

2018 Forestry Industry Bargaining

USW LOCAL 1-417 UPDATE

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Update #17

November 6, 2018

USW – IFLRA agree to Mediation

The USW Bargaining Committee, representing the USW Locals 1-417 (Kamloops), 1-423 (Kelowna), 1-405 (Cranbrook) and 1-2017 (Prince George) and the IFLRA, representing southern interior forestry employers, have agreed to mediation through the B.C. Labour Relations Board following the inability to agree to a new collective agreement after the groups' 4th bargaining session ended last week, November 1.

Mediator Dave Schaub has been appointed to mediate talks between the two parties. Those talks are scheduled for November 14, 15 and 16, 2018 in Kelowna.

Following a 98% strike mandate by the USW membership October 30, 2018, 72-hour strike notice was served to the IFLRA October 31, putting over 3000 members in a legal strike position as of Saturday, November 3. No job action will take place while the mediation process is engaged.

Despite reporting record profits in the 3rd quarter of 2018, Canfor has decided to engage in rotating layoffs at their BC operations, angering USW members in what looks more like a bargaining tactic than a reflection of markets. Forestry employers across the province have expressed concerns regarding high stumpage costs. Based on last quarter's lower lumber prices, that rate is expected to decrease accordingly beginning January of 2019.

For the members of USW Local 1-2017, Prince George, over 1700 members have been in a strike position since October 1 and participated in an overtime ban and rotating strikes. At the request of the USW Bargaining Committee, job action will be halted prior to and during the mediation process. The Bargaining Committee is grateful for the strong show of solidarity USW Local 1-2017 members have displayed during this process.

Your USW Bargaining Committee remains determined to bargain a fair collective agreement however at this point, the IFLRA has yet to match the last CONIFER proposal. Meanwhile, CONIFER continues to demand the concession of working 40 hours at straight time if a statutory holiday falls on a rest day, among others.

More information will be made available as bargaining continues.

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