



Nova Scotia's Independent Review of Forest Practices – The Lahey Review

Presentation for Municipality of Shelburne

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Overview

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- Ecosystems and biodiversity are the priority
- They require forestry that (a) maintains or restores multi-aged mixed-species forests and (b) limits clear cutting to single-aged single-species forests and high-production plantations
- Triad model of ecological forestry should be
 - aggressively and fully implemented on Crown land;
 - subject to some important regulatory changes and reviews, implemented on private land over time through a combination of diverse non-regulatory measures

Ecological Forestry

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- A different forestry model, called ecological forestry, should be adopted as the new paradigm for forestry in Nova Scotia
- Core rationale: protecting ecosystems and biodiversity should not be balanced with other values as if they were of equal weight: they are foundational to the other values
- It aims to combine healthy ecosystems and biodiversity with a productive, profitable, diverse forestry industry
- It is about
 - ✦ “Listening to the Forest”
 - ✦ Emulating Natural Disturbance Regimes

Natural Disturbance Regimes

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- Sites where natural disturbances affect individual or small patches of trees = multi-aged forests.
- Sites where whole stands are naturally affected at relatively frequent intervals = even-aged forests.
- Ecosystems “match” the forests produced by each kind of disturbance regime.
- Forestry protects ecosystems and biodiversity when it “matches”, to extent possible, these disturbance regimes.

Triad Model of Ecological Forestry

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- As much as possible, forests should be:
 1. Protected
 2. Managed for a combination of ecological and production objectives (Matrix) – the “biggest” leg
 3. Managed for high production forestry
- In NS, all three legs of the triad must be improved:
 - ✦ Continuing development of network of protected areas
 - ✦ Greatly reduced clear cutting in the forest “matrix”
 - ✦ Higher productivity in forests managed for high production
- Alignment of high production leg with natural disturbance regimes should be maximized

Implementation on Crown vs. Private Land

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- Gov't should use its direct control over what happens to fully implement the triad on Crown land.
- Requiring implementation on private land would be
 - (a) consistent with public opinion on forest practices (b) in tension with landowner rights and (c) beyond current readiness for that scale of regulation.
- Differentiated approach
 - (a) focuses attention on what can be done on Crown land; (b) results in ecosystems and biodiversity obtaining substantial protection on a landscape scale; and (c) provides landowners and industry flexibility and time to adjust

Crown Land

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- Roughly 30% of province; roughly 30% is protected; 65% of harvesting is by clearcutting
- **Most important recommendation:**
 - ✦ **Significant changes to ecosystem based-management (more multi-aged silviculture, less clearcutting, increased retention in clear-cuts, etc.) in the forest “matrix”**
 - ✦ **Conclusions 51 and 56; Technical Paper 14**
- Implementation of this and other recommendations for Crown land could reduce clearcutting to 20-25% of harvest on Crown land

Crown Land

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○ Other recommendations

- ✦ Model ecological forestry for private land
- ✦ Old Forest Policy changes
- ✦ Include areas for high production forestry (with oversight for outcomes), including herbicide use for high production forestry
- ✦ Legislated forest planning process—through EA or similar process;
- ✦ Crown Lands Act changes
- ✦ Full implementation of improvements in oversight recommended previously by the Auditor General
- ✦ Transition role of department from conducting forestry to managing forests, forestry policy, standards and oversight (accountability)

Private Land

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- Roughly 70% of province; roughly 90% of harvest is by clearcutting
- Landowners continue to decide how to manage their lands subject to applicable laws and regulations, with owners of industrial forests to be subject to new outcomes regulation
- Adoption of triad to be encouraged, supported and enabled
 - ✦ Enable support woodlot owners receive from regional service and membership organizations;
 - ✦ Improved access to forest management tools, technology and information for private landowners
 - ✦ Financing for purchase of woodlots
 - ✦ Diversify and grow markets, including options for forest land owners to earn revenue for carbon storage

Crown and Private Lands:

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- Rigorous implementation of Endangered Species Act
- Prohibition of full-tree harvesting when combined with clearcutting (with limited exceptions)
- Review of riparian zones and wildlife clumps with regulatory changes as recommended
- Outcomes based accountability for high production forestry on Crown and private industrial land
- Review, improve silviculture programs to enable and support ecological forestry and ensure accountability for results
- More research and action (on natural disturbance regimes, birds, sensitive soils, tourism, etc.); more innovation (technology, harvesting and production methods)

Other Conclusions and Recommendations

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- Condition of the forests - State of Forests Report(ing)
- Role of DNR (Lands and Forestry)
 - Shift role of department from operational decision making to oversight of forestry operations
- Role of forestry professionals
- Management of western Crown lands
- Use of data and technology

Implications

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- Changes will mean (a) majority of Crown land managed exclusively or significantly for ecological objectives and (b) significant reduction of clearcutting on Crown land
 - ✦ (estimate: from 65% to 20-25 %)
- Wood from Crown land reduced by approximately 10–20 per cent, depending on how recommendations are implemented and findings of recommended research on natural disturbance regimes on Crown land

Further Implications

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- Could cause a shift of forestry to private land or a contraction of forestry (or combination of both outcomes)
 - ✦ a shift to private land could mean more clearcutting on private land and increase over-all level of clearcutting in the short term
 - ✦ better than the status quo because of percentage of Crown land in protected areas or managed for ecological objectives
 - ✦ could increase/decrease opportunities for owners of private land (subject to variation across the Province)

Implications for Municipalities

- Will depend on ecological, economic and social implications of the recommendations.
- Will vary across the province, in accordance with how the implication of the recommendations will vary across the province.
- Municipalities could play important roles in
 - Land use planning process recommended for western Crown lands; legislated forest management process for all Crown lands; proposed encouragement of small-scale wood energy projects; recommended strengthening of the community forest; and proposed emphasis on market diversification and development.

Implementation/Accountability

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- Independent committee of technical experts should monitor, evaluate and report to Nova Scotians annually on the Department's actions and responses to this report.
- EGSPA should contain goals on implementation of ecological forestry.