



## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### **BC Economic Development Association Launches Forestry Plus program**

**CHILLIWACK, BC, December 12, 2019** - Communities in British Columbia continue to experience economic restructuring, caused not only by the loss or temporary closures of sawmills, but also by the direct and indirect economic impacts of the closures. These closures and curtailments will impact major centres throughout the Province, including Vancouver, Victoria and Kelowna.

“The British Columbia Economic Development Association [BCEDA] is committed to doing what it can to assist every BC community and is dependant on support,” said Dale Wheeldon, president and CEO. “If a business or member of a community has ideas on other initiatives that could help those affected by the impacts of closures or curtailments or would like to partner with us on assisting communities, we encourage them to reach out.”

Due to support received over the past several years by communities at its annual auction, BCEDA is announcing the launch of a “Forestry Plus” program. The first phase of the program will allow for increased dialogue between impacted communities – Indigenous and non-Indigenous, BCEDA and other partners. Bringing together a network of economic development professionals to share challenges and successes. Additional phases will be launched as resources become available.

The first phase of this program includes the following:

- Forestry Impacted Communities Webpage with resources: <https://www.bceda.ca/forestry.php>
- Forestry Impacted Communities Group Email – Peer-to-peer intranet tool. One single email address reaches a network of impacted community representatives
- Informal roundtable discussion at 2020 BC Economic Summit for forestry-impacted communities
- Forestry Impacted Communities Message Board

BCEDA was the first Canadian association that launched an Economic Disaster Recovery Program to assist communities impacted by natural or economic disasters, including the closure of a major employer. The program has been used extensively throughout BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, US Virgin Islands, and in January one of the modules will be implemented in the US Mariana Islands.

For more information about the BCEDA Economic Disaster Recovery Program, please visit: [https://www.bceda.ca/disaster\\_preparation\\_and\\_recov.php](https://www.bceda.ca/disaster_preparation_and_recov.php)

**Contact:**

Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO, BCEDA

T: (604) 819-3809

E: [dwheeldon@bceda.ca](mailto:dwheeldon@bceda.ca)

[bceda.ca](http://bceda.ca)

**About BCEDA**

*The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is the leading professional association of economic development practitioners in the Province of BC. BCEDA currently has over 450 members from communities throughout the province. BCEDA provides services that help member communities grow and expand new and existing businesses, attract new business investments, and work towards strategic infrastructure investment, land use planning, and community enhancement.*

*BCEDA services include an annual summit and networking event, educational and professional development opportunities, public relations, advisory services and resources and partnering with communities and the Province of BC to market British Columbia for business investment.*