

Coast has enough parks: Coleman

FORESTRY | Loggers shouldn't worry about losing timber to protected areas, minister says

BY GORDON HAMILTON
VANCOUVER SUN

The British Columbia coast has enough parks and protected areas, Forests Minister Rich Coleman told the annual Truck Loggers Association convention Thursday.

Loggers no longer need to worry about losing timber to parks, he said.

"We are not going to have any shrinking landbase any more. We have enough protected areas and parks," the minister said during a panel discussion at the

annual convention now underway in Vancouver. "Let's recognize that and celebrate it. But remember: we need a working forest for the future of our system."

Coleman, who had to defend his government over criticism from the loggers that it no longer considers forestry a key file, made the statement after saying stakeholders in the troubled industry need to "set aside issues between each other."

He also vented some annoyance about his own job.

"I'm just a little frustrated with

the people on the coast of British Columbia who keep saying 'quit cutting all the old-growth forest' when there is four million hectares of old-growth forest in the province of British Columbia and there is only 700,000 hectares available for harvest."

At one point Coleman mused: "I wonder some days just what I did to the premier to have been made the forests minister."

Coleman also said the government is working on resolving other issues to ensure there is a enough timber on the coast, such as getting timber on the market that was taken from tenure holders and provided to first nations. The first nations often didn't have the capacity to harvest it and it has not come

back on the market.

He referred to it as "the black-hole wood."

Fellow-panelist and association president Don Bendickson, who spoke before the minister, said the government no longer lists the forest industry as one of its top-three files, a situation that must change.

He called for major policy changes to encourage more players in the industry and a deeper commitment to the forest landbase. The coastal region now has 30 per cent more land in parks and protected areas than is available for logging, Bendickson said. He also said contract loggers need assurances that the new ecosystem-based management being devel-

oped won't make harvesting too costly in the working forest.

"If we want an industry, we need a land base. Somebody has to draw a line in the mud and say 'enough is enough.'"

Coleman responded by saying: "This is B.C.'s critical industry."

Later Bendickson said in an interview that he is encouraged by the minister's statement that the park-building era is over.

"We very much appreciate the minister's commitment to conserve the working forest land base," he said, noting that forestry provides benefits from funding schools and health care and providing employment to capacity-building for first nations.

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Waste wood will be used for bioenergy, loggers told

BY GORDON HAMILTON
VANCOUVER SUN

BIOENERGY | Coastal loggers saw a vision Thursday of a future in which pulp mills convert wood waste left behind after logging into high-valued electricity and synthetic gas as a byproduct of making pulp and paper.

Trading in carbon credits, changes in government policy, and a pending BC Hydro call for proposals on bioenergy development will make it possible, Bill Adams, manufacturing services manager at Domtar's Kamloops pulp mill, told the annual Truck Loggers Association convention in Vancouver.

Scandinavian countries do it now, Adams said, illustrating his talk with images of small logs and branches being bundled roadside in Finland and trucked off to bioenergy plants.

"The global competitiveness of the B.C. industry is really going to depend on how well we can extract that bioenergy value. It is going to require new investment in our industry to ensure that we maximize that value of bioenergy."

"We also need to make sure that we have government policies that encourage the transformation to the bio-refinery model and recognize the environmental attributes of co-generation," he said.

But for the truck loggers whose job is to harvest the wood, the mechanics of how low-grade wood will be profitable for them has yet to be spelled out.

Contract loggers harvest 90 per cent of the province's timber and would have to invest in new equipment themselves to collect wood waste. They are now coming under increasing cost pressure from forest companies that control the timber resource.

"Who's going to write the cheque?" one logger asked from the floor.

Truck Loggers Association president Don Bendickson said in a later interview that right now loggers are hauling wood to the roadside, yet the forest licensees that own the timber don't want it all. It is too costly to remove, so it is left behind. Yet European bioenergy plants can afford to burn wood pellets produced in the B.C. Interior, shipped by rail to Vancouver and then sent overseas to Europe.

Bendickson said it must somehow become profitable for B.C. plants to use residual wood.

"There has to be a business case for it, plain and simple," Bendickson said.

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Long-time prof named SFU business dean

VANCOUVER SUN

Veteran Simon Fraser University professor Daniel Shapiro has been named dean of the university's faculty of business administration through to September 2009, SFU said Thursday.

Shapiro, an economist who teaches managerial economics for SFU's executive MBA program, holds the position of Dennis F. Culver Executive MBA Alumni professor.

In the past, he has been director of SFU's CIBC Centre for Corporate Governance and Risk Management, director of executive programs, and associate dean.

In a news release, the university said that Shapiro "is well placed to provide strong leadership to the faculty, with more than 16 years at SFU business."

Shapiro's curriculum vitae notes that he completed an undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary in 1968 before moving on to earn masters and PhD degrees in 1972 and 1974 at Cornell University in New York State.

The author of five books and more than 50 scholarly articles, Shapiro's current research looks at corporate performance and strategy, corporate governance and ownership, and foreign investment.

He was awarded the Canada Trust Excellence in Teaching Award in 1995 and 2002.

Prior to coming to SFU, Shapiro taught at Concordia University and served in administrative positions including principal of the university's school of community and public affairs.

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Reject MDA sale to weapons firm: critics

BY FIONA ANDERSON
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TECHNOLOGY | Opponents of the \$1.325 billion sale of MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates' space business are urging the government to say no to the deal because the purchaser's business includes weapons and landmines.

Minnesota-based Alliant Techsystems (ATK) was described as a world leader of satellite systems and rocket motors for spacecraft launch when the deal was announced last week. But the company is also the U.S.'s largest weapons' manufacturer, and included in its artillery are anti-personnel mines, a.k.a. landmines.

Canada was one of the first signatories to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, which prohibits the use and production of landmines. There are now 156 signatories to the treaty, but the United States is not one of them.

Libby Davies, the deputy leader of the federal New Democratic Party, said she plans to raise the issue at this weekend's NDP caucus retreat.

"I want to make sure the NDP is taking this on and making it clear we think this should not be allowed," Davies said in an interview.

Richmond-based MDA is best known for developing the Canadarm, which is used by NASA's space shuttle, and the Radarsat-2, considered to be the most advanced satellite of its kind.

The federal government invested \$400 million in the Radarsat-2 "and now it's being turned over to an American corporation that has a huge vested interest in military applications," Davies said.

"It's the antithesis of what Canadians would believe in and would want to see," she added.

What Davies finds frustrating is that in providing regulatory approval, these types of transactions are treated as routine business cases.

"Well there's something here called the public interest," she said. "And members of Parliament should be standing up for that and fighting [the sale] tooth and nail."

A former MDA engineer has also spoken out against the sale. American-born Paul Cottle quit his job at MDA after the sale was announced, saying he could not work for a company that produced weapons, the CBC reported.

In a written statement, MDA said it viewed the sale to be in the best interest of its employees.

Since the transaction was announced, only one employee has resigned, the company said.

ATK also defended its operations in a written statement.

"The self-destruct systems that ATK has produced in the past have served the needs of U.S. and allied soldiers in combat without presenting a lasting hazard to civilians or non-combatants," Brian Cullin, ATK's senior vice-president of corporate communications, said in the statement.

In an interview, ATK vice-president of corporate communications Bryce Hallowell said no employees from MDA's space program would be expected to work on weapons.

"The employee base at MDA has world-class capabilities in satellites and space programs," Hallowell said. "And that's exactly what they will continue to work on. We have no plans to have them switch their focus."

An Industry Canada representative was not available for comment.

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL COURTNEY/GLOBAL TV

The *Guard*, starring Jeremy Guilbaut, Steve Bacic and Zoie Palmer, is one of the original Canadian television productions filling the void left by the U.S. writers strike.

Canadian productions get boost from U.S. strike

While service-production industry suffers, Canadian shows are still in business

BY MARKE ANDREWS
VANCOUVER SUN

As crippling as the writers strike has been for the province's film and television industry, there have been a few rays of light. As American stations fill the program void with game shows, reality series and re-runs, original Canadian dramatic and comedy television series are getting prime-time attention. Canadian writers are beginning to get recognized. And American studio executives and talent agencies are all ears when Vancouver producers pitch projects that are unhampered by labour stoppages.

For years, producers in the province have stressed the need to wean the film and television industry off service work for American studios, and to create more domestic production. Usually they say this because fluctuations in the Canadian dollar affect so much of the industry here. But the 10-week-old Writers Guild of America (WGA) strike has given new meaning to the term "out of service."

Canadian film companies with a slate of Canadian projects are surviving quite nicely. This includes the province's two busiest production houses, Insight Film Studios and Brightlight Pictures. Insight did \$176 million in production last year, and so far has \$100 million booked for 2008. Brightlight, with a slate that includes original shows, co-productions and minimal service work, has two co-produced movies and two television series on the go, including *The Guard*, which premieres next Tuesday (10 p.m.) on Global.

Both Insight and Brightlight use Canadian writers. Insight's full-time work staff of 150 includes two screenwriters, Jason Bourque and Keith Shaw, and have another group of six writers they use on a regular basis.

"We tend to use WGC [Writers Guild of Canada] writers or non-union writers who are Canadian," says Insight president Kirk Shaw.

The Guard, a one-hour drama about the Canadian Coast Guard that was shot in the Squamish area, had five Canadian writers: Raymond Storey, Peter Smith, James Phillips, Karen X. Tulchinsky and Abigail Kinch.

"Most of Hollywood is run by Canadian writers," says Stephen Hegyes, partner at Brightlight Pictures and an executive producer of *The Guard*, a Canadian co-production that paired Vancouver-based Brightlight with Nova Scotia company Halifax Film. Hegyes cites top-rated



Steve Bacic and Claudette Mink star in Canadian production *The Guard*.

U.S. network series *Bones* and *House* as shows with Canadian writers.

"There's no question we have the talent," says Hegyes, who says if there's work here and writers are compensated well they will work in Canada. "Sometimes they get lured [to the U.S.] because there isn't enough work here. The more drama that's available for them to work on in Canada, the more we can keep them."

The U.S. writers strike has given Canadian producers a higher profile south of the border, because Canadians are still making drama and comedy. In addition to *The Guard* and Insight's projects, Canadian series *iPod*, *The Border*, *Sophie and MVP* are filling CBC TV's primetime schedule.

"I think the writers strike is a big opportunity for Insight because I'm spending more time with [American] networks, studios and agents," says Shaw. "They don't have time to see you when they're all busy. But now they have the time. We're pushing network development executives and talent agents to consider working with Insight."

In addition to providing full-time work for 150 employees, which includes some crew technicians, Insight has a pool of 200 crew members it uses for all of its productions. To maximize employment for these crew members, the company tries to juggle and stagger its production schedule so the 200 technicians are working steadily.

That wouldn't be possible if Insight were doing service work for American producers.

Insight is just finishing production on

two movies, *Personal Effects*, with Ashton Kutcher and Michelle Pfeiffer, and *Helen*, starring Ashley Judd. In February, the company begins pre-production on sitcom series *Under One Roof*, the shot-in-Australia science fiction movie *Malibu Shark* (a co-production with an Australian company), a shot-in-Manitoba movie *Forget Me Not*, a Vancouver action movie *Vincent*, a second sci-fi flick *Polar Shift*, and another feature called *Tower*.

Insight has also put aside \$1 million for four reality/lifestyle TV series pilots: *Get Dirty with Evan*, *Beauty Detectives*, *Shop Like a Man* and *The Straight Goods*.

Brightlight Pictures is about to shoot a new series, *Stormworld*, in Australia and Vancouver. It is a Canada-Australia-Singapore co-production, which will air on the Space network in Canada. The company is just completing a Belfast shoot of the Ireland-Canada feature film co-production *50 Dead Men Walking*, and in March will commence shooting in South Africa another feature, *The Bang Bang Club*, a Canada-South Africa co-production.

Some companies have looked beyond the current imbroglio with the WGA to a possible strike by American actors and directors, because contracts with the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and Directors Guild of America (DGA) expire June 30. Insight is in negotiations with a major American comic book company for more than a dozen direct-to-DVD movies that would use Canadian actors only.

"We've been developing programming that would counter any potential strike," says Shaw.

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