

NEW BRUNSWICK PROTECTED AREAS STRATEGY

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As exploration geologists and members of the mining industry on one hand and s members of environmental groups on the other, both Geosleuths and the Sussex Society of Public Interest strongly support your protected areas strategy and commend your efforts even if it is a bare minimum. Preserving wilderness is to preserve ourselves. What does not need to be preserved is the assault night and day by mechanised harvesting, the application of biocides and forestry policies that serve off shore industrial interests rather than our own woods workers, our citizenry and ecosystems.

Although it may seem strange to you that mining interests and environmental interests can support similar objectives with regard to our wilderness. We would like to demonstrate a few ways whereby you could accommodate mining interests, emplace the protected areas and extend protection for our ecosystems. We will also point to a few policy changes that would put wood cutters back to work in our public forests and lay industries new found concerns over the working man's plight to rest.

Mining interests in early stages of exploration are less invasive and intrusive over a landscape than ATV trails. They make no trails or roads and do less environmental damage than hunters and fishermen. The proposed protected areas pose no restriction on hunters or fishermen. In fact any hunter knows that a living forest in a protected area makes better habitat for for game than silent, near dead, corporate sponsored

monoculture spruce plantations. ATV trails existing in the designated areas are to be grand fathered in and will continue to be used. The protected areas are so small and limited that we insist that they all be emplaced and not be allowed to burn in the event of forest fires.

The truth is that just about every use of the forest except industrial forestry can be carried out in Dorries off Newfoundland compared to the huge factory trawler corporate fishery. The Dorries and communities take a few fish, while the maga-trawlers take the entire ocean. All activities from hunting through tourism to mining exploration, pale beside those of the industrial forest sector.

Mining exploration let alone community mining interests are poorly understood by the public and the environmental movement. In sketching out a scenario which would be inclusive of mining interests. I would like to spend a moment in explaining the process of searching for a mine at its several stages and its relative impact and, if in the unlikely event a mine is found in a protected area, how it could be best dealt with.

Mines, unlike forests, are not a mobile, shifting, living complex of ecosystems but static resources. Minerals are found only in specific places, which should not be isolated from examination, and if sufficiently valuable, from usage. They can, like the forest or the fishery, be utilised to the benefit of a community rather than remote corporate interests as is the case of Havelock Lime or in past times the quarries of Mary's Point or the manganese mine at Markhamville. If the Potocan Mine had been worker owned, it would still be in production and profitable to this day.

Compared to the area annually overtaken by urbanisation, land consumed by mining is negligible--less than a fraction of a per cent of Canada's land surface is take up by mining...that can hardly be said of the forestry industry.

Initial mineral exploration surveys are not invasive. They can utilise flagged lines for surveys cutting no trees or even branches.

Approximately one out of one hundred grass roots mineral exploration prospects is drilled with the attendant disruption limited to a very low level--at the most, a few hectares of land, which by law must be rehabilitated. At this point you have less disruption than ATV or skidoo trails.

However, one in a thousand of these drilled prospects will develop into a mine. It is obvious that the odds are stacked against finding a mine in any of the protected areas.

In the eventuality of an ore body being discovered in a protected area, we recommend that "mining contingency areas" and biodiversity corridors be set up on public lands adjacent to each of the proposed protected areas in order to offset the impact.

A minimum of two hundred hectares congruent with each proposed protected area should be set aside and treated with selection harvesting methods, if and when cut, in order to maintain 75% of the canopy with the object of keeping that area's biodiversity intact.

These special mining contingency areas can then act both as replacements in the event of a mine being developed and enhance the protected areas as stepping stones to less protected corridors for species transmission to other favourable habitats and ecosystems.

The mining contingency area acting as a trade off would become a permanent replacement for the space occupied by the discovered mine within a protected area. All mines must be developed within stringent environmental guidelines as per the provincial mining act. It can be done. An example of such a mine with strict environmental standards, and low impact mining is the PCS mine at Penobsquis. Water entering that mine is more polluted than the water leaving it. A portion of royalties garnered from a mine in the protected areas should be assigned to conservation projects aimed at extending wilderness.

As an adjunct to the contingency area it is absolutely necessary

that extensive corridors be set aside where selection cutting practices are designed to protect biodiversity. Here the forest canopy should be maintained at no less than 60%. Selection cutting practices create more jobs. These meandering belts across public lands should be at least 800 meters wide, connecting the protected areas and the mining contingency zones with refuges, parks and other wilderness areas to assure biological mobility across the larger landscape.

It is after all as reasonable to protect the movements of the larger web of life to which we belong as the proposed protected areas. Scientific observations elsewhere have shown that if corridors containing relatively mature forests are not put in place then species in those restricted islands can atrophy and die off.

When the forest industry tells us that we are going to lose 300 odd jobs if the protected areas are set aside, I am, frankly, astounded by their new found concern. It simply amazes me, for if they are so concerned about jobs, what are they doing cross border shopping, purchasing million of dollars of massive cutting machinery that systematically drive cutter in droves out of the woods. To boot, these same conscientious companies insist that woods contractors buy the same pricey harvesters.

The price tags of mechanised harvesters are between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Once bought, the larger ones must operate around the clock. At maximum output they can cut 80 cords a day or about 2400 cords a month. One such machine knocks out at least 20 jobs. How many of these machines are out there on our public lands? Let's take a really conservative guess and say only 1000,000 machines would eliminate 2000 jobs. What are our conscience stricken absentee corporate foresters saying about that?

It is not just harvesting machines but the mills themselves which are displacing jobs as they become increasingly automated. The Bathurst Pulp and Paper mill was "modernised" a few years ago at a cost of over \$100 million to we the tax payers. To compound things, the government allowed that mill to be sold for a pittance, around \$35 million to a foreign company and chucked in a 12 million lumber mill as a gratuity. That company reduced the work force at the mill by approximately half. But Some

Consolidated is not the only pulp and paper company benefiting from taxpayer monies to automate, reduce work forces and expand the output of the mills. They all do. Mechanisation both at the mills and in the forests means layoffs, fewer jobs, increased cutting and the assured destruction for the wood supply and the ecosystems that go with it. And when they're done we'll all be out of work and out of a landscape.

So that makes us look pretty dumb, doesn't it? Paying corporations to put us out of work and take our money to help bottom lines in Nassau (the Irvings), in Chicago (Stone Consolidated), in Toronto (Fraser) and in New York.

If jobs are the issue, our forest policy on public lands must be redesigned to employ cutters with saws rather than corporations with mechanised harvesters. Each crown lease should be treated by selection cutting methods and have a minimum quota of direct jobs at least double that of today, attached to it. With that simple initiative, the mechanised harvesters would begin to disappear and unemployment along with it.

Nothing that 93% of New Brunswickers in a recent poll support the protected areas proposal and our need for a fully employed economy, we propose a solution via a transition to community controlled forestry.

An example of this kind of forestry is being carried out by the B.C. Ministry's of Forest own Small Business Forest Enterprise Program in Vernon, B.C. It would be worth emulation in New Brunswick. Average stumpage from large companies in B.C. is \$25.00/cubic meter whereas Vernon's Small business forest project revenue is between \$50 and \$60/ cubic meter. Their log yard sells 48 different products. Traditional products such as sawlogs and peelers make up about 70% of the Vernon Log Yard sales. These are bought by a variety of mills large and small. other sales are specialty items ranging from house building logs to guitar blanks and oversized logs bought by small value-added woodworking firms and individuals. The enterprise generates about four times the gross revenue as current industry-government tenure models with the added benefit of maintaining their ecosystems. There is a greater intensity of labour at all phases,

costs are higher but benefits exceed industrial forestry by many times more than revenues. The money garnered stays in the community.

To bring the picture close to home, in nearby Main, Lansky and others have demonstrated that community forests employ more people and benefit local economies in our Acadian Forests several fold more than that of the monoculture tree farming or cut out and get out industrial models practised by Georgia Pacific, the Irvings and the other giants. It is way past time to look into these and other viable alternatives.

In view of these sorts of solutions to salvaging our landscape, its ecosystems and our work force, policy makers, managers and woods workers should not be supportive of increasing the power of a corporate forest industry. Let alone one that stoops to threatening women who have vocally supported the protected areas strategy. What's next ? Beating me up on the way home?

We recommend that you put in place all of the protected areas with hunting, fishing, ecotourism and traditional ATV access. The people want them. Build onto them mining contingency zones and biodiversity corridors. Take back our public forests and harvest them within genuine ecological guidelines for the benefit of our citizenry and communities. This round of meeting should be seen as an opportunity to establish the protected areas initiate appropriate forestry, employ more people and begin to maintain healthy ecosystems.

Thank you.

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