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For Immediate Release

CCNB calls on the NB government to not rewrite forest rules for J.D. Irving

Fredericton – A new deal between JD Irving and the Government of New Brunswick tabled late last week in the Legislature sets the stage for further degradation of New Brunswick's already endangered forest and watersheds, and effectively eliminates public input into the way public forests are managed, says the Conservation Council of New Brunswick.

The Memorandum of Agreement, signed behind closed doors on February 7th, not only allocated much more public forest to one company, it also proposes to set up a radical new system to regulate the way it operates in the woods, says CCNB's Forest Campaign Director, Tracy Glynn.

“What’s shocking in the forest strategy is not only is the government allowing clearcutting in old forest, areas critical for wildlife survival and river and stream buffers, this deal is also proposing to dump standards that ensure that pockets of our endangered Acadian forest return to its natural state,” says Glynn.

“This new system, if approved, takes the lock off of the chicken coop door and hands it over to the fox,” says Glynn. “And perhaps what is even more galling, that while the company certainly got a sweetheart deal, the government is bending to demands to change the laws without hearing the insight of scientists, or asking the people what they think.”

The MoA says both the government and the company want to move towards “outcome-based forestry,” instead of prescriptive rules. After years of public consultation and debate, the State of Maine adopted an outcome-based forestry model, first used by J.D. Irving in 2012. “The experience of outcome-based forestry in Maine is one of deregulation for clearcutting, allowing larger clearcuts and cut backs to government monitoring,” argues Glynn.

CCNB and the NB Federation of Woodlot Owners are organizing a public "Rally for Our Forest" on Tuesday, May 13th at 12:30pm at the NB Legislature.

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