

From: Andrew Kekacs
Sent: Mon, 16 Nov 2020 11:12:13 +0000
To: Minister, Lands and Forestry
Cc: Premier;William Lahey;Towers, Julie K
Subject: Formal request for harvesting moratorium
Attachments: MAC_Request_Harvest_Moratorium.pdf

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The Hon. Derek Mombourquette
Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forestry

cc: Premier Stephen McNeil, Deputy Minister Julie Towers, William Lahey

Dear Minister Mombourquette:

I have been asked by six other members of the Minister's Advisory Committee to submit a formal request to you regarding the implementation of recommendations from the Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia, which was presented to Government in August 2018. The statement is attached to this e-mail, and a paper copy should arrive soon in the mail.

Because of the extended delay in achieving the transition to ecological forestry practices, we recommend and request a temporary moratorium on all even-aged harvesting on forested Crown land until William Lahey's recommendations are implemented. We believe that not doing so will result in the failure of Government's latest attempt at forestry reform, with long-term damage to the ecological health, economic productivity, and socio-cultural values that Nova Scotians receive from this critically important public resource.

It's time for all of us to move forward together to implement the forestry recommendations upon which we have been asked to advise.

Respectfully,

Andrew Kekacs
Minister's Advisory Committee

16 November 2020

The Honourable Derek Mombourquette
Minister, Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forestry

cc: Premier Stephen McNeil, Deputy Minister Julie Towers, William Lahey

Minister's Advisory Committee members recommend harvesting moratorium

As Nova Scotia residents and members of the Minister's Advisory Committee (MAC), we are deeply concerned by observations of continued heavy harvesting on forested Crown lands before spatial landscape planning and new forest protection and management requirements for ecological forestry take effect.

Although William Lahey stated more than two years ago that forestry practices in Nova Scotia should be modelled after natural disturbances in the Wabanaki-Acadian Forest, prescriptions that lead to even-aged forests remain common on Crown lands. Harvest plans that specify heavy cutting are being submitted and approved at a rapid pace, with little apparent regard for the ecological impacts that Lahey warned about.

At the MAC meeting on 19 Oct. 2020, Marcus Zwicker reported that mills in the Westfor consortium in Southwest Nova Scotia currently have five years of harvest plan approvals in place. This means the practices that Lahey rejected will remain the dominant treatments on forested Crown lands for many years after Government accepted the recommendations of the Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia. This arguably represents a de-facto rejection of Lahey's findings.

It is long past time for Government to take significant action to transform forest policy and management in Nova Scotia. The Premier, Minister and Department of Lands and Forestry did not accept the Lahey review with the caveat that the remaining Crown forests be liquidated before its recommendations were implemented. Because of the long delay in adopting ecological forestry practices on Crown lands, we request an immediate moratorium on all even-aged harvest treatments including variable retention, salvage and uniform shelterwood harvests, until Lahey's recommendations are implemented in principle, policy and practice. These harvest prescriptions should be limited to the eventual "High-Production Forestry" lands.

We also urge immediate action to more strongly foster the culture shift needed for NSDLF and Crown licensees to effectively implement ecological forestry and landscape-level planning in Nova Scotia. As William Lahey wrote, "ecosystems and biodiversity are the foundation on which the other values, including the economic ones, ultimately depend." Maintaining the viability of family-owned sawmills is important to us, and so is the ecological integrity of Crown lands. Responsible management of Crown lands should demonstrate leadership in ecological forestry and serve as an outstanding example for private woodland stewards, who provide the largest share of wood to the sector.

Respectfully,

Karen Beazley
Donna Crossland
Angie Gillis
Andrew Kekacs

Raymond Plourde
Mary Jane Rodger
Greg Watson