



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TFL 44 Limited Partnership Holds First Board of Directors Meeting Advancing Vision of Stronger Forest Sector in Alberni Valley

May 16, 2019 – Port Alberni, British Columbia – The newly formed TFL 44 Limited Partnership, a partnership between Huu-ay-aht First Nations (“Huu-ay-aht”) and Western Forest Products Inc. (“Western”), held their first Board of Directors (the “Board”) meeting today. Aligned with their goal of providing more long-term sustainability for the forest sector and the region, the Board took a number of positive steps forward to execute on several key terms of their partnership agreement.

The Board approved moving forward with a manufacturing study to evaluate the fibre supply in the Alberni Valley, including TFL 44 Limited Partnership and Huu-ay-aht lands and crown tenures. This was a key component of the TFL 44 transaction, which closed in March of this year, whereby the Huu-ay-aht acquired a 7% interest in TFL 44. The study will include a market assessment for potential wood products from the fibre produced in the Alberni Valley.

The study will be conducted by third parties, with results expected in the fall. TFL 44 Limited Partnership will look to engage with the local community, government, the United Steelworkers (“USW”) and area First Nations on the results of the assessment.

In addition, the Board reaffirmed their commitment for TFL 44 Limited Partnership to ensure big trees in TFL 44 are protected by following a standard that utilizes the measurements maintained by the independent board that oversees the provincial Big Tree Registry housed at the University of British Columbia.

The Board has also asked management to proceed with:

- Finalizing an agreement to upgrade road maintenance from Km 61 to Anacla. The Huu-ay-aht have partnered with a local contractor to enhance the capacity to complete this work
- Continuation of the work with the Province and the USW to increase opportunities for employment and training of Huu-ay-aht citizens and other First Nations

“We are working together to manage the forest resource through an innovative and collaborative management structure; this meeting was another step forward in advancing that objective,” said Board member Shannon Janzen. “Our discussions during our first Board of Directors meeting led to substantive, tangible progress on key areas that we believe will benefit the Huu-ay-aht people, Western’s employees and the residents of the Alberni Valley.”

“We are excited to participate in this partnership, particularly because of the focus on sustainable forestry and the employment and capacity-building opportunities,” said Board member Robert J. Dennis Sr. “We look forward to the results of the manufacturing study and are eager to explore ways to create jobs and opportunities in the Alberni Valley including on Huu-ay-aht Treaty Lands. We see great potential to generate wealth to support the expanded services and programs we offer as a Nation.”

The Board also supports a common objective of the partners to explore the potential to involve other First Nations that have part of TFL 44 within their traditional territory in the partnership. The shared vision of Huu-ay-aht and Western includes a framework for reconciliation and revitalization of the Alberni Valley forest sector.

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