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LP Air Emissions Review
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Submitted by:
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My name is Ward Perchuk and I am the President of Spruce Products Limited (SPL). I am also here today as the Chairman of the Forest Industry Association of Manitoba. Today I plan to offer some comments on LP's environmental and social performance in the Swan River area.

Since LP's arrival in this area, standards for forest management have risen. As a Registered Professional Forester (Ontario #1738) I can state that stream crossings have improved dramatically, low quality poplar is now utilized, and planning and modeling for future forestry activities are likely the best in Province.

As the largest softwood user in the area, SPL has a good business relationship with LP. Our harvesting operations are intertwined in that LP's logging operations will produce incidental softwood which is delivered to our mill and our logging operations will produce a volume of incidental hardwood which is delivered to LP. It is also important to note that prior to the arrival of LP in the Swan Valley there was a number of small hardwood sawmills. LP has been very respectful of these small business people and helped ensure they receive their annual quota volumes for their own mills. Furthermore, the presence of LP has helped these mills receive a higher grade of log as now the lower quality logs can be shipped to the OSB mill in Minitonas.

Essentially the above paragraph brings attention to the fact that LP is an honest and ethical company to do business with. It is clear that LP plays a crucial role in forest management in the Mountain Forest Section and their ongoing operations are linked to the success of many other businesses in the area.

LP's ongoing operations provide in excess of 170 direct jobs and create opportunities for over 60 logging and trucking contractors. In addition, since mill construction the company has spent millions on maintenance and new capital projects that have also created employment in the area.

As a corporate citizen, LP has been most generous. There is seldom a week that goes by where some group from our area is noted in our local paper thanking LP for their support. Support has been directed at everything from environmental initiatives such as the Duck Mountain Forest Centre to children's sports.

The RTO question at the Minitonas mill is simple one. The RTOs consume a huge amount of natural gas and produce little benefit. In all of this discussion it seems the impact to the environment burning large volumes of natural gas has been overlooked. I would like to think our Provincial officials would be steering us towards bioenergy options. I note LP has recently made a large investment in bioenergy for process heat.

The same technology that LP uses to produce boards is used in numerous mills in communities all across Canada every day. Not one of these mills has RTOs and yet all local emissions standards are respected. In other jurisdictions, governments has set standards and instructed OSB companies to comply. In all cases RTOs were not required.

We are currently going through the worst down turn in the forest products industry since the 1930s. To impose unnecessary environmental costs on a company at this time would be something more than irresponsible. LP is critical to the well being of many other businesses in Manitoba. The loss of LP would impact numerous contractors, suppliers, and service providers; SPL included.

Here in the Swan Valley, we abide by standards set by Manitoba Environment. Expert evidence will show that RTOs at LP are not required to meet government standards. Clearly, it is time to discontinue the use of the RTOs and move forward on a path where Manitoba Environment and LP continue to work cooperatively to ensure good air quality.

Respectfully:

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