



SimpCW First Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIMPCW FIRST NATION (June 12, 2019) - The Chief and Council of SimpCW First Nation (“SimpCW”) are speaking out after Interfor recently announced its intention to acquire \$60 million in forestry assets from Canfor.

“It’s a non-starter”, said Chief Shelly Loring. “Unless and until SimpCW has a meaningful role in management of our forests, this transaction will not go forward,” adding, “the loss of 178 jobs in a small community is most definitely not in the public interest. SimpCW is not only looking out for our own interests but the local interests up and down our valley.”

Canfor’s cutting rights are in the heart of SimpCW’s Territory. SimpCW has clearly and consistently expressed its focus on acquiring tenure to grow its forestry operations, including in a meeting with Minister Doug Donaldson in May. “We were clear that forest tenure and forest management is a key component to SimpCW’s economic sustainability and reconciliation with the Province”, said Chief Loring, “We have also had discussions with Interfor and Canfor – they were both aware of our interests - it’s unfortunate that with this knowledge, instead of working with us, they were making a deal in another room.”

“There is a clear inequity here – we are at a disadvantage in competing with large private companies” added Tina Donald, Councillor and Manager of the SimpCW Natural Resources Department, “and this transaction is case in point. Our understanding is that the recently enacted Bill 22 is a tool for the Province to combat this inequity - we will now see how serious the Province is”, said Ms. Donald.

Bill 22 is a clear opportunity for the Province to ensure not only that the public interest is protected from the monopolization of the forest resource, but that economic reconciliation with Indigenous communities is front and centre as a matter of public policy. SimpCW has advised Minister Donaldson of its expectation to sit down with the Province to design a process of how this proposed transaction will be evaluated. According to Chief Loring: “We are prepared to work collaboratively with the Province on this – but we will not hesitate to take appropriate action to ensure that our rights are protected and we are preserving our forests for our future generations.”

About SimpCW

SimpCW First Nation is a division of the Secwepemc, or Shuswap, whose territory encompasses approximately 5,000,000 Ha in the North Thompson region. SimpCW has a membership of over 700 people. Their mission statement is “SimpCW’emc are a culturally proud community, valuing healthy, holistic lifestyles based upon respect, responsibility and continuous participation in growth and education”. Visit www.simpcw.com

Simpcw's economic arm, Simpcw Resources Group (SRG), manages Simpcw's tenures (planning, layout, permitting, harvesting, silviculture etc.) and employs local Simpcw businesses to harvest and haul logs. SRG maintain a solid track record of good management, including for large volumes.

For more information, contact:

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