
KTUNAXA NATION AND TEMBEC INDUSTRIES SIGN PARTNERSHIP FOR WILDFIRE TIMBER SALVAGE OPERATIONS

Cranbrook - The Ktunaxa Nation and Tembec Industries Inc. today signed an operating agreement to work in partnership to salvage wildfire timber from the 2003 forest fires in the Cranbrook Timber Supply Area.



Salvage operations will take place in the Lamb, Ram, Cummings and Plumbob Creek areas in 2004, with an estimated wood supply of approximately 205,000 cubic meters of fiber.

KKTC Administrator Kathryn Teneese notes "the non-replaceable forest license for the salvage of timber is the first forest license issued to the Ktunaxa Nation. It's a historic event, and our partnership with Tembec is also a historic first. The operating agreement provides Tembec with wood fiber the company would not necessarily receive, and provides our nation with new economic opportunities in the forest industry".

Tembec's Vice President of BC Operations, Dennis Rounsville sees the operating agreement as, "a unique and welcomed opportunity. In addition to the benefits associated with salvaging the burnt timber,

the most important aspect is the KKTC's involvement in administering a forest tenure". Given recent changes to forest policy which provides for new additional tenures to First Nations, Rounsville hopes that this agreement will be an instrumental step towards a long-term and lasting partnership.

KKTC designated the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Development Corporation (KKDC) as the forest tenure holder, as an agent of the KKTC, for administering the forest tenure. KKDC General Manager Brent Lucas adds, "the operating agreement with Tembec supports our desire to contract our members in forestry work in connection with the license, while still providing an opportunity to those contractors with whom Tembec customarily deals with. It's a win-win situation for all of us." KKDC and Tembec are jointly tendering contracts for the harvesting and associated activities.

A separate non-replaceable forest license is held by KKDC in the Invermere Timber Supply Area, and a contract agreement is being finalized with Slocan Forest Products for wildfire timber salvage operations of up to 50,000 cubic meters in the Magnesite Creek area.

BACKGROUNDER

In December 2003, the provincial government through the Ministry of Forests (MOF) invited the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council to apply for a two non-replaceable forest licenses for the salvage of timber in the 2003 Magnesite, Plumbob, Lamb, Ram/Storm and Cummings Fires. The total timber harvest of both licenses will be up to 255,000 cubic meters of wildfire-damaged timber in the Cranbrook and Invermere timber supply areas.

KKTC designated the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Development Corporation as the forest tenure holder, acting as an agent of the KKTC, for administering the forest tenure.

Under terms of the agreement, the licensee is required to undertake all of the operational planning, engineering, and Silviculture work and associated costs under the license in accordance with the Forest Practices Code of BC.

The KKDC has negotiated an operating agreement with Tembec Industries Inc. for the sale of timber from the Cranbrook timber supply area license. Under the agreement, Tembec shall retain all forest management responsibilities including long-term silvicultural obligations.

A separate non-replaceable forest license is held by KKDC in the Invermere Timber Supply Area, and a contract agreement is being finalized with Slocan Forest Products for wildfire timber salvage operations in the Magnesite Creek area.

The Ktunaxa Kinbasket Development Corporation's mission is to generate wealth and **business**, employment and on the job training opportunities for members of the Ktunaxa Nation. KKDC works primarily in the forest industry, including watershed restoration, construction/engineering, fisheries and environmental operational areas, and employs management and administrative staff, resource technicians and field labor staff.

Tembec operates lumber production facilities in Cranbrook, Canal Flats and Elko plus a kraft pulp mill at Skookumchuck. These plants are supplied from forest harvesting operations throughout the East Kootenays.

For additional information, please contact:

Brent Lucas 250-417-4022
Kathryn Teneese 250-417-4022
Troy Hromadnik (Tembec) 250-426-9246