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TIMBERWEST COMMITTED TO SAFETY: ORDERS INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

Vancouver (BC) – TimberWest looks forward to the recommendations of the Coroner's Inquest in Duncan and will work to determine how to best implement those relating to landowners and licensees, Paul McElligott, TimberWest President and CEO, said today.

"We thank Coroner Stanton and the jury for their hard work and deliberation," said McElligott. "The death of Ted Gramlich last November was a terrible tragedy. Even though WorkSafe BC concluded that a 'lapse of judgment' by the logger himself was the primary cause of the fatality, it is our duty to regularly review safety procedures, look for ways to make improvements, and then follow through."

McElligott added, "Safety is our first priority and we have made numerous enhancements since the fall of 2005. This is an area of continuous improvement for our company."

To that end, the Company has asked Dave Haggard, former President of the IWA, and Philip Halkett, former Deputy Minister to the Premier and a long-serving Deputy Minister of Forests in BC, to undertake an independent, third-party safety evaluation. The scope of their mandate will include the following:

- Review TimberWest's safety obligations as both a landowner and employer under the existing regulatory framework;
- Review TimberWest's overall safety program as well as related policies and procedures to identify any areas for improvement;
- Review and comment on enhancements to TimberWest's safety program since November 2005;
- Review TimberWest's safety program with the BC Forest Safety Council to identify any potential gaps and areas for further improvement; and
- Review any recommendations of the Coroner's jury for potential safety improvements by landowners operating under a contractor model and advise on how they should be integrated into TimberWest's overall program.

In ordering this evaluation McElligott said, "Safety is of paramount importance to TimberWest and nothing comes before it, not production, not quality, and not profits. We have always been very transparent about safety and proud of our safety record. We will make the findings of this independent evaluation public."

Mr. Haggard and Mr. Halkett have been asked to deliver their report by the end of November 2006.

Profile – Dave Haggard

Dave Haggard is the former nationally-elected president of the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA). Working out of the national union office in British Columbia, he also sat on the Executive Council of the Canadian Labour Congress and has served as an executive officer of the BC Federation of Labour. Mr. Haggard also sat on the Board of Directors of Working Enterprises Ltd., Working Enterprises National Ltd., and Concert Properties and is a trustee of the IWA-Forest Industry Pension Plan.

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Mr. Haggard was first elected as national president of the IWA in 1996 and was re-elected to that position twice. Before that, he served five years as President of Local 1-85 in Port Alberni, BC, during which time he also served on the IWA's National Executive Board, National Environment Committee, and BC Provincial Negotiating Committee.

A full-time officer of the IWA since 1985, he became camp chairman at MacMillan Bloedel's Franklin River division in 1978, where he worked as a welder and a truck driver and served on the safety and camp committees during the 1970s.

Profile – Philip Halkett

Philip Halkett is a former senior civil servant with the province of British Columbia, having served as Deputy to the Premier and Deputy Minister for a number of ministries including: Forests; Aboriginal Affairs; Small Business; Tourism and Culture; Economic Development; Finance and Corporate Relations, as well as Secretary of Treasury Board.

Since his retirement from the provincial government, Halkett has worked as a consultant for clients in both the public and private sectors. He also serves as chair of the Advisory Board, School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and is past recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in the Public Service. Mr. Halkett is a graduate from the University of British Columbia with a degree in economics.

Additional Information

For further information, please contact:

Steve Lorimer

TimberWest Forest Corp.

Manager, Public Affairs & Government Relations

Telephone: (250) 729-3727

Email: lorimers@timberwest.com