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**FORESTS IN SETTLED LANDSCAPES: THE  
2007 CIF ANNUAL MEETING.**

The organizing committee for the 2007 CIF AGM met at the U of T Faculty of Forestry on November 1. This conference is to be jointly hosted by CIF and the Faculty of Forestry as part of the latter's Centennial celebration. At the meeting were Bruce Ferguson, Andy Kenney, the Conference Co-Chairs, John Pineau, Executive Director, CIF, David Balsillie, of the Faculty's Centennial Organizing Committee, Kim Appleton, whose consulting skills will help ensure that things run smoothly before and during the conference, and also John McNeil, Mack Williams, Mike Rosen, Wally Bidwell, John Wilson.

Wally Bidwell of the Lake Abitibi Model Forest, which jointly with the CIF hosted a successful Fall, 2006 Boreal Conference in Cochrane, came to share his experiences from that event.

I attended, primarily so I could report to you on how the conference is unfolding, and also to note that you can now mark this event on your calendars.

The 2007 conference, whose theme is Forests in Settled Landscapes: Working Together to Protect and Enhance, will be August 20 to 23, 2007 at the U of T. There will be registration Monday morning. On Monday afternoon the conference gets under way, with a keynote speaker for each of three themes: Private Land and Forest Stewardship, Landscape Level Planning, and Urban Forestry.

Late that afternoon there will be a tree-planting ceremony, with a large tree donated by CIF being planted on Campus to commemorate the Faculty's Centennial.

On Monday evening there will be a social event and the opening of an exhibit hall.

Tuesday all day and Wednesday morning will see concurrent sessions, one on each of the main themes, with each theme having several speakers over the day and a half. It is planned to have lots of time for questions and discussion. At the end of the technical sessions on Wednesday there will be a plenary summary.

Tuesday evening there will be a fun event. Having it at Drysdale Tree Farms is a strong possibility, though travel from downtown to Drysdale's at rush hour might be a problem. Another possibility is something like a dinner cruise from the Toronto waterfront. Either way, lots of entertainment is planned. As well, there will be special celebration of the Faculty's centennial.

The Conference is designed to attract, not just CIF members, but the many organizations involved in various aspects of trees and forests in the community, and, especially students. An Open House is being considered that would hopefully attract a wide range of interests.

There will be strong involvement of or partnership with the Faculty's Graduate students, with discussions between Andy Kenney and the U of T's Forestry Graduate Students' Association to develop this. A fourth theme, Student Involvement may be added, with student presentations being an essential part of the conference program.

The conference is being financed in part as a part of the Faculty's Centennial, which includes quite a number of other events. An outside consultant is engaged, a person that committee members have worked with in the past and found it to be an excellent investment in making the planning and the conference go smoothly.

Though it was not discussed November 1, a selection of post-conference tours is planned for Thursday.

## URBAN FOREST SEMINAR

On Thursday October 19 about 50 people gathered for a seminar presented by Ontario Urban Forest Council (OUFC), at the Toronto Botanical Garden (formerly Edwards Garden) in Toronto. It was one of the livelier gatherings on trees and forests I've attended in some time, and full of high quality material.

There were nine speakers, who each spoke for 30 minutes, and then a panel where speakers took questions from participants.

Paul Cadieux of Alliston presented slides of heritage trees and other trees of interest in the South Simcoe County. Ten are designated as heritage trees, several others as trees of special value to the community. Community interest in these trees had been generated by the holding of two "great community tree hunts" over the past two years.

Paul's slides included: a willow with a 22-foot trunk circumference; a bur oak 160 years old on Alliston's main street; a tulip tree in Alliston; a magnolia 60 years old; in Essa a 200-year-old white elm, the only survivor in a row of 50 trees; a row of 50 silver maples in Beeton, planted by a bee-keeper; black locust in Alliston, planted when the municipality paid landowners 50 cents per planted tree; several black walnut planted around 1926 on the farm owned by the founder of Loblaw's. Also noted is a grove of trees planted in Cookstown Memorial Park, a tree in memory of each member of the community killed in action in World War II.

Willard Carmean, retired professor from Lakehead University, noted that there are heritage forests as well as heritage trees. Old growth forest (OGF) is one kind of heritage forest. It is important for both ecological and heritage reasons. On OGF conservation: it does not live forever; if we want OGF in, say, 150 years, we should have in mind today a number of candidate stands. Setting aside an OGF is just one step; it then has to be looked after. The OGF is typically made up of trees, shrubs, herbs, lichens, mosses, mammals, birds, insects and more, and is found on a specific site. Like the heritage tree, each has its unique history.

Some of Will's examples include: a stand of very large black walnut; one of white oak, one of bald cypress along the Mississippi that is there

because of river valley changes caused by an 1806 earthquake.

A white oak stand will have other species, esp. in the understory; one has to consider that in time, without some intervention the oak is likely to be replaced by more shade-tolerant species.

Another is a timber line forest struggling to exist on top of a New Hampshire mountain. Another is a huge hollow snag of a chestnut tree; in the absence of any live trees it reminds us of what the chestnut forest was like.

The Boreal Forest does not commonly have large trees. Stands tend to be of fire origin, and of species that tend to break up after about 100 years.

Different people see different values in white pine. Artists love the windswept pines on the rocky shores of Georgian Bay; the British Navy reserved for ship's spars the huge trees found in colonial days. Later the squared timber industry made the white pine famous. Now it is the tree of choice for log houses.

Marshall Buchanan, R.P.F., asks: if we want trees for tomorrow, why not be on the lookout today for the most desirable trees from which to collect seeds for tomorrow. Those choice trees in the urban forest would be the seed orchard. He proposes a registry of such trees. They will be chosen as the ones known to thrive in the harsh urban environment where you want them.

Preferred trees for such a registry will include those doing well on a specific set of site conditions. For example the white spruce in the swamp may be genetically different from that on the nearby upland. They should be seen to be resisting various kinds of insects and diseases. Their crowns, leaves, flowers, fruit and seeds should be healthy. Large healthy crowns will also likely produce a lot of sugars to ensure healthy seed. An older tree by its presence has proven that it can withstand whatever conditions have been thrust upon it. Trees of one species in a grove (or even a row) are good; they will have the advantage of numerous breeding partners. A tree of rare species (e.g. rock elm or blight-resistant chestnut) will be good; you'd like to prevent extinction. A tree of local historic or other significance is desirable.

All this is by way of ensuring that existing genetic material is conserved. This could prove to be just what we need for future landscape restoration. If a tree has a pedigree it may be helpful in future recognition of a tree's value.

We need more reliable seed sources, we need to develop standards. And since most trees are on private property we need to develop effective communication with private owners.

Urban Forester Bill Morsink completed the morning by discussing some features of Carolinian trees. He mentioned the new book *Trees of the Carolinian Forest* by Ecologist Gerry Waldron (who lives near Windsor). He noted that we in Toronto and southwestern Ontario are on the fringe of the Carolinian life zone, which is centred in the Alleghany and Ozark mountains and the river valleys (e.g. Mississippi) in between. Bill, like Gerry Waldron, notes that of the world's 90,000 known tree species, 73 are classed as Carolinian. (In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the entire region was part of the British province of Carolina.

The 73 species include white pine, sugar maple, beech and others that have a much broader range. They include upland species, as well as wetland species that have inhabited the valley lands. Bill noted that after the last Ice Age these trees migrated north, as did also communities of corn-growing people. Some species migrated at different rates, and by different routes, and likely by different levels of contact with human communities.

Like Bill, Gerry Waldron is a champion for tree planting and care, and a great fan of Carolinian species for planting in urban back yards.

The afternoon began with head arborist Tom Mikel of the Belleville Parks Department, who described years of effort by a local group called the Bell Creek Environmental Association (BCEA), successful as it turned out, to save a 250-year-old white oak from being removed for the subdivision which was taking shape around it. The tree must have been in a fence row to have escaped being cut for all that time.

The BCEA saw the value of this tree, conducted a media campaign, and turned to the town parks department for help. Ontario Heritage Trees Alliance visited the site, and provided guidance. Tree Canada Foundation visited, and wrote a

supportive letter to Town Council. Many letters, e-mails, phone calls followed. There were meetings involving Council, the BCEA, the developer.

In time the subdivision plan was amended to accommodate the tree, with a buffer zone 2.5 times the diameter of the tree's drip line being left, with an undertaking to fence it for protection from heavy equipment during construction, and a corridor for small wildlife and a trail left to link it to a nearby open area.

Some negative aspects of this story: difficult to overcome a feeling that "what's the use, you can't save it;" many people were uninformed and did not see value in saving such a tree, much less the how that tree might enhance the value of future nearby homes. Many people did not see the big picture, thinking that well, if the tree dies, we'll just remove it and be able to build more houses.

Finally people overlooked that while the tree lives there is the potential for many acorns and many offspring from that tree.

Barbara Heidenreich of Ontario Heritage Trust noted that heritage trees must be found and identified, and a way found to preserve them. A chapter about this is in the Ontario Heritage Trees Protection Toolkit published by the OUFCA. The main tools are the Municipal Act and the Planning Act (both the official plan and the zoning bylaw), the Ontario Heritage Act, through easements, the Conservation Lands Act. Some trees get protected by being on Conservation Authority property. The official plan sets out the municipality's vision; the zoning bylaw puts lines on maps.

More on the part of OUFCA's Toolkit that deals with protection and Barbara's work can be seen at [www.oufc.org](http://www.oufc.org), go to Ontario Heritage Tree Alliance, then to Heritage Trees Protection Toolkit, then in the first few lines of text, to Legislative Tools.

She notes that valuable trees on private property affect the public good, and can be protected, that, given their importance, too few trees are protected. It is too easy to sneak in with a chain saw at night.

The Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence, ECEE, [www.ecee.on.ca](http://www.ecee.on.ca) has been around since

1993 when a small group of citizens decided they wanted to keep the Elora area green and healthy. Its example has led to other communities in Southwestern Ontario to do much the same. It is a member, with 40 others, of Green Communities Canada (GCC), a national association of organizations that deliver practical environmental programs to Canadian households and communities. (See [www.gca.ca](http://www.gca.ca)).

From ECEE came Toni Ellis, to talk about the centre's tree program. Elora was a pioneer of the blue box program. The town, located on the Grand River, has lots of heritage houses, and a lot of street maple trees around 120 years old. Their tree committee has undertaken a tree awareness program, then a Treasured Tree program. A classroom of 12-year-olds wrote and sang a song about trees, and made a movie of this. They designed a simple treasured tree plaque. They made a map of the town, showing all its heritage trees. The township supported them by doing some of the map preparation.

They do a lot of education. The County wants to increase tree cover to 30% and has a greenhouse. They have done Earth Day plantings.

They started Neighbourwoods, a tree steward program, where 20 volunteers undertook to catch up on tending boulevard plantings, which had been neglected for some time. The Centre trained stewards, who donated their time to give the boulevards needed care. Indoor training involved biology, social marketing and tree ID. University of Guelph Arboretum provided training in pruning. They prepared them to do the work and to make a point of explaining to residents what they were doing. They wore distinctive t-shirts, placed printed cards on front doors before and after the work. They destaked established trees, unwrapped them if necessary, mulched and pruned them. They kept records of their work and responded to citizen enquiries.

For more about this, go to [www.leafontario.org](http://www.leafontario.org) then click on Join the Urban Forest Network then onto Current (October) Newsletter for an article by Toni.

They hope to maintain momentum by things like manageable workload, regular contact, regular press coverage (they have had lots of help), links for training, a newsletter, and THANK YOU's.

Barb Boysen of OMNR as she does so often and so well, made an impassioned plea for use of biologically appropriate species for urban plantings, recognizing that the site has been changed, usually drastically, from what it was before urban development. For successful urban forestry one needs to be well informed, use the right kind of planting stock with the right genetics, and do a good job of locating, planting and tending the trees. Don't, as she would put it, trust to dumb luck. Much of the substance of her presentation can be found on [www.fgca.net](http://www.fgca.net).

Gerry Waldron, author of the book *Trees of the Carolinian Forest*, after an interview with a journalist, sent her Salute to Mothers of youngsters who take an active interest in nature in the forest or elsewhere:

"Don't you think an interest in nature is innate? So let me put in a good word here for those saintly mothers that let us drag in all manner of creepy crawlies and never got upset when the garter snake went AWOL or the praying mantis eggs hatched releasing hordes of beady-eyed predators into their home. A read of any bio from Darwin's to E.O. Wilson to Farley Mowat usually reveals one of these unsung heroines discretely in the background."

Some time during the seminar we were told of a group called Ontario Heritage Connection Society, Inc. located at (yes this is its actual address!) Toronto's First Post Office, Box 51, 260 Adelaide Street East, Toronto, ON M5A 1N1, [www.ontarioheritageconnection.org](http://www.ontarioheritageconnection.org).

It has been formed to facilitate the exchange of information about Ontario's culture, history, built and natural heritage, archaeology and the environment. Its mandate is to provide a first stop for anyone seeking info on Ontario's heritage, to help in the exchange of Ontario's heritage news, to build a network of links to Ontario's heritage web sites, to raise public interest and awareness in Ontario's heritage, to promote heritage research and education, to encourage partnerships for exchange of news and info.

Here are some of the points made during an open discussion at the end of the day.

Having a good grasp of the trees in your area (inventory, ages, state of health, etc) as well as a

good grasp of the values they provide to the homeowner and the community, should be a big help in making the case to save them.

Trees have ecological, spiritual and psychological value to the community, and are a public good, and the landowner should not have unlimited right to damage or remove it, nor a right to compensation for having to keep it.

There was a short discussion of the pros and cons of forming a “Friends of Trees” in any community.

Education, where you explain, explain, explain, using lots of illustrations of good trees should help.

#### CAMERON SMITH ON HERITAGE TREES

Tom Mikel’s story, above, and the value to the community of the Bell Creek oak tree in Belleville was the subject of Cameron Smith’s environment column in the Toronto Star, October 28. He noted that such a tree is as much a part of the community’s heritage as are its fine old buildings, and by letting it be destroyed we are losing one more link to our past, and that much less able to see where we are headed.

Cameron noted in his November 19 column that his Bell Creek story drew responses from a number of readers about trees that are/should be conserved as heritage trees, among them:

Comfort Maple in Pelham, over 550 years old.  
The Allenburg white oak in Thorold, over 300 years old.

In Niagara Falls, the Stamford white oak, over 300 years old.

In Oakville, a 250 year old oak on Bronte Road, which people are trying to save from a proposed road widening, and have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for that effort. This one made the CTV early evening news in December. A great red oak on Coral Gable Drive in Toronto, which residents are trying to have protected.

Avery large beech and a very large oak at Ruthven near Point Pelee.

In Belleville a second tree, a centuries-old maple

In Aurora, in Shepard’s Bush, a bur oak a metre in diameter and perhaps 125 years old, at the headwaters of the East Holland River. It was

reported to Cameron by a massage therapist, who finds her own therapy in daily visits to this tree.

#### BOREAL FOREST—WHAT’S IT WORTH

Going from the urban to the remote, a Globe and Mail item in Nov/05 wonders what the boreal forest would be worth if left undisturbed, and referred to some research from Pembina Institute on the natural capital of that forest.

They noted the worth of peat lands for filtering water, of the forest as a massive carbon sink,

Senator Mira Spivak in an article in *Conservator*, a Ducks Unlimited Canada magazine, says of the Canadian Boreal: Imagine a natural engine that filters water, controls floods and pests, stores carbon and offers a home to waterfowl and other wildlife. Think of the 1.4 billion acres of forest, wetland and peatland that form a green mantle on the shoulders of Canada’s north. The more we learn about natural capital, the more we know its true worth.

She goes on: Some have described Canada’s Boreal Forest as North America’s bird nursery. Others have estimated that the natural services it provides are 2.5 times more valuable than all the lumber, paper, oil, gas, minerals and hydroelectricity produced through industrial development.

#### FARMING IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

Something by John Clement, of the Union of Christian Farmers of Ontario:

Ontario (I’m sure he means S Ont) has natural advantages for farming. Good soil, temperature, weather, access to water, customers in the GTA and even more within a day’s truck drive. He notes that Ontario has not yet plumbed the depths of its economic potential, and wonders if intentionally creating a plan for Ontario agriculture might deliver even more prosperity.

The Alberta example was cited; in the mid-1990’s a target was set for the farm sector in value-added agricultural products, to be met by 2010. It notes that there are five key industry sectors offering great opportunity for growth, and that certain things must be done to achieve those goals.

The writer wonders if the same approach would not work for Ontario, and if social, economic and environmental values could not be achieved.

And I wonder if such an approach might not make sense for Southern Ontario forestry.

#### DR TERRY ANDERSON ON COLLECTING SEED FOR CHESTNUT.

Terry plans to write a brief article on current activities of the Canadian Chestnut Council. It is responsible for propagation and distribution of native chestnuts in the Recovery Program but has difficulty keeping up with demand for seed. His goal is to describe the program aimed at breeding resistant native trees, and to point out that something is well underway, and to enlist help in finding suitable seed sources.

#### VALUE ADDED OPERATION IN N B

My observation from my own plantation thinning in 2004 is that the timber being taken found a number of uses, including sawlogs, pulpwood, poles of several lengths, and timber for log house construction. Some wood might go for pulpwood or sawlogs, depending to some extent on day to day market. And most of the time, as the logger approached each individual marked red pine tree, he decided right there whether it would be a pole or several sawlogs.

I was also a bit surprised at the amount of wood left on the ground after the operation. That did not bother me in the sense that it had been a lump sum sale of standing trees, so that wood left there did not hurt me financially. And I won't complain about wood left on the ground that will help build up the sandy soil that in 1946 had been depleted of organic material. But I did wonder if a second operator could not profitably pick up pieces that had been left, without unacceptably depleting the organic content.

November issue of Atlantic Forestry Review tells of the Devon Lumber Co. mill in Fredericton that produces construction studs for the New England market, cedar for lumber for domestic and export use. Besides its sawmill it operates a comprehensive retail store that offers lumber, garden amenities, mulch and wood finishes. Planer shavings and sawdust are sold

locally for livestock bedding. Bark, yard debris and mill waste are ground up and sold as biomass for energy plants; this helps keep the premises free of debris.

Being in the urban environment they have paved their premises partly to avoid being a dust and mud nuisance to neighbours. This has the added benefit of being able to keep their products clean. Also, lumber is piled on the asphalt pavement, which keeps it dry; the black surface absorbs summer heat, which helps the drying process. (In winter lumber is dried using a kiln).

Value added products include fencing, patio furniture, planters, tool sheds, plant display structures. These are marketed in the US through a Maine company. They also make pallets and other shipping products.

Their value added products contribute significantly to their business, and also diversify their work load so that it is much easier to keep staff on the job full time.

About 48% of its wood comes from Crown land and 52% from private land.

#### FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (FSC)

An article on the management of a 1025 acre forest owned by the Mi'kmaq in NS contains a description of FSC that I find especially helpful: FSC is an unbiased, third-party entity removed from the influence of industry (and others?). It assures retailers, newsprint producers and wood product buyers that the products they buy come from woodlands managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. FSC operates around the world, ensuring that FSC-certified wood products come from healthy forests.

From elsewhere, a news item from World Wildlife Fund Canada, noting that Canada leads the world in the amount of FSC-certified lands, with 1.7 million hectares.

#### TRADITION OF CAREFUL FOREST MANAGEMENT.

The same article about the woodland owned by the Mi'kmaq in eastern NS notes that active management began in 1988 after a management plan was in place. Several harvests have taken

place, of high enough calibre to be the first aboriginal forest in Canada to earn FSC certification.

Some of the features described:

Since FSC certification, two ponds have been built for speckled trout and other aquatic life. Brush from forestry operations is placed in long piles as potential shelter for small wildlife. Since there are few old trees with holes, boxes have been placed for a range of nesting birds.

During the logging some older trees have been set aside because of the pileated woodpecker(s) in the area.

Various logging techniques were tried, and horse logging was decided upon. While I am told this is not universally the case, they found it was the least destructive of the forest. It gave them a welcome reminder of the good old days.

Among other things, the timber harvested is to be used to build a medical centre for the Band, following a Mi'kmaq cultural theme. Poles will be steamed and bent as part of the construction.

Despite warm winter weather, the logging method used did minimal environmental damage, and a minimum of mess on the roads or in the stands. The article's author noted the high level of sensitivity about logging in their woods, which augurs well for the future of the people, the forest and the wildlife.

#### KYOTO PROTOCOL.

Notes from a summary in Atlantic Forestry Review, which makes it a bit easier for even me to understand than other explanations I've seen.

Kyoto Protocol is an agreement made under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Control. In it, developed countries have agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels by 2008-12. If they do not they will have reduction targets increased for the next period.

Greenhouse gases, those that affect global warming, include CO<sub>2</sub>, nitrous oxide, methane, and CFC's (chlorofluorocarbons).

Emission reduction is to be achieved by reducing pollution by industries, through cleaner technology, changing energy sources, etc.

In some cases, industries, including those that had already taken positive steps before Kyoto, find that further reduction will be difficult, and perhaps need more costly technology. For such cases, a mechanism within Kyoto allows trading of emission reductions from other industries or countries.

Such reductions are known as carbon credits and are equivalent of the right to emit CO<sub>2</sub> gas, achieved by reduced emissions by another industry. Carbon credits are freely traded, and the market thus defines the value of pollution. Environmental NGOs are also able to purchase carbon credits and remove them from the market, thus reducing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> pollution and driving up the price of pollution.

Moves are underway in the US and Europe to evolve free market trading of carbon credits.

#### SWEDEN'S EXPERIENCE WITH FOREST BIOMASS.

Atlantic Forestry Review carries a letter on energy from a Swedish correspondent. The city of Vastervik, Sweden, in 1984 built a plant for distributing heat from household waste and wood chips, and has done so profitably ever since. Other cities have been sending their waste to Vastervik.

However, other cities are building similar plants, it is feared this might lead to stiff competition for waste, and competition for wood chips with makers of pulp and particleboard.

One solution is to grow material for biomass fuel, ones being considered are canola for diesel fuel, wheat for ethanol, and Salix, a fast growing tree for electricity.

Sweden has two full-scale ethanol plants, one using wheat, the other wood.

Another promising source is to make diesel fuel in pulp mills, with a pilot plant to be in operation by 2008.

## MAINE'S EXPERIENCE WITH FOREST BIOMASS.

Near Fort Fairfield, along the Maine-New Brunswick border, is a 36-MW electricity generation plant that uses over 200 truckloads a week of wood waste. Efficient burning means that almost nothing comes out the chimney.

Its owner, Boralex, has six other wood-using energy plants in the Northeastern US, as well as hydroelectric power plants in Quebec and France, and several wind energy projects in France.

It is noted that the Fort Fairfield plant uses mill residues such as bark, sawdust, hogged or chipped wood debris and harvest operation residues such as tree tops and low grade stems. Other plants use recycled wood from construction and demolition projects.

For its wood waste supplies, the plant has developed good business relationships with contractors who do forest harvesting.

In some parts of Maine, whole low-grade trees are fully chipped and used, due to lack of other viable market for that material.

A plant like this is seen as being a good fit for some rural communities that have a lot of wood waste, including mills where the waste might otherwise pose a disposal problem.

## SILVICULTURE ASSISTANCE

An article in Atlantic Forestry Review notes one company's silviculture program for private properties from which it purchases wood, and that such companies as registered buyers, buying over 5,000 cu. M or 2,270 cords in any year must do so, or pay into Nova Scotia's Sustainable Forestry Fund. This meets a private lands silviculture obligation based on a rate of \$3/cu m of softwood and \$0.60/cu m of hardwood. Although not part of the legislation, the Province contributes to private land silviculture by paying the registered buyer a portion of the cost. In some cases the buyer may require that the owner contribute to the cost.

## AND IN ONTARIO'S FORESTS

The Toronto Star business section on Oct. 30, reported on a development in Ontario. An MNR team visited Sweden, Finland and Germany to investigate how forest biomass, the residue left over from logging operations, could be made into usable energy, thereby creating some new revenue for the forest industry.

Last summer MNR decided to invest in a prototype plant that can turn logging waste into "bio oil." It contains no SO<sub>2</sub>, and half the nitrogen oxides found in conventional oil, and can be used to fuel industrial boilers, diesel generators and electricity-generating turbines. Waste from this process, making up about 40% of the forest waste, can be used to dry material coming into the plant, and to fuel the process.

There is a limit to how far forest residue can be economically transported. So the plant is designed to be movable to logging sites.

Smaller plants are in place or in the works for using agricultural waste.

For more, search for Advanced Biorefinery Inc.

## BIOMASS AND THE FOREST SECTOR

An article by Brian Barkley appears in Forestry Forum, newsletter of Eastern Ontario Model Forest. Brian notes at the outset that historically, exploitation for energy has severely damaged forests. At the same time an apparently available forest biomass is seen as an opportunity, in times of upheaval in the forest industry, declining demand for paper, and rapidly and wildly rising energy prices and concern about supply.

Brian notes that roughly 2,500 forest industry jobs were lost in 2005 in Ontario, 7,500 in Canada, and with them who knows how many indirect jobs.

He lists some strengths that might help us when moving into forest biomass for energy:

-What he calls the most progressive forest management in the world, with stakeholder involvement and a commitment to balancing forest values. And along with that, leadership in adoption of sustainable forest certification.

-Ongoing research and development in bioenergy and bioproducts provides the knowledge needed to progress.

-The forest industry has some experience in using forest biomass for energy, though limited experience with bioproducts.

-The forest sector has infrastructure in place for harvesting, transporting and processing biomass, which would be adaptable to bioproducts.

Whether financial returns will be adequate is a question. It may depend on a range of products, or on using closed but existing mills, or production in conjunction with pulp production, and the cost savings of a combined operation.

There are 8 presentations on bioproducts in [www.eomf.on.ca/projects/workshop.christmas\\_2005](http://www.eomf.on.ca/projects/workshop.christmas_2005)

#### HAS CHINA ENOUGH WOOD?

Atlantic Forestry Review reports on a conference last January in Vancouver called "China's Boom: Implications for Investment and Trade in Forest Products and Forestry."

It seems that China, with its booming economy, is one of few regions of the world with a major wood shortage. Its annual allowable cut is decreasing, and the country is timber-poor, despite having 13 million hectares of plantations. The shortage is likely to continue until at least 2020.

China's timber comes from three sources: its natural forests, its plantations, and imports, primarily from Russia. Reliance on imports is due partly to a ban on logging in natural forests, the nature, composition (and purpose?) of plantations, and increasing demand.

Logging in natural forests has been partly or wholly banned in recent years, partly to protect headwaters, e.g. of the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers, and partly to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, and to diminish impacts of deforestation, e.g. flooding, reservoir sedimentation, and dust storms. There has been a reduction in reported harvest volumes, though some say this is offset by increased unreported logging.

China has the world's largest area of forest plantations, 50 million hectares, only 12% of it dedicated to timber production. Nearly half have been established for non-timber conservation purposes, and a third is on marginal lands with low growth rate.

A somewhat confused picture of wood supply from Russia is painted. Its harvest appears to be about 40% of its annual allowable cut. A vision for the forest sector is lacking. There has been no recent investment in the sector, infrastructure (mainly roads) is lacking, (where there are roads there is severe overcutting), and the capacity to move wood from Russia to China is limited.

Supplies from elsewhere are limited. The rest of Asia has been severely overharvested, some illegally. Wood from North America is expensive. Places like Australia and New Zealand could supply more.

On the other hand:

Last January's conference heard that China had overtaken Italy as the world's largest furniture manufacturer.

As someone noted, things are moving fast in China, that North America is standing still, China is running at 100mph. China plans to achieve self-sufficiency in wood by expanding plantations. Plans call for tree-breeding, shorter rotations, quality and wood utilization improvement, and value-added.

Given China's skyrocketing economy since 1978, it is not unreasonable to believe that its massive wood deficit will be erased. China is growing fast, and must continue doing so to generate enough jobs to maintain social stability. No business anywhere in the world is insulated from the effects of China's economic transformation, especially in the forest sector.

Some numbers are given about China. It has had 9.7% economic growth over 25 years. It is the world's largest user of concrete and steel. It has 9 of the world's 50 largest ports, 13 of the world's 20 most polluted cities. It has the world's largest area of forest plantations. It is the world's largest wood products manufacturer, the world's largest furniture manufacturer, the largest plywood producer, and has 25% of the world's flooring production.

## THE E-WORD (EFFICIENCY)

Peter Robichaud, Exec. Dir., of Canadian Woodlands Forum (CWF) writes a guest editorial in *Atlantic Forestry Review*, Sept/06. CWF is an organization of individuals and organizations related to forestry operations, support technology transfer and information sharing focusing on better competitiveness of forestry operations. Members are largely from Atlantic Canada, a few from ON and QC.

Member organizations include forest products companies, contractors and equipment suppliers; he has seen the results of the three groups who must work together not communicating well, to the detriment of all. In today's economic climate, too many businesses marginally survive or wither away and too many lives are uprooted.

He sees the potential for upgrading efficiency in numerous round tables where contractors, forest companies, and manufacturers discuss their various challenges and solutions. Often it leads to better understanding of one group of the challenges or problems of another, leading to better working relationships and efficiency. Sometimes it is as simple as finding out that someone knows how to fix a nagging equipment problem. It overcomes problems that may arise from the various parties, dealing with their own problems, lack the time, energy or interest to understand the others' problems, and may not see opportunities for mutual improvement.

He sees the need to develop better wood supply relationships between landowners, logging contractors, equipment dealers manufacturers, suppliers, and forest product companies, and the benefits of this in removing "silo walls" and developing chains with strong links.

He notes that the industry faces continuing challenges, not the least that of competition from nations like China and Brazil, the rising Canadian dollar, and slowdown in the American housing boom. He is convinced that better communication among the parties will lead to a more positive outlook on learning of how to do things better, fewer sunsets and more sunrises, fewer economic casualties, fewer uprooted lives.

His members from Ontario and Quebec tell him they wish there was a similar mechanism here, "for everyone in the industry to come together,

learn from each other, hear about equipment, and the latest thinking on environmental concerns. "

## FOREST AND ART.

In Mahone Bay, NS, an artist, Lynn Feasey, finds that forests hold rich potential for linking aesthetics and ideas. Along with a photographer partner, Jeff Amos, she has established TREESgallery, a gallery and store devoted to Canadian fine arts and crafts related to the forest theme through materials, images or inspiration. Besides becoming self-supporting, the gallery aims, through its artistry, to promote meaningful public discussion of forests and forestry, and to provide a friendly venue for such discussion.

Jeff Amos provides his own direct connection to the forest as an owner and a craftsman. Others whose work is exhibited at TREESgallery, each provide their own forest narratives.

TREESgallery has been enough of a success that they are thinking of opening another gallery. They have taken part in a forum sponsored by the PEI Model Forest Network and the provincial Public Forest Council, which will also feature such topics as medicinal forest plants, foliage, and mushrooms.

## THE PLANTING OF TREES IS THE PLANTING OF IDEAS.

In a publication of Project Ploughshares, an NGO dedicated to seeking peaceful solutions to the world's conflicts, is a message from Nobel Peace Laureate of 2004 Dr. Wangari Maathai, founder of Kenya's Green Belt Movement (GBM). ([www.greenbeltmovement.org](http://www.greenbeltmovement.org)).

When we see the many armed conflicts—the connection between the environment and peace may not be obvious to everyone. Although initially the GBM's tree planting activities in Kenya did not address issues of democracy and peace, it soon became clear that responsible governance of the environment was impossible without democratic space. The tree became a symbol for the democratic struggle in Kenya. The tree also became the symbol for peace and conflict resolution. Trees of peace were planted to demand the release of prisoners of conscience and a peaceful transition to democracy. Using trees as a symbol of peace is in keeping with a

widespread African tradition, part of an extensive cultural heritage that contributes both to conservation of habitats and cultures of peace.

There can be no peace without equitable development. There can be no development without sustainable management of the environment. There cannot be sustainable management of the environment without democracy and peace. We must all shift to this higher moral ground. It is the dream we hold out for our children.

#### DOLF AND ANNE WYNIA HONOURED.

Anne and Dolf Wynia (Dolf is a former Southern Ontario section chairman) were recently honoured by the Carolinian Canada Coalition with a lifetime achievement award for their years of contribution toward the protection of natural habitats and their diversity of Ontario's Carolinian zone, and to a cleaner, greener, safer landscape for all. Both have served with distinction on a number of organizations in the area, including naturalist clubs, the Long Point Foundation and the Carolinian Canada Coalition, the Long Point Conservation Authority and the local land stewardship council.

Like most readers, I'm sure, I'm delighted, but not at all surprised.

#### HOG FARMS AND SHELTERBELTS.

From the Carolinian Canada Newsletter, a note about a program where hog farmers are learning the benefits of using shelterbelts to reduce odour and dust from their farms. Within the past year 11 demonstration sites have been planted, Interested farmers are invited to enquire at their local Conservation Authority.

#### A BAG OF TOOLS by R.L. Sharpe (I heard this recently and like it!)

Isn't it strange  
That princes and kings,  
And clowns that caper  
In sawdust rings,  
And common people like you and me  
Are building for eternity?

Each is given a bag of tools,

A shapeless mass,  
A book of rules;  
And each must make  
Ere life is flown  
A stumbling block  
Or a stepping stone.

And this: Intelligence is like money. If they don't know how little you have, they will treat you as though you have a lot.

And some terminology for our computers:  
Log on: make the wood stove hotter.  
Log off: no, don't add any more wood.  
Monitor: keep an eye on the wood stove.  
Download: get the wood out of the pickup.  
Megahertz: what happens if you don't download carefully.  
Floppy disc: what you get if you handle too much firewood.

#### FROM URBAN FOREST NETWORK NEWS

Rene Dubos, microbiologist, environmentalist, and Pulitzer Prize winner: Man shapes himself through decisions that shape his environment.

[www.forests.org](http://www.forests.org) works to end deforestation, preserve primary and old growth forest, conserve and manage other forests, and to move toward ecological restoration.

A number of volunteers planted 500 indigenous trees and shrubs on Montreal's Mount Royal, bringing to 5,500 the total planted since 1998, to maintain the mountain's wooded area and its contribution to Montreal's diversity, and to repair damage caused by the 1998 ice storm.

For more on Les Amis de la montagne and their work go to [www.lemontroyal.qc.ca](http://www.lemontroyal.qc.ca)

#### FORESTS AND THE ONTARIO ECONOMY

Somewhere in my clutter I found a note saying that the theme for the 1992 AGM of the Canadian Institute of Forestry in Vancouver was "Forestry, Cornerstone of Canadian Society." How many times and in how many places in the past 60 years have I heard words like these?

In 2003, the final statement of the XII World Forestry Congress noted that the needs of the planet and its people can be harmonized, and that

forests have enormous potential to make a vital contribution to environmental security, poverty alleviation, social justice, enhancement of human well-being, equity for present and future generations.

By just about any measure Canada is a forest nation, but one might scarcely know it, for as at least one fellow forester would put it, we are not a nation of forest people. We seem not to understand our forest and its rich potential, even where it is the economic mainstay, and certainly not in the big cities, nor in just about any crowd.

We keep hearing that our Northern communities are hurting, despite the region's wealth of forest, mineral, water, energy and other natural treasure, and its natural attractiveness. Why?

In the south, the forest, which is dominantly privately owned, continues to fall short of its unique potential for economic, social and environmental benefits for its owners and for their communities. Again, why?

Matthew Gaasenbeek's article in the Fall issue of Ontario Forestry Association's "Our Forest" notes that the North has huge forest, mineral and other resources, yet it is not doing well. He sees harvestable trees being increasingly distant from mills (and work force) just when transportation energy costs are skyrocketing.

People are leaving the north in thousands, likely including the best and brightest young people. Raw materials go out, finished goods come in at high prices. Electricity produced locally at low cost goes into the provincial grid at low prices and is sold back to the north at high prices.

He perceives a close relationship among OMNR and the resource industries, as well as dominance of Crown land on the northern landscape, wonders if this combination serves society's best interests, and suggests some changes in land tenure around populated areas. They include selling Crown land areas to individuals willing to commit to reforestation (or, I'd think, to any other appropriate form of restoration and/or management), with MNR playing an active support role.

A November editorial in the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal, copied in the Toronto Star, tells much the same story: mill closings, loss of thousands of forest industry jobs, with more to

come, many communities in deep trouble, high electricity costs, high wood-fibre cost, and a softwood export agreement that makes it difficult for anyone dependent on the USA market.

The prospect of ghost towns and a troubled resource industry, besides the hurt being inflicted on the communities, if it is not changed, does not bode well for the future of our nation in a rapidly changing world.

It calls to mind two things.

First, about 15 years ago there was discussion of the potential of community-based forestry in Northern Ontario, which led to the establishment of four pilot community forests across the north. That over 20 communities submitted proposals suggests that there was a good level of interest and merit. I believe those four are still there, though I am not up to date.

The idea has been around in BC since about 1945 when a Royal Commission supported it. As of now there are 43 BC communities operating Community Forestry Agreements (with the Province) or in the application stage. The BC Community Forestry Association ([www.bccfa.ca](http://www.bccfa.ca)) has a membership list of 43 communities.

The arrangement appears to involve ecological, economic and social sustainability, and delegates responsibility for looking after the resource to the community, which assumes both the risks and the benefits. It has evolved so that the nature of the forest and the agreement is to a large extent tailored to the needs and wishes of the community.

The idea gained impetus in the mid 1980's when a mill closing deprived one Vancouver Island community of its livelihood. It owned an area of forest, and was able to secure sizable start-up funding for a stand improvement program, starting a community-based forest, which seems still to be in operation.

There are a number of long-standing successful community based forests in the USA, one large one in Oregon, another the Menominee Tribal Forest in Wisconsin, which has been sustainably managed and harvested for over 150 years.

In Southern Ontario things are quite different, though I'd say scarcely any better for forestry.

The more diverse economy is not nearly as dependent on our forest here as northerners are on theirs. The forest, though dispersed in a pattern of multiple land uses, has a substantial potential for economic, social and environmental contribution to our present and future well-being. But in its present condition it cannot begin to live up to that potential. Public interest seems low; I wonder if anyone cares if there is a strong and growing forest-based industry.

Whereas government at the provincial or state level seems to have had a strong and positive presence in private forestry in many jurisdictions, it does not seem so here.

When the discussion of community forestry in the north was taking place a few years ago, it was felt that some sort of community based arrangement might work in the south, even though the forest is very largely in privately owned parcels of ever-decreasing size. A workable arrangement with land owners would need to be worked out. One community forest in BC that I know a bit about has a mix of crown and private forest land.

And in the Fall, 2003 issue of this newsletter was a paragraph about a 6,782-ha forest, about 15% of which is privately owned, in Baden-Wurtemberg in Germany. It has been managed since 1834 as a community forest, its inventory keeps growing in volume and quality; it has a staff of 32 in the office and in the field, all of whom make acceptably good incomes. It supports a number of sawmills and other forest-based businesses, one a builder of square timber frame houses, many of these are generations old.

An interesting expense item is noted: they have 169 km. of hiking trail, 160 km. of bike trail, 32 parking lots for hikers, 2 restaurants and 12 official fireplaces.

Overall lack of citizen awareness in, and appreciation of the forest and its potential seems to continue to lead us to decreasing enrolment in forestry schools and decreasing priority for government attention and action. In light of the above, why?

A second thought: for over 20 years I have been a member of the Conservation Council of Ontario (CCO), which for over 50 years has striven to provide a coordinated voice for a diversity of conservation interests. It has done

that by trying to provide the potential for coordinated outlook and effort by many conservation interests, including forestry. About a decade ago it fell on difficult times, stripped of needed government support; its survival is due to heroic efforts and sacrifices of a few believers.

CCO has found renewed favour and support with the present provincial government, with its desire to develop what it calls a conservation culture. CCO is being supported, and listened to. So what is it saying to the government and what is the government hearing of that message. Little, so far, about forestry.

There is little doubt these days that there are a number of priority conservation issues. Among them is energy, both its supply, and its wise use. CCO has focused on energy and done some good work the area of actions to promote energy conservation, and for that the government is duly aware and appreciative, feeling that this supports its wish to develop its conservation culture.

The idea is that other conservation matters, including stewardship and use of our forests, might be high on a future agenda. What is needed to put forestry higher on the agenda is for the government to be convinced that it should be higher, and for the forestry voice available to CCO and that approaching government directly to be as strong and as constructive as possible.

A problem I see is that for as long as I can recall, forestry has been tomorrow's conservation priority. Some time soon, it needs to be today's.

To be heard and taken seriously by government, and by society, to the point that something actually happens, seems like the story of a tangled ball made up of bits of yarn that needs untangling. You work at it, many people may work at it, each uses his/her own way of going at it. Bit by bit over time the whole mess will become untangled, as long as someone starts somewhere, and there is a sustained effort, and you work on those that matter most. (I've heard progress defined as relentless incrementalism).

And what are some of those bits of yarn? The need to provide CCO or someone else with a strong forestry voice, and help integrating that voice in the overall conservation scene. The need to make our own case for priority. The need to support our forestry schools, our profession, and all its various institutions. The need to make the

case of forestry understood by Canadians and their governments, well enough that they demand priority. The need to engage more owners. And, since we seem to have been in a losing battle for decades, somehow to generate the momentum to turn it into a winning battle.

The biggest bit of yarn in that ball? Somehow society must become convinced that good stewardship of Ontario's forest treasures is an essential part of any conservation culture. Government must be convinced enough to take action. The electorate must be convinced enough to demand action. For as long as I can recall it has been tomorrow's priority. Somehow, some time, somewhere, it needs to become today's.

#### A REFLECTION ON TREES.

In a Church bulletin I read that a few weeks ago the trees were loaded with leaves, green at first, then many in splendid fall colour. They were beautiful to see, but obscured one's view of the world beyond. Now that the leaves are fallen, we can see through the leafless branches to the sky and the rest of the world. It is a reminder that life has its immediate and long term dimensions, of the need to look after both our material and spiritual needs.

In my mail last week was a greeting card from Project Ploughshares, an organization that promotes peaceful solutions to disputes rather than armed conflict. The picture on the card is a family of four looking at a sculpture of a tree, both silhouetted against a brilliant red sunset sky.

The sculpture is called Tree of Life, it is in Mozambique, and it was created by Mozambican artists out of destroyed weapons. The card says that: A tree is a symbol of life, and a tree made of destroyed weapons is a symbol of our deep hope for life transformed.

When you enter a grove peopled with ancient trees, higher than the ordinary, and shutting out the sky with their thickly inter-twined branches, do not the stately shadows of the wood, the stillness of the place, and the awful gloom of this doomed cavern then strike you with the presence of a deity?

- Seneca

#### SENT TO ME A FEW YEARS AGO

For us who feel the deepest love and affection for the ways computers have enhanced our lives.

At a recent computer expo (COMDEX), Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated,

"If GM had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25.00 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon".

In response to Bill's comments, General Motors issued a press release stating: If GM had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull over to the side of the road, close the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a manoeuvre such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive --but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask "Are you sure?" before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You'd have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off.