

Good afternoon ladies, gentlemen, and honorary members of the Select Committee on Wood Supply.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My talk will respond to the Jaakko Pöyry Study and the NB DNRE Crown Forest Management Publication, 2003.

I would like to begin by sharing two items of apparently contrasting information. In a letter from our Honourable Minister Keith Ashfield, he assured the president of the NB Federation of Naturalists that all public interests in Crown land management would be taken into consideration by the Committee as it formulated recommendations to government.

A potentially contrasting media advisory released today stated that pulp and paper companies licensed to log New Brunswick's Crown lands have been holding high level discussions with government about the future of our Crown lands, at the same time as the Select Committee is holding public hearings.

This left me with a few burning questions:

- 1) Wouldn't it be more appropriate for all these presentations to be made to the committee? Wouldn't this process be more uniform and accountable?
- 2) How much power will the Committee be granted if there are concurrent negotiations taking place on the same matter?

I would be interested in learning the responses to these questions.

I will continue my presentation on behalf of the Fredericton Nature Club with the hope that this Committee will put our suggestions and concerns forward on this very important management issue in the history of our province. This study is proposing changes to our Crown lands; an area that totals an entire half of NB. I trust that when making the decision the overall importance for the future of all NB inhabitants will be taken into account.

The Province is tasked with the responsibility of looking after/managing our public land – our Crown lands. It is this same land base that is up for discussion in the Jaakko Pöyry Assessment. To approach the issue inclusively we need to look at all the long term benefits of our forests. These include a variety of consumptive and non-consumptive uses:

- Protection of biodiversity
- Soil and water resources
- Tourism and recreation opportunities
- Aesthetic values
- Hunting, trapping
- Production of timber

I would ask that this Committee take into account all these long-term benefits of our wonderful forests when making its recommendations to government.

A little more opinion on these consumptive and non-consumptive uses will provide the bulk of this presentation:

Protection of biodiversity

Over 33,000 species live terrestrially in New Brunswick. While we have plenty of data on tree species in New Brunswick and their distribution on Crown Land, we lack large amounts of information on the vast majority of other species.

The Jaakko Pöyry suggests ways in which we should alter our tree communities to be intensively managed forest environments. Management driven by a desire to maximize spruce/fir yield would reduce hardwood forests and their associated species. Currently hardwoods represent 32% of tree species in the province. Where possible, Crown Lands should maintain this same representative proportion (something that won't happen if Scenario 2 is endorsed). In addition, softwoods would be harvested at a much younger age (41-60), leaving only the current protected areas for growing any old trees.

This same study suggests changes to reduce watercourse buffer zones.

Tree communities represent complex ecological systems and on behalf of the local naturalist club would like to request that the Committee consider this important fact about our forest when formulating their decisions.

We cannot support the recommendation that NB create more intensively managed forests or reduce watercourse buffer zones as depicted in Scenario 2.

Soil and water resources

With forest type distribution projected to decline in hardwood component and final harvesting softwood at a much earlier age, soil and water resources would be negatively impacted. Changes to reduce watercourse buffer zones would also negatively impact both water and soil.

Tourism and recreation opportunities

Aesthetic values

Scenario 2 looks at increasing AAC from Special Management Areas. This potential increase by as much as 250,000m³/year would have significant impact on aesthetic values, and tourism and recreation opportunities. Many other aforementioned details of Scenario 2 would have similar detrimental effects.

Production of timber

The premise of the Jaakko Pöyry study is that it is possible to double the long-term softwood supply within the current objectives for Crown land usage. Is this really the path-forward that we want for our forests? As you can imagine doubling the softwood supply would mean that our forests would look entirely different from those of today. For a picture of what this might look like we can turn to countries such as Finland that have wood farms, rather than forests.

For Scenario 2 to proceed, silviculture funding would be doubled to an increase of over \$50 million, due to a large increase in softwood planting. This is a significant cost and one that should be given great consideration. I would suggest that in determining what should be done in our Crown Lands, social, economic and scientific perspectives be given due consideration.

Having forests certified is becoming a precondition for selling into some key markets. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) represents the most environmentally accountable certifying body in our region. Rather than adopting Scenario 2, I suggest putting money towards developing our image to markets willing to pay extra dollars for wood that is certified (many European countries for example). This could have more positive effect on the forest community in the long term and guarantee a more sustainable market for the future.

Other uses for the additional millions we are considering spending on Scenario 2 could be put to the development of a more value-added wood supply system. One in which NB doesn't export raw fibre, but exports a product with more value (secondary, tertiary production) and therefore more revenue.

Funding could be allocated to create jobs for more of the forest operators and licensees by decreasing mechanization and putting more people rather than machines in our forest. This would have positive long-term implications for other beneficiaries of our forests.

The whole issue of climate change impacts wasn't touched on in the Jaakko Pöyry Study. I am concerned at how negatively scenario 2 will impact the current rate of rapid climate change.

The Jaakko Pöyry study has demonstrated is that it is possible to double the long-term softwood supply within the current objectives for Crown Land usage. We cannot support the implementation of Scenario 2. The Fredericton Nature Club, a member club of the NB Federation of Naturalists was founded in 1960. Its members have seen many changes during this time and we are very concerned about the future of NB's forests if the changes stated go ahead.

As outlined in the presentation, to solve the issue inclusively we need to look at all the long term benefits of our forests. These include a variety of consumptive and non-consumptive uses. May this perspective help guide the recommendations that this committee makes to government.

The Fredericton Nature Club was founded by a CWS scientist in 1960, with current membership greater than 100. We are comprised of members who want to ensure that future generations of New Brunswickers will be able to enjoy the same natural heritage that we enjoy right now.

Sincere thanks for your time

Marieka Arnold

Fredericton Nature Club Member