



TRANSCRIPT OF CHAIR'S VIDEO MESSAGE

Hi. I am Kevin Kriese, Chair of BC's Forest Practice Board. I am here in my home in the beautiful Bulkley Valley, traditional territories of the Wet'suwet'en Nation. Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic threw us all a big curveball. Like many organizations, the Board had to modify its approach, modify its operations in order to keep people safe and meet COVID-19 protocols. We reduced the number of our audits and focused our audit attention on government responsibilities rather than community or major licensees. We also, like many organizations, took advantage of virtual platforms so we didn't have to do face-to-face meetings and took a lot of our training and other meetings online. We experimented with the use of webinars and successfully used them to launch a couple of our major reports. We are pretty happy with the results. One of the benefits of being with the Forest Practices Board is we have a very broad mandate and we were able to shift our work and focus on other parts of our mandate that didn't require as much travel, so we could continue to serve the public interest. One of the projects we were able to take on in this time was to look at some of our internal processes and improve our policies, processes, and some of our operational tools so that we are able to come out of the pandemic in the future stronger with clear roles and responsibilities and improved operations. A couple of other things we took on that we are excited about is our approach to Indigenous people and to climate change. We have begun assembling a major inventory of climate change information so that the board better understands how forest practices can mitigate, respond to, and adapt to the changing climate around us. We also modified and have improved our approach to engaging Indigenous communities. We are now approaching First Nations early in our audits and our investigations and this is providing an opportunity so that communities who want to learn about our work early can engage with us at the beginning of our processes. These are just early steps that we are taking with Indigenous communities and we'll see more as we try and learn and expand. Reconciliation is a journey and we are taking some of the first steps. Overall, we are really confident that a return to more normal routine operations will see a Board that is stronger, better, more focused with clear roles and responsibilities and better prepared for the challenges that we all face in the future.