

Nova Scotia Forest Technicians Association
53th Annual General Meeting
March 10th, 2016

Meeting called to order –1:37pm

Cheryl Rudderham: Welcome and opening remarks from the President

Attendance – 56 Members present, 4 Guests: Riley Cote-DeMerchant
Katelyn Strong
Gerry Redmond
Todd MacPherson

Moment of silence for deceased Member: Loman Ayer

Recognition of new Members: Carolyn Towell
Jessica Swinkels

MCFT Guest: *Gerry Redmond (Director)*

Recruitment: Recruitment at the college has been great. Natasha Oulette recruitment officer has been very successful. There were 140 applicants for 60 spaces last year. Gerry thanks the Association for promoting MCFT. Applications for the forest tech program are exceeding seats, some will reapply another year. In the future the college could increase the number of students accepted but then must consider staffing and other implications.

Graduation: Greg Watson will be attending the 2016 graduation to represent NSFTA, there will be approximately 46 grads this year. The first year class started with 60 students, it is now down to 50. First year students are looking for summer work. If anyone has positions to fill, (summer or full time) please contact the college and they will email the positions to students as well as alumni.

Financial: The college had a tough financial period, they were unsure of how much funding the college would be getting through provincial gov't last year. They have been able to maintain but last year were looking for other funding sources. They are also getting leads on corporate financial help. Staff has been downsized at the college; haven't replaced front office staff after retirement, (duties have been absorbed by others). Somewhere around 30-40% of costs of running the school are covered by tuition. Could consider increasing tuition but gov't could then step in and may also decrease their funding. Always considering ideas for new programs

to offer such as an Advanced Fire program.

Accreditation: College will have to be reaccredited this year. In future may look into being accredited by a Canadian body.

Alumni List: Gerry encourages members to sign up for alumni list on MCFT website to receive updates and info from the college.

Fish and Wildlife Program: Fish and Wildlife Program is doing well, 15 students this year and 15 enrolled for next year. Program can take up to 24, but still making a profit with 15. Not many fish and wildlife jobs in the Maritimes but the program helps attract students and makes them more employable.

Articulation Agreements: Working to keep articulation agreements. Many students further their studies after graduation. In some years 30-40% of UNB's Forestry program is MCFT students.

Bathurst Campus: Bathurst campus is struggling but did have a good recruitment last year of 17 students. Amalgamating the two campuses has been considered. If they lose some of their budget, this may be reconsidered. Bathurst campus has been open since 1976 and has never had a huge number of students. They also offer the 2 year program. It's hard to get francophone students from Quebec because they have a different education system, would have to recruit internationally.

MCFT Guest: *Todd Macpherson (Supervisor of Continuing Education)*

Background: Graduate of 1992. Taught at the college for a few years in the past. Started with CE in June 2015. Has formed a lot of partnerships in this time.

Upcoming Courses: Through a partnership with the University of Maine, MCFT CE will be offering an Advanced Herbicide Application course and has already had an overwhelming amount of interest.

There will be an Introduction to Drones course on Friday July 29/16 to start off the 2016 reunion. It will include a live demonstration.

Working with natural gas company to get REDD Training (training for working in and around streams where there are salmonid nests).

Watercourse Alteration Certificate is the most successful course, excellent instructors and a lot of positive feedback. They will be offering 5 courses this year. In February 2017, a 2 year Utility Arboriculture Program, in partnership with Arboriculture Canada, will be offered. The course will consist of an in class portion and work experience. MCFT CE was approached by NB Power to develop the program. NB Power will provide the instructors and equipment. The college is now in the process of recruiting. There is a big demand for a program like this. It will be open to 25 students. The program will also receive some gov't funding. There can easily be 5 classes graduated (10 yrs for program to run) to the province of NB. In

the future the college will try to develop partnerships with other utility companies.
Reunion 2016: Being held July 29th -31st . Lots of events planned for the weekend.
Visit **www.reunion2016.ca** for more details. If you would like to be added to the alumni list (to receive newsletters and other info) you can send an email to alumniinfo@mcft.ca or by calling 866-619-9900.

Review and Approval of Agenda

Motion from Jim Rudderham to accept Agenda as written, 2nd by Clifton Sangster.

Approval of 2015 Annual Report/Minutes

Motion from Dave Sweet to accept the 2015 NSFTA AGM Minutes and Reports, 2nd by Jason Casey.

Motion carried

President's Report *Cheryl Rudderham*

The second year as president was another great experience. It was busy but still enjoyed it. Thank you to the Executive for their help and advice on issues. Special thanks to Tony Mummery and Matt White for all their work with Right to Practice.

Highlights from the year:

Donated \$500 to the Boy Scouts Scotiajamb.

Right to Practice committee was formed; work is ongoing for this committee.

Celebrated Lloyd MacDonald's retirement and his longtime service with NSFTA.

Participation in a NS DNR Research Field Tour for National Forestry week.

Communications and Forest Alliance committees were dissolved. Museum committee is dormant.

Awarded the NSFTA Scholarship and attended the 2015 MCFT graduation.

Funds allowed prizes to be purchased for a draw at the AGM.

CFT exam will be offered this spring.

Represented the Association by attending sessions on Provincial Timber Objectives and the Crown Land Forest Resource Management Policy.

“Thank you all for allowing me the privilege to be NSFTA President and the honor to serve.”

Financial Reports

Auditor's Report presented by Jason Casey.

Financial books were audited by Jason Casey and Dave Steeves and found to be in good standing order.

Motion from Jason Casey to accept the Auditor's Report, 2nd by Al Blinn

Motion carried

Auditors for 2016

Volunteers called – Jason Casey and Dave Steeves.

Motion from Clifton Sangster to accept Jason Casey and Dave Steeves to be Auditors for 2016, 2nd by Andrew Fedora.

Motion carried

Treasurer Report presented by Jim Rudderham

Balance forward as of Jan. 2015 was \$ 10,304.59

On Dec. 11, 2014 \$10,000.00 was put in a two year GIC @ 2%. Value on Dec. 31, 2015 was \$10,211.18

Dec. 31, 2015 chequing account balance was \$10,520.02

Total funds of NSFTA as of Dec. 31, 2015 were \$20,731.20

Membership Report presented by Jim Rudderham

67 regular members, 1 new graduate, 14 CFT, 9 Life-Time members

Total Members 2015: 91 (101 in 2014)

Motion from Jim Rudderham to accept reports, 2nd by Clifton Sangster.

Motion carried

Committee Reports

Certification, CFT & CFE presented by Jim Rudderham

CFT Members : 14

Re-update 2015-2016 CFT Members: Michael Kennedy, Jim Rudderham, Neil Kenney and Robert Sarson.

Big Tree Contest presented by Lloyd Morgan

The first tree in 3 years was submitted this year by Richard Andrews. The tree was a red oak, 23m in height, 159cm diameter, scoring 182 points. It is located in Granville Ferry, Annapolis County. Land owners are Art and Martha Vandermeulen. They won a \$100 Sobeys gift card. Richard Andrews gets a \$75 gift card for submitting the tree.

There was also a late entry that will be held over for the 2016 contest.

2016 contest posters are now available.

Forestry Hall of Fame presented by Stephen Cole

Two nominations this year. One was voted down by Executive (Fernow, White and Howe – authors of the Fernow report). The other was sent back with a request for more information and will be reconsidered next year.

Forest Protection presented by Jim Rudderham

Forest Fires: 247 fires, 517 ha burnt. This is well below the 20 year average in NS (291 fires that burn 775 ha). Low numbers due to the severe winter of 2015, which also resulted in a delay of the fire season until the end of April. The season ran until Oct. 15th as usual.

Forest Pests: The province surveys for many forest pests each year. All surveys showed normal populations. On April 2, 2015, brown spruce longhorn beetle regulated area was expanded to include all of NS. The province no longer surveys for this pest. Spruce budworm population is still active. The province continues to prepare.

Saw Milling & Silviculture presented by Jason Casey

Sawmilling: Log and stud prizes started high in 2015.

Most mills have full wood yards due to increase in harvesting in 2015. This resulted in a drop in price for studs and logs late in 2015 and into 2016.

The softwood lumber agreement expired in Oct. 2015 leaving one year of no duties imposed. This has led to increased shipments especially from western mills taking advantage of this. This has also resulted in a low price for lumber but the low Canadian dollar has helped offset this.

Hope to have more activity in local markets given the early spring.

Westfor consortium started in Jan. 2016, which will now represent licensees acquiring wood from the western part of the province.

Westfor Inc. will be the governing body for Crown licensees that are part of the consortium. Westfor's board of directors is made up of representatives of the

licensees.

In 2014 there were 123 sawmills registered in the province and 45% of the total provincial harvest went to stud wood and saw logs.

Silviculture:

Registered buyers from the 2015 report accounted for a required value total of 6,806,158 for 2014 wood intake.

In 2014 a total of 4,932,044 credits were submitted for 10,344ha. This included; 2% Natural Regen Establishment, 23% Plantation, 30% Early Competition Control, 18% Plantation PCT, 22% Natural PCT, 4% Commercial Thinning, 1% Category 7 treatments.

Total of 2,736ha funded through Association of Sustainable Forestry from June 2015 – Feb 2016, the majority of work being PCT.

2015 Crown Lands Silviculture program amounted to about 6,000,000 credits.

Regional budgets spent mostly on PCT and Planting. Some licenses were directed to focus credit requirements on partial harvests.

For Crown and ASF; PTAs for partial harvests and prescriptions that are based on FEC information are encouraged.

Website/Database (Derek Gilby) presented by Jim Rudderham

Currently working on updating the website and removing bugs. Will soon implement a membership login area for members and executive to access private information. There will also be a document management system to organize documents and meeting minutes. Also working on a better way to organize membership names and information, certification information, mailing list etc. If members are interested in a free nsfta.ca email or free storage space for nsfta info, documents or pictures please contact Derek Gilby at nsfta@nsfta.ca

Scholarship Award presented by Cheryl Rudderham

3 applicants this year. Executive voted at January meeting, scholarship awarded to Jamie Ring.

Technician of the Year presented by Norm MacDougall

There were no nominations this year; therefore there will not be a presentation at the banquet. Only the 3rd time in 25 years without a nomination. Encourages members to nominate a technician they feel does a little extra for next year's award.

Wildlife presented by Greg Watson

No changes in the hunting regulations for white tailed deer last year. Maybe this

fall will be buck only in some areas to reflect the severe winter of 2015. A hard winter may not have been entirely bad for the deer population as it weeds out some of the weak and may contribute to a stronger genetic pool.

There has been hair found in Kejimikujik National Park, from what is believed to belong to a cougar, it is being tested to confirm whether it is or not.

Encourages technicians to put in an effort to manage for both forestry and wildlife.

Motion from Clifton Sangster to accept Committee reports, 2nd by George Dempsey.

Motion carried

Regional Rep Reports

Western presented by **Richard Andrews**

Quiet year in the west for the Association. Spoke to a few prospective forestry students who visited the NSFTA website to get info.

Encourages members to talk to people about the association and get our name out there.

Cape Breton South presented by **Glenn Wallace**

Took on role as regional rep in June after Lloyd MacDonald's retirement. Attended Sept. and Jan. meetings. During these meetings was brought up to date on what's been happening with RTP. The committee formed to work with the RPFs on RTP gave very informative updates. Concerned with the fast approach being taken to get this legislation passed through cabinet.

Will continue to forward NSFTA info to members and try to recruit new members within the region.

South Central presented by **Matt Nelson**

Halifax County is very busy with wharf, boat ramp and breakwater construction/repair. Historically Halifax West has the most permits issued on a yearly basis.

A lot of trail groups are presently active, many of which have management agreements with crown.

Northern Pulp has been busy harvesting in south central region this year.

New system called Crown Land Production and Sales tracks load slips from blocks and emails to notify when harvesting will begin.

Approx. 400ha of Crown land PCT this past season.

Possibly an active fire season this year due to low snow this winter. Fire crews start April 4th.

Expecting a lot of calls for nuisance wildlife to start with the warm weather. Migratory birds should have an easier transition this year with not much snow and more food available.

Many hunters have been reporting low deer populations to DNR offices, believed this is due to last year's severe winter.

Eastern presented by Ian Gunn

Was able to attend all but one of the NSFTA executive meetings in the last year. Continue to encourage techs from the Eastern Region to join NSFTA. Welcome members in this region to contact him with any concerns that should be brought to the attention of the Association.

Valley presented by Stephen Cole

2015 was a very busy year, increased harvesting on Crown and private.

Access to significant silviculture budgets a challenge.

Lots of calls from private woodlot owners expressing interest in forestry.

Demand for forest products was high in the valley.

Access to consistent and stronger markets gave the opportunity to working with different landowners and meeting their goals.

Several logging contractors upgraded or invested in new equipment in 2015, including 2 harvesters that will be used mainly for partial harvests.

South Shore vacant

Motion from Glenn Wallace to accept regional reports, 2nd by Jason Casey.

Motion carried

Old Business

Right to Practice

Below is a copy of the presentation given by Tony Mummery and Matt White, (NSFTA members of the Right to Practice Committee)

Joint NSFTA/RPFANS RTP Committee Members

- *Spokesperson's*: Earle Miller & Tony Mummery
 - *Other members*: Matt White, Ryan McIntyre
 - Current President's of both NSFTA & RPFANS are invited to attend all committee meetings and are kept up to date on progress

Recent Activities of Joint Committee

- Discussion between association representatives – June 2015
- NSFTA invited to join RTP committee and move towards joint path forward – August 2015
- Committee developed joint proposal of scope of practice- Fall 2015
- Approval from each professional association to continue on proposed path with proposed scopes – January 2016
- Refined scope detailed and prepared for AGM – Feb 2016

Proposed Right-To-Practice Structure

Categories

- RPFT – Registered Professional Forest Technologist
- RFT – Registered Forest Technologist
- RPF – Registered Professional Forester

SCOPE

RPFT & RPF – The planning, designing and assessing of forest practices at a landscape level. RTP Legislation will apply on lands and management areas where the Code of Nova Scotia Forest Practice applies

RFT – The planning, designing and assessing of forest practices at the stand level. RTP Legislation will apply on lands and management areas where the Code of Nova Scotia Forest Practice applies

Benefits to Nova Scotia in establishing Forestry Right-To-Practice

- The Forester's Association Act's complaint review, code of ethics and discipline process ensures the *accountability* of current & future RPFANS members (RPF, RPFT or RFT)
- Increased *credibility* in managing Nova Scotia's forests knowing there is an independent, self-regulating association overseeing the activities of forest professionals
- *Due diligence* in planning and designing forest practices will increase as the liability upon individual Association members increases

Today and Forward

- March 11, 2016 – Update from RPFANS / NSFTA joint committee
- April 2016 – Finalize edits & amendments to DRAFT legislation

- May 2016 - Proposed amendment to the Forester's Association Act to be presented to the Province (DNR)
- June 2016 – Identify and meet with significant forest industry & public representatives
(*stakeholder consultation process*)
- Fall 2016 – Have amendments prepared & tabled in the NS legislature

Right to Practice Committee Contacts

- Earle Miller – earle.miller@eastlink.ca (*Spokesperson*)
- Tony Mummery – tonymummery@eastlink.ca (*Spokesperson*)
- Ryan McIntyre – jryanmcintyre@gmail.com
- Matt White – matthew.white@northernpulp.com

Also noted during the presentation:

- RTP mainly affects technicians that do landscape level planning (landscape level is not clearly defined yet but would be areas much larger than 500ha).
- When foresters graduate from UNB they must have 2 years of work experience before they can write a landscape level plan.
- Not that many technicians in the province that do landscape level planning.
- Most technicians would fall under RFT, which would have to write the jurisprudence exam.
- The Committee looked at the differences between BScF and Technologist programs– amounts to 18 credit hours of landscape level planning and timber supply analysis.
- 18 credit hours are equal to about 6 Ontario RPF Association module courses (developed through several Canadian universities) about 40 hrs each to complete.
- Scope of practice hasn't changed. New categories of membership are what have changed.
- Under the new legislation there would be NO limitations for an RPFT verses a RPF.
- With the above membership categories there will be a place for all technicians in the province, it doesn't exclude anyone's right to work.
- The process of becoming an RFT or RPFT takes into consideration years of

experience.

- All committees involved with the process of becoming an RFT or RPFT would have equal representation from technicians and foresters.
- Key element: if NSFTA decide we won't support it, the RPFANS will move forward with it anyway.
- May be a good idea to go with what's on the table now so we as technicians will be involved in, not excluded from, the decision making process. If we are not involved we could risk not being able to sign off on any plans.
- There is lot of support from senior management of DNR to go forward with RTP.
- An amendment to the Forestry Act would be required. DNR offered to cover costs of all legal counsel to bring RTP to the legislature, and agreed to put it forward as a government sponsored bill.
- There will be 3 readings, after the 3rd there is a chance for the public to comment.
- Dues for the different levels of practice rights as well as errors and omissions insurance have to be discussed further.
- All technicians would have to maintain their membership with NSFTA.
- Grandfathering process – after the legislations goes through technicians would have 2 years to decide if they are going to become an RFT or RPFT. If they wait longer than the 2 year period they would have to go through the mentorship program.
- Saskatchewan is the only other province with an equivalence program between technicians and foresters.

***NOTE – To have the amendments prepared & tabled in the NS legislature by fall 2016 is probably unlikely, more likely to be spring or fall of 2017.**

Motion from Glenn Wallace for Tony and Matt to continue to work with the joint committee for Right to Practice, 2nd by Andrew Fedora.

Motion carried

New Business

How NSFTA would respond to questions on controversial subjects if asked

Question of how NSFTA should respond to subjects such as biomass or other

controversial issues that the executive may be asked to speak on.

Consensus of membership: The Executive cannot speak on volatile issues on behalf of the NSFTA because everyone has their own personal opinion and we represent a multitude of employers.

Youth Outreach Committee

Richard Andrews brought forth the idea to form a Youth Outreach Committee for Regional Reps to work with local youth groups such as 4H.

Motion by Richard Andrews to form a Youth Outreach Committee. Regional Reps will be the go between for the NSFTA and youth groups, 2nd by George Dempsey.

Motion carried

Election of Officers

Forestry Hall of Fame

Nomination: Jim Rudderham

Jim Rudderham by Acclamation

North Central

Nominations: Cheryl Rudderham

Alex Feix

Alex Feix by Acclamation

2nd Vice President

Nomination: Tony Mummery

Tony Mummery by Acclamation

South Shore

Still vacant

(The remainder of the Executive, Committees, and Regional Reps remain the same.)

Motion from Clifton Sangster to adjourn meeting.

Meeting Adjourned March 10th, 2016 - 4:34pm