

**Submission from Marcel Maillet, Manager,
SENB Forest Products Marketing Board**

As an organization representing approximately 8000 private woodlot owners in Kent and Westmorland counties and the parish of Rogersville we would like to respond to the reports on Forest Diversity and Wood Supply submitted by Donald Roberts and Tom Erdle. We believe our government has an obligation to seriously consider the impacts their decisions will have on private woodlots and the people who earn their living on woodlots. The burden of the crisis in the forest industry over the last few years has already been unfairly carried by private woodlots. The mill closures have impacted everyone (mill workers, businesses in the communities, woods workers, truckers ect...). But the *reduction in harvesting* has almost been completely burdened by private woodlots. SENB has lost over 70% of our wood sales over the last 3 years while harvesting on crown land has not been reduced at all. Our government has done everything it can to help operations on crown land while ignoring the problems on private land. They have provided financial assistance and increased crown allocations for certain Licencees, while refusing requests to help locally owned sawmills and letting them close. Requests to access small volumes of wood from crown land by local people who are trying to start something new (ie. pellet plants) have also been refused. When UPM closed on the Miramichi, private woodlots found themselves competing for markets with our own crown wood because our government did not want to reduce crown land harvest and allowed UPM to export unprocessed pulpwood, to the same mills private woodlots are trying to sell to. And the changes made to the silviculture program in 2008 by this government have had a devastating effect on SENB, reducing it by over 70% and putting nearly 100 silviculture workers and forest technicians, in SENB alone, out of work.

Private woodlots represent 30% of the forests in New Brunswick and cannot be ignored if the forest industry is to survive. Our forests, crown land & private, are very unique and diverse and have an important role to play in maintaining a healthy environment, as well as providing employment for our people. We need to find a balanced approach for our forests and be open to new ideas, especially from our local people. The following are our recommendations to the N.B Government.:

- There should not be more than 20% of the Crown forest in plantations. Plantations have a role to play in providing wood for the industry. But converting 37% of a natural forest into a few softwood species is risky & dangerous, both economically and environmentally.
- We need to reduce the amount and size of areas that are clear-cut. Clear-cutting has its place in forest management, but in balance. We need to promote alternative methods which encourage natural regeneration and mixed species stands (patch cuts, selection harvest, shelter-wood harvest, ect...). There is more to management than clear-cut and plant or clear-cut and pre-commercial thin, too much is managed this way.
- We need to maintain and encourage the diversity of our forests. Instead of trying to change our forests into growing only a few species that current industry wants. We should be looking for markets and uses for the species that grow there naturally.

Silviculture programs need to be expanded, not reduced. Our government has taken a private land silviculture program that was working well and changed it so drastically that in 2008 there has been a 70% drop in program participation by woodlot owners in SENB. Private land cannot be managed the exact same way as crown. There are unique and fundamental differences that must be considered when designing management programs for private woodlots.

* The Roberts report recommended that N.B Forest Industry needs to use bio-mass to co-generate electricity and should have the right of first refusal for excess biomass on crown land. If the best return for low grade wood on crown land is to produce electricity, then so be it. But our government needs to be open to *all *options and be prepared to consider other uses if it gives a better return to N.B. No one should be given the right of first refusal for anything on our crown land.

* We strongly believe that the management of our Crown land must be put back in the hands of the Department of Natural Resources. Currently the Licensees (forest industry companies) produce a management plan for the area of crown land covered by their license, which must be approved by DNR. The cost of producing and implementing the plan is paid for by the government. In return the Licensee has sole access to the wood off that area. We believe DNR should be responsible to produce the management plan, based on objectives defined by the people of N.B. Companies interested in accessing crown land would apply for a license, with priority given to local people and businesses. The license could be short term or long term depending on the needs and commitment of the company. DNR would monitor all work to ensure the management plan is followed.

* The Roberts report states sawmill industry has an excellent future and is the cornerstone of a competitive forest industry.* * Our government seems to believe a competitive market is having one or two large companies to sell all the wood to. We have seen numerous locally owned mills close with little help from our government yet they have been able to provide millions of dollars in assistance to a few large multi-national companies, many that closed anyways. We need to find ways to help our locally owned mills, established by local people who live and work in their local community and whose profits remain here. It's a shame to see family owned mills like Fawcett Lumber and M.L. Wilcons, which have been here since the turn of the century, close their doors. We need to rethink our priorities.

* The Roberts report states OSB Plants and Pellet Plants are not a good investment for the future. We do not agree with these statements for the following reasons:

1. Arbec, a company from Quebec, has offered to purchase the former Weyerhaeuser Mill on the Miramichi to produce OSB. The only thing holding up the deal is their application to the N.B Government for the crown allocation formerly held by Weyerhaeuser. Arbec seems to believe the market outlook is pretty good, and are prepared to invest in it.

2. With the amount of unused low grade wood in N.B. we believe there is a huge potential market for pellets to be used locally for residential and commercial heating and selling to the eastern U.S. The Roberts report seems to have concentrated their study on exporting to Europe. There are other studies that say pellets have an excellent future. This is a real chance for N.B to become self-sufficient and promote something that is actually good for the environment.

Marcel Maillet, Manager