

Nova Scotia Forestry Employs 11,500

By Hon Lloyd Hines

Forestry is among the top economic drivers in our province, employing 11,500 people and generating \$800 million in GDP last year.

Today, through progress and the use of best practices, our forestry decisions are based on science and the assessment of each individual forest harvest site. That means we assess the tree and plant species, wildlife habitat, soil and terrain condition, and more. It is known as ecosystem-based forest management.

As we recognize Forest Week (Sept. 18-24) it is important to acknowledge forest management in our province has evolved to this improved approach over time and we have become more open and accountable about the management of our forest resources.

Nova Scotia is one of the few provinces posting proposed harvest maps and ask-

ing citizens to comment on forest harvests before decisions are made (<https://nsgi.novascotia.ca/hpmv/>). We believe in being transparent and doing things in a responsible way. People should know how government is managing public lands. Government began posting harvest maps in 2014 when then Natural Resources Minister Zach Churchill introduced them, and we continue to make improvements so people are better informed.

"The status quo is not an option" was the clear call of the natural resources strategy, The Path We Share, five years ago after much public input. It is just as true today, and we will not revert to the old ways of managing our forests.

Things have changed since the natural resources strategy was released. The volume of timber harvests is half of what it was in the early 2000s, which has reduced pressure on our forests, and all aspects

of biodiversity are being taken into account. What's been missed lately in public discussion is that clearcutting reductions have not been abandoned — this will occur using the ecosystem-based method, and it is a wiser way to achieve reductions.

Having a destination in mind is not the same as having a roadmap in hand. There is more than one way to get there as the terrain changes along the way. It is logical to be flexible. We also need to consider that close to 65 per cent of our forests are privately owned and we can only promote but not prescribe how those lands are managed.

Relying on science first for harvesting decisions, we can better ensure that our children and our children's children's children continue to enjoy and make a livelihood from our forests. As minister, I am committed to unlocking the value of our forests; their great economic and recreation values. I am proud of the progress and learning we have experienced in managing our forests in recent years.

Lloyd Hines is Nova Scotia's Minister of Natural Resources



Hon Lloyd Hines, Minister of Natural Resources helps the Harrison family, Matthew, Bonnie, Luke and Noah plant a ceremonial Black Ash tree on the back lawn. (Rees Photo)

Harrison Family Provincial Woodlot Winners

By Maurice Rees

Lynn Mountain is now home to the 2016 Central Region and Provincial Woodland Owner of the year with Matthew and Bonnie Harrison's, Hidden Mountain Maple Farm being chosen as winners. A field day and woodlot tour and awards were presented on Saturday, September under warm and sunny skies.

The Harrison family lives on a 1000 acre (405 hectare) woodland and their primary focus is on long term viability of the woodland in order to sustain the many values that the property offers. The Harrison's property was previously owned by Matthew's grandparents who bought it in the 1950s. Matthew is now the current owner and has done an amazing job at maintaining the woodland through forest improvement practices, such as tree planting, selection management, and pre-commercial thinning.

They have been very active in developing recreational opportunities such as snowmobile trail development on the land, and primarily developing and operating

sugar maple and blueberry businesses. For the past six years, the Harrisons have committed to at least 20 ha (50 acre) of selection harvesting each year. This has resulted in a well-managed forest with continuous cover for wildlife.

Matthew and his family, wife Bonnie, a veterinarian and their two sons, Luke and Noah are also living completely off the existing Nova Scotia Power electricity grid; nearly all of their electrical power comes from the solar panels installed on the property. Electricity comes from a 4500 watt solar panel, which is supplemented by a back-up generator, which provides added power during the maple season in the spring. All appliances in their new home are electric with the exception of stove, oven, dryer and furnace which operate from propane.

Other than during maple season, the generator operates maybe 10-20 hours a year. Additional power is stored in 12 - 12v battery storage system. Matthew is considering a hydro-turbine installation in a couple of the brooks near the house. The brooks are always full of water.

In the 1990s Matthew started growing blueberries; which has expanded to 120 acres. Shortly after starting his blueberry business, he initiated a sugar maple business called the Hidden Mountain Maple Farms. The Harrison family currently manages 12,000 maple taps and has recently added another 1500 taps.

Just over a year ago, Matthew and family moved into their new home, which is part of the sugar processing area. The building features in-floor heating. All sap arrives at

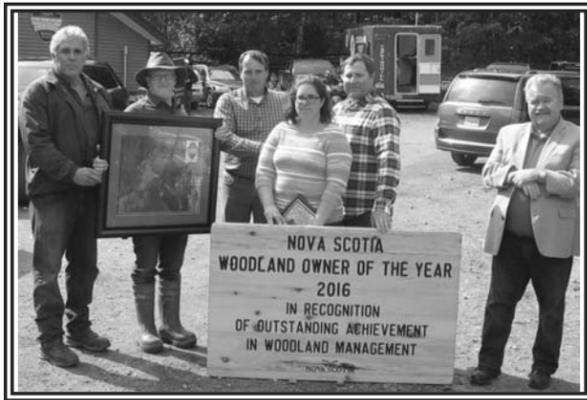
the receiving area, which is housed in the former sugar shack, prior to the new facility being built. With sump pumps installed in the receiving tanks, the raw sap is then pumped above ground to another holding tank. Sap is then treated with reverse osmosis to remove most of the water.

The refined sap is pumped into another tank awaiting its trip to the evaporator. The water extracted during reverse osmosis is purified. Matthew is currently accessing if he will start bottling water for retail sale of if he will sell in bulk to craft brewers.

The Hidden Mountain Maple Farms sell many sweet products such as maple syrup, maple butter, maple cream, fudge, maple jelly and many more. The tour will held 9:00 am - 4:00 pm with the Springhill Ladies Auxiliary catering for lunch, which was followed by presentations and prize draws. Department of Natural Resources Minister Lloyd Hines was in attendance to present Harrisons with their various awards.

The Harrison's activities include an ever-expanding 12,000 tap sugar maple operation, 120 acres of blueberry fields and blueberry harvester operation. Besides operating a blueberry harvester, Matt runs an excavator business for a variety of types of work such as levelling blueberry fields, road building, bridge and culvert construction, and chipping roadside and utility right-of-ways.

For the past six years, the Harrisons have committed to at least 20 hectares (50 acres) of selection harvesting annually. A wide variety of stations with different topics were located around the property.



Bonnie and Matthew Harrison were presented with several signs, plaques, an aerial photo of their property, and a chainsaw at the Open House and Woodlot tour on September 24th. (Rees Photo)



Athol Forestry Cooperative Limited

today's members growing tomorrow's forests

We offer: Woodlot advice, management plans, evaluations, silviculture & harvesting services.

Our store location provides quality and reasonable priced work clothing and footwear. We carry the brands Helly Hansen, Pioneer, Dunlop, Royer, Muck, Husqvarna and many more. We also carry a large selection of culverts and geo textiles for road construction.

Open Monday – Friday 8:00 until 4:30

Athol Forestry Cooperative Limited
 21397 Highway #2
 Amherst, NS
 (902) 667 7299



Athol Forestry Cooperative Limited



MCISAAC · DARRAGH

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

Member of The AC Group of Independent Accounting Firms

Advisors to the Forestry Industry - Woodlot owners, contractors
Minimizing Tax, Estate and Succession Planning, Structuring your Business

Susan Mclsaac FCPA, FCA - susan.mcisaac@mcisaacdarragh.ca
 Vicki Darragh CPA, CA - vicki.darragh@mcisaacdarragh.ca
 Cindy Costin-Fury CPA, CA - cindy.costin@mcisaacdarragh.ca

11 Princess St. Amherst, NS
 Phone: (902) 661-1027
 Toll Free: 1-877-282-6632
 Fax: (902) 667-0884
www.acgca.ca