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INTERFOR WORKERS CONCLUDE NEGOTIATIONS

by Mona Mattei on 25 Aug 2011

The Grand Forks sawmill workers ratified their collective agreement last week after nearly two years in negotiations.

International Forest Products Ltd. (Interfor) and the United Steelworkers Union finalized their contract wording two weeks ago, and on Friday, Aug. 19 the workers voted with a 76 percent majority to accept the new agreement.



http://boundarysentinel.com/sites/default/files/news_images/theboundarysentinel/ian/interfor.jpg

"The pattern followed the Southern Interior master agreement," said Bruce Gardner, union representative for the Steelworkers. "For the most part negotiations went rather quickly and smoothly, although there was a couple of issues that did slow it down at the end."

Although the discussions on the agreement started in 2009, Gardner said that their negotiations were put low on the list as the union worked through negotiations with bigger players first. As a result, most of the contract wording was set by the precedents in other agreements and there were fewer specifics to work through.

Interfor General Manager Andrew Horahan was unavailable for comment at press time.