

Brief to the Select Committee on Wood Supply in NB
Presentation is by 5 students from Leo Hayes High School (LHHS)
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Fredericton NB

Introduction – Jessi Bradley

Presentations/Comments:

The Future of Forestry in New Brunswick by Alex Bubar

My name is Alex Bubar and I am a 5th generation private woodlot owner. My family owns a 250 acre woodlot from which we cut firewood and sell other products to marketing boards. Our woodlot has been a source of income for our family for the last 75 years. I have some concerns that involve private woodlot owners and, especially, my generation.

If the proposal to increase the cut of wood on Crown lands by forty percent is successful, where might the extra wood be cut and how might protective buffer zones, such as those near rivers and highways, be affected? Will wood from private woodlot owners still be worth a fair value or will the price decrease?

It will be our generation that will be working with companies who must deal with the decision of the Select Committee. These companies are, as I understand, working on Crown lands that they do not own. They will have to invest a substantial amount of money into the management of these lands. It is my belief that the companies involved would need some sort of government protection; a contract that would allow them to cut on and sell wood off of whatever portion of land they have managed. This contract may protect the companies from the decision of a new government to discontinue with the increased cutting.

With all the money being put into Crown forests by these companies, who will have the larger say in how they are managed - the companies themselves, or the public? How great is the need for more wood? If we increase the amount of wood cut on Crown lands by forty percent, more mills may be constructed, more jobs may be created, but will the price of this wood stay high? If there is a greater abundance of wood available, won't the price decrease? Consider the following: an antique is only worth something if it's in good condition and if it is only available in limited quantities. If you can buy this antique anywhere, it won't retain its full value and therefore loses its marketability.

If more wood is cut, more trees will have to be replanted so that the wood supply will replenish. I believe that the idea of monocultures will create several problems. First, the ecological diversity, species of lichens, plants and animals, will disappear. Second, if only one type of tree is planted, it could all be wiped out by a single insect or a single disease; this would decimate the region, and we would be forced to start over in that area. Nature solves this problem by creating variations in all species. I believe that in order to successfully replant an area, it must be done with diversity in mind. The benefit of having a diversified woodlot is that no one factor, be it insects, weather, or even commodity prices can disrupt the entire system.

It is very important that the right decision be made today. The decision must not be based solely on one report, or on the opinion of one person. The result of these presentations and the conclusion of the Select Committee will affect several generations for many years to come.

The Value Of A Tree And A Forest For The Biosphere by Jen Atkinson

The most essential part of the biosphere that promotes a healthier life for the world and its living organisms are the mass varieties of trees found throughout our regional forests.

Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have been increasing drastically over the past years with the higher demands of fossil fuel, traffic and industrialization. Many scientists believe that this rise of carbon dioxide and other emissions in the atmosphere are catching more of the sun's ultraviolet rays, producing heat and raising the temperatures which is causing global warming. A rise of 35 to 50 percent of these "greenhouse gases" is predicted in the next fifty years, with the temperature rising along with it.

As a tree gradually grows into maturity, they absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide through their leaves, change it into oxygen and emit that oxygen into the air. Since forests mainly grow in poor nutrient soils, trees have a greater need for carbon dioxide and other nutrients. They deplete whatever nutrients are in the soil and then adapt to taking nutrients from other places. This research is very important in determining the exact role a forest plays in helping change the climate and eliminating the threat of global warming. If we chose to cut down large amounts of trees or grow a single species of trees, the forestry industry could greatly reduce a valuable asset in helping the fight against global warming and the future of our world.

Trees also provide protection from sunlight for many smaller plants and animals in a forest. This habitat is maintained on the fact that a tree is there to shade and give nutrients to surrounding lifeforms. Without a variety of trees, this process is shattered by the adaptation of a single type of tree. If trees didn't grow in plentiful bunches and stay like that, the soil and plants that live closer to the ground would dry up from overexposure of the sun and be damaged or eliminated by malnutrition. Trees provide a home, protection against the sun, nutrients and safe places for all types of organisms in need. Without them, our natural habitats that we find so invigorating and refreshing to see each day will be ruined and ultimately destroyed by our own petty need for industrialization.

When we destroy or clear an area of all its natural habitat for industrial development, erosion of the soil can happen. This is when all of the soil is exposed to the daily climate, without protection, and results in mal-nourished and hard, cracked soil. When trees are cut down and stumps grubbed, you destroy the only existing plant cover. This results in an infertile and basically dead landscape that becomes severely eroded. Also, sediment left over and produced over the years can travel in the air, affecting surrounding forest growths. An accumulation of this sediment can result in the death of different species of trees and wildlife. When a healthy, natural forest is grown, it canopies and creates a natural debris of decaying leaves and branches on the ground, stopping water runoff. The foliage of the forest reduces wind and noise, cools the air, stops glare, produces oxygen, traps dust and pollen and captures rainfall to prevent a harmful run-off of water which, floods the ground and destroys the habitat.

When we think of trees, we usually think of large, beautiful organisms that diversify our land but, in essence, trees are the founders and protectors of plants and animals alike. Trees are not only able to adapt to climates and soil, and grow on their own without aid of fertilizers or excessive

water, they are also the means of life. They provide food, a place to hide and even a whole natural habitat for wildlife. A forest is a canopy, protecting living things from the deadly rays of the sun and provides nutrient rich soil for others to grow in. Without them, many diversly interesting and resourceful habitats will be destroyed, leaving us with a barren wasteland of rotten and decaying life.

Tree Loss Affects the Biosphere by Natalie Comeau

I would ask you to take a moment and think about the joys of nature. How many times have you, your children, or even your grand children been caught up in looking at the beauty of the monarch butterfly? When was the last time that a woodpecker, pecking a hole in a tree brought a smile to your face? If you're anything like myself, it hasn't been that long. If the suggested proposal goes through, you may never see these beautiful sites of nature again.

These species are just two of the many that will have their habitat interrupted by the suggestions in the Jaakko Poyry report. By replacing 40% of the public forests with plantations the diversity of our ecosystems will decrease greatly. Think about living in the city, you have all the necessities for life well within your reach. Now think about being forced to moved to the country, where necessities are hard to come by and it's a fight to get by. This is the kind of situation that thousands of species are faced with when their habitats get cut down. It's not to say that all these species will die immediately or that they won't adapt to their new habitat but they shouldn't be put in that situation to begin with. Canada as a nation prides itself in its bio-diversity, when we start to ruin that diversity for the sake of a dollar we are slowly tarnishing our nation's pride.

Carbon sink is a reservoir that absorbs or takes up released carbon from another part of the carbon cycle. The thing giving the carbon is the source, where that receiving the carbon is the sink. What do trees need in order to preform photosynthesis? Carbon dioxide which is a combination of oxygen and carbon. When numerous trees are cut down, there is less carbon being used, which means there is an unbalance in the carbon cycle. When this cycle changes there are a number of things that get disrupted, the biggest thing effected is the temperature of our planet. Global warming is and will continue to be a threat as long as we keep changing the balance of our environment. It may not seem like a big thing, we all complain when we have to get into a cold car after a night's snowfall, but when the temperature of the Earth increases, everything living on and in it will be affected.

If you have ever bought a package of seeds you will have noticed they come with specific instructions on where the growing plant should be kept and at what temperature. Like these seeds, each plant in our biosphere has a specific requirements. When these requirements are not meet, the plant will die. Yes, there will be plants that will be able to survive at a higher temperature, but when the diversity is removed from vegetation the risk for widespread disease increases, which has already been mentioned by my colleagues.

When it rains, we use umbrellas to protect ourselves so we don't get wet or ruin our outfit or laptop. The Earth is fortunate enough to have a permanent umbrella, forests. Forests protect the ground from the direct hit of rain, snow and anything else Mother Nature decides to throw at it. This umbrella stops the ground from eroding at a rapid rate. Erosion can take away the fertile top layer of soil from our once lush forest areas and it can take away the homes of valuable species. Erosion is a

natural occurring process, but it does not need to be hurried along by cutting down our long-lived forests.

So many things can be affected by over cutting one of Canada's most valuable resources. Think about your future, the future of your children and all of those yet to come. Crown lands are those of the people, they are to benefit all mankind, and not just those who want to make money. We need to take into consideration all those who can and will be affected by replacing 40% of our varied forests with clone like plantations. A neighborhood with a variety of house styles and sizes is much more appealing than one in which all the houses look alike. This is the same for our forests. Variety and sustain ability are key in keeping every body and thing on this planet happy, healthy and living.

The Benefits of Biodiversity in the Forest by Jessi Bradley

As well educated people who have been working on this proposal long before I learned how to spell Jaakko Poyry, you are certainly aware that half of New Brunswick's forests are on Crown Lands, land that makes up more than three million hectares. It should also come to no surprise that New Brunswick is one of the most environmentally responsible jurisdictions in the world when it comes to forestry practices because it has set aside 32 percent of the Crown lands as special management areas. I feel it is important to voice my opinion regarding this proposal because this is an important and prestigious title that New Brunswick need not lose.

It is important to have a wide range of tree species in a forest rather than just the ones needed to support the forest industry because it is this diversity that provide shelter and food for animal and serve as valuable irreplaceable means for us as humans as well. For instance, Balsam fir is used in medicines. Butternut is its used for oils and when cooled is similar to butter. Moose, deer and beaver enjoy red ash. White ash is an important food for birds and small mammals. Natives ground Bur oak nuts into a rich nutritious flour. Black Willow contains salicylic acid, which is copied for aspirin. All of these trees as well as many others make up the 39 species of native trees that make up our gorgeous diverse New Brunswick forests. What will happen to them while all money and cautiousness is being focused on newly harvested spruce and fir? There will surely be an imbalance in these trees.

Accepting this proposal would mean converting public forests into tree plantations reducing the biodiversity and other forest values. This also means putting the production of spruce and fir ahead of any other uses for the forest including animals. Lets face it, tree farms are not forests in which plants and animals live and grow, they are simply a temporary habitat for endangered and threatened animals such as the Eastern panther or the Canada Lynx to live for a limited amount of time, then it is taken away.

As a student I have learned first hand that for every action there is a consequence. Because you people play an important role in deciding weather or not this proposal should be set into place I hope that you can see ahead into the future and realize that loosing a species, tampering with biodiversity and fooling mother nature has a far higher price to pay and affects far more people than just the forest industry. My hope is that you take what I have said into consideration and think about the consequences before jumping into this proposal.