

2018 ILA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW SHOWCASES FOREST INDUSTRY

By Jackie Pearase

The Interior Logging Association (ILA) demonstrated leadership, a commitment to safety and innovation as it celebrated 60 years at its annual conference and trade show in Kamloops this past May. The theme, "Our Strength...A Unifying Voice for 60 Years," was highlighted with a robust trade show, informative seminars and timely luncheon speeches from Premier John Horgan and Forestry Minister Doug Donaldson.

ILA members, partner organizations, trade show vendors and presenters embraced the new venue, with the Tk'emplúps te Secwépém̓c First Nation Powwow Grounds filled with a wide assortment

of equipment outside and 31 booths inside showcasing organizations, products, services and information. "It's been one of the largest conventions that I've been involved with," noted ILA General Manager Wayne Lintott. "Everyone is pretty happy with the Powwow Grounds."

Photo: Jackie Pearase



In fact, some equipment vendors increased from eight to 12 or even 16 spots at the event. The highly visible location drew in not only industry professionals but seniors, youth and families wanting to meander through the site.

Finning (Canada) came to the show with six new machines and a small utility vehicle. Representative David Beleznay said people came from all over the Interior, Vancouver Island and northern BC to check out the latest the industry has to offer. "We come out to show the new products we have and get out and support the association," Beleznay added. "It's a great site this year so we're excited about that."

Martin Ridgway, senior safety advisor with BC Forest Safety, said the ILA hosted an excellent event that provided ample networking opportunities while Bob Elliott of Ace Innovation Solutions was excited to exhibit his oil retrieval equipment for industry professionals. "I hope to make people aware that there is stuff out there for them," Elliot said. "We thought we'd come out and show the rest of the industry."

The trade show was complemented by a series of instructive and interesting seminars.

On Friday, Dzhamal Amishev of FPInnovations spoke to more than 50 people about winch-assist logging and best management practices, and Clint Parcher of Coastland Wood Industries Ltd. talked about weight scaling to about 30 people. More than 30 people attended the Saturday workshop about logging costs presented by Aaron Sinclair of PNL Consulting Inc. and about 25 people took in Cpl. Ron Miciuk's workshop on workplace impairment.

The Shuswap Branch of Canadian Women in Timber hosted a silent auction with a spectacular assortment of items including an electric mountain bike, kayak, tools and a 2,295 piece Mack truck Lego set that was very popular with bidders. Canadian Women in Timber earned a portion of the auction revenue for their efforts.

An excellent lunch and sumptuous dinner served en familia at the Colombo Lodge on Friday were well received by delegates, Easy Fix got everyone on the dance floor Friday night, and many delegates also attended the safety conference and a meet and greet on Thursday.

Minister Donaldson spoke on Friday and outlined funding announcements



Both Photos: Kelly Funk Photography

directed at addressing some of the issues faced by the industry including: a \$500,000 injection into the Forestry Service Providers Compensation Fund, \$72 million over three years for a wildfire recovery fund, \$134 million for the Forest Enhancement Society of BC and \$60 million over three years for land-use planning.

from the work that you do," he said. "The resources that come to the Crown from the forest industry pays for our hospitals, pays for our schools, pays for our highways. And that has been consistent for generations and I have every expectation that that will continue into the future."

Horgan said recommendations from the Contractor Sustainability Review are

Recommendations from the Contractor Sustainability Review are expected to be implemented by the end of July

Donaldson also thanked workers in the forest sector for the assistance and knowledge they provided during the hectic 2017 fire season and noted that the BC Wildfire Service is looking to hire out 16 contracts for eight-person Type 2 fire crews for the 2018 fire season.

"The impact of the wildfires was significant. 1.2 million hectares of land was affected and I believe 1.3 million cubic metres of wood impacted. A lot of that wood has been expedited into cutting permits to be available to mills and other uses," he added. "We have a big job ahead of us and we're very focused on rehabilitating that landscape so that forest will be there not just for timber harvesting but for all the other values that are important."

Premier Horgan spoke on Saturday about the importance of the forest industry, challenges facing the sector, how his government hopes to address them and what the NDP expects from the industry.

"I value the work that you do and the Government of BC benefits significantly

expected to be implemented by the end of July with the goal of improving competitiveness for contractors and licensees—an ongoing issue in a sector dominated by a few long-term tenure holders.

A workforce that is expected to decrease by 40 per cent due to retirement is a challenge but not insurmountable. "What is going to encourage and attract new people to the industry? We need to make sure government is putting in the training opportunities that you need so that you can bring on more people into your businesses so that your communities can continue to thrive," Horgan stated.

He said last year's fire season resulted in unique issues and the ongoing softwood lumber dispute adds to instability in the sector, but the government is prepared to face those challenges. "It's absolutely critical that you know that the government of British Columbia stands four square with our forest industry, the tenure holders and contractors, to make sure that we can continue to have



a dynamic and vibrant forest industry," Horgan noted. "I want you to know that whether it's softwood lumber, whether it's pulp logs, whether it's our pulp and paper products, I stand ready to fight for British Columbians' interests every single day."

Horgan is very supportive of innovation in forestry, looking to engineered wood products to provide opportunities for utilizing wood waste and for the

building industry. The BC government is dedicated to working with industry professionals and organizations to address issues, but Horgan wants to ensure prosperity is shared among forest communities, that First Nations' rights and title are understood and respected, and there is a fair return on resources.

"It's not just about sectoral numbers, it's not just about revenues to the Crown,

and it's not about volumes. It's about people, it's about families," Horgan added. "And no better representation is there than the TLA and the Interior Logging Association where you represent not just the companies that you operate but you represent families and communities up and down the Interior. I want to thank you for the work that you do and give you my commitment that I'm going to do my level best to ensure you are here next year and the year after that and the year after that."

Both Horgan and Donaldson expressed sincere thanks for the work done by those in the forest industry and pledged to work cooperatively to ensure the future is as bright as the past. "You are an important voice to me—that reality on the ground to make sure we have the forests we want into the future," Donaldson said. "We need to make it abundantly clear that your success is everyone's success," added Horgan. "We need to be proud of that. We need to stand on a hillside and say this is a good thing for British Columbia today and it's a good thing for British Columbia's future."▲

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