

EIGHT FORESTRY LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

"Don't leave the most valuable forest products in the swamp"

Byard Hoyt Wood lot Owner: "There are two very bad woodsmen, the one who clear cuts and the one who never cuts."

These were the words used by Wood Lot Owner Byard Hoyt in a letter to the Editor in 1984. I kept it because it represented what I felt after 34 years working as a forester in the Department of Natural Resources.

This presentation try's to tell why. Our Politicians ignored our wishes when the Forest Resources Study, considered a masterpiece of public input at the time, was presented in 1974. Today the same issues face us and I see no improvement unless we give the forest back to people. To local communities. Herewith why I have reached that conclusion. I call it forestry lessons from the field.

1) On Friday 13 November, 1937 our barn burned. Father decided to rebuild and to cut the logs for the lumber from the wood lot. My brother and I, 11 and 13, would help. Xmas holidays and Saturdays were committed.

The first forestry lesson came from father who had a small black notebook with a list of materials for the new barn. On the list were rafters which would be long slim trees to a six inch top. When he came to such a tree on the wood lot he would make the decision rafter or future log? Such trees were the fastest growing and had the best value as large logs in the future. Then he would apologize "sorry tree, your too young to cut but I need rafters and your to be one of them" . Father maintained a forest and only cut what was necessary for family use.

2) In April, 1946 I was on the river drive. Discharged in February from the RCAF where I had served in World War Two and starting a career as forester. A future planned while in the air force. River drive was the first forest activity each spring.

On the West Ranch Portage Brook we threw pulp into the stream and started it on the way to the mill some 70 miles downstream. One day two of us were rolling a 36 inch spruce bolt 4 feet long toward the stream. It had been floated into a swamp area by the "splash" when water from the dam above was released to float such big pieces down the small stream, normally too shallow. The boss came along and ordered us to leave it. "It's not worth it" he said. We were shocked but left it as a monument to keeping cost per unit down. A corporate rule that abuses labor and wastes resources. Today they call it downsizing labor to increase profits. The community picks up the cost of unemployment and retraining.

When we ignore water, climate and local employment we are leaving the most valuable forest products in the swamp.

3) Ten years later, now with forestry degree and management forester in a district, I was involved in applying the "combined operation regulations. These had been drafted to help sawmills get logs and pulp mills get small wood generated on logging operations for pulp. A reduced stump age applied to the smaller volume. Product. For example logs produced on a pulp operation had reduced stump age. (Royalty)

This rule was an attempt to increase utilization, production and reduce waste It would cover the costs of producing multiple products.

It failed. The operators saw it as increased profits instead of a cost rebate or reward for co-operation.. The failure of this regulations led eventually to the creation of the Forest Resources Study. Presented in 1974

4) In the early seventies the department started an intensive planting program. Tree planting is always a motherhood forest policy which the people understand. Unless you are a wood lot owner.

At a wood lot owners meeting in Kings County I was asked, as District Forester, what I thought of the planting program. I replied that there were some areas which needed some help from foresters but that in New Brunswick we usually find nature puts back too many after a fire or cutting. I saw the biggest problem as thinning.

The wood lot owner audience agreed

Planting is useful only if you want mono culture; to force the land to produce a single product. It destroys diversity...

5) I have here a "Statement of policy on industrial forest development" published in January 1976 by Hon Roland C Boudreau. It states that multiple use would govern policy; licenses to Crown Lands will be canceled and replaced by wood guarantees; wood harvesting matched to wood resources and the "Crown" would be residual supplier - private Wood Lot owners would be primary producers. The annual cut would be increased etc etc

This policy was never implemented. Boudreau was replaced as Minister, a new Crown Lands and Forest act written and we rebuilt the tenure system.

Sadly Boudreau came from the Belledune riding in Northern New Brunswick. Today they argue about the Bennett wastes disposal project. Job hungry people are forced to considering a questionable environmental project. If Boudreau's policy had been implemented the objectives of the Forest Resources Study would have meant more forest related businesses and jobs on the area.. The community would be free of foreign corporate control.

The speech from the throne in 1971 ordained the Forest Resources study identified the problem which is still with us: *"my government is not satisfied with the present level of utilization for our forest resources. Production from the net annual growth of our forests could be increased by one third, as a conservative estimate, Each year the utilization of wood becomes more fibre oriented and sawmills are rapidly disappearing, partly for lack of access to adequate timber. Stands of hardwood are not being fully utilized, and we have very little manufacturing of such piece products as furniture Much of this underutilization of the forest is the result of timber holdings and taxation policies which fail to promote more intensive use of the forest resource."*

6) In 1953 we first applied DDT to kill the budworm. That spring I met the supervisor of the project in a Campbellton Hotel. He had been a UNB Professor in the forestry Department. We shook hands and he asked what I thought of the budworm control program. I replied I was not sure that was what was needed. He asked why and I replied at UNB you showed us spruce trees which had survived several Budworm attacks indicating nature was reacting to a forest problem.

I have never been satisfied with chemical control. Byard Hoyt, when the Budworm hit his wood lot, said: "I just go back to each part of the wood lot more often to remove the dead and dying trees". That is forestry put to human use. When nature is ready it gives us what we need. If we don't use it Budworms, beetles and bugs will.

7) My most recent forestry lesson comes from the report now being considered and Byard Hoyt wood lot Owner for most of the last century The Jaakko Poyry report recommends partial cutting of protested

areas. A dream come true! They admit we don't have to clear cut. They can take individual trees! Mature trees - native to that place! We Can maintain a forest! We can remove mature, sick, dying trees for industry use and leave the forest. See page 51 of the report where it reads "A viable forest structure is needed to sustain non-timber objectives." Water, wildlife, air and climate are non-timber values this world desperately needs to protect. It starts here.

This is what Byard Hoyt did for a living. He "cut the poorest and left the best" for fifty years. No clear cut, no chemicals, no budworm spraying - when a tree got sick from age or nature it was removed. His wood lot had diversity of plants and sizes; and products for a variety of wood users.. It was a forest my father wanted in 1937

8) Finally, preparing for this presentation, I re-read Ian Mahood and Ken Drushka's book Three Men and A Forester. Reading his book I knew I had found a kindred spirit. The book is based on forestry in British Columbia in the period World War Two until 1990. In it I learned:

To the Sloan Commission on forestry in British Columbia 1945 Contributor H.R Macmillan (Mc Millan Bloedel) "It will be a sorry day for British Columbia when the forest industry here consists chiefly of a few big companies holding most of the timber and all the better growing sites To the disadvantage and early extermination of the most hard-working, virile, versatile and ingenious element of the population the independent market logger....."

AND "for more than forty years, we have been living with the flawed forest policy of the tenure system. For the past fifteen years, that system has been manipulated by a small group of fixers employed by a handful of corporations owned and operated from a distance and, in terms of the welfare of the forests, by the most irresponsible government the province has ever had."

AND "For forty years there have been only two employers of young foresters, the major integrated companies and the Ministry of Forests. In this kind of employment situation it is unwise to say what one thinks. The motto of the professional forester in BC could well be "don't rock the boat". People who follow this rule long enough eventually stop thinking. When that happens to foresters, they lose the ethical direction they were granted with the signing of the Magna Carta."

AND "If we had many forest owners and some diversity in tenure types there would be many different jobs, employers and professional opportunities open to foresters. If B.C. Foresters were freed from the requirement of keeping their mouth shut and their minds closed to everything except the prevailing corporate or bureaucratic line the practice of silviculture would make a great leap forward."

From the November/ December Forestry Chronicle an article by Marc Andre Coté and Luc Bouthillier entitled: ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED BY SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND FOREST CERTIFICATION

".....some governments would be happy to adopt a neutral position and relinquish control. This situation is not unique to the forest sector. At present globalization seems to mean a loss of power for the state to the benefit of financial markets and other interest groups in every sector."

We are not alone in seeking a change in social economic issues. The report you are looking at will commit us to factory forestry; to fibre forests, mono-culture with chemical control of insects and diseases.. To continued loss of people in rural areas, to corporate management supported by political friends of the status quo.

Public forests should be owned and operated by people in the community for the benefit of all. We should lease our forest land to people like Byard Hoyt. To care for the forest so that it stabilizes climate, holds and purifies water and prevents floods; gives a home to all living things dependent on trees. They should be paid to tend and care for the forest. If they are able to harvest ripe trees (mature) without damaging other values, they should be allowed to do so.

Because we are a people of the forest we show trees the same respect we show each other.

THE HARVEST OF GROWTH

Machines that clear cut forest trees,
And herds of White Tail Deer,
Will multiply like busy bees,
'Till food stocks disappear.
Then, sad to say, disaster comes,
There's nothing left to eat,
In piles of rust and piles of bones,
The species obsolete.
The Deer, alas, don't see the threat,
And naturally they die,
Machines alas, are lifeless pets,
The corporations buy.
The Human Being intervenes,
When life is threatened by machines.

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I also mentioned young people leaving to find employment, only 25% vote the rest say what's the us.
Based on my experience its business first people second. Like . other studies ignored Bates Sheault etc
and how Veterans of two world Wars were promised a world without war twice and League Of Nations
United Nations respectively were not supported and children Grandchildren face a war world today.

When are you going to support people?

Arbiter Greek 55 BC We trained hard and were becoming an effective force when orders came to re-organize.

Canadians practice forestry everywhere except in the woods.

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