

Review of Nova Scotia Forest Practices

Terms of Reference

Introduction

Recognizing a wide diversity of interests related to forestry, the Government of Nova Scotia is undertaking an independent review of forest practices in Nova Scotia. Professor William Lahey, President of the University of King's College, has been retained as Project Lead for the review and to provide recommendations to government.

Scope

The review will examine current practices, including strengths and weaknesses, and provide recommendations for improvement regarding how Nova Scotia balances long-term environmental, social and economic interests in managing the province's forests. In particular, the review has the mandate to examine the following components:

- 1) Evaluate the effectiveness and identify opportunities to improve the legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines, as well as the science-based tools that determine whether and where harvesting occurs, as well as the harvesting methods (eg: clear cut, partial harvest) that can or should be used.
- 2) Evaluate market access for private forest owners, particularly in the western region, and provide recommendations to address any identified issues.

Technical Experts

Under the direction of Professor Lahey, DNR will retain experts to advise him on technical aspects of the review. This may include experts on forest ecology, resource supply modelling, integrated resource management, forestry operations, and wood markets.

Stakeholder, Mi'kmaq and Public Input

The review will build on and not duplicate the stakeholder, Mi'kmaq and public engagement that has occurred on the issue of forestry in recent years, including *The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia 2011-2020*, and the Western Crown Land Planning Process. In order to inform the review, additional opportunities for input will be provided, designed by and under the direction of Professor Lahey.

Support

The review will receive secretariat support from staff within the Department of Natural Resources Policy Planning and Support Services Branch. This will include retaining technical experts as needed, general administrative, logistical and research support (including hiring of students), and assistance with planning and coordinating additional public, stakeholder and Mi'kmaq input that may be required. Wherever possible, and consistent with the effective

discharge of the mandate, Professor Lahey will make use of the available support resources of DNR.

Delivery of Report

Professor Lahey will deliver an interim draft report followed by a final report to the Minister of Natural Resources. The report will include:

- A description of the methodology, including meetings held, documents reviewed, and analyses conducted;
- A summary of the issues examined and the perspectives of the public and interested parties on those issues based on submissions received in this review or in prior processes;
- A summary of key findings that form the basis of the key conclusions and recommendations on forestry practices policy, regulation and management and on market access for private forest owners;
- Rationale, conclusions and recommendations regarding the issues examined, including what currently works well and areas for improvement.

The final report will be public.

Time Frame

The final report will be delivered no later than February 28, 2018 and the work will be conducted in the following phases:

1. Preparatory Phase (September-December)
 - Assemble and review background material
 - Retain independent experts, commission background paper(s)
2. Issue Identification and Review (December-January)
 - Identify major issues
 - Mi'kmaq engagement
 - Stakeholder, and public Input
3. Analysis and Report Preparation (January-February)