

Forestry Report 2018

Municipality of the County of Annapolis

Report prepared by: Annapolis County Forestry Advisory Committee



MEMBERS OF THE FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Warden Timothy Habinski

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Michael Gunn

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Opening Summary

In June 2017 Annapolis County Municipal Council determined it to be in the public's interest to research current forest management practices affecting the county. Council established the ad hoc Forestry Advisory Committee to conduct that research and report back to council in June 2018. The committee received input and heard presentations from First Nations, municipal and provincial levels of government, the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, private woodlot owners, local mill operators, industry spokespersons, scientists, academics, cooperative and community forest managers, writers, photographers, and knowledgeable local residents willing to share their views from a very personal perspective.

The Forestry Advisory Report is a summary of the initial research on forestry and it includes important and timely recommendations for council's consideration. The committee sees this report as practical and visionary and it points to the need for both short and long-term collaboration between the province, the private sector, industry, and the municipality.

The rural community lens through which the committee focused its study and crafted its recommendations bring to light just how closely tied local community development is to local forestry practices. Our research revealed new and innovative opportunities in areas of forest ecology and climate change, value-added industry, local job creation, recreation and education, and local energy and food production - all of which can serve the long-term interests of both local community residents and the province.

ULTIMATE GOAL

To begin the intelligent shift to a municipal forestry model.

Forest land currently owned by the county offers both ecological and economic opportunities in terms of recreation, health, spirituality, education, job creation, and revenue.

Our review of documents, both historical and contemporary, and the many discussions and presentations we hosted, left no doubt that the ecological, political, and economic interplay, and the ground it is played out on, is complex. One document stood out for us. *Restoring the Health of Nova Scotia's Forests* is detailed, scholarly, and forward thinking. It is also practical and well written. It went to the heart of the matter:

Without an intelligent shift away from current practices, we will continue to degrade our forest resources, and lose the multitude of social, economic, and ecological benefits that a healthy forest provides.

It is our hope that the Forestry Advisory Committee report provides some real momentum behind an intelligent shift away from current practices. Through study, conversation, and reflection the committee kept returning to the social, economic, and ecological benefits for Annapolis County residents, and the land and water that sustains us, by doing forestry differently. We were quite pleased to learn as well, that excellent models of doing forestry differently are many, varied, and to a large extent replicable here in Annapolis County.

This report draws heavily on, and in places seeks to enable, current Annapolis County municipal goals, objectives, and targets as described in the following official documents:

- Annapolis County Strategic Plan
- Annapolis County Economic Development Strategy 2050
- Annapolis County Municipal Climate Change Action Plan

In fact, the success of the Economic Development Strategy and the Climate Change Action plan both hinge on policies and practices that encourage a healthy Acadian forest.

If Annapolis County is going to meet its economic target of 80% local food and energy production by 2050, a bold and clear forestry strategy is essential. If the county continues to emphasize the importance of clean air and water, and uncontaminated soils, as part of an overall economic strategy, then a forest strategy based in both ecological forestry and ecological economics is the point of beginning.

Forests cannot be properly cared for in either the short or long-term by people, governments, and industries who do not know them intimately.

If Annapolis County is going to be timely and cost effective in adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change on the municipal infrastructure, as outlined in its climate change action plan, and great care must be taken to understand, calculate, and value its natural capital (trees, water courses, wetlands, soils, and wildlife). It is now without question that Annapolis County will experience hotter and drier summers. We will experience an increase in extreme storm events and sea level rise.

We must prepare for an increase in the frequency and intensity of forest fires on both the North and South Mountain; new insect infestations and stronger surface runoff water are certain. The Acadian forest in Annapolis County is perfectly designed to mitigate some of the effects of climate change if they are managed accordingly.

Gibsons, B.C. is on the leading edge of finding long-term value in its natural assets. They now know that:

Natural assets provide clear advantages over engineered infrastructure, as they:

- *are cheaper to operate and maintain, if not degraded;*
- *do not depreciate if properly managed; and*
- *are carbon neutral or even carbon positive.”*

(Town of Gibsons Natural Asset Management Plan)

There are some scenarios of forest management, including climate forests, where trees are worth more standing than felled. In the age of carbon sequestration and monetization, this sort of scenario makes perfect economic sense.

Annapolis County is well suited to manage and benefit from sustainable forest practices in partnership with the province if certain provisions are agreed to and put in place. Sustainable forest management will not require any new technology, just political will and a system of enforcement and incentive.

From what the committee now knows it is likely some of the possible outcomes suggested in this report will take long to mature, i.e. climate forest. Long-term management, and therefore long-term employment, will be required to restore some of the damage done to the forest by current unsustainable forestry practices.

“Determine what do we want from the forest. And then make those objectives measurable and invest in science, technology, effort and research into collaborative research especially to determine whether we’re looking at the right things.”

- Marcus Zwicker

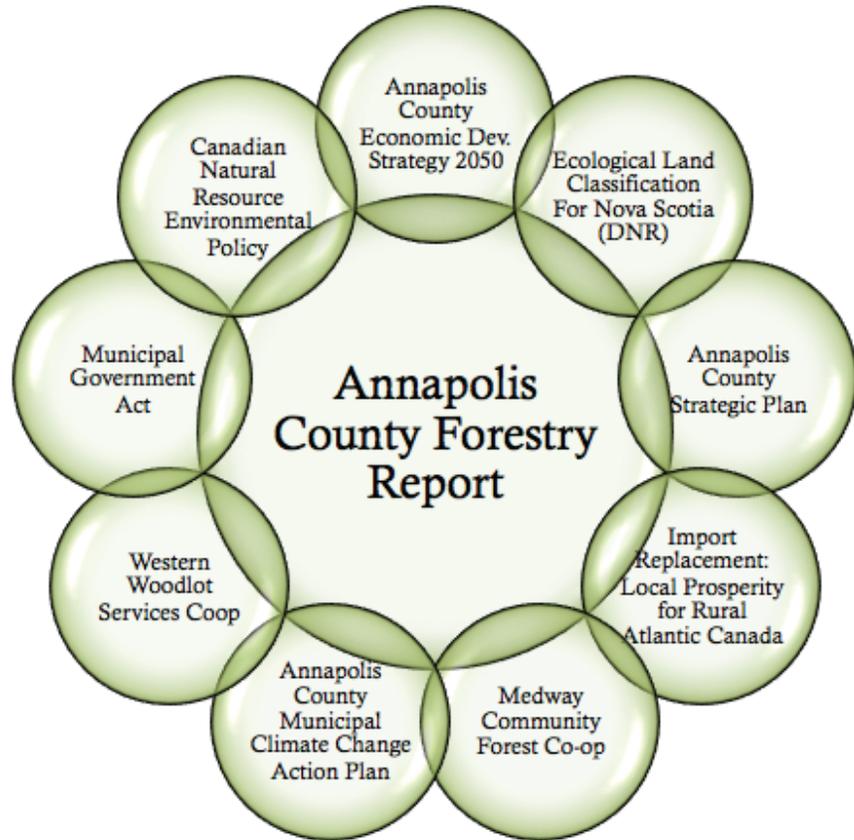
“Manage the forest for mills, but leave enough for the animals to make a living. It’s all doable.”

- Bob Bancroft

**“We’re at a cross-
road. Either we
go down poverty
chips road on the
left or go down the
healthy road on the
right”**

**- Donna
Crossland**

Crafting a Municipal Lens



**“I hope there is a
forestry adviso-
ry committee 100
years from now.”**

**- Councillor
John MacDonald**

Building Common Themes

The last half-century of provincial forest management policy in Nova Scotia has remained highly resistant to change. While over this period of time there has been a gradual policy shift away from pure extraction to resource management, it is only within the last decade or so that forest management policy has recognized the tremendous economic and ecological opportunities inherent in a municipal-based ecosystems approach to forest management. It is without question that large-scale industrial forestry has simply overpowered local ecosystems. It has seriously curtailed local community development, local wealth, and local resilience.

The recommendations in this report support a new narrative to help describe a municipal-based ecosystems approach to local forest management in the county. The recommendations are only the starting place from which to launch a more thorough public engagement process to gather citizen input. Annapolis County is adamant in insisting that the public interest is best served by working in partnership with the province, Mi'kmaq, local industry, local land owners, local knowledge, and skill. The aim is to help curtail the downward spiral of the forest economy and to provide an intelligent alternative to a seriously compromised Acadian forest.

The committee was reminded time and again in the working sessions and in the presentations that the forest, fishing, agricultural, and cultural economies are linked to one another. Their common ground is the health of the natural environment.

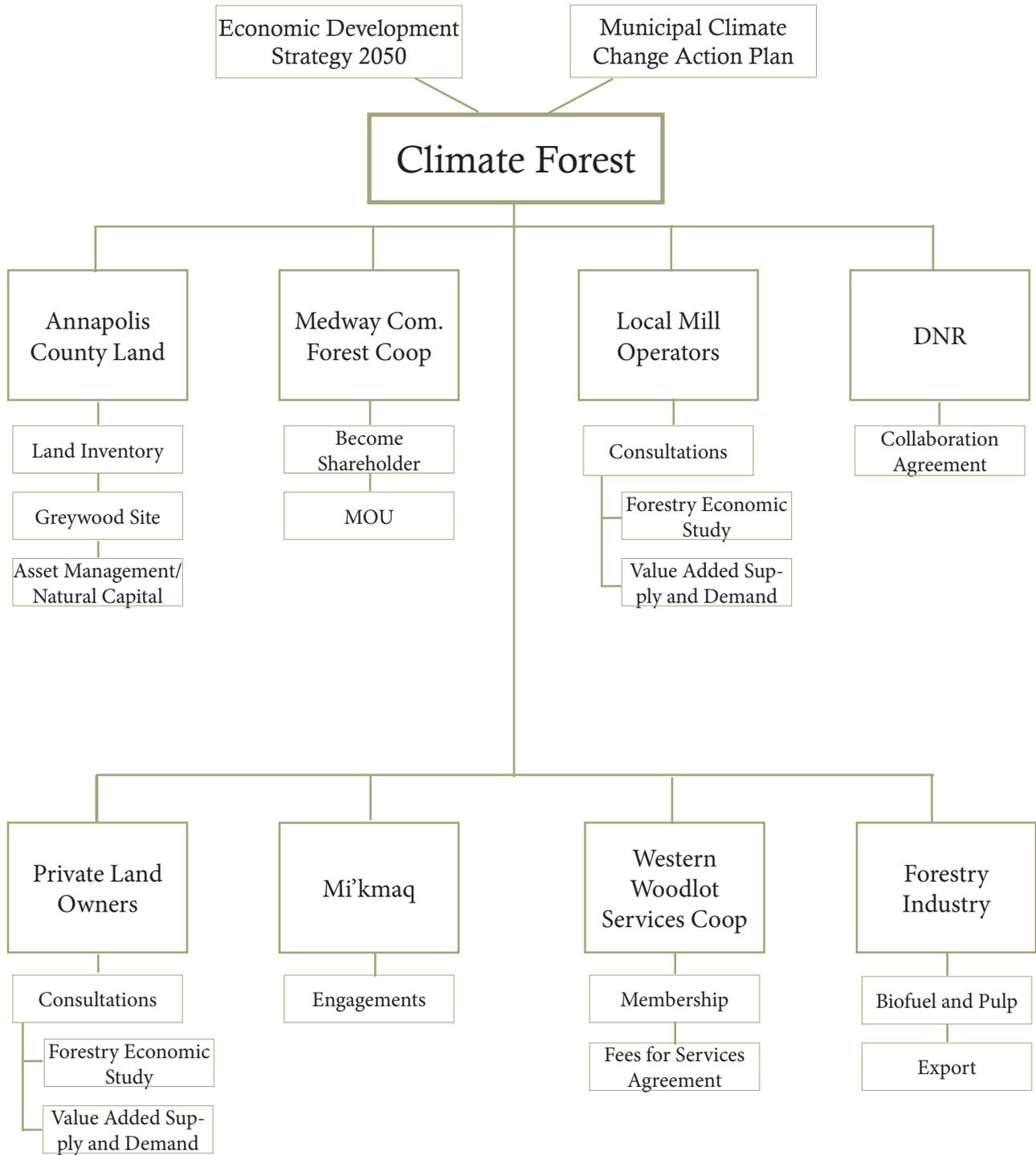


“We need a new paradigm where having a healthy forest is the foundation to move forward on.”

- Jamie Simpson

“If it takes us 50 years to influence public lands, that’s how long it will take.”

- Tom Berry



Recommendation: Climate Forest

A Climate Forest is a forest that is deliberately managed to fight climate change. This is done by centering the management of that forest around the capture and storage of additional carbon. The primary products from this type of Climate Forestry include carbon offset credits that can be sold to regulated emitters, and wood-based products that displace the use of products with a higher carbon foot print, such as firewood that displaces heating oil and mass-timber beams that displace metal beams.¹

Climate Forestry is a new economic paradigm that expands the economic opportunities for rural communities, placing them at the lead in the global fight against climate change. Rather than limiting traditional forestry opportunities, Climate Forestry increases the economic opportunities of a forest, resulting in a more valuable forest land base that can support more and better jobs, all while maintaining traditional forestry industries such as silviculture, logging, and saw milling.²

- It will lay out the ecological and economic case for curtailing all clear-cutting on crown land within the county. The interdependence of forest health and the stability of the local forest economy is adversely affected by current forestry practices carried out by WestFor on crown land.
- It will summarize the current ecological diversity and overall health of all forested land in the county. In consultation with ecologists, wildlife biologists, hydrologists, geologists, and county staff, the report will map out a long-term plan to create a paradigm shift toward ecologically based, multi-aged forest management on land owned by the municipality.

“We want to show exactly how we think it is in the best interests of our constituents to have our forests managed for biodiversity, for carbon capture, for the value of the timber itself, and the future of the forestry industry.”

- Warden Timothy Habinski



¹Personal communication with Dale Prest, president of Climate Forest Company, New Brunswick

²Personal communication with Dale Prest, president of Climate Forest Company, New Brunswick

“Partial harvest should be the first choice”

- Bruce Stewart

ANNAPOLIS COUNTY LAND

- Complete the mapping of Annapolis County Land
- Add a link to DNR online maps
- Facilitate Woodlot Management Plan No. 1181, Greywood, Annapolis County, Nova Scotia
- Request CAO to initiate discussions on asset management inventory, including natural assets, with recognized experts, e.g., actuarial/carbon scientists

MEDWAY COMMUNITY FOREST COOPERATIVE

- Become a shareholder
- Request CAO to outline a Memorandum of Understanding that encapsulates the following:

It will set out a strategy of cooperation and collaboration with Medway Community Forest Cooperative that will increase the likelihood of a successful cooperative forest model in Annapolis County. This strategy will help the municipality identify and magnify employment opportunities in overall forest restoration practices that lead to local value-added forest products industries.

- The Co-op will strive to manage the forest resource to support economic stability in local communities.
- All investments and activities should strive to leverage and build local capacity.
- The organizational structure and planning processes are designed to cultivate community collaboration and consultation.

LOCAL MILL OPERATORS

- Request CAO to develop a strategy (EOI/RFP) to determine supply and demand data to enhance import replacement data

“We’re protecting emitters in this province rather than setting a program that would penalize greenhouse gas emissions.”

- Dale Prest

DNR

Develop a strategy for collaboration with DNR to help initiate and support:

- Local value added supply and demand
- Annapolis County climate forest
- Education on land management
- Public engagement

PRIVATE LAND OWNERS

- Request CAO to develop a strategy (EOI/RFP) to determine supply and demand data to enhance import replacement data

MI'KMAQ

- Engagements

WESTERN WOODLOT SERVICES COOP

- Join Western Woodlot Services Coop
- Explore the potential for fee for services agreement

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

- Biofuel and pulp wood inventory data
- Export/import data

“The community had a vested interest in managing the resources in their own backyard.”

- Mary Jane Rodger

“There’s a different angle to forestry going back to cultural history and tradition.”

- Melissa Todd Labrador

Further Resources

REPORTS

Harold Alexander, *Small Private Forestry in Finland*, (2016)

Jamie Simpson, *Forest Biomass Energy Policy in the Maritime Provinces: Accounting for Science*, (2015)

Province of Nova Scotia, *High Conservation Value Forest Assessment Report for the Medway District*, (2016)

Province of Nova Scotia, *Restoring the Health of Nova Scotia's Forests*, (2010)

Province of Nova Scotia, *The Path We Share*, (2011)

Province of Nova Scotia, *The Path We Share - Five Year Progress Report*, (2016)

Province of Nova Scotia, *The Roots of Sustainable Prosperity in Nova Scotia*, (2010)

Province of Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, *State of the Forest Report*, (2016)

Woodbridge Associates, *Economic Impact Analysis of Timber Management & Supply Changes on Nova Scotia's Forest Industry*, (May 2011)

WEBSITES

<https://annapoliscounty.ca>

<https://forestsinternational.org/canada>

<http://www.medwaycommunityforest.com>

<https://www.westernwoodlotcoop.com>

<https://www.westfor.org>

PHOTO CREDITS

Front Cover - Annapolis County Forest, by Melissa Fillmore
Pg 2 - Councillors, by Melissa Fillmore
Pg 7 - Observant Owl, by David A. Mitchell
Pg 9 - Walk through the Forest, by bambe1964 - Flickr.com
Back Cover - Eagle on watch, by Tom Gill

THE REPORT TEAM

Gregory Heming prepared the draft report.

Karelee Clerk provided direction on and assisted in the preparation of a skeleton draft to be used for the final report.

Melissa Fillmore designed the report.

THANKS

A special thanks to all the presenters who took the time to share their knowledge of forestry with the committee.

Bob Bancroft - Impacts of Current Forest Practices on Wildlife and Habitats

Bruce Stewart - Department of Natural Resources

Dale Prest - Carbon Capture and Storage

Donna Crossland - Crown Land Forest Strategy and Reports

Jamie Simpson - The Legal Landscape of Forestry and Value-Add

Mary Jane Rodger - Medway Community Forest Cooperative

Marcus Zwicker - WestFor Management Inc.

Melissa & Todd Labrador - The Long-view, Wildcat Reserve

Patricia Amero - Western Woodlot Services Cooperative

Scott Leslie - The Natural World as Inspiration

Tom Berry - County Land Use Proposal

