

# CFAC Newsletter Highlights

*(The following highlights were extracted from the March Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee Newsletter)*

Advisory panel members called for moratorium on clear-cutting in November. 'It is long past time for government to take significant action,' says letter to minister and premier. Last November, half of the members of an advisory committee to the Lands and Forestry minister called for a moratorium on clear-cutting on Crown land.

Half of the members of an advisory committee to the minister of Lands and Forestry wrote him expressing deep concern about continued heavy cutting on Crown land. They also called for a temporary moratorium. In submitting the letter to Derek Mombourquette, the members say they are concerned about "the extended delay in achieving the transition to ecological forestry practices" and say the pause in cutting is necessary until the recommendations of the Lahey Report on forestry practices are implemented.

"We believe that not doing so will result in the failure of government's latest attempt at forestry reform, with long-term damage to the ecological health, economic productivity, and socio-cultural values that Nova Scotians receive from this critically important public resource," reads an introductory message submitted along with the letter.

The letter, which the NDP received through a freedom of information request and released was copied to Premier Stephen McNeil, Lands and Forestry Deputy Minister Julie Towers and William Lahey, the president of University of King's College and author of the report that provides the blueprint for a change in forestry practices.

### Little progress since report's release

Lahey's report, which was released two-and-a-half years ago, called for a change to a

more ecological management of the forests.

Among the many recommendations was a move to a so-called triad system, where some Crown land is reserved for high-production forestry, some is left untouched for conservation and the largest portion is used for a more light-touch approach that allows the forests to recover from years of heavy cutting.

Overall, the recommendations would lead to a major reduction in clear-cutting. But since the report was released, there has been little public progress.

The draft of the new forest management guide, which outlines how the change would happen, was finally released last month.

The letter from the committee members notes that as people continue to wait for change by the government, harvest plans "that specify heavy cutting are being submitted and approved at a rapid pace, with little apparent regard for the ecological impacts that Lahey reviewed about."

"It is long past time for government to take significant action to transform forest policy and management in Nova Scotia. The premier, minister and Department of Lands and Forestry did not accept the Lahey review with the caveat that the remaining Crown forests be liquidated before its recommendations were implemented."

### A decision for the next premier

Members of the committee who signed the letter are Karen Beazley, Donna Crossland, Angie Gillis, Andrew Kekacs, Ray Plourde, Mary Jane Rodger and Greg Watson. Mombourquette has previously said he wanted all necessary preparation work ahead of potentially implementing Lahey's report to be complete before a new premier takes office.

Iain Rankin, the former Lands and Forestry minister, won the Nova Scotia

Liberal Party leadership on Saturday and is expected to be sworn in as premier in the coming weeks (already sworn in).

That means a decision on what happens next will fall to Rankin, and not McNeil. During the leadership campaign, Rankin pledged to implement the major aspects of the Lahey Report, including passing a new Biodiversity Act, this year.

NDP Leader Gary Burrill said the situation presents Rankin with a chance to show the public his priorities. "I think that Mr. Rankin has an important opportunity to follow a new direction on this and to change from the foot-dragging and delay that has characterized the government's response to the Lahey recommendations to really dealing seriously with clear-cutting," he said in an interview.

"If he were to follow this advice and bring in the moratorium on Crown [land] until those key, central, pivotal recommendations were implemented, I think this would go a long way towards demonstrating that in fact he means business on the subject."

A statement from the Lands and Forestry Department said the government remains committed to adopting Lahey's recommendations. It notes public consultation on the new management guide closes on Feb. 19.

"Once the new guide is finalized, the next steps will be to determine the details of how [it] will be implemented, including necessary training and the status of previously approved harvests."

"Interim forest management guidelines remain in place throughout this process. These measures have reduced the number of clearcuts approved by the department on Crown land considerably while the ecological forestry model is being implemented."

**The Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee can be reached at E-mail: cfac2021@gmail.com or on Facebook.**



## New Sidewalk on Hwy 289 Requested

By Maurice Rees

Colchester staff have been asked to discuss with NS Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to have a crosswalk at Highway 289 in Brookfield and pre-existing crosswalks be repainted on the side streets.

The action was brought forward by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Cooper as result of a petition from Brookfield area residents. In presenting the matter, Deputy Mayor Stewart advised of a situation on

Hwy 289 with two schools on the outer part of the community that have no safe crossing points between the school and the intersection in Brookfield. The motion was carried unanimously.

## Public Work Projects to Start Soon

By Maurice Rees

In her March report to Council, Michelle Newell, Director Public Works reported on some of the projects and initiatives currently being undertaken by the Public Works Department related to staffing: hiring has been completed for usual winter casual for support during plowing operations; currently recruiting for the vacant position of Wastewater Treatment Manager; as long as COVID numbers remain low will be hiring summer students this year to supplement field crews and will be hiring usual summer term in Debert for mowing of the airport and park grounds.

In Ongoing and Upcoming Projects the following projects are expected to undergo construction in the Spring and Summer of 2021: • Sidewalk Reconstruction, Hill Street and William Street; Sidewalk Con-

struction, Highway 2 Hilden; Marked Crossing, Highway 311; New Landfill Cell, Kemp-town Balefill; Highway 246 Watermain Replacement, Tatamagouche; Screen for Grit Chamber, Lower Truro Sewage Plant; New Waterline, Debert Aviation Centre; Chantilly

Drainage Project; Debert STP2 Elimination - Ongoing; Biosolids Larvae Pilot Project - Ongoing Regulatory and Staff will soon be starting up again with regular meetings of the Debert and Tatamagouche Source Water Protection Committees.

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## Five On-Line Courses

By Nancy Pitts

Do you love learning just for the sake of learning? The Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia (SCANS) is offering a new suite of five on-line courses starting April 21, 2021.

The spring course topics include aspects of nutrition,

mental health, economics, physics and engineering, political/social considerations. These are offered as 2 hour lectures once a week, for 6 weeks.

An Information Session on these courses (Thursday March 18th 10 am) will be

recorded and, like the on-line classes, can be viewed afterwards at your convenience. An annual membership (\$150 + tax) entitles you to take all, or as many courses as, you want for 3 semesters. Check these out at [www.thescans.org](http://www.thescans.org) or for more information [scansinfo@gmail.com](mailto:scansinfo@gmail.com)

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PUBLIC INQUIRY

## Call for Applications for Participation (Standing)

The Joint Federal/Provincial Commission into the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty is an independent public inquiry created to examine the April 18-19, 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia and to provide meaningful recommendations to help protect Canadians in the future.

If you are an individual or group with substantial and direct interest in the subject matter, you can now apply for participant status and funding on our website. We are seeking completed applications by April 6, 2021.

[MassCasualtyCommission.ca/participation](http://MassCasualtyCommission.ca/participation)



**MASS CASUALTY COMMISSION**

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