



UNITED STEELWORKERS - LOCAL 1-2017

Prince George Office:
#100-1777 3rd Avenue
Prince George, B.C. V2L 3G7
Admin email: info@usw1-2017
1-800-565-3641 (toll free)
250-563-7771 (p) 250-563-0274 (f)

Williams Lake Office:
124C N. 2nd Avenue
Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1Z6
1-888-398-8248 (toll free)
250-398-8248 (p)
250-398-6218 (f)

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For Immediate Release

FOREST WORKERS SUPPORT PROGRAM PAYS DIVIDENDS

(Prince George, BC) USW Local 1-2017 President Brian O'Rourke expressed surprise and shock at the comments some Interior mayors and others are making regarding the diversion of funding from the Economic Dividends Fund to new Forest Worker Support Programs.

"It's just unbelievable" explained O'Rourke. "These same people have been slamming Government for not taking action to assist Forest Workers and Communities! What they're saying now makes no sense. This funding diversion will be grouped with additional funding to help dozens of affected communities and thousands of workers and families in the forest sector. Right now there are thousands of workers from both the logging and manufacturing sectors who are not working. They haven't (in some cases) been working for months! These re-directed funds will benefit many more people than someone's special project."

"Forest workers are the lifeline in many communities. Providing assistance to those who have given so much over the years should not even be questioned. Regrettably, it is and that's very disappointing and, in my view, even shameful."

"We have endured a number of downturns over the years and lobbied both Federal and Provincial Governments for assistance because forest workers and forest communities are still the life blood of BC's economy." According to a 2009 Ministry News Release, thousands of forest workers received financial assistance to get through that economic downturn, as an example.

"We fully support the Government's current actions to assist forest workers. It may mean a short term setback for local special projects, but this funding will by far reach and benefit more workers and communities through these challenging times."

For further information, contact:

Brian O'Rourke President USW Local 1-2017
1-250-960-8583

BRIAN O'ROURKE
President

PAUL FRENCH
1st Vice President

ROD PARK
2nd Vice President

MARK BISSAT
4th Vice President

LINDA FAULCONER
5th Vice President

DON IWASKOW
Financial Secretary