

Queen Charlotte Islands Timber Supply Area Timber Supply Review

Summary of Public Input

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This is a summary of the public input that has been received on the Timber Supply Review in the Queen Charlotte Islands Timber Supply Area. This summary does not assess the feasibility or validity of the input or whether it relates to the clearly defined mandate of the chief forester in the allowable annual cut determination.

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Background

As part of the review of timber supply in the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area, the British Columbia Forest Service distributed the *Discussion Paper* and two technical reports—the *Timber Supply Analysis* and the *Socio-Economic Analysis*. The public was encouraged to review and comment on the accuracy of the information in these reports and to provide additional information. This report summarizes the information received during the 90-day review period, as well as at a January 1994 conference. This input was provided to the chief forester for his consideration when he reviewed the allowable annual cut for the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area.

The first section of this summary, Public Review Process and Response, outlines the public review process implemented by the Forest Service and describes the types of public input received. The second section, Public Input, summarizes the public input in sufficient detail to indicate the range of input received.

The original submissions with personal identifiers removed (in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*) can be reviewed at the Queen Charlotte Forest District office.

Public Review Process and Response

Queen Charlotte Forest District staff solicited input through the following actions:

- direct mail-out of the three documents to 22 organizations and businesses. The *Discussion Paper* included a response form, which readers were encouraged to complete and return to the district manager
- four information sessions held with representatives from local governments and interest groups (see Table 1)

- three open houses advertised extensively through the local newspaper and through flyers delivered to all Queen Charlotte Islands mailboxes

Approximately 90 individuals attended the information sessions and open houses. The Queen Charlotte Forest District also received 35 completed response forms and 20 letters.

Forest Service staff participated in forums hosted by on-island interest groups. A brief summary of the Share the Rock conference, January 1994, and the Global Links Workshop, March 1995, is presented on page 6 of this report.

Organizations (No. of participants)	Date
Interest groups	
Village of Masset Town Council (6)	January 23, 1995
GIAPC/QCCSLAPC* (3)	March 1, 1995
Old Masset Band Council (11)	March 16, 1995
Skidegate Village (4)	March 16, 1995
Open houses	
Port Clements (22)	January 31, 1995
Sandspit (9)	February 1, 1995
Queen Charlotte City (35)	February 2, 1995

* Graham Island Advisory Planning Commission/Queen Charlotte City Skidegate Landing Advisory Planning Commission

Table 1: Participation in public information sessions

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Public Input

In this section, public response to the information presented in the three Timber Supply Review reports for the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area is summarized under the following headings:

- Timber Supply Analysis
- Socio-Economic Analysis
- Discussion Paper

Public input on other ongoing government processes and on related issues that may influence the timber supply in the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area is summarized under Other Issues. A final section, titled Community Response, summarizes a consensus letter from all communities and planning bodies, a case for community control, and two workshop proceedings.

Timber Supply Analysis

- **Timber harvesting land base**
Seventeen submissions discuss the size of the timber harvesting land base used in the *Timber Supply Analysis*.

Ten submissions propose the 14 Council of Haida Nations "protected areas" be removed from the timber harvesting land base.

Five submissions, including two from local forest companies, suggest the use of helicopters would allow the harvest of some marginal areas presently not included in the timber harvesting land base. One of these writers requests that Small Business Forest Enterprise program registrants be given an opportunity to "prove out" these marginal areas.

Husby Forest Products prepared seven submissions, including three major reports dealing primarily with the size of the timber harvesting land base. The company suggests the timber harvesting land base should be increased by at least 25 per cent over that used in the timber supply analysis. This increase could come from forests with low timber volumes and from forest types that are difficult to access.

One writer suggests that, since at least 40 per cent of the timber supply area is deferred from harvest and the Forest Practices Code may reduce the available timber supply still further, the projected long-term harvest level is extremely optimistic and possibly twice what will actually be available. This writer urges the chief forester to base the allowable annual cut on the most conservative estimate of the timber harvesting land base. This same writer urges the chief forester not to include marginal timber types or economically inaccessible stands as these may be the only old-growth timber in the timber supply area available for future generations.

- **Blowdown and dead standing timber**
Considerable emphasis is given in submissions, largely from the Port Clements area, to the issue of salvage of blowdown and dead standing timber. All 12 writers who address this issue state that substantial opportunity exists for local operators to harvest these areas successfully. One writer suggests the estimates of unsalvaged losses used in the timber supply analysis are too low.
- **Growth rates in future forests**
A letter from Timber West Forest Limited suggests that while the timber supply analysis appeared to use mean annual increments of three to four cubic metres per hectare, the company is confident its sites produce from 4 to 12 cubic metres per hectare per year. Another writer suggests that no allowance was made for the growth difference between the islands and Interior regions of the province. This results in an underestimation of the mean annual increment for the timber supply area.
- **Harvest age**
Timber West describes the rotation length as the single biggest question in the Timber Supply Review. It suggests the analysis did not use defensible biological or economic rotations.

Two other writers propose that forests be managed for quality or value, not quantity or volume. They infer that older harvest ages and therefore longer rotations would be required.

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- **Inventories**

The Queen Charlotte City/Skidegate Landing Planning Advisory Commission and the Village of Port Clements submit that expanded and updated inventories are needed and that these should be made available to the public in an easily understood form.

Socio-Economic Analysis

Concern over logging and processing jobs for islands residents, short- and long-term stability, and the level of the allowable annual cut dominate the comments on socio-economic issues. Timber West, in particular, questions certain statements in the *Socio-Economic Analysis*. It contends:

- employment income calculations net of taxes underestimated the benefit to the province
- job losses would not be significantly offset by Forest Renewal BC, the South Moresby Forestry Replacement Account and the Gwaii Trust
- forest industry employment, stated in person-years, underestimated the number of workers and families involved
- indirect and induced employment were also underestimated
- **Level of allowable annual cut/community stability**
The allowable annual cut and its influence on community stability is discussed in 32 submissions. Of these, 31 recommend that the cut be reduced to a sustainable level, with several asking that the long-term harvest level be reached in less than five years. These writers cite long-term concerns and the concept of "intergenerational equity" as their rationale. One writer suggests the allowable annual cut be increased. This individual cites short-term economic and employment problems, especially in and around Masset.

Discussion Paper

- **Visual quality**
Two letters from members of the general public ask the Timber Supply Review to place a higher emphasis on viewsapes than had been provided in the past. They cite recreation and

tourism as important industries for the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Timber West questions whether 23 per cent of the TSA needed to be assigned to visual quality objective areas when 23 per cent of the islands' total land base was already assigned to parks and ecological reserves.

- **Forest practices**

Five writers from the general public and timber industry urge the chief forester to adopt only harvesting and silviculture practices that are not damaging to the site or to the environment. Their suggestions about harvesting range from stopping clearcutting to using selective logging wherever possible.

Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks staff urge the chief forester to adopt the following:

1. provide wider buffers on estuaries, lakes and streams, especially where recreational fisheries are involved
2. maintain 12 per cent representation of all habitat types across the landscape, ideally through a system of biodiversity corridors

- **Managing old growth for the future**

Several writers suggest that timber harvesting be focussed on second-growth stands, reserving old growth for as long as possible.

Three writers request that some high quality old-growth stands be put aside for future generations to harvest.

- **Harvest full timber profile**

The Queen Charlotte Islands Independent Forestry Association and the Village of Port Clements support harvesting the full timber profile. They suggest that experience has shown that small local operators can successfully work in marginal areas.

- **Partitioning the allowable annual cut**

Five letters—one from the Village of Port Clements and the others from the forest industry—recommend the chief forester partition the cut, effectively setting a separate, lower allowable annual cut for lower quality stands. They suggest this approach could help preserve old growth.

- **Better utilization**

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Two loggers urge the chief forester to ensure that all wood, including alder, be fully utilized wherever logging occurs.

- **Anticipate future losses to Forest Practices Code and Protected Areas Strategy**
Many writers who support the exclusion of the Haida Nation's 14 "protected areas" also urge the chief forester to consider the impact of the Forest Practices Code and Protected Areas Strategy on timber supply. While some writers express concern about further reductions due to these initiatives and the impact of these reductions on the timber and processing industries, the majority of writers are concerned for other reasons. These writers suggest that if there is any chance the long-term harvest level will be reduced at a later date due to these initiatives, allowance should be made for that in the present allowable annual cut determination. They urge the chief forester to err on the side of caution and maintain a timber supply for the industry into the future.
- **Structure of the Timber Supply Review process**
Share the Rock suggests in their 1993 letter that an independent body be established to evaluate the outcome of the Timber Supply Review. In their recent letter, the Village of Port Clements recommends a 10-year Timber Supply Review timetable to allow for better preparation and input. The Queen Charlotte City/Skidegate Advisory Planning Commission and one general public respondent state that the public input process used for the Timber Supply Review was not adequate.

Related Processes and Issues

- **Land use**
Two writers encourage the implementation of better land-use planning practices in the timber supply area. They raise concerns about forestry practices near fish-bearing streams. The upper Tlell River is cited as a watershed requiring special planning.

Another writer suggests that all ecological reserves in the timber supply area be eliminated and the land returned to the timber harvesting land base.
- **Tenure management**
One writer recommends that all Queen Charlotte Islands forest land management decisions be made while considering all forest lands (i.e., tree farm licences and the timber supply area). Neither should be managed in isolation of the other. This should include the allowable annual cut determination.
- **Local log market**
One writer proposes the establishment of a local log market to help local processors obtain logs at fair prices and thus encourage the local processing industry.
- **Timber sales**
Two issues are raised around local timber sales:
 1. too few Small Business Forest Enterprise Program sales have been advertised
 2. two forest industry submissions ask the chief forester to make Section 16.1(b) sales (Small Business Forest Enterprise Program take-back volumes) available for local processing
- **Consensus position**
One letter to the chief forester represents an island-wide consensus position for all organized and unorganized communities, planning commissions and the Council of the Haida Nation. It makes two requests of the chief forester:
 1. lower the allowable annual cut for the timber supply area to a sustainable level within three years
 2. do not include the 14 "protected areas" in the calculation of the long-term harvest level for this Timber Supply Review
- **Log exports**
Six letters—representing two members of the public, one municipality, two planning commissions and one industry association—oppose log exports. Four of the writers refer to the standing green permits while two propose a steep levy on any unprocessed log leaving the islands.

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- **Local jobs/local processing/value-added**

Thirty-two letters raise the topic of jobs for island residents. The majority of these writers ask that a higher proportion of the cut be made available to local loggers and processors. Also, some respondents note that the major licensee, Husby Forest Products, does not employ as many island residents per cubic metre of wood harvested as local logging and milling companies.

Writers suggest that stumpage incentives are required to encourage companies to employ local people and to help local companies obtain the licences needed to keep their processing facilities working.

One writer suggests the granting of tenures should consider local employment. O'Brien & Fuerst Logging urges the chief forester to consider local jobs and community stability. It, along with another writer, cites the decline in the firm's employment from 53, in 1994, to 20 employees at the time of writing. The short-term outlook is also said to be bleak.

Nine writers ask for an increase in value-added manufacturing on the islands. One suggests the highest value wood should not leave the islands but be fully processed in local facilities. Another respondent from the general public proposes that incentives be provided to encourage more local processing. O'Brien and Fuerst Logging, along with Eagle Crest Enterprises, cautions against providing incentives for local processors. They suggest instead that local value-added processing might be encouraged by making available small parcels through competitive bidding.

- **Community control/community stability**

Many respondents mention great frustration over past ministry decisions regarding timber supply and timber opportunities.

Ten writers, representing a cross-section of respondents, urge the chief forester to establish a locally based organization to manage the timber supply area. This "community resource board" could work in any of a variety of ways, but would represent local interest better than the ministry has in the past. Most writers support a system of co-management with the ministry, while one writer recommends disbanding the ministry altogether.

Twenty-eight writers, representing a wide range of interests except major licensees, urge the chief forester to consider apportionment along with the allowable annual cut decision. All apportionment discussions concern the issue of a dwindling timber supply—especially in high-value old growth—and the ongoing need for local jobs and community stability. Most writers are optimistic that, given the reallocation of a reduced cut, local communities and operators could thrive. To achieve this, however, they recommend the following actions:

1. buy out or eliminate the large Husby Forest Products quota
2. maintain or increase the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program cut
3. apportion timber to companies on the basis of hiring locally and supporting the local economy
4. create small, locally controlled tree farm licences
5. establish more woodlot licences

Closely tied to the recommendations for local control and apportioning the cut is the recommendation that a large part of the cut go to local processors. It is noted that if local processors can gain access to a steady supply of timber, more local employment and greater community stability can be achieved.

- **Workshops**

Two community workshops were held to encourage input into the Timber Supply Review process.

1. **Share the Rock Society**

Share the Rock Society hosted the workshop "Forest Management and the Public-An Evolving Process," in January, 1994. The one-day workshop included a morning plenary session with five speakers and a roundtable discussion in the afternoon. Off-island speakers focussed on ways to maintain or increase the allowable annual cut. They spoke of experiences in other communities and timber supply areas. They suggested that preservationists and faulty inventory data

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were the main issues leading to reduced allowable annual cuts.

Speakers representing the local logging and processing community spoke of the need for local control, timber for local processing, fair treatment for local companies and the need to reduce the export of raw logs.

An IWA spokesperson addressed the need for retraining displaced forest workers.

2. **Global Links Society**

On March 4, 1995, the Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii Global Links Society held a workshop entitled "Toward a Community Vision for the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area." More than 60 individuals participated in the day-long workshop and 32 personal visions, developed during the workshop, were submitted to the Timber Supply Review with the proceedings.

Six panelists, representing the Forest Service, local environmental interests, the Queen Charlotte Islands Independent Forestry Association, and the Forestry Branch of the Council of the Haida Nations, spoke and answered questions during the morning plenary session. The delegates broke into small working groups in the afternoon and developed personal visions for management of the Queen Charlotte Timber Supply Area. The main thrust of the personal visions were:

- (a) local control or co-management of the forest resource (local resource board)
- (b) equal access to timber for local operators and mills (competitive bidding)

- (c) immediate reduction to the long-term harvest level
- (d) generation of maximum value from every cubic metre of wood harvested (do more with same/less).

Appendix 1

Submissions received by the Queen Charlotte Islands Forest District

Government Agencies

Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks

Local Government and Planning Bodies

Consensus position representing all Islands communities, planning bodies and the Council of Haida Nation

Moresby Island Advisory Planning Commission

Graham Island Advisory Planning Commission

Queen Charlotte City/Skidegate Landing Advisory Planning Commission

Village of Port Clements

Forest Industry

O'Brien & Fuerst Logging Limited

Abfam Enterprises Limited

Eaglecrest Enterprises Limited

Green Timber Log

Queen Charlotte Islands Independent Forestry Association

Echo Bay Scaling

Timber West Forest Limited

Husby Forest Products

Islands Societies

Global Links

Share the Rock

Submissions Received from Members of the General Public

40 submissions received as letters or response forms