



Bridging Agreement between Quatsino First Nation and Western Forest Products Represents a Meaningful Step Towards Reconciliation and Rights Recognition on North Island

July 7, 2022 – Coal Harbour, British Columbia – Quatsino First Nation (Quatsino or the Nation) and Western Forest Products Inc. (Western) have entered into an agreement that provides for a joint vision and approach to share opportunities related to forest resources in unceded Quatsino traditional territory. This agreement allows for a “bridging period” of increased stability for forestry workers and North Island communities as Quatsino, Western and the Province continue to pursue longer term reconciliation arrangements that respect and recognize Quatsino’s rights within its territory, and provide for North Island economic stability.

The Quatsino / Western “Bridging Agreement” builds on a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Quatsino, Western and the Provincial government in 2020. This milestone agreement recognizes and respects Quatsino’s rights within its territory and creates a foundation to achieve Quatsino and Western’s shared goals around sustainability and predictability for forest resources.

“This agreement allows us to explore what is possible when we work together for a stronger future for everyone today and the generations to follow,” said Quatsino Chief Tom Nelson. “We are on a journey together and we will reach our destination when our Nation’s rights, including title are recognized and implemented. The recognition of Quatsino rights by government and industry will provide for a sustainable and stable future for the forestry sector in Quatsino territory.”

“Business can play a meaningful role in reconciliation, and finding a common path forward is difficult but necessary work for everyone involved. Western and Quatsino believe that the Bridging Agreement is a significant step towards a more secure future for workers and communities across the North Island,” said Shannon Janzen, Western’s Vice President, Partnerships and Sustainability, and Chief Forester.

“Western and Quatsino are demonstrating that when government and industry recognize and implement Indigenous rights, all British Columbians can win. This is the type of reconciliation-based work we want to see happen in B.C. and we were proud to support the Memorandum of Understanding that initiated this work – though we know there is much more to be done,” said Murray Rankin, B.C.’s Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

The approach taken in the Bridging Agreement will increase collaboration in the forestry business and generate social, cultural and economic benefits for Quatsino through the re-expansion of the Quatern Limited Partnership, established by Quatsino and Western in 2012, and thus Quatsino's role in the forestry industry. Both Western and Quatsino are recognizing this as a meaningful step towards reconciliation and rights recognition. The agreement sets the stage for ongoing, meaningful collaboration in territorial planning through an Integrated Resource Management Plan guided by the Nation's Land Use Plan and values.

"We are pleased with this important step towards reconciliation that Quatsino and Western have taken in advancing their relationship and pursuing a joint vision for forest resources. Our government supports efforts to increase Indigenous opportunities in the forestry sector and better share the benefits of our forests, now and in the future, while working to ensure First Nation rights and titleholders are full partners in sustainable forest management," said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests.

The Bridging Agreement will be in place for three years and addresses several near-term priorities of both parties. The agreement builds upon the success of the 2021 Quatsino purchase of certain Western private land near Coal Harbour, supporting the Nation's longstanding goal of returning the community to the water.

Quatsino and Western look forward to continuing to demonstrate how working together to develop common solutions will create a brighter and more secure future for everyone.

About Quatsino First Nation

Our people have been living on the Northern tip of Vancouver Island for millennia. We are the descendants of five (5) traditional Kwakwaka'wakw "tribes" which are as follows: T'latsinuxw (Klaskino), Hoyalas (Hoyalas), Gusgimukw (Koskimo), Gob'inuxw (Giopino), Qwat'sinuxw (Quatsino) that spoke a similar dialect of the Kwak'wala language and amalgamated starting in the 1700's. We have used and occupied the full extent of this territory since time immemorial. It was a land of plenty that supported a dense population, complex society and vibrant economy. We will always be the stewards of this land and rely on its rich bounty to support our culture, community and economy.

About Western Forest Products Inc.

Western is an integrated forest products company building a margin-focused log and lumber business to compete successfully in global softwood markets. With operations and employees located primarily on the coast of British Columbia and Washington State, Western is a premier supplier of high-value, specialty forest products to worldwide markets. Western has a lumber capacity in excess of 1.0 billion board feet from seven sawmills and four remanufacturing facilities. The

Company sources timber from its private lands, long-term licenses, First Nations arrangements, and market purchases. Western supplements its production through a wholesale program providing customers with a comprehensive range of specialty products.

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