findings.

In focus group research sessions with high school students, parents and first year science students at

UBC, participants generally did not see forestry as a discipline where they could build their future.

Interestingly, the Faculty of Forestry was considered a school of last resort – a way to get into university – and was characterized as either a place for outdoorsy, redneck types or outdoorsy, hippie types.

Few valued forestry as a secure career path with strong potential for advancement and excellent remuneration.

Constant negative media headlines of environmental attacks, mill closures and ongoing trade issues have painted a warped picture of our industry. In addition, how many of us, when we think of forestry, still think

of axes and saws – and guys sitting in a bunkhouse after a day in the woods.

We must correct these outdated perceptions because failure to attract new talent to our business could threaten the long-term viability of our industry's competitiveness.

And the reality is that our industry is one of the most modern and technologically sophisticated. We continue to employ new technologies to improve the productivity of our mills. Today's students might be surprised to find many of our employees spending their day in front of computers and control screens – making on the fly adjustments that help us operate more efficiently.

I've outlined many challenges.



So how do we deal with all of these? How can we realize the potential of our industry long term?

First, industry must continue to work in partnership with the Alberta government to make sure that we stay focused on facilitating a competitive and world-class forest industry in this province.

Of particular importance is the need to ensure a careful consideration of competitiveness issues in all discussions on policy change so that Alberta producers are not inadvertently disadvantaged.

The government of Alberta has helped build a thriving industry with transparent regulations, long-term access to the resource through FMA

agreements, a commitment to economic and environmental sustainability and an equitable sharing of resource values. We must remain committed to these core principles to offset the increasing competitive pressures we face globally.

Government must also be cognizant of incremental, cumulative cost pressures downloaded on industry. Individually these seem insignificant, but when added together, this list of new responsibilities that must be shouldered by industry creates a burdensome load that will increase operating cost infrastructure and further erode the competitive position of Alberta producers.

We believe that a significant role the forest industry in Alberta can play is to use its expertise and proven

success in environmental stewardship to help direct land use policy changes related to integrated land management strategies.

We believe the key is to work together, with vision leadership and determination, to continue to build and evolve this industry into one of the best in the world.

Another major advantage we have in dealing with ongoing competitive pressures is the productive and dedicated people we have employed in this industry in Western Canada. In B.C. and in Alberta, we have created a centre of excellence for lumber manufacturing.

Western Canadian companies supply much of the equipment, technology and services used by lumber companies throughout North America and the world.

West Fraser is constructing a new \$100 million sawmill in Quesnel. Approximately 90% of the new equipment used in the mill is being sourced from Western Canadian companies.

With homegrown know-how and innovation, we have become the best sawmillers in the world, maintaining world-class facilities managed by the industry's best and brightest. This technical know-how and world-class capability will serve us well in future as we focus on revitalizing our pulp industry and dealing with increasing competition from new and traditional market players.

To ensure we are globally competitive, this industry needs to further consolidate. We need to continue the recent trend of consolidating into larger, more diversified and better capitalized companies.

Canadian companies are still relatively small players on the global competitive field.

Abitibi, Canada's largest forest company, ranks only number 21 in the world based on 2004 sales. Canfor and West Fraser, Canada's third and fifth largest companies by sales, rank 23 and 32, respectively.

Competing worldwide in commodity markets will increasingly require economies of scale. Access to capital will be a critical component in competing in the global marketplace. Only well capitalized

companies will be able to make the investments needed to increase productivity and lower costs.

This leads right into my point that our industry must become even more productive and efficient. We must continue to invest earnings to stay at the technological forefront.

We are doing this across our operations in Canada and the U.S. In Alberta, we are spending more than \$40 million in 2005 in capital upgrades in our various facilities across the province. Many of these upgrades will improve our efficiency and productivity, and help reduce our costs.

We built a world-class sawmill in Quesnel in 1970 for under \$10 million. Today, that same mill would cost

close to \$140 million. Small companies will find it increasingly difficult to compete on this scale.

Finally, communication is paramount as we face these challenges of the future and seek to secure our competitive position long term.

We must communicate our marketing and environmental messages more forcefully when dealing with environmental activists, substitute product manufacturers, and outdated perceptions of our forestry schools.

As industry, it's not in our nature to be communicators. For years, we've lived with the theory that the highest-growing dandelion in the grass gets its head chopped off by the lawnmower.

In other words, better to keep your head down and out of the line of fire.

That attitude just doesn't cut it today. We must take every opportunity to boldly deliver our messages and counter the myths that are perpetuated when activists, substitute product manufacturers and others spin tales about the sustainability and suitability of our products.

We must turn up the heat on our marketing efforts to ensure the public understands the compelling environmental attributes of our products and the demonstrated leadership commitment we have made to resource sustainability.



And again – there is a role for government to play. We need government’s vocal support in dealing with the pressure from the activist groups that are targeting our operations in Alberta.

Our customers want to know that the Alberta government is engaged and supportive on their behalf. We know you are and we will work with you to demonstrate this commitment on an ongoing basis.

Even with all of the challenges we face, I believe our industry has a bright future in this province and Canada.

We are an industry that builds and operates the most technologically advanced manufacturing facilities in the world;

We are an industry that manufactures universally-desired and required products that are derived from the world's most environmentally-friendly and sensitive resource;

We are an industry that operates in a jurisdiction that is a world leader in forest sustainability and with a commitment to continuously improve our performance and practices;

We are an industry that believes in working in partnership to define solutions to even the most challenging issues.

We are an industry that has had a remarkable history in this great province. I know we will have an even greater future; one that our children will be proud to inherit and continue to build on.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I look forward to your questions.

**END**