From: Mike Morris <mjmorris@telus.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2026 7:51 AM
Subject: Why Local Governments Should Not Endorse COFI's Campaign "Forestry is a Solution

Dear Mayor's, Council's and Regional District Directors
April 16, 2026

In 2015, I was appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the BC forest minister and tasked by the premier, to review the cumulative effects of resource development on wildlife habitat across our province.

I had full access to all provincial data and travelled extensively throughout the province, observing impacts from oil and gas, mining, forestry, hydro, transportation and other land use disturbances. I interviewed industry executives, field technicians, professional associations, academics, and other subject matter experts, and conducted extensive literature reviews. I was shocked at what I found, and even more shocked at what I observed. The cumulative impacts from clearcutting close to 20 million hectares and building hundreds of thousands of kilometers of logging roads significantly eclipsed all other industries combined.

I concluded my review with a presentation to COFI in the summer of 2015, advising them that if harvesting levels were not immediately and significantly reduced, the province would be out of harvestable wood within the next eight to ten years, leading to massive mill closures and job losses. The reasons I had made this plea to industry was because changes to forestry legislation in 2004 had turned control over to the forest sector.

In 2018, while reviewing a Forest Practices Board report from 2016, I found a citation referencing UBC Forest Hydrology research that concluded clearcut forest harvesting increased the frequency, magnitude, and duration of flood events. The research also found that it would take 80 years for conifer trees to regrow high enough to mitigate these consequences. Having also served as Public Safety Minister in BC, I became very concerned at the public safety risks this presented to British Columbians.

Numerous scientific peer reviewed papers now determine that not only does clearcut logging cause increased frequency, magnitude, and duration of flood events, but also leads to increased drought, increased wildfire risks, and increased landslide risks. The Chilcotin River landslide in 2024 and the billion-dollar disaster financial assistance provided by the federal government to rebuild highways and secondary roads destroyed by landslides in the caribou come to mind.

Lives have been lost, and life changing injuries are being endured as the result of BC floods, landslides, and wildfires. Billions of dollars in infrastructure damage and billions more in economic losses have occurred across our province.

The liabilities facing governments at all levels and the pressures this puts on generations of taxpayers is enormous and requires careful consideration.

Based upon my experience as noted above, and my 32 years of experience in the RCMP, much of it involved with emergency management and community evacuation plans, I see a clear and present danger facing British Columbians. I recommend local governments have a more fulsome discussion amongst all UBCM members, and to invite scientific experts to present and answer any questions before considering the endorsement of COFI's "Forestry is a Solution" campaign.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Morris,

Prince George B.C.