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### Global Mission

Local log builders, like Sitka, are among exhibitors at a value-added global buyer's mission in Whistler

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## LOCAL NEWS

# Local log builders at global buyers mission

By Keri Langley

Local log building companies will be among the exhibitors at a global buyers mission designed to help reduce the impact of the U.S. lumber trade dispute.

The Global Buyers Mission, Sept. 15 to 17 in Whistler aims to increase the sales of value-added wood products not subject to U.S. tariffs and to expand their market around the world.

Products for sale at the mission include log homes, pre-fabricated homes, engineered wood products, treated lumber, windows, doors, flooring and other wood products.

From 100 Mile House, Sitka Log Homes and Canada's Log People are slated to have an exhibit, along with Pioneer Log Homes from Williams Lake. In all, there will be eight log building companies from around B.C.,

and eight timber framers.

"There's such an extraordinary amount of value added wood products in B.C.," said Sitka General Manager Wally Bramsleven.

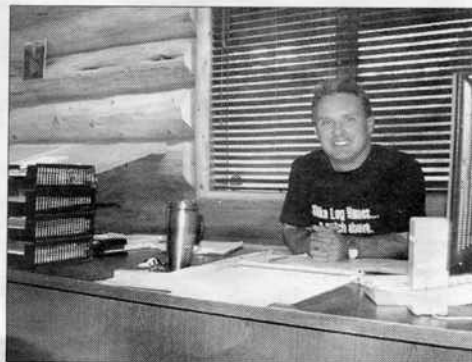
"Individually, it's too expensive for a guy who makes wood widgets to market himself around the world. We're trying to diversify outside the American market and increase sales that are not subject to a U.S. duty."

The buyers mission has been organized by BC Wood, a not-for-profit group of value-added manufacturers that was started in 1989.

"They've actually been marketing BC wood products world wide for quite some time," Bramsleven said.

About 400 participants are expected to attend, including more than 150 pre-qualified buyers from China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, UK, Denmark, France, Spain, Austria, Finland, Mexico and the United States.

"We're not trying to exclude the United States, we're just trying to



SITKA LOG HOMES will be an exhibitor at the global buyers mission, said GM Wally Bramsleven.

expand globally," Bramsleven said.

About 75 to 80 per cent of Sitka's revenue is from the U.S.

"We want to expand our markets and we already have. We want to start trading more with Japan and Europe, and China's on the horizon too," Bramsleven continued.

"We met with a Chinese developer last fall. He came up here and he anticipates that a few years down the road, with China being an emerging society, the middle class market will emerge and

become quite prevalent. We're certainly making our presence known over there."

BC's value-added industry employs about 20,000 people and exports approximately \$3 billion annually.

The buyers mission is supported with funds from BC Wood and government partners including Western Economic Diversification Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Ministry of Natural Resources' Canada Wood Export Program.

Currently, the United States is withholding about \$5 billion from Canada in tariffs, in spite of trade rulings from the World Trade Organization.

