

Canfor to Restart Mackenzie Sawmill

By [250 News](#)

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Prince George, B.C. - Canfor is going to restart its sawmill in Mackenzie by early July . One shift, with about 60 people on the payroll is the plan . That will translate to a further 150 jobs that are not directly at the mill.

Company CEO Jim Shepard was joined by Mackenzie's Mayor Stephanie Killam and Minister of Forests, Pat Bell, in making the announcement this afternoon. The decision to restart operations in Mackenzie comes as a result of the Company's efforts to increase its production of value-added products. The mill will return to operation with a single shift. This decision will result in the production of 80 million board feet of SPF lumber, on an annualized basis. The restart of operations in Mackenzie will directly employ approximately 60 people, in addition to suppliers and contractors associated with the operation.

Shepard says the favourable climate for the reopening is a result of the hard work of the employees the community and the government "Not only do we have a good workforce, we have a strong fibre supply this start up is important as it shows Mackenzie is a positive place for investment."

Shepard also praised Pat Bell for all his work saying it couldn't have happened without his efforts.

Mayor Stephanie Killam says the District is giving Canfor a tax break, reducing taxes by about 25% a year for three years, that's \$100 thousand a year in each of the three years.

Shepard says "It is the beginning of the beginning, and hopefully others will follow behind us." He says they have customers who are looking for a high grade material, and that high grade fibre is in Mackenzie.

While there are concessions from the unions, Shepard says they will not be revealing the details of those concessions. "Those details will remain private."

The concessions from the Government are Softwood Lumber Agreement compliant says Bell, "There has been an anomaly in Mackenzie over stumps, and with the review over the past few months we have found the issues that were problematic and now we think we have the correct factors."

Shepard says there are contracts in place with the Japanese customers and with Loews.

"This could be the trigger point for other things for Mackenzie" says Pat Bell. He noted there was a finger joint plant that needed blocks, and this may help that company as well.

Shepard says the start up capital will be in the \$5 million dollar range as there will need to be a system put in place to deal with chips, because there is no local pulp mill to handle those chips. Shepard says the chips will be hauled to the pulp mills in Prince George, "Certainly if there was a pulp mill here (Mackenzie) that wanted to start up, we would look at entering into an agreement with them on supplying chips."

Mayor Stephanie Killam says the message from this announcement today is positive "We are open for business."

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