

SOLIDARITY NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF USW LOCAL 1-1937

SUMMER 2021

USW SUPPORTS CALLS FOR JUSTICE, ACCOUNTABILITY & RECONCILIATION. TRAGIC REVELATIONS CANNOT BE IGNORED.

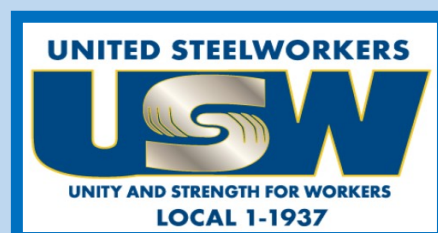


Honouring the children who died at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.
Photo by Maddi Dellplain



Photo by The Guardian

USW Local 1-1937 offers sincere condolences to the Indigenous communities that are grieving for hundreds of children that have been discovered in unmarked graves across our country. Nearly 150,000 Indigenous children were sent to government funded and church-run residential schools, which were set up in the 19th century and operated until the late 1990s. Many children were forcibly taken from their homes and families to be placed in the schools. The total number of children who died or went missing may never be known. This is a shameful reminder of the systemic racism that has occurred across our country. Demands for accountability from the government and Catholic Church can be heard nationwide.

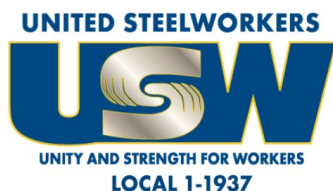


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EFAP

**Employee and Family Assistance
Program**

Contact Numbers

Duncan	250-746-6900
Nanaimo	250-754-8222
Comox	250-338-4533
Mainland	1-877-746-6911
Campbell River	250-287-2266
Port McNeill	250-956-3144
Port Hardy	250-956-3144
Port Alberni	250-723-7001
Powell River	604-485-2800

Mission Statement

With compassion, respect, and integrity, we help people to build hope, growth, and well-being.



Creating healthy employees,
families, and communities.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Brian Butler, President



Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends,

With increasing vaccination percentages, it is looking as though we can all expect to find some relief over the summer from the most onerous restrictions we have been dealing with. Having the opportunity to see family and friends in group settings is good news for everyone. I hope all of you can take advantage of it.

I receive many emails and voicemails from the public on a variety of issues but primarily over their concern about over-harvesting old growth. Some of them are made in a sincere and cordial way, which I respond to and some of them are downright hateful and threatening which I ignore. However, all of them are founded on misinformation.

I thought for this newsletter I would share an email I received recently from a member of the public concerned with our members harvesting old growth trees and my response:

Dear Brian,

I looked up your local in light of the recent protests over logging in the Fairy Creek watershed. I've seen this issue divide communities and I think those divisions are really missing the point. The logging community, I think, is a group of people who love the outdoors. I'm sure many of your members privately are uncomfortable with old growth logging but feel that their jobs are at stake. That is where I believe the government and industry have failed us all by creating an unsustainable model of forestry. Loggers know better than anyone just how quickly a forest goes from standing upright to logs shipped overseas. If all the remaining old growth stands were to go it would be a few years of work with most of the money going to the companies who will shut down the mills and lay off the workers when it's all finished. It seems to me that continuing to log old growth is extremely short-sighted and pushing for a real sustainable model that relies on second and third growth going to local mills is what will actually protect your members' jobs. I understand why companies are on the other side of this issue because they have always been motivated by money, but forestry workers and

environmentalists, I think, can be on the same side. Your members have an opportunity for a true moment of leadership; to refuse to cut old growth and demand better from their industry.

You have the power of influence. I hope you'll consider it before the best places become slash piles.

Dear Jocelyn,

Thanks for your email. You are correct that our members love the outdoors. They also do not want to see the environment harmed and are some of the first people to raise the alarm if they see practices that do harm the environment. Our forests are often their workplace as well as their backyard. They have mortgages, families to support, and bills to pay like anyone else. I can confirm though that our members are not privately uncomfortable with old growth logging. They know the facts and try to block out the fiction that is being served up on social media platforms and other forums.

Where I think ENGO (environmental non-government organizations) groups fail is that they follow an ideology that has not understood the many changes the industry has made either by the government regulation changes or by industry's own initiative. The forest industry today is not the same forest industry I started to work in at age 18 in 1980 but I don't think most ENGO's understand that. It has drastically changed for the better in terms of sustainability and many other facets since the 70s, 80s and 90s. ENGOs continue to think that everything is clear cut and that harvesting is not sustainable. The NDP started those changes in the 90s and they are keeping with the times in their current review of policy and practices today.

In response to your email, let's start with the fact that the independent Chief Forester in BC manages multiple objectives including conservation, biodiversity, sustainability, cultural uses, jobs, and the economy when setting the harvest. You probably did not know that the volume of old growth forests (250 years and older) on the Coast of BC is actually growing according to verifiable statistics from the BC Ministry of Forests. This is due to the fact that BC has done an outstanding job of protecting BC's biodiversity. With 52% of the land

President's Report (cont.)

base in BC already having a conservation measure on it the province has permanently protected ten (10) million hectares of old growth of the existing thirteen point seven (13.7) million hectares. They have also permanently protected many forests younger than 250 years old that will grow into old growth forests in the years to come. Within these protected areas every biogeoclimatic zone in the province is well represented within those protected areas to ensure we have sustained biodiversity.

ENGO's ignore all that. They act like nothing is protected. This is why it is hard to believe anything an ENGO group says as most of the rhetoric they spout is campaign-based misinformation designed to create conflict that the ENGO group can then gain media exposure on, in order to raise worldwide donations. As a business, ENGO groups continue the pattern of inflating numbers and misusing data in order to create the illusion that harvesting in BC is not sustainable. This is troubling, when in fact we have the highest harvesting standards in the world and lead in sustainability certification for our logging practices. The industry of course is not perfect and regulations are not perfect either. There is always room to improve.

Take Fairy Creek as an example of ENGO intentional misinformation. ENGO's campaign that this area is about to be clear cut and lost forever, when in fact the valley is already protected with the exception of a few small blocks approved for sustainable harvesting by the ministry that lies to the outside of the water catchment area. It is frustrating that the media doesn't do investigative journalism anymore. If they did, they would find out that the protest is built on a falsehood that once repeated over and over becomes the truth to some. This may sound familiar to those who follow US politics and their former presidents' penchant for repeating falsehoods to ultimately make those lies the truth for some. ENGOs also try to use First Nations to try and pretend they are protesting for them in order for them to further their campaign and donation appeals and when the First Nations elected and hereditary leadership tells them they are not wanted in the area, they simply spin on a dime and state that one individual from the First Nations invited them so they are staying. ENGOs also do not understand the economics of the forest industry. They somehow think if the province just

transitioned workers to other occupations everything would be great. It would not be. It would be a disaster. Rural communities would empty out and close down with people moving (at a loss) to higher-cost urban centres in search of jobs that do not exist. They would break service with their pensions and the stain on families would likely lead to many other immeasurable personal issues.

If you were to just remove all old growth from harvesting, it would remove the sustainable high-value timber, that creates high-value products, that makes up for the low-value uneconomic forest stands that are only able to be harvested because of the value blending across the harvesting land base. If you removed old growth the industry could not sustain the high-paying family-supporting jobs it produces and the tax base that is the backbone of our economy. The coastal industry could not effectively operate on harvesting second growth alone and we know that many ENGOs espouse the desire that no logging takes place, so it is unlikely they would be satisfied if that were to happen. The ENGO business model must find more issues to divide on and create controversy over so that they can continue to raise funds.

There are also very good environmental reasons to continue harvesting old growth. More carbon is stored in younger trees than in older trees and when harvested the carbon remains locked in the products our members produce. When left to rot old forests release the carbon they once stored. Harvesting also helps fight against forest fires from burning out of control with the accessibility and infrastructure the industry creates. Also, I would like to note that if the mountain pine beetle infested interior forests were left alone without harvesting there would have had even more dire consequences for the environment. Thankfully a sustainable, productive, and essential forest industry was there to protect the environment.

It is too bad that ENGOs try to make what should be science-based decisions in our forests into emotional ones. The provincial government has a stated process of which the USW supports. We desire consultation with government within the old growth review process that brings together all stakeholders so people can learn from one another. If we remain in our silos no one will learn

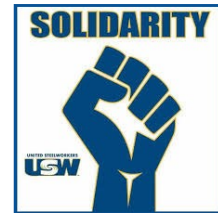
President's Report (cont.)

and we are all doomed to repeat the cycle over again. We are hoping the government plans to consult in such a manner. We also desire that the review takes into account all of our forests not just the ones ENGOs want to talk about. With climate change being a top priority, I would hope that ENGOs would agree that all of our forests including those already protected should be part of this process.

I wish I had more time to explain more but unfortunately, I do not. Forestry is a complex issue and if people broke through the surface of the issues and looked at the underlying issues and facts, they may find that the position they hold dear is not as righteous as they once thought.

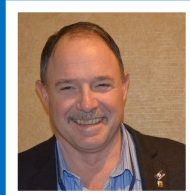
In closing, I would like to wish the membership a safe and happy summer.

In solidarity,
Brian Butler



KINNEY REPORT

By Pat Kinney, Financial Secretary



There always seems to be a lot going on in the Local these days, even with COVID-19 limiting the number of meetings taking place. It is promising we are continuing down the road of bending the curve and reopening with more people getting their vaccines and now the second doses. Here is to hoping we continue down this path.

With notifications of levelling the playing field with our contractors, in regards to having everyone in our contract community being signed up to the common Industry benefit plans, it has been somewhat challenging. It has been directed at the owner-operators and has been met with some opposition, but by and large, most understand the need. The change came as a result of requests from contractors during the 2014 contract negotiations who stated they were at a competitive disadvantage from those that did not have industry standard benefits. This issue was put into the 2014-2019 Coast Agreement but as a result of having to make several changes in the different trustee plans to facilitate implementation, it has taken longer to execute.

The changes needed were cancelling the opt-out provisions that were in all of our associated plans, including the Pension and LTD Plans. The provision for the owner-operators being able to opt-out has been in place since the mid-80s so there were a number of changes in all Plan Texts which took a considerable

amount of time to change. The timeline as result ended up that all were to be in at the ratification of the current 2019-2024 Collective Agreement. Then as a result of COVID-19 coming on the heels of the Coast strike, it took until last September to get started. Currently, we are hopeful of wrapping this project up in the next month.

LTD and Short Term Disability

With regards to members making applications for Short Term Disability benefits and LTD benefits, the numbers of members receiving benefits are down in both plans. There is no single reason to explain this anomaly as it was an expectation with the COVID-19 pandemic to see increases in use but it did not materialize. We are still seeing the issue of members trying to get medical information for their claims in a timely fashion as being one of the biggest hurdles. This is as a result of COVID-19 and not being able to see doctors in person or not being able to get diagnostic testing immediately. Hopefully turning the corner on COVID-19 will dissipate backlogs and then medical appointments and information will flow at a faster pace for our members.

In solidarity,
Pat Kinney

CINKANT REPORT

By Chris Cinkant, 4th Vice-President



I am not sure how to title this article, but I know the topic will be about workers in the Manufacturing Industry. It seems to be that there are some serious issues facing the Manufacturing Industry and our membership.

I am fortunate in my position to hear from a gamut of workers from every generation and experience level with numerous points of view on working in this Industry. With all the differences, there is a common thread in recognizing two topics; workers are clear on the following two major problems:

TRAINING & MANNING

I touched on just some of the training shortfalls our members are seeing as significant in our last issue of the Solidarity News. There is one glaring problem area at the start. Whether manufacturing facilities are large or small, all are running with fewer employees than needed or at the bare minimum to run an operation. The situation leads to a lack of training and poor training practices due to manning shortfalls. For example, when a new worker finally has an opportunity to train, they are not given enough hours of hands-on training with an experienced qualified operator. This same worker is then expected to train the next trainee without acquiring the minimum skills or safety knowledge needed to pass on proper essential work habits. This practice snowballs and creates safety risks and/or eventual discipline or disqualification for the inevitable mistakes. The trend continues and our members and committees must deal with the fallout.

Most Training Agreements have allowances for the training of backup operators who are fully trained and available to replace qualified incumbents (trainers) when needed. Unfortunately, the number of backups is minimal at best or nonexistent (due to lack of training) creating a roadblock for qualified operators to be freed up as trainers. In the past, Companies had call-boards where the call list workers could be called upon when there were absences to cover the trainee level entry positions vacated. The qualified backup would in turn free up an experienced operator to fully instruct a member, one-on-one, with an appropriate amount of time to completely train a worker up to a safe qualification standard. This safe standard of training cannot be met without adequate manning levels.

I have referred to this training in Manufacturing as a problem, though it is much greater than that. A “training crisis” better befits the present conditions in most of our worksites.

The condition is obvious and is a frustration to our membership. The questions are, “Why won’t employers properly staff their facilities and train now while lumber prices are at extreme record highs?” “If not now, when will they?”

We can only assume that hands are tied at a certain level of management, or the problem is being ignored at the highest levels.

It is no wonder workers fear for the future of a once vibrant and stable Industry.

COVID-19

I am hopeful that at the time of this printing all our members and families have had at least the first vaccine dose and are awaiting their second. Reports are that the second shot will be available sooner than expected. I would like to remind everyone that Employment Standards has enacted the following:

Ministry of Labour-Employment Standards Act amendments:

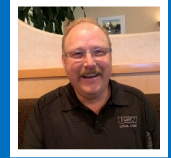
[Paid leave for workers to get their COVID-19 vaccine \(Retroactive to April 19, 2021, now in effect\) Employment Standards Act amendments provide workers with up to three hours of paid leave to get each dose of their COVID-19 vaccine.](#)

Brothers and Sisters, we are getting closer to some semblance of normal, please continue to be cautious for you and yours, for just a while longer.

**In solidarity,
Chris Cinkant**

NORTH ISLAND REPORT

By Dan Jorgenson, Business Agent



Old Growth Logging

In regards to the idea that there needs to be a moratorium on old growth logging on Vancouver Island, I am NOT in favour of this. It seems that the desire for this is based on an uninformed opinion that there is no old growth set aside for the next generation to enjoy. This is untrue. Look at the BC parks that are in place because of former BC governments. I understand that if they could, they would make old growth reserves on the South-East Island but they cannot because of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo railway land grants. This leaves the reserves on the West Coast of Vancouver Island and the North Island.

The North Island is where I live, in Port McNeill. The Provincial Parks on the North Island (many of which the NDP and Socred's brought into being in the 1980s and 1990s) were taken out of the working forest from tree farm licences (TFL) and forest licences. The park area amounts to a total of 101,969 hectares. This is less than half the size of Strathcona Provincial Park which is 250,000 hectares. In logging terms, the 101,969 hectares represents a loss to the working men and women of the North Island of 72,772,000 cubic meters (m³). At 1,000,000m³ per year a crew could work for 72 years before they were done; just in time for the second growth harvesting to start. The problem with the mentality of stopping old growth logging is that it is a community killer. In the 1990's Port McNeill had a population of 3300, today it is 2100. The Tahsish-Kwois Provincial Park was going to be logged by what is now the WFP Port McNeill crew. The Nimpkish Lake Provincial Park would have been logged by what is now the WFP Nimpkish Camp Crew. Woss Lake Park would have been logged by what is now the WFP Woss Crew.

Ignorance and a lack of science-based facts are what cause people to want to stop old growth logging on Vancouver Island. There is plenty of old growth set aside in parks. The problem with these parks is that they are not accessible to Joe and Jill Public. They have become Old Growth Reserves. Thou shalt not log.

In order to access Nimpkish Lake Park, you need a helicopter and a strong set of legs. If they put in a bridge at the bridge site that Canfor built and a road into the old growth, people could actually see the park for what it is, instead of just viewing it from Hwy 19.

Tahsish- Kwois Park is a gem. MacMillan Bloedel laid out a logging road in the 1980's but it became a park in the 1990's. The valley bottom has huge massive spruce. Only the rich get to enjoy this area as you need a helicopter to get up the river from Kyuquot Sound, or a friend with a shallow tin boat. In October it is awesome; I viewed Coho and Chum salmon by the thousands. There should be a road into the park with a campground. The giant spruce reminded me of the Redwood Forest in California

Brooks Peninsula, a huge park I have viewed from Google Earth on my phone looks spectacular. Once again this is only accessible by yacht or by helicopter. You need to be very wealthy if you are going to get to enjoy this park. These three parks have been set aside for the public but the average British Columbian with an SUV cannot access them.

If the Parks were made accessible to Joe and Jill Public, they would be able to see the vistas, the giant spruce, the Western Red Cedar, and the incredible beaches. No roads you could not go on. Stay home and untutored. Maybe join a protest. After all, what you don't see doesn't exist.

Union Business:

Very few permits for TFL 6, Holberg, will likely be down for months starting at end of June. Jeune Landing is not in any better shape. TFL 37 has an Annual Allowable Cut of 847,000m³ but they are only logging 385,000m³.



Aaron and Ray Harper, Jeune Landing (grapple yarder and super snorkel)

In solidarity, Dan Jorgenson

SOUTH ISLAND REPORT

By Dusty Palmer, Business Agent



Bargaining Update

The Town of Lake Cowichan membership put in a raft of resolutions to put forward to the employer. The committee has worked hard drafting new improved language for all. Though the Provincial Public Health Order allows up to 50 people indoors for an organized event with a safety plan in place, the employer feels more comfortable conducting negotiations by video conferencing this round. We drafted a Protocol Agreement on June 11, 2021, and it has just been signed. We will keep you posted.

Sodexo: Cedar Valley Lodge, Kitimat

The issue of job postings continues. I have been informed that postings in culinary are now being posted by the time box. If you hear or know of positions that employees are 'promoted' into and not by seniority, competency considered, please contact a Shop Steward or me to advise of this mishap. Mark down the specific job, date, and person who was given rather than awarded a posting and forward the information.

Seniority is the basis of the Union. It counts, even if you hear one or two of your supervisors say that seniority does not matter. At a unionized worksite, it matters for layoffs, recall, job postings, overtime, vacation, and shift preference (page 9, Article 9 of Sodexo's Collective Agreement (CA)). Have a look to see more good things we need to be following. If you do not have a copy, go to our webpage at www.usw1-1937.ca. Under the tab 'Resources' you will see Collective Agreements, click on that and scroll down to see the USW/Sodexo CA.

More than 10 employees have been made whole and more to come on the July 2 cheque for being improperly laid off; juniors working ahead of seniors. Seniority matters! If there happens to be anyone else that did not come forward, the grievance is still active. You will need to provide a copy of your EI payments, full name, and who was working that had less seniority than yourself while you were laid off.

Sodexo has a \$0.50 per hour training premium as well as a \$1.00 per hour night shift premium. If you have not been receiving them please inform onsite HR Ann-Marie Arsenault, to have corrected. Keep track of who you

trained and how long you trained them for. I understand some employees are training co-workers for ten hours per day, fourteen days consecutively. It all adds up and it is your money, make sure you are collecting it. Print and save your paystubs and keep a calendar of all the shifts you worked and how much overtime. If there is an error in your pay, it will be easier to pinpoint where it is to help with corrections.

The client, JFJV who oversees the site, is extremely strict when an employee has breached their policies. Our Local has a contract with Sodexo, not JFJV. If you find yourself in trouble with the client who may revoke your site pass, the Union has little weight to assist you. It is like being a truck driver and you lose your driving license from the RCMP. Your employer cannot get your license back. Similarly, if you are caught with contraband in your room or have had a fistfight and JFJV revokes your site pass, you can no longer work for Sodexo as the camp access is regulated by the client. Know what the rules are and make sure you follow them.

The client has recently decided to do luggage searches. I have asked Sodexo to communicate this to the membership so that there is an awareness of what to expect. If a flight of 300 comes in for example, they may check 5-10% of the luggage once at camp. They planned to do it before COVID hitting, and held off due to the pandemic. Do not bring in liquor or drugs to camp or you will find yourself terminated.

Notice Pursuant to Section 54, Labour Relations Code

The School District 79 and Western Forest Products Head Office (WFP) both served the Local a Section 54. The School District advised it will need to reduce its operating expenditures in order to balance the budget. We anticipate one position (that is two separate half positions) will be reduced. At WFP we have been advised the two clerical positions will be eliminated due to an automated system that tracks freight and no reception desk will be necessary. There are outstanding questions to be answered at each operation.

Casinos Set to Reopen in July

Playtime Casino in Campbell River and Duncan Dabber Chances Cowichan Casino are both preparing for opening

SOUTH ISLAND REPORT (cont.)

after an extremely long shut down due to the pandemic and Provincial Health Orders mandating a closure. It has been fifteen months plus that these workers have been out. Fortunately for both sites, the majority of the employees are returning. Agreements were negotiated to ensure employees retained their seniority rights, otherwise there the majority of employees would have been terminated.

During the pandemic, a lot of effort was put into lobbying the government to allow the casinos' to operate under a limited capacity and a strict COVID protocol plan. Even though the plans at each operation seemed extremely safe in comparison to big box stores, grocery stores, or gyms there was no movement in persuading Dr. Bonnie Henry to budge on opening casinos.

We hope that with vaccinations and safety precautions in place the opening up of businesses will be smooth and without incident. The pandemic is most likely a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence (fingers crossed). Welcome back to work!!

Arbitrations/Settlements

Wescon Cedar has finalized an outstanding grievance by way of a settlement rather than going to arbitration. The majority of the settlement is fulfilled and we are now going back and forth with the lawyers to have the final points completed. Wescon has been tardy in fulfilling the settlement; no surprise there. Other grievances may be headed to arbitration in the near future if they are not resolved. Not paying statutory holidays, demoting employees to lower pay grades without just cause, cancelling benefits, and termination without cause are all on the list.

The Town of Lake Cowichan has several outstanding issues headed to arbitration as well as one arbitration decision we have been waiting on for two years involving Cowichan Lake Education Centre. Replacing regular workers with students at a cheaper rate has been an ongoing issue for years. We hope to have a positive decision by the end of June.

*Wishing you all a safe and happy summer.
In solidarity, Dusty Palmer*

WORKING TO COUNTER ANTI-LOGGING PROTESTER MISINFORMATION & PROTECT OUR JOBS IN THE WORKING FOREST **By Brian Butler, President**

The United Steelworkers Local 1-1937 is mindful of the history of anti-logging protests against the work our members perform in the working forests. While we strongly oppose illegal blockades, we acknowledge the rights of individuals to peacefully protest. We also want to be clear that in doing so, protestors must not endanger the lives of workers and should consider the danger they put themselves in when they illegally enter active logging areas. Safety must be first and foremost in everyone's mind and as such we are supportive of the RCMP keeping the peace and enforcing the law within TFL 46 or any other area where illegal blockades take place.

All British Columbians should know that the sustainable annual allowable harvest in this Province is set by BC's independent Chief Forester

who manages multiple objectives including conservation, biodiversity, cultural uses, jobs, and the economy. Many citizens are however unaware that there are agenda-driven environmental organizations that misuse the province's data and make false claims that harvesting is harming the environment and is unsustainable.

Our Union firmly believes it is the goal of these environmental groups to have the Provincial Government react emotionally and without due process, instead of through the due diligence contemplated in the Old Growth Strategic Review process. It is clear to our Union that consultation with First Nations, Industry, workers, and other stakeholders, utilizing a science-based approach across all of BC's forests, (as called for in the Review), is what is truly needed if we are to end division and chaos created by continuing the valley-

ANTI LOGGING PROTESTER MISINFORMATION (cont.)

by-valley protest and blockade approach desired by environmental groups.

Our Union knows that by engaging these organizations directly on the ground or in the media, is a process that only serves their purpose of creating more division, more uncertainty, and better opportunity to further their misinformation. These groups want confrontation for the purpose of creating media coverage, which is a key tool that drives their worldwide fundraising efforts.

To support our membership, Local 1-1937 has chosen to invest significant time and resources in working closely with the forest industry (through the Council of Forest Industries - COFI), through which we hope to create an information campaign to assist in educating the public on the facts. As part of this campaign, we are attempting to speak to all Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA's) from both parties as it's important to help them understand the issues, so they may have informed responses when questions are raised by their constituents.

The Local Union, in conjunction with the Industry, also plans to offer to do the same for Local Government Officials, especially in those communities that may have passed anti-old-growth logging motions without having a clear understanding of the complex issues involved. **We believe that it is important that our political leaders at all levels understand forestry issues, so they may decipher what is factual and what is not in the age of social media.**

Our direct engagement with the Forest Minister and her ministry over our issues of tenure security and forest health as part of the Old Growth Strategic Review and its implementation will continue. In this forum, we are speaking directly to the decision-makers when it comes to forest policy and we believe this approach gives us the best opportunity to ensure good long-term solutions for all British Columbians.

The Local Union continues to encourage members and their families to send letters to the

government in support of forest workers and their communities. For those looking for a quick way to do this please go to www.usw1-1937.ca and under News & Events scroll to "Letter to John Horgan". It takes one minute to send a supportive letter to protect jobs in the working forests. Our provincial government needs to hear from you and your family.

Many people, including some of our own members, may be unaware that in Coastal BC (by the Forest Ministry's own data), the amount of old-growth forest (250 years or older) is actually increasing each year, even with the small amount that is harvested annually. This is because BC is a world leader in forest conservation having permanently conserved 70% of all old growth forests as well as many areas of the province where the forests are not yet considered old growth, but are growing older faster than the small sustainable old growth harvest we have today. With 52% of BC's entire land base having a conservation measure on it, our province has plenty to be proud of for its world-class and certifiable forest practices.

We should all be proud of the work our members perform. It is difficult, often dangerous but very rewarding work. It remains an essential service that supports our families and powers the economy in our communities and across our Province. One final reminder to members: Please do not take the bait and engage with protesters if they are found blocking access to your worksite. It only serves the protestors' purpose of creating a rallying point, gain media exposure, fundraises, and further their ultimate goal of ending commercial logging.

Our Local Union will continue to work with the Government, First Nations, and Industry to ensure working forests, including old growth, continue to support good-paying Union jobs in a sustainable, accessible, and productive manner, so it can remain the economic backbone across our Province.

**Please stay safe everyone.
In solidarity, Brian Butler**

Then and Now

By Candace Kitagawa

Town of Lake Cowichan Public Works/Parks Dept.



I'll never forget how desperate I was back THEN. I was so excited to get hired by the Village of Lake Cowichan for \$5.00 an hour as a Gardener's Assistant. I had just finished digging shoulder-width ditches up to nine feet deep for new storm and sewer services in backyards for several months. When I started my new job with the Village, I wasn't in the Union. The rest of the six-man crew were. One day, I heard one of them complaining about only earning \$15.00 an hour, I blurted out, "Try feeding your family on five dollars an hour!"

Coincidentally, the garbage truck operator injured his back and I volunteered to do his job. Several hundred empty cans later, and proving my other skills, I was invited to join IWA Local 1-80. After 12 years of loading and driving gravel trucks, street sweeping, running the screening plant, shovelling hot mix, pouring sidewalks, digging holes to locate services, raking back-fill, and landscaping, there was a new "In-House" job posting. I traded my shovel in for a computer.

NOW I have been a Public Works Administrative Assistant for 22 years. I have developed my organizational skills, kept detailed records, written pages of minutes, and improved the office system. Of course, dealing with the public makes every day interesting!

My Anniversary Date is in 1987. As the years pass, I refer to my Collective Agreement often. Although I was the Shop Steward for only one term, I have helped many co-workers with grievances, provided several Business Agents with priceless information for settlements, and won a personal arbitration.

Unions have done a lot for women over the years by providing higher wages, better benefits, education, protection, decent work hours, and extended maternity and parental leave. USW Local 1-1937 has supported me, personally, many times over the past 34 years. It is truly life-changing that I do not have to tolerate bullying. I do not have to feel pressured, intimidated, harassed, or work in an unsafe work environment. I am extremely thankful for my Union benefits and my Union's never-ending support.

Sister Dusty Palmer has been an exceptional Business Agent since 2015. I tried to warn her the first time I met

her that there are issues in the Town of Lake Cowichan's Public Works/Parks and Municipal Office/Bylaw/Building Departments. She said she was up for a challenge! Well, she has had five (5) years of challenges!

Currently, I am honoured to be the Recording Secretary for Bargaining and Negotiations. It is different this year because of COVID-19. We are spread out at separate tables with masks and hand sanitizer available. Everybody has been vaccinated at least once so there is high hope the pandemic will ease. Through the restrictions, we are focused on the written resolutions that were collected from our membership. We have meetings lined up in June.

I have experienced eight Superintendents and five of them have been in the past four years. One resigned, one quit, one got fired, one was appointed and the last one started in September. It's remarkable that simultaneously, there have been numerous grievances, settlements, arbitrations, and lawyer bills. The Union has won most of them.

Our Business Agent has experienced our frustration firsthand. She has made the time to listen to us, updated the language in our Collective Agreement, and improved our working conditions. She genuinely cares about all members and has fought hard to protect us.

Recently, the USW slogan, Strength in Unity, has been tested. A petition was circulated which divided our Union brothers and sisters and weakened our unity. There have been false accusations and there is dissension in other departments. Hopefully, this will be rectified moving forward.

As noticed in the Solidarity News, it is not surprising to see Dusty move on to larger certifications. We will miss her professionalism, strong work ethics, and feisty character.

NOW and THEN, when I reflect on my Public Works career and my Union activism, I am proud!!! It's ok that I have been called, "Little Miss Union", more than once.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank the 1-1937 support staff, past and present. They have always been there to answer questions and help on so many levels. **In solidarity, Candace Kitagawa**

PORT MCNEILL REPORT

By Shelley Siemens, Business Agent



SNEAKY GAMES THAT EMPLOYERS PLAY THE TRADE-OFF TRAP!

In certain circumstances, an employer has been offering to give additional days of work as a method to remedy a seniority grievance. It sounds really nice when they say, “Hey I’m sorry that happened, but you can come in on your day off and work in replacement.” Chances are if they are offering you to come to work to remedy a seniority grievance, you were likely entitled to those hours anyway. In some cases, it could be at overtime rates had you been called into work when you were supposed to be. I would suggest if there is work on this day, and you are senior enough to qualify for it, you accept it and let them know that they can still pay you for your lost day, and you should continue with your grievance. Make sure that you do not get caught in this trade-off trap. Talk to your Shop Stewards and your Business Agent if this is happening to you.

SIGNING DOCUMENTS AT WORK

When you are part of an incident investigation and especially if your name appears on the form as participating in an accident or incident report, make sure you sign your incident reports. Do NOT accept any excuse that you are not allowed to sign because of COVID-19 or other reasons. If it is that big of a deal the employer can make copies for everyone or provide gloves in order to not cross-contaminate. Make sure you get a copy of the report for your files. If you find that there is something in that report and you do not agree with or it is inaccurate, make a note on your signature line that you do not agree with it (and list what the item on the form is you disagree with). Because your employer is telling you to sign something does not mean you have to agree with them, especially if it is important information on an Accident Report that is not being recorded accurately.

KEEP GOOD RECORDS

Keep copies of any important documents that you need to hand into your employer; Anything that is important for you that you are required to share with the employer (ie. doctor notes, letters, etc.). You will be surprised how many important documents are conveniently misfiled when they benefit the grievor. Use your “Notes App” on

your iPhone and click the camera icon and scan the document. It is a simple and amazing file management tool. Take care of your records!

KEEP INFORMED

Have you ever heard the expression knowledge is power? Well, it is true, we often communicate to our members in newsletters such as this, The Solidarity News. Also, we have several methods of communication that I hope you take advantage of, our Local’s USW Website is a great place to find current news Information, Resources for Stewards, and up-to-date information on current Union campaigns. Make sure you check them out at <https://www.usw1-1937.ca/>

We have a very current Facebook site that can be found by searching @usw1937 or click this link or copy and paste this link into your browser <https://www.facebook.com/usw1937> and make sure you hit “Like” on our Facebook page to get the up-to-date information in your newsfeed.

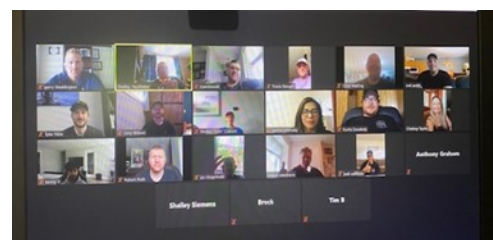
We also have an active Text to Member Program where we often send out texts of current events and important information for our members. Make sure you contact our office with your current cell phone number in order to get signed up to the texting programs, call to get activated toll free: 1-866-746-6121



EDUCATION

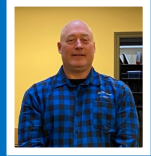
It was really encouraging to see so much involvement with our online New Members Courses and the Stewards Level 1 and 2 courses. Even though we were unable to meet in person we still persevered given all the elements against us. No surprise there, as we are Steelworkers after all! The Local would like to thank everyone for your flexibility and participation in these courses, we have many more new ones on the way. Make sure to sign up!

In solidarity, Shelley Siemens



MID-ISLAND LOGGING REPORT

By Jason Cox, Business Agent



Camp Committees have been working hard dealing with issues and agreements that are needing to be enforced. We hope to resolve as many as possible in the near future.

Feedback from members that have taken the online education courses offered in the last couple of months has been very positive. Great job by Shelley Siemens who is our Education Coordinator. If you are interested in participating in our online courses, visit our website at www.usw1-1937.ca and put in an application.

Two grievances are waiting to go to arbitration. One dealing with interpretations on hours of work is scheduled for June 22-23, 2021 and the other, an Article XXV Contracting Out issue will be referred directly to Arbitrator Vince Ready as per Supplement No.1 of the Collective Agreement. Permit issues are still taking a toll in some operations, making it next to impossible to have a consistent workflow. This is all at a time of record-breaking lumber prices.

The Wrap and Splash Program in Powell River at the Olympic Dryland Sort is having major impacts on the crew and company with north of 70 percent of the wood directly watered instead of going over the deck. This affects the crew's employment drastically. They are having to rely on wood being barged in from other sources to make up for the shortfall in work.

The Local has signed up Kip Brown Trucking 2021 Ltd. in Powell River. Kip Brown has a Bill 13 contract with Western Forest Products (WFP) to dewater the wood that is harvested up and around Powell Lake and haul it to the ocean where it is boomed up and readied for towing.



Shelly Forsland, wheel loader operator at Olympic Dryland Sort in Powell River

Cypress Creek Logging Ltd. took over as the Woodlands contractor for the WFP Gold River Division and Nootka Sound Central Sort in January of this year and is having some major challenges as all of the wood has to go to Nasook Dump instead of going through the Nootka Central Sort. This is adding significant cost to the operation.

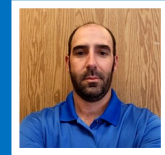
Stay safe and enjoy the summer.

In solidarity, Jason Cox

safety
matters because **you** matter

NEW DIRECTION

By Nolan Paquette, Business Agent



A lot has happened in the past couple of months. On May 10, 2021, I said goodbye to my Manufacturing position of almost 20 years with Western Forest Products and started a career within the Local Union.

I worked my way from the bottom up at Duke Point Sawmill (DPS) from 1999 - 2008 doing everything from clean-up to forklift driver, boom man, crane operator, and then into the barker. When the recession hit, I left the DPS for four years and did pipeline and drilling work, paving, and sold office supplies. I returned in 2012 and begun my activism within the Union, becoming a Shop Steward and eventually became the Plant Chair as well as an Executive Board Member, servicing Ward Area 10, Nanaimo - Qualicum.

As a newly hired Business Agent with Local 1-1937 working out of the Duncan Office, I look forward to stepping up and fighting for our members' rights.

There is a lot to learn in my new position and I have 14 new Collective Agreements to read and take in. The certifications I will be servicing all have different contracts than what I am used to at DPS, but I am up for the challenge. I have hit the ground running and would like to thank everyone in the office for helping me get sorted along the way. This new chapter is something I have been building up to over my years as a Union member and I am excited to begin representing our Union Brothers and Sisters on a larger scale.

On a side note, we recently held elections at Duke Point

Sawmill for both the Plant Committee and the Safety Committee. There was a lot of interest from the membership for all positions, and we will have a full panel on each committee. I am happy to see continued interest in helping each other out to ensure your workplace is safe and fair. The balance between new and returning committee members is about even, so there will be a lot of good information to be passed down, as well as the opportunity for new training throughout the year.

With restrictions lifting in the coming months, I am excited to announce that we will be getting our members from Playtime Gaming Group Inc., (Campbell River) and Duncan Dabber Bingo (Chances Cowichan) back to work soon. This is roughly 80 members who have been off work over the last 16 plus months due to Provincially mandated closures. Meetings are already being set to make this a smooth transition back into the workplace. Let us hope we can stay ahead of the pandemic and get back to some form of normal.

Have a great summer!

In solidarity,

Nolan Paquette



Nolan Paquette taking his oath of office, sworn in as a Business Agent on June 25, 2021.



Rick Vaux (R) showing support for Union committees by casting his vote in the Duke Point Sawmill elections. Business Agent Glen Cheetham (left).

DAILY CHALLENGES

By Aaron Henry, Chair School District #79



Over the past two years, our organization has had a complete shift in every department with new managers. With this change came a transition to new views and open-door policies for workers to be “heard” (slippery slope if “heard” is talking about another member). We have had challenges on interpretations of contract language, encouragement of members bargaining their own work, members flat out denying work (all this does is weaken our job duties), and job descriptions being followed when convenient and this is being accepted by some. From a Union standpoint and an employee, we want to be heard and we want it done through the proper channels. We do not want to take away from the contract language that protects us.

We have had managers encourage members to challenge the contract when it does not suit a person’s needs when the contract is jointly owned the language is valid. Changes do not arbitrarily happen without both parties revisiting the Collective Agreement (this part is always left out). It is our job to increase the benefits we fought to have as our conditions of work, not reduce them. One member wrote to the Board of Trustees which directly pointed fingers back at the workforce. Good intentions were there but it could have been better served with assistance from the Shop Committee. We have had a manager state, “I am surprised the Union has not asked for physical competency tests for your members”. This is NOT our role, this is an employer’s role.

We have heard members continually ask to be directed and given tasks so they could be efficient and effective. All we hear is, “Thing’s take time,” and the same is repeated while nothing is done. This has been a long and tiring process for the Union to try and combat. In some instances, work is needed but is not issued to the workforce. We have members going days/weeks without work orders.

The Union has continually asked for work to be brought in-house as we can be doing work that is contracted out. We are at a tipping point hearing, “We assume our staff is at 100% of their workload capacity,” while our members are asking for more work and the School District is advertising for contractors to come onto our sites for work projects when it could be done by our own members. We cannot defend this, as our existing workforce is working. We are asking to utilize our current workforce and hire more employees if need be. We constantly hear about past practices; ones we have tried ending. We get a consistent practice and then it changes and we have to go to HR to try and remedy it.

A busy workforce is a happy workforce as people feel productive when they go home at the end of the day. We stand by the fact that it is easier to work and be fulfilled than to look busy. Have a good summer.

In solidarity,
Aaron Henry

Terminal Mainland Sawmill Retirees and New Hires

Mainland Sawmill used to run three shifts. Since the devastating fire at the mill a couple of years ago, the Company made a business decision to cancel the graveyard shift due to a lack of money and has been running two shifts only. During this timeframe, nine employees have retired and the Company hired fourteen new employees. Much experience was lost but the new employees are doing well. The workforce is aging in all sectors and we will need to see an increase in training and apprenticeships (within the trades) in order to keep up.

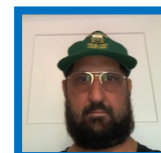
This month two saw filers are retiring; David Stuart and Walter Giroto, June 16 and June 20, 2021, respectively. Both were good workers who got along with everyone and will be missed.

On behalf of the entire committee, I wish them all the best in their retirement. We will arrange a pizza party in the near

future as COVID-19 restrictions are lifting and everyone is getting vaccinated. We have had a tradition of a pizza party for many years for coworkers retiring and the pandemic has stopped us from holding them. We look forward to planning gatherings in the near future now that the Provincial Public Health Order is loosening restrictions.

Happy Retirement Dave and Walter!! Wishing everyone a good summer.

In solidarity,
Joginder Sunner, Executive Board Member



COFI, USW Wood Council call for ‘balanced approach’ to Old Growth Strategic Review

Across British Columbia, important discussions are happening about the future of our provincial forest sector. As these discussions continue and as the BC government advances consultations on the Old Growth Strategic Review and looks to modernize provincial forest policy, the United Steelworkers (USW)’s Wood Council and the BC Council of Forest Industries (COFI) – together – believe it’s important to take a balanced approach that is grounded by good science, informed by an inclusive process and creates a path forward that benefits all British Columbians.

We are very proud to work in BC’s forest industry – a sector that is foundational to the provincial economy, recognized as a global leader in forest management practices, and delivering the low-carbon products the world needs.

As COFI’s recently released report, *Contributing to a Better BC: 2019 Forest Industry Economic Impact Study*, found, it’s an industry that supports 100,000 good jobs for British Columbians and generates \$13 billion in GDP and nearly \$8.5 billion in wages, salaries, and benefits. Importantly, the forest industry contributes over \$4 billion in government revenue annually to support healthcare, education, and other important social services.

Like all British Columbians, we cherish our forests and value BC’s commitment to conservation. BC is already a leader in this regard, with about 52 percent of the land base – which totals 95 million hectares – either protected or under some form of designation. But in addition to conservation values, we also value BC’s renewable forest resource, including old growth, for its spiritual and cultural uses, and the jobs and economic opportunities it provides to Indigenous communities, people, and families all over the province.

Each year, less than one percent of the area designated for sustainable timber harvesting by BC’s independent chief forester is harvested. About one-quarter of that one percent is considered old growth, and this modest harvest of mature timber supports 38,000 jobs and contributes \$3.5 billion to BC’s GDP.

As the provincial government undertakes the work on the Review and forest policy modernization, it is critically important that we all work to ensure the result is an evidenced-based, province-wide strategy not only for old-growth, but for all of BC’s forests.

To achieve this, it’s essential to first define a clear vision for BC’s forests. We need to know where we are headed to create a strategy that provides British Columbians with a refreshed vision that balances the environmental, social, and economic objectives for our forests.

The next step is creating a province-wide implementation strategy for all forests province-wide, including all Crown forest lands, parks, protected areas, and special management zones, not just the timber

harvesting land base. The strategy should be implemented through a plan that prioritizes forest health and sustainability, recognizing the dynamic nature of forests and planning for the effects of climate change.

Getting this right will require input from a wide range of people and organizations. That’s why it is critical that First Nations, communities, labour, industry, and others be engaged throughout the process. It’s also essential that decisions about BC’s forest resources are grounded in and informed by science, good data, robust socio-economic analysis, and incorporate traditional knowledge. This will ensure that the government’s objectives are achieved while also minimizing the potential for negative impacts on cultural uses, jobs, families, and communities in both urban and rural BC.

We recognize that there will be differences of opinions about what approach is best, but we believe it’s important that the consultation process brings different parties to the table together to hear each other’s perspectives. Ensuring this vital and informative work is completed prior to any further land-use decisions being made will help us get past divisiveness in our communities and move us towards collective solutions.

By working together and balancing the important roles that forests play in our province, we can find a positive path forward that ensures the sector continues to provide benefits for all British Columbians for generations to come.

Article by Jeff Bromley and Susan Yurkovich.

Jeff Bromley is Chair, Wood Council Canada, United Steelworkers. The Steelworkers’ Wood Council represents over 12,000 forestry workers in BC. Susan Yurkovich is president and CEO of BC Council of Forest Industries. COFI represents most lumber, pulp and paper, and manufactured wood producers from across the province.



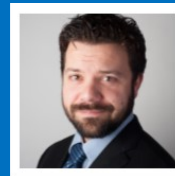
Jeff Bromley



Susan Yurkovich

UNION REPRESENTATION AT EMPLOYER INVESTIGATION MEETINGS

By Steve Rogers



The law is clear that any meeting where an Employer is considering discipline of an employee must be conducted fairly and consistent with the Collective Agreement. All USW Local 1-1937 contracts contain provisions requiring a Union representative (like a Shop Steward) to be present at a disciplinary meeting.

Despite this, your employer might tell you that you do not need a union representative following a safety incident or harassment complaint because those meetings are just for the purpose of “investigating” and no discipline is being contemplated. This is based on law that distinguishes “investigation” meetings from “disciplinary” meetings.

I strongly recommend that you insist on Union representation for any meeting where there may be a suggestion that you did something wrong, even if your employer says it’s just an investigation.

Many USW Local 1-1937 Collective Agreements, such as that with Western Forest Products, require the employer to allow Union participation in safety incident and harassment investigations.

Even if there is not a clear Collective Agreement obligation on an employer, when employees insist on union representation, employers will often agree. Employers will often decide to have a shop steward present rather than risk a later finding that they breached the Collective Agreement or conducted an unfair process.

If your Employer does not allow you representation, I recommend that you make sure that either the Employer puts its refusal in writing or a co-worker is present to witness the refusal.

If you are disciplined following an unfair investigation and you can prove you were denied representation requested, the Union may be able to have your discipline overturned on those grounds alone.

In Solidarity,

Steve Rogers, Victory Square Law

Back in the Day

Sorting Logs

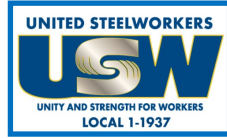


Photo by:
Gettyimages.ca

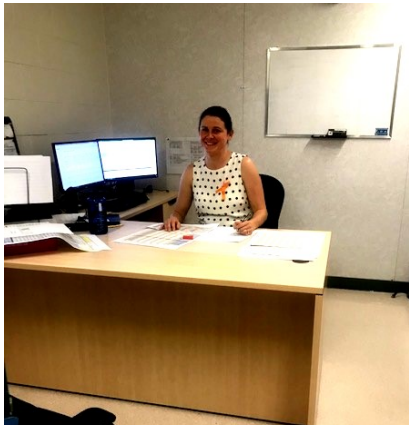
Member Photos



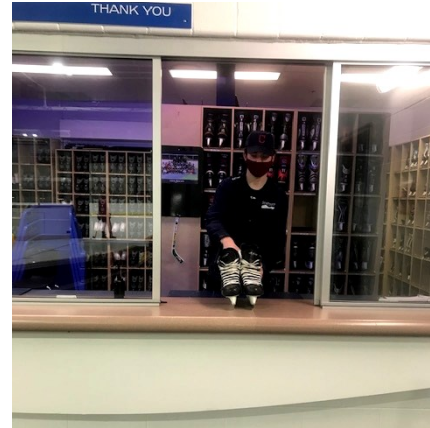
Clark Atchison and Tony Croteau
Icemakers, CVRD



Lori Olsson, Reception Supervisor
Strathcona Regional District



Amanda Phillips, Program Assistant
Aquatics; Strathcona Regional District



Coulsen McCartney, Skate Patrol
Strathcona Regional District



Reg Nightingale, Log Truck Driver
WFP Englewood Forest Products

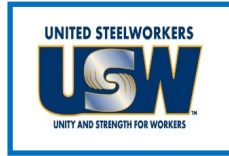


James Seward, Drop Sorter
WFP Duke Point Sawmill

Member Photos



Walter Giroto, retiring Saw Filer
Mainland Sawmill. Congrats!!



David Stuart, retiring Saw Filer
Mainland Sawmill. Congrats!!



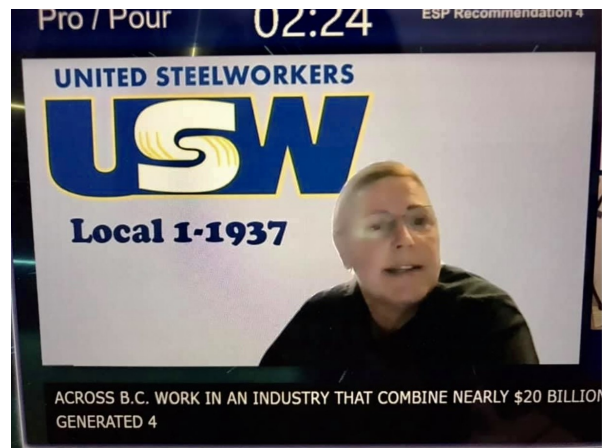
Curtis Baller Electrician
School District #79



Steve Wiersman Icemaker
Cowichan Valley Regional District



Travis Hilts, Log Truck Driver
WFP Port McNeill Forest Operation



Shelley Siemens, Business Agent speaking in favour of a
forestry resolution at the CLC Convention June 18, 2021

USW EDUCATION

Our Education Department has been transferring our courses into virtual programs. This is a great opportunity for members to be able to continue their education online while attending from the safety of their own homes. We have found that there are great benefits to the convenience of online learning, as well as some challenges that come with reception and accessibility. USW Local 1-1937 is holding virtual online courses. The first ones have been a great success! Hopefully, we can resume face-to-face courses after everyone is vaccinated. We are now in the planning stages of putting on more stewards courses and new member courses. If you are interested in participating in any of these courses make sure to let your Business Agent know, or you can go to our website

to view our up-and-coming calendar of courses and sign up for them here:

<https://www.usw1-1937.ca/education.html>



Smarter is Stronger

Welcome To United Steelworkers Local 1-1937

We Are A Large Geographic Local Union Representing Workers In All Areas And Sectors Of Coastal British Columbia Including All Of Vancouver Island, All Coastal Islands Including Haida Gwaii And The Mainland Coast Area From The Alaskan State Border South To The Washington State Border.

IWA-Canada (Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers) Merged With The United Steelworkers In 2004.

Our Local Union Was Created Through The Amalgamation Of Former I.W.A. Local Unions That Merged Together Over The Years, Including Locals 1-71, 1-80, 1-118, 1-217, 1-363 And 1-85.

USW Locals 1-80, 1-363, And 1-2171 Merged In 2009 To Form What Is Now Local 1-1937. In 2017 Local 1-85 Of Port Alberni Merged With Local 1-1937 To Create One Local Union Servicing All Of Vancouver Island And The Coast Of British Columbia.

The Moniker 1-1937 Was Chosen As The 1 Represents The Historic Region 1 Of The Former International Woodworkers Of America (IWA) And 1937 Represents The First Year That IWA Locals Were Chartered In British Columbia.

Today, USW Local 1-1937 Proudly Represents Approximately 6200 Men And Women On The Coast Of British Columbia Working In All Sectors Of The Economy

