

Myth and Reality

The New Brunswick Forest Products Association continues to make claims about the Jaakko Poyry report and forestry on Crown lands that have been repeated often enough they have become modern myths. The Crown Lands Network wants to set the record straight.

Jaakko Poyry are the foremost experts in the world on the subject of forests.

The Finnish-based consulting firm are experts on industrial forestry, converting forests to plantations to increase the production of wood fibre for industry, but make no claim about being the foremost experts in the world on the subject of forests.

It is possible to double the amount of fibre supply in 50 years, without having an adverse effect on the environment.

Nowhere does Jaakko Poyry make this claim in its report. In fact the report says "There is a risk of reducing potentially important components of the forest, including hardwood species, uncommon softwood species (e.g., cedar and hemlock) and other elements of the diverse forests."

It says that a monitoring system will be needed to detect any adverse effects on biodiversity, so changes in management can be made to eliminate the problem (p.52).

What Jaakko Poyry so say is that it is possible to almost double the long term softwood supply for industrial purposes while meeting the current objectives for the protection of habitat and water, and the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity. But that these objectives must be restricted to the standards established in 2000 if the doubling of wood supply is to be achieved.

It should come as no surprise that the report found that New Brunswick is under-harvesting.

The Jaakko Poyry report actually says there is no prospect for an increase in the softwood harvest for 35 years if its recommendations to double the wood supply are implemented. It points out the only area where additional timber could be obtained over the next 35 years is by increasing the amount of cutting in stream-side buffers, deer habitat and old spruce-fir habitat.

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.

This one fails the straight face test without even trying. It's actually 28 percent of Crown lands that are designated as special management areas. That means that 72% of the forest on Crown lands is designated exclusively for logging, primarily clearcutting, and timber production. The buffers strips along our streams and rivers amount to 12 percent of the Crown lands. As much as 30 percent of the wood in these buffers can be logged every 10 years, they just can't be clearcut. Similarly another 12 percent of Crown land is designated as habitat for deer and other wildlife which need old spruce-fir forests to survive. Logging is permitted in these area as well, just not clearcutting. Finally, 4.2 percent of the Crown lands have been set aside as protected natural areas. However, even here, clearcutting is being permitted within the boundaries of three of the larger protected areas until 2012.