

August 1, 2024

## Renewed agreement a major milestone for Splatsin and Tolko partnership

**SECWÉPEMC TERRITORY, BRITISH COLUMBIA** — Splatsin te Secwépemculucw (Splatsin) and Tolko Industries Ltd. (Tolko) proudly announce the signing of a renewed relationship agreement — titled the “Mlkwátaka” (place where we come together) — which serves to support and advance this long-standing partnership built upon mutual trust and respect.

The essence of the Mlkwátaka Agreement, evident in its name, lies in its mission to unite Splatsin and Tolko together on their continued journey of learning and growth. Splatsin and Tolko share a vision to advance innovative forest management practices while respecting and implementing Splatsin’s traditional laws, values and principles. Splatsin and Tolko have been collaborating on land management, forest management and business opportunities since 2008, and the initial version of this relationship agreement was first established in 2012.

“Splatsinaca (Splatsin People) have been caretakers of the land and all our relations since time immemorial,” says Kukpi7 Michael Christian. “Our relationship with Tolko has been ongoing since the early 2000’s and we look forward to continuing to work together on co-managing the tmicw (land) in accordance with Splatsin te Secwépemculucw values and laws. Our relationship and how we work together is a model for co-management that we plan to implement throughout Splatsin area of caretaker responsibility. Kukwstsamc to the Splatsin community members who have supported this work, to our technical staff and to the previous Kukpi7 and Tkwamipla7s who have been instrumental in ensuring this work moves forward in a good way. Kukwstsamc to Tolko and all their staff who have participated in this work and who have been willing to partner with our community.”

At its core, the Mlkwátaka Agreement stems from the acknowledgement that the Splatsinaca (People of Splatsin) have an inherent right to steward the land by embracing the cultural perspectives of land management and working collaboratively to balance economic interests with Splatsin’s land stewardship objectives.

“We all have a role to play in creating the conditions for success and the Mlkwátaka Agreement is a great example of how Tolko and the communities we partner with are driving change and doing things differently,” says Janis Simpkins, Tolko’s Vice-President of Indigenous & Government Relations and Sustainability. “Indigenous communities have a deep connection to — and knowledge of — the places they have called home and the territories they have stewarded since time immemorial. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from partnerships like this; we all benefit from healthy forests and thriving forest ecosystems.”

The Splatsinaca dedication to collaboration and the recognition of their inherent humility serve as a catalyst for progress and innovation. By merging two distinct cultural perspectives, we aim to nurture equity and revive the Splatsinaca’s profound connection to and stewardship of their ancestral lands. Tolko recognizes the significance of this relationship, and its operations in the Secwépemc territory continue to be guided by a deeper understanding of the land that has been cultivated over many years of collaboration with the Splatsinaca.

### About Splatsin te Secwépemculucw

The Splatsin are the southernmost community of the Secwépemc Nation, the largest interior Salish speaking Indigenous Group in Canada. Forests are foundational to Splatsin culture, heritage, and future — they are the key to a sustainable environment and contribute to a strong economy. Splatsin’s area of caretaker responsibility extends east into the Columbia Basin, north to the Mica Creek area, south to Kettle Falls, Washinton USA, and as far west as Monte Lake, British Columbia.



## About Tolko

Tolko is a world-class value-added forest products manufacturer headquartered in British Columbia, offering a wide and growing range of forest products to customers around the world. For nearly 70 years, Tolko has remained a private, family-owned and values-driven workplace dedicated to people, products and communities. Tolko recognizes and respects the rights, history, and resilience of Indigenous Peoples and is committed to increasing Indigenous participation in forestry through partnership with the Indigenous communities where we operate.



### ***For more information, contact:***

Chris Downey, Communications Advisor

250-306-0929

[Chris.Downey@Tolko.com](mailto:Chris.Downey@Tolko.com)

## Photos



*Janis Simpkins and Kukpi7 Mike Christian take a walk around Splatsin land*



*Janis Simpkins and Kukpi7 Mike Christian exchange gifts as part of the signing ceremony*



*Group photo with Splatsin's Kukpi7 and Tkwamipla7 (Chief and Council), Janis Simpkins and representatives from the Co-Management Technical and Working Groups*