Vastly Different Approaches Between Finland and Nova Scotia

By Maurice Rees

MacDougall's and colleagues identified vastly different approaches to forest management and the public's perception to the value of the forest and what how it can a sustainable economic engine. Those differences are outlined below:

Culture and Cooperative attitude:

Finns refer to themselves as "A Nation of Tree Growers" they call Forests "Green Gold" for themselves, their families and the economy of the country… In Finland profit Is not a dirty word

Finns are very knowledgeable of their land, and have a long term commitment to forest management

They look upon it as farming the forest and they do a harvest every few years, it evens out their revenue over time

You will not see a 100 acre c/c in Finland, they will not strip their lot

you will see is many small c/c and thinnings

the contractors love this

the big one, "high degree of cooperation by woodlot owners, forest industry and government and public. They don't bash each other, if problem they get together and fix it

In WW2 the Soviets tried to invade Finland with 2 soviet tank divisions of 45, 000 men. It was a big mistake. Against all odds 11,000 Finns on cross country skis with rifles on their backs defeated them.

If they have a problem they deal with it !!!!!

Strong Landowner Support System was identified as another major difference in approach we identified

Over 85% of Finnish forest owners belong to an FMA

Forest Management Associations (FMAs) are non-profit orgs that help woodlot owners, there are 76 FMA offices spread across the country

FMAs have, sales managers, foresters, clerks. GIS expert management plans have a business component.

FMAs creates efficiency and economy of scale for woodlot owners

(In my job with Fed. I'll often get a call from woodlot owner who doesn't want to deal directly with industry or contractor).

In Finland the FMA creates the bridge between the Woodlot Owner and the forest company, landowners participate in harvesting because they know they are protected.

In Nova Scotia we estimate only 10% of landowners are member of woodlot organizations.

We are beginning to develop the FMA model in NS with CBPLP and other initiatives but we have a long way to go

INTENSIVE forest management regime:

Driving across Finland everywhere you look you can see tended forest and people still using the forest for a multitude of values incl. recreation, food, hunting etc.

You might think a nation using this much wood you would see clearcuts everywhere but in fact what you see is the opposite Mature forest is everywhere

The Finnish Management regime is: Mechanical scarification; Plant nS, scots pine, silver birch; Pre commercial thinning; two commercial thinning over the rotation (73%) and Final harvest with Small block size.

With these treatments the Finns are maximized economic potential on the forestland base

Legislation that you must ensure cutovers are re forested within 5 years of a harvest or the owner will face fines.

The Finns support Certification on all private forest not as way of getting more $ for wood but as a way of letting their citizens and the world know that their forests are well managed and sustainable.

Obviously in Nova Scotia we have the Acadian forest and this requires a slightly different management approach but does not, in my opinion, mean we can't practice intensive forestry if we choose.

Why did the peahen and its baby cross the road? (Harrington Photo)

Deadline for the February The Shoreline Journal is January 21.

A Fully Integrated Forest Product Value Chain

By Maurice Rees

In his presentation to the Woodland conference in Lantz in spring 2017, MacDougall explained what the benefits of a value chain would mean, especially if it was fully integrated. His colleagues, following their trip to Finland also came up with some suggestions for Nova Scotia.

Fully Integrate Forest Product Value Chain:

What does this mean???

In Finland most forest products are utilized to their highest end value, and all parts of the tree are able to be sold at roadside.

Finns especially recognize the importance of pulpwood and low grade markets as a means to improve value of their forests and keep landowners active

In NS many woodlot owners and contractors are currently inactive or struggling because of their limited markets opportunities for pulpwood and low grade.

Finland has a full integrated value chain:

Finland has approximately 190 sawmills with numerous products from 3 main species

In Finland there are 49 pulp and paper board plants and continued new investment

Over 130 bio- energy plants and boilers are all over the country, close to wooded areas, that range in size from a few Megawatts to more than 100 Megawatts.

Bioenergy is used on an industrial scale to provide both electricity and district heating

Nova Scotia recently lost a major pulp mill in western Nova Scotia. In Finland if they lost a pulp mill or two, they are Ok because they have an alternative for their low grade wood.

WE NEED ALTERNATIVES IN NOVA SCOTIA

In summary the key difference in approach between Finland and Nova Scotia:

- culture and cooperative ATTITUDE
- STRONG woodlot owner support
- intensive forest management regime
- fully integrated value chain

MacDougall concluded, "Our group sincerely believes that if our forests were managed using some of these principles:

We believe thousands of jobs could be added to our forestry sector. Mostly in rural Nova Scotia.

100s of millions could be added in forest product exports from Nova Scotia.

We believe more woodlot owners would participate and would realize the true value of their forest holdings.

The question is … What can we do ?

We believe if we all work together we can make some positive changes.

We need everyone onside to tackle our problems.

This is a call to action.

Where Finland is today was a century in the making.

In Nova Scotia BFP…Time is of the Essence

Thank you.