



Message from the Honourable Doug Donaldson  
*Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development*



While I could not join you today, I want to congratulate the Huu-ay-aht First Nations and Western Forest Products on the TFL 44 agreement.

Forestry is at the heart of Port Alberni, and it's encouraging to see these kinds of partnerships become a reality.

It's clear that increasing First Nations participation in the forest sector can go hand in hand with direct benefits to Western Forest Products, as well as more jobs and business opportunities for the community.

We want to see more opportunities and greater participation of First Nations in the forest sector because we know that when First Nations are brought in as partners in a collaborative way it benefits everyone. In fact, one of our goals under the Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative is to increase domestic and value-added manufacturing jobs – to directly benefit local communities.

As part of our mandate for reconciliation with First Nations we engaged early on with First Nations, along with industry and labour, to discuss options for the Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative. Our goal is to build a strong, healthy coast forest economy for all British Columbians.

Again, congratulations to Chief Robert Dennis Sr, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations council and staff, and to Don Demens and the staff at Western Forest Products for seeing the value in collaboration, setting a solid vision for a partnership rooted in respect and reconciliation, and making that vision happen.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Donaldson", written over a thin horizontal line.

Doug Donaldson  
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource  
Operations and Rural Development