

Media Advisory- For Immediate Release – May 17, 2017

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Margaree Environmental Association

The Margaree Environmental Association releases plan for Nova Scotia to transition from clearcutting to a selection cutting forest economy. The MEA calls on all political parties to embrace this transition with set time lines for action, similar to how Nova Scotia adopted recycling.

The Forest Economy Post-Clearcutting: **CHANGE = JOBS**

For decades the Margaree Environmental Association has been challenging government forestry policies and proposing alternatives to the current practices. MEA has opposed the use of herbicides, and promoted manual weeding; challenged the widespread use of clearcutting, and proposed small scale, site-specific harvesting methods; protested against the “dumbing-down” of our industry in its dependence on pulp and biomass, and called for government support to diverse value-added industries. MEA has conducted its campaigns through public education, government lobbying, industry collaboration, litigation, NGO cooperation, and media releases. Out of these activities has emerged a vision for the future of our forest industry, with systemic change that translates into a wide range of business and employment opportunities aimed at adding value to our forests and protecting the forest environment. Below is an outline of MEA’s proposal for change:

1) Implement an End to Clearcutting in Nova Scotia:

- Define timelines to phase out clearcutting, and replace with alternative harvesting methods.
- A new Department of Sustainable Forestry should be formed, new jobs, new descriptions, new people.
- An immediate halt and ban to all hardwood and mixed wood clear cutting.

2) Training and Retraining for The Forest Economy Post-Clearcutting:

- Train tree markers. The Canadian or Ontario Tree Markers Association has offered to run training courses in N.S. (contact Kari Easthouse- he can co-ordinate these courses).
- Retrain harvester machine operators for selection cutting, species optimizing, working with machines and tree marking. (This is all very doable, as these are highly skilled operators.)
- Establish a team of monitors and inspectors to work with and coordinate tree markers with the harvester machine operators. (The whole process should be one of co-operation to build successful relationships among harvesters, tree markers, and government services people.

3) Eliminate Exemptions:

- End the practice of clearcutting forests, without guidelines, under the pretense of establishing farmland such as blueberries. To proceed with site conversion to agriculture, the farmer must demonstrate the funds are available, and must be bonded.
- Employ inspectors, and establish policy and guidelines.

4) Develop Non-Clear cut Strategies for all Forest Types:

- Softwoods, mixed woods and hardwoods, all subject to non-clear cut prescription.
- Softwoods extended to 100 year rotation in which no more than 10% of a softwood forest can be clear cut in any ten year period.
- Mixed woods – no clearcutting
- Hardwoods – no clear cutting

5) Ban the Use of Herbicides on all N.S. Forests

- Where appropriate, utilize manual weeding to eliminate competition to high value stands.
- Develop training programs and introduce subsidies.

6) Develop a Viable Forest Economy for Private Woodlot Owners:

- Prices to private woodlot owners should match prices paid in other provinces under their marketing boards for private woodlots. (Currently in Quebec this price is approximately \$1,000.00 more per tandem truck load at the mill gate.)
- Large industrial landowners such as Wagner and Northern Pulp do not get this pricing, nor should they have access to government funds to supplement their forest operations.
- The additional money paid to private woodlot owners will be paid through higher Crown Land stumpage rates. (This will create a more level playing field in the N.S. forest industry.)
- Review, reduce and possibly end subsidies for reforestation and roads. (These subsidies have driven the clear cut economy.)

7) Develop a Sustainable Hardwood Management and Utilization Strategy:

- Create strategies appropriate for a diverse hardwood industry to support the development of private businesses, co-operatives, and allocation and marketing structures. (Consult with experts such as Tom Webb, St Mary's University Co-operative Department, and current and former business owners in the hardwood industry.)
- Add value to currently underutilized and low priced species. (To note: clear Spruce and Larch flooring commands a price comparable to hardwood flooring, indicating a high end market for softwoods.)

8) December 2018: Implement Policies and Regulations to Increase the use of N.S. Wood Products in Local Buildings:

- Define and establish appropriate regulations, such as amendments to the Building Code that will ensure that Nova Scotia homes and buildings are built out of Nova Scotia wood. (The current trend toward imported composite structural components should be critically reviewed, with the intention of promoting quality local wood solids for building structures.)

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