



THE VOICE FOR OUR MEMBERS

At the Interior Logging Association, the health and safety of our members, exhibitors, participants and their families will always remain our highest priority, so we regret to inform our membership that as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the ILA has made the difficult but necessary decision to cancel our 62nd Annual Convention and Trade Show in Kamloops from May 7-9.

We deeply appreciate your understanding of this difficult decision and look forward to seeing you in 2021. While it is disappointing to not see everyone in Kamloops this year, I will make sure that the ILA takes to the road again to visit you in the communities that you work, live in and support. Please continue to monitor our website for more information regarding ILA activities and events.

I also encourage you to visit our website to read the results our Labour Market Partnership Agreement—a project we entered into with the provincial government—that focused on collecting information to provide government with recommendations on how to assist our industry as we move through these challenging times.

There is a trend that has developed in the past year where grassroots movements are starting to become more commonplace and I believe if conducted properly, they can only assist our Associations in our advocacy efforts. It's important to

remind the government about how the decisions they make and the policies that they enact affect those who are most reliant on the resource. Policies cannot continue to be a “one size fits all” ideology. What works in Smithers, may not work in Cranbrook or Campbell River. Issues such as old-growth logging or Caribou recovery need to be resolved with the local stakeholders at the table. Let those who know how to help, find the solution that works in their areas. There are examples in this province where this approach has worked and is still working today. Sometimes we need to look to the past to plan for the future.

We find ourselves having to answer to well-financed anti-logging groups who believe they know what is right for our industry and our communities. It's uplifting to see how we as a community have rallied back and found our voice. It's no longer about the Coast or Interior forest industry, but all of British Columbia's forest industry and forest communities! I would like to extend an invitation to those other groups—if they really are concerned about saving our forests, pick up a shovel this planting season or if necessary, a pulaski on the fire line and join those who really know how important the working forest is.

On behalf of myself, the ILA's Board of Directors and Nancy Hesketh, I would like to thank the TLA for their hospital-

ity during their 77th Annual Convention + Trade Show in January. Conventions such as ours and the TLA's are a great opportunity for all of us to be able to share ideas that myself and others may be able to put forward when meeting with government.

I would like to congratulate Bill Nelson on his succession to become the 42nd president of the TLA, and to all the new and returning Board members. I also want to thank outgoing President Mike Richardson for all of his efforts during his tenure to ensure the needs of members were met. Thanks also to David Elstone for his dedication and hard work and we wish him well in his future endeavours. And finally, I would like to welcome the TLA's new Executive Director, Bob Brash.

The ILA is also pleased to welcome John Nester into his new role as the general manager of the NWLA. We look forward to working with him and his Board of Directors on issues that affect us all.

The ILA looks forward to continuing to strengthen our relationship with the TLA and NWLA, and working together on behalf of all members. The strength of this alliance between the associations can only help our collective memberships moving forward. 🌲

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Photo courtesy of Jackie Peanase

