



UNITED STEELWORKERS (USW)

Steelworkers, CONIFER Reach Tentative Deal in BC Northern Interior

PRINCE GEORGE, BC, Aug. 17 /CNW/ - The United Steelworkers (USW) BC Interior Bargaining Committee has reached a tentative agreement with the Council on Northern Interior Forest Employment Relations (CONIFER), an industry association that employs about 2,000 USW Local 1-424 and 1-425 members.

USW Wood Council Chair Bob Matters says full details of the tentative agreement will be provided to members at series of ratification meetings in the weeks ahead.

In general, the four-year agreement, expiring on July 1, 2013, enhances job security, improves health and welfare benefits, stabilizes the long-term disability plan, and improves contract language on permanent and partial closures of lumber manufacturing operations.

In addition to general wage increases in the third and fourth year, a trades rate adjustment has been negotiated. A profit pay plan is included that may provide workers additional compensation as the forest industry recovers.

CONIFER represents the following employers and respective mill sites: Abitibi-Bowater - Site No.1 in Mackenzie; Abitibi-Bowater - Site No.2 in Mackenzie; Conifex in Fort St. James; Dunkley Lumber Ltd. in Hixon; Hampton Affiliates - Babine Forest Products in Burns Lake; Lakeland Mills Ltd. in Prince George; Tolko Industries Ltd. - Soda Creek in Williams Lake; Tolko Industries Ltd. - Lakeview in Williams Lake; Tolko Industries Ltd. - Creekside in Williams Lake; Tolko Industries Ltd. - Questwood in Quesnel; West Fraser - West Fraser Planer in Williams Lake; Winton Global - Prince George Planer in Prince George; and Winton Global - Hart Sawmill in Bear Lake.

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