



2019 Forest Industry Bargaining

USW LOCAL 1-1937 UPDATE

2019 BARGAINING UPDATE #19 – September 9, 2019

Coast Bargaining Committee - News Release

WFP'S GREED IS COSTING THEM GOOD EMPLOYEES

It is becoming increasingly clear that WFP concessions are costing WFP good and productive workers in several different ways.

The longer WFP has concessions on the table, the longer the strike will carry on. The length of the strike is causing some workers to opt for retirement, some to get jobs elsewhere and some that will ultimately return to work after the strike with a very different attitude towards this employer.

First off, a number of members who would otherwise have continued working are now looking at retiring instead. We all want to reach the point where we can retire one day, but in prolonging the strike the way WFP has done, it is forcing some workers to consider this option. For WFP it will cost them the ability to have these senior and skilled workers train other members before they retire. This is a clear loss for WFP and for our members who could use that experience in order to better advance in their own training.

Second, with the great economy and job opportunities, we have in this Province; members are able to find jobs in numerous other occupations or even with other USW operations that are not currently on strike. Many will also likely find that their new employer is better than WFP in that they respect their workforce. This may cause many to stay with their new employer and not return once the strike is over. Many of these employees are newer employees who don't have a lot of vested time with WFP and can clearly see by WFP's actions to date that this is an employer that does not respect its workforce.

WFP is also losing skilled workers the longer their concessions and lack of addressing the Unions issues goes on. Many tradespeople, who WFP cannot afford to lose, are taking those skills elsewhere as they are in high demand. It is not difficult with the current skilled trade's shortage for a tradesperson to find a job and one that may pay better than their current job. WFP needs to wake up to this reality, as it affects everyone.

And finally, members returning to work after a strike will not soon forget how WFP has treated them. Many workers have dedicated their working lives to WFP and its predecessor companies. Most recall better times when predecessor companies respected their work and treat them fairly. While every worker wants to work hard and do their best while earning a living, everyone knows that a happy worker is a more productive worker. Everyone it appears, except WFP.

Clearly, WFP has a long, long, way to go in order to make workers happy. If they ever want to do it, as a first step, they need to start treating workers with respect; and that means stopping its attack on workers' rights, removing concessions and responding positively to the workers' proposals in achieving a fair contract.

After that, it is going to take a significant and positive shift in philosophy at the very top of WFP's leadership; a shift that respects workers' rights; and understands that for a company to be successful in the long term, it must provide a working environment where people want to go to work.

BEST SUMMER LOGGING IN A LONG WHILE WAS MISSED DUE TO WFP GREED

Anyone even remotely connected to the logging business knows this past summer was a great one for logging in Coastal BC. No extreme heat, lots of rain and dampness, especially in Mid-Coast, Middle and North Island where WFP's logging operations are located.

Unfortunately, WFP's greed had them completely miscalculate what would be accepted by USW Local 1-1937 in bargaining. Because of their greed, they missed out on a great opportunity to benefit from good logging weather. With significant undercuts in both Port Alberni Forest Operation and Englewood Operation, it would have been a perfect opportunity to reduce it.

Their greed, however, may continue to hamper their ability to get back to logging and sawmilling, if they do not recognize soon that Local 1-1937 will not be making any concessions and will only accept a fair agreement that addresses workers issues and is in line with what coastal forest workers deserve.

USW MEMBERS ARE A STRONG AND RESILIENT BUNCH

It is great to see how strong our members are in the face of adversity. Entering the third month of the strike USW members continue to demonstrate the willingness to fight for their rights and the rights of all working people by staying strong. Solidarity Works!!

A Committee is being formed to ensure we are protected against the elements on our picket lines and solidarity events are being planned for many areas.

KEEP UP THE FIGHT FOR FAIRNESS



USW Local 1-1937 Members take to the streets of Nanaimo



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