

Presentation to
New Brunswick Select Committee on Wood Supply

Nairn Hay

On Behalf of the partnership of the

Fundy Model Forest



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Nairn Hay, General Manager Fundy Model Forest

In preparing this brief, I consulted verbally and through email, with the 11 members of the Executive Committee of the Fundy Model Forest. The 11 Executive Members represent the four land-base managers (ownerships) within the Fundy Model Forest; the research, environmental, First Nations, education and “Public at Large” sectors; and our President and Vice President.

In order to reach our recommendations, I will talk about:

1. the context under which the Fundy Model Forest operates,
2. the lessons we have learned through over the last 12 years, and
3. two recommendations based on this experience.

The Fundy Model Forest - a brief history.

The Fundy Model Forest (FMF), as a partnership, was established in 1992. The FMF is one of 11 model forests across Canada, each of which reflects the ecological, social and economic fabric of the region in which it is located. The model forest program was based on the assumption that sustainable development in the forest sector could be fostered through partnership. Quite simply, if a concept makes sense to a large group of partners representing a spectrum of organizations, and if it is taken to the practitioners through those organizations, it is more likely to be implemented.

The original partnership included 20, four of which were J.D Irving, the Southern New Brunswick Wood Cooperative, Fundy National Park and the Crown. These partners represent the four land managers within the FMF. Ours is a virtual land-base, centred at Sussex and encompassing 420,000 hectares of the Acadian Forest. The partnership has grown from the original 20 members to 36 (the full list is attached to the back of this document) with the loss of only one member, which occurred as a result of that organization disbanding. The partners were asked to commit to the FMF partnership at the start in 1992, re-commit at the start of Phase II in 1997 and at the start of Phase III in 2002.

The focus of the first five years of the program was research and, as importantly, the development of the partnership. The partners around the table were asked - *if they wanted the program to succeed* - to listen the views of the other partners and through consensus, make decisions to move the process forward. This required a strong commitment to understand opposing viewpoints, to develop trust in individuals and organizations around the table, and to reach consensus on decisions.

I think the key to this success has been the need for consensus. It has meant that we have moved away from “winners and losers” to strive for “win-win” decisions. We agree, sometimes agree to disagree, but we manage to keep moving forward. I was not

present for Phases I and II but from stories from those that were, it was at some points a rocky road and yet the partnership has persevered.

Natural Resources Canada, through the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) initiated and continues to support the model forests across Canada. In 2002, the CFS committed to a third five-year phase of funding. It will provide FMF with \$500,000 of core funding annually until 2007. Our total yearly budget varies from \$1,100,000 to \$1,600,000 including financial and in-kind support. This budget supports:

1. research to acquire data and develop knowledge,
2. the development of tools based on knowledge developed within and outside the FMF, and
3. the transfer of the knowledge and tools from the FMF to practitioners in New Brunswick and beyond.

Who are our Partners?

As I stated before, we have 36 partners. The partnership continues to grow and a new member is part way through the approval process. Our partners include departments from the federal and provincial levels of government; municipalities; research organizations and universities; First Nation communities; environmental organizations; educational institutions; woodlot organizations and the forest industry. Our Partners, as well as the individuals representing them, reflect a wide spectrum of stakeholder opinion.

Before I came here today, I took a look at the schedule of speakers before your committee. Based on a quick inspection, 10 of our partners made representation for a total of 16 presentations. Looking at the summary of recommendations, it is safe to say that a wide range of views were presented.

What are the products of the partnership?

The products of the partnership are threefold. The first product is ecologically, socially and economically based, forestry focused research. A few of the types of research projects we have supported include:

- silviculture strategies and operational techniques,
- rare plant species,
- bryophytes and vascular plants,
- indicators such as forest birds and flying squirrels,
- soils and,
- natural disturbance patterns.

The data and knowledge acquired through these projects have been communicated through research publications and integrated into policies and practices of industry and within the past and current Crown Land "Vision" documents.

Through projects carried out by the FMF and knowledge gleaned from other land-bases, tools have been developed for use by our partners and the practitioners within their organizations. Partners within the FMF have developed and piloted the implementation of the following tools:

- ecologically based yield curve development,
- detection of land-use changes using remote sensing tools,
- commercial thinning techniques,
- computer based Stand Density Management Diagram,
- drainage prediction model,
- monitoring and benchmarking protocols for soils.

Finally, but by no means the least complicated, is the transfer of the knowledge and tools to the practitioners that work in the forest. The FMF has been working with partners such as School District 6, UNB and the newly retooled Maritime College of Forest Technology to transfer the lessons learned to practitioners and the public. Some of the products developed as part of the extension/education process are:

- demonstration woodlots,
- conservation areas,
- outdoor education for elementary and high school students,
- brochures, booklets and publications, and
- web based products.

These are a sampling of the projects supported by the FMF. All of the projects listed above were developed and delivered collaboratively through our partnership.

The lessons learned through our partnership.

Partnerships require time to develop and mature. Where there is likely to be conflicting views, two important elements need to be developed: *trust and knowledge*.

The first element, trust, can only be built within a continuous process over a relatively long period of time (depending on the type of partnership). The FMF is 12 years old and counting. The first phase of the program was a test of the partnership. If we look back 12 years, the climate associated with implementation of forest management was much different than today. Having multiple stakeholders around a table to discuss and implement “Sustainable Forest Management” across a landscape was relatively rare. It took time to work through the conflicting views, and there were many, ranging across the continuum from one viewpoint to its diametric opposite.

Through commitment on all sides to keep working as a partnership and on consensus, trust in the process was developed. This trust in the process has continued as new organizations have joined the partnership and individual representatives have changed.

The second required element is knowledge. Many organizations require input to operate to move their business forward. But, as one of our Executive Committee members put it: “There is a significant difference between input and informed input”. It is relatively easy to build a process to collect input; you can build a website or organize a petition. It is an entirely different to build a process where a catalogue of informed input is compiled.

Our experience is that an ethic of continuous learning is required. This requires a long-term commitment to a collaborative process that builds capacity. Capacity, in our experience, is built in four ways:

- **as partner organizations develop new knowledge.** The new knowledge is acquired, it is shared through the organization.
- **as stakeholders are added to the partnership.** New stakeholders bring new information, knowledge and experiences to the organization. This new information is shared throughout the organization often bringing a new perspective to the group.
- **as new individuals representing current partners are added to our Board of Directors.** Over the years, there has been a constant turnover of Board Members. This has been a very healthy process. Individuals often bring different skills and perspectives to the table than the representative they replace. This contributes to the capacity of the organization as a whole.
- **as knowledge is developed through collaborative research.** The FMF has had a specific mandate to identify gaps in knowledge and, where possible, develop collaborative projects to fill those gaps. As new knowledge emerges, it is transferred to the ground by collaborating organizations and implemented. This feedback loop is critical to ensure that decisions are based on the most current knowledge and that we are always moving forward developing new and more effective tools for sustainable forest management.

So, to summarize the experience we have gained: *to do effective consultation you require the appropriate mix of trust and knowledge. This requires a long-term commitment to assimilate knowledge from partner organizations and identify knowledge gaps, fill them and integrate it with current thinking.*

Recommendations

Based on our experience, the Fundy Model Forest makes the following recommendations:

- 1) **The public should participate in reviewing the objectives in the management of New Brunswick Crown Lands to provide a mandate for the direction and magnitude of change in forest management.** There should be a process developed that allows for the continuous participation by provincial and community stakeholders. An on-going process would allow for the building of knowledge and public trust in the consultative process. This process should be fully funded to allow for regular participation by stakeholders and the public at large.
- 2) **A fund supported by stakeholders should be developed specifically for research and development of science-based forest management practices applicable in New Brunswick.** Current and future management decisions should have a scientific basis focused on work conducted in the Acadian and Boreal forest types. Changes to policies, objectives, targets and practices should have a foundation based on investigative research and analysis. This foundation should include not only the physical sciences but also social and economic disciplines. The research should be funded by the stakeholders to allow for the identification of knowledge gaps and for the filling of these gaps through the investigative process.

Fundy Model Forest Partners

Atlantic Society of Fish and Wildlife Biologists (1992)
Canadian Institute of Forestry (1992)
Canadian Forest Service (1992)
City of Moncton (1997)
Conservation Council of New Brunswick (1992)
Eel Ground First Nation (1998)
Environment Canada (1998)
Fawcett Lumber Company (1992)
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (2002)
Fundy Environmental Action Group (1994)
Greater Fundy Ecosystem Research Group (1992)
Indian and Northern Affairs (1998)
Infor (2003)
J.D. Irving, Limited (1992)
K.C. Irving Chair for Sustainable Development (2003)
Maritime Forest Ranger School (1992)
NB Department of Environment and Local Government (1992)
NB Department of Natural Resources (1992)
NB Federation of Naturalists (1992)
NB Federation of Woodlot Owners (2002)
NB Premiers Round Table on the Environment and Economy (1992)
NB School District 2 (1994)
NB School District 6 (1994)
Nova Forest Alliance (1998)
Petitcodiac Sportsman's Club (1992)
Red Bank First Nation (2002)
Remsoft* (2003)
Southern New Brunswick Wood Cooperative Limited (1992)
Sussex & District Chamber of Commerce (1994)
Sussex Fish and Game Association (1992)
Town of Sussex (1992)
Universite de Moncton (1994)
University of New Brunswick Fredericton Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management (1992)
University of New Brunswick Saint John (1994)
Village of Petitcodiac (1994)
Washademoak Environmentalists (1994)

(Year Joined as Partners)

- * Ratified by FMF Executive Committee
- Founding Members in italics.