

23 September 2003

Cowichan Tribes and Hayes Forest Services Limited Form Joint Venture for Proposed Sale of Honeymoon Bay Public Lands

Duncan, B.C. – The Province's largest Indian Band and largest forest services company have joined forces to bid on TimberWest's Honeymoon Bay (HBO) Public Lands business. The HBO Public Lands would be operated by Hayes Forest Services Limited in partnership with Khowutzun Forest Services Limited, a company owned by the Cowichan Tribes. This joint venture also carries with it the support-in-principle of the Ditidaht First Nation and the Pacheedaht First Nation.

"A significant portion of the HBO Public Lands fall within our traditional territory," said Cowichan Tribes Chief Harvey Alphonse, "and, this very progressive business arrangement with Hayes will help us build stable, long-term employment for our People. Though the land remains publicly owned, the full-phase harvesting operations have tremendous economic development possibilities."

The HBO Public Lands are located on southwestern Vancouver Island and are currently operated by TimberWest Forest Corp. The area consists of diverse and challenging terrain which necessitates a full range of harvesting systems from ground-based to helicopter.

"We've got the widest range of services in the industry and I'm confident we can work with Cowichan Tribes to maximize the potential of the Honeymoon Bay operation," said Donald P. Hayes, President of Hayes. "We believe there is a strong future for B.C.'s forest industry and that innovative business partnerships like this are how we can make it happen."

Both Khowutzun Development Corporation (KDC) and Hayes Forest Services Limited are British Columbia companies and both are major economic contributors to the Cowichan Region. KDC has successful operations in forestry services, construction, civil works, millwork and cultural tourism, and employs over 200 people. Hayes is the leading forest services provider in British Columbia and is recognized as one of "Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies" with over 600 employees.

An Expression of Interest was hand-delivered to TimberWest offices in Vancouver today by a Cowichan Tribes entourage lead by Chief Alphonse. Both the Cowichan Tribes and Hayes are optimistic about the potential outcome of the TimberWest sale process.

For more information, contact:



Mary Venneman
Manager, Communications
Cowichan Tribes
250 748 3196, Extension 412



Caroll Taiji
Vice President, Communications
Hayes Forest Services Limited
250 709 6300