

# **BC INTERIOR**

## **USW WOOD COUNCIL 2009**

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### ***USW PICKS UP BARGAINING THREADS IN SOUTHERN INTERIOR WITH IFLRA***

The USW BC Interior Bargaining Committee and Interior Forest Labour Relations Association (IFLRA) have finished a week of collective bargaining in Kelowna.

After five months of watching from the sidelines, the IFLRA signalled to the union that they were ready to resume talks and bargain the renewal of the southern interior master agreement that came to term in late June of last year. During the long pause in bargaining, the USW has moved their bargaining mandate forward in other regions and negotiated tentative agreements with CONIFER, Western Forest Products, Forest Industrial Relations, and West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd..

The BC Interior Bargaining Committee stands committed in their efforts to continue the pattern in the southern interior. But surprisingly, the USW Bargaining Committee found itself working even harder to steady the equality bar because it seems the IFLRA finds it acceptable for union members employed by IFLRA-member company southern interior operations—with roots in both BC interior regions—to be treated as second-class citizens when compared to those in the northern interior. The IFLRA is insisting that they require an advantage over the northern interior and are holding back provisions that their member companies with operations in the north have not only knowingly accepted for their unionized employees, but were agreeable players in the northern interior bargaining table.

The USW is determined to fight this double-standard and win a fair contract for their southern interior union members. Bargaining with the IFLRA will resume on Monday, November 15th in Kelowna.

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