

Environmental, conservation, and fish and wildlife organizations, scientists, private woodlot owners call for new *Crown Lands and Forests Act*

The *Crown Lands and Forests Act* became law in 1980 and reflects 1970s goals for forest management. At that time, production of timber products was seen as more important than other uses of forests, and the government was prepared to delegate many management responsibilities to industry. Since then, society has changed, the Supreme Court has issued many decisions on aboriginal and treaty rights, and New Brunswickers expect forests to be managed for water, wildlife, recreation and other uses, as well as for jobs and revenue. Forest management is more complex than it used to be. The *Act* needs to reflect the interests of the whole province.

In June 2015, Auditor General Kim MacPherson released Volume II of her 2015 Auditor General Report, which included two chapters related to forest management. The report stated that forests are a cornerstone of the economic, environmental, and social foundation in New Brunswick and need to be managed for all values. However, the Auditor General highlighted that the recommendations made in many reports over the last number of years have not been adopted or responded to by the Department of Natural Resources. MacPherson also stated that from 2009-2013 the total losses incurred by the Department for forest management operations exceeded \$53 million.

Given that the current *Crown Lands and Forests Act* and supporting strategies are inadequate to protect values the public has repeatedly demanded be safeguarded, including community-based forest jobs and biodiversity conservation on Crown lands, and given that financial losses we are experiencing from forest management cannot continue, we urge the government to develop a new *Crown Lands and Forests Act* that will advance a wide range of goals including forest-based jobs, both timber and non-timber, and the conservation of fish and wildlife and the intact ecosystems they need to survive.

The new legislation should:

- (1) State clear principles for managing public forests to protect ecosystem services, native biodiversity, a wide variety of sustainable, forest-based business opportunities, and recreational values all in the context of climate change;
- (2) Establish a comprehensive framework of regulation, land tenure, and policy that clarifies and reinstates government as the trustee responsible to the public for the stewardship of Crown lands;
- (3) Ensure transparency in setting, and a timetable for revising, goals, objectives, and their implementation, including a robust system of public involvement and consultation throughout;
- (4) Respect the Peace and Friendship Treaties and establish mechanisms for consultation through free, prior, and informed consent with indigenous peoples;

(5) Support diversification and value-added processing within New Brunswick's forest products sector; and

(6) Ensure that private woodlots provide a proportional share of the wood supply and promote productivity from private woodlots through stronger management, pricing, and marketing measures.

The undersigned strongly urge government to immediately initiate the development of a new *Act*.

Signed

Fish and Wildlife Organizations

1. NB Salmon Council
2. NB Wildlife Federation
3. Bartibogue Fish & Game Association
4. Canaan River Fish and Game Association
5. Club Chasse et Peche de l'île de Lameque
6. Hammond River Angling Association
7. NB Professional Guides and Outfitters Association
8. Nepisiguit Salmon Association
9. Petitcodiac Sportsman's Club
10. St. John Basin Salmon Recovery INC
11. Ruffed Grouse Society of Canada

Woodlot Owners

12. NB Federation of Woodlot Owners
13. Carleton-Victoria Forest Products Marketing Board
14. Madawaska Forest Products Marketing Board
15. North Shore Forest Products Marketing Board
16. Northumberland County Forest Products Marketing Board
17. South East New Brunswick Forest Products Marketing Board
18. Southern New Brunswick Forest Products Marketing Board
19. York Sunbury Charlotte Forest Products Marketing Board

Naturalist Organizations

20. Nature NB
21. Miramichi Naturalists' Club
22. Nature Moncton
23. Restigouche Naturalists' Club

Environmental Organizations

24. Canaan-Washademoak Watershed Association

25. Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NB
26. Coalition sur la Viabilité pour l'environnement de Shippagan et des îles de Lamèque et Miscou
27. Comité de l'environnement et du Plan vert de la Ville de Shippagan
28. Conservation Council of NB
29. Council of Canadians, Fredericton Chapter
30. Council of Canadians, Kent County NB Chapter
31. Feu Vert/Green Light, Grand Falls
32. Friends of Mount Carleton Provincial Park Inc.
33. Friends of Rockwood Park Inc., Saint John
34. Groupe de développement durable du Pays de Cocagne Sustainable Development Group Inc.
35. New Brunswickers Against Fracking
36. PEACE-NB, Saint John
37. Public for the Protection of the Forests of NB, Kent County
38. Red Head Anthony's Cove Preservation Association, Saint John
39. Sustainable Energy Group, Woodstock
40. Tantramar Alliance Against Hydro-Fracking
41. Voices for Sustainable Environments and Communities, Gagetown

Scientists and Academics

1. Andrea Bear Nicholas, Professor Emeritus, St. Thomas University
2. Alain Patoine, Professeur en gestion de l'environnement, v.-p. Société canadienne de limnologie (SCL), Représentant sur le Comité environnement Science Atlantic, Université de Moncton, Campus de Shippagan
3. Bradley B. Walters, PhD, Professor of Geography & Environment, Mount Allison University
4. Corinne Hersey, PhD, Department of Sociology, St. Thomas University
5. David Coombs, PhD, Professor of Biology (ret.), University of New Brunswick
6. Derek Simon, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, St. Thomas University
7. Emmanuelle Tremblay, Secteur arts et sciences, Université de Moncton, campus de Shippagan
8. Hector G. Adégbidi, PhD, École de Foresterie, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston
9. Jeannette Gaudet, St. Thomas University
10. John A. Kershaw, Jr., PhD, Acting Associate Dean of Graduate Studies/Professor of Forest Mensuration, School of Graduate Studies/Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, University of New Brunswick
11. Kelly Bronson, PhD, Acting Director, Science and Technology Studies, St. Thomas University
12. Lucy Wilson, Geology, UNB Saint John
13. Marc-André Villard, Professeur titulaire, Département de biologie, Université de Moncton
14. Marilee Reimer, St. Thomas University
15. Marilyn Dupre, PhD, Director of the School of Social Work, St. Thomas University
16. Martin Béland, PhD env., r.p.f.NB, Professeur agrégé, sylviculture et écologie forestière, École de foresterie, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston

17. Michael Duffy, Associate Professor of Biology, University of New Brunswick
18. Michel Soucy, PhD, Professeur agrégé, Économie et opérations forestières, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston
19. Monika Stelzl, PhD, Chair, Department of Psychology, St. Thomas University
20. René Blais, PhD, Professeur titulaire de géographie, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston
21. Rob Moir, PhD, Associate Professor of Economics, Assistant Dean of Special Projects, Faculty of Business, UNB Saint John
22. Roderick E. Cumberland, BScF, Certified Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Instructor, Maritime College of Forest Technology
23. Roger J. Roy Ph.D., forestier agrégé (N.-B.), Directeur et professeur titulaire, École de foresterie, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston
24. Ron Smith, VarFor Ltd., Adjunct professor, Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, University of New Brunswick
25. Stephen M. Law, PhD, Head of the Department of Economics, Mount Allison University
26. Stephen Wyatt, Ph. D. Professeur agrégé, École de foresterie, Université de Moncton, campus d'Edmundston
27. Suzanne Dudziak, Associate Professor, St. Thomas University
28. Thomas Parkhill, Department of Religious Studies, St. Thomas University
29. Tom Beckley, Professor, Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, University of New Brunswick
30. Tony Diamond, PhD, Research Professor, Wildlife Ecology, Director, Atlantic Lab for Avian Research, University of New Brunswick
31. William Anderson, PhD candidate, Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, University of New Brunswick
32. Y. H. Chui, PhD, Professor, NB Innovation Research Chair - Advanced Wood Products, and Director of Wood Science and Technology Centre, University of New Brunswick
33. Yacine Benahmed, Professeur adjoint, Baccalauréat en gestion de l'information, Université de Moncton, campus de Shippagan

First published on November 26, 2015. Since then, additional organization or academic signatories have been added and are invited to add their endorsement.