The Atlantic Forestry Centre is celebrating 100 years of forestry research in New Brunswick. The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) presence in New Brunswick had a humble beginning. In 1912, a two-room prefabricated wooden building was purchased at the cost of $200 and put in place on the campus of the University of New Brunswick. This marked the beginning of the federal forestry presence in the province. The last century has seen many changes and improvements to the buildings that have served as laboratories and offices for the staff, culminating in the state-of-the-art facilities at the Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre in Fredericton. The original role of federal forestry in the province was the protection of the forest from harmful insects, a role that is still prominent today. Over the years, research projects were expanded and now encompass many other vital areas of forest research.

John Douglas Tothill was the first federal forestry employee in New Brunswick. He was born in England in 1888 and came to Canada to study at the Ontario Agricultural College, where he specialized in entomology and botany. He later received a doctorate from Harvard University. After working for a short time with the US Bureau of Entomology Gypsy Moth Parasite laboratory, Tothill joined the Entomology Branch of the Dominion’s Department of Agriculture (CFS antecedent) and set up a laboratory on the University of New Brunswick campus in Fredericton. Over the next 10 years, he directed intensive research on invasive pests, such as the brown-tail moth (Euproctis chrysorrhoeae) and the gypsy moth (Lymantria dispar), and native insects such as the forest tent caterpillar (Malacosoma disstria), the fall webworm (Hyphantria cunea), and the spruce budworm (Choristoneura fumiferana). In 1923, Tothill transferred to the Forest Insect Division in Ottawa. In 1924, he was seconded to Fiji to fight the Levuana moth (Levuana iridescens) and became that country’s Director of Agriculture. He later held similar posts in Uganda and Sudan. Although his career in Canada spanned but a dozen years, Dr. Tothill’s work and legacy live on. He is credited with being the founder of

References
biological pest control in Canada and for initiating a science-based approach to forestry.

Long-term research installations are an integral part of forestry research. In 1933, the Acadia Forest Experimental Station, now known as the Acadia Research Forest (ARF), was established by the Dominion Forest Service (another CFS antecedent). This 9000-ha tract of federal land is situated in the heart of the Acadian Forest Region. It is the site of some of the oldest documented forest research studies in Canada, including direct seeding experiments that were conducted in the early 1920s. The ARF serves as an outdoor laboratory for work in silviculture, tree improvement, physiology, entomology, and a host of other disciplines. The Atlantic Forestry Centre is responsible for the management of the ARF and currently maintains about 2000 ha in research sites. The ARF is steeped in history and, during the Second World War, was used by the Department of National Defence as an internment camp to house German and Jewish prisoners of war. These men, building on work done in the 1930s under the National Forestry Program, and with the assistance of local farmers who participated in short forestry training programs, established most of the infrastructure and early silvicultural study plots that helped form the basis of modern forestry concepts. The remnants of the internment camp can still be seen at the Acadia Research Forest, and a museum has been established in nearby Minto, New Brunswick, to preserve artifacts from the camp for public viewing.

The longest-serving “Officer-in-Charge” over the last hundred years was Dr. Reginald Ernest Balch who took charge of the Dominion Entomology Laboratory at Fredericton in 1930. His accomplishments include directing the European spruce sawfly (Dypteron hercyniae) project to its successful conclusion, directing the first spruce budworm spray program, conducting definitive research into the balsam woolly adelgid (Adelges picea), and persuading the city of Fredericton to adopt a sanitation program to help preserve elm trees against Dutch elm disease. Two of the more notable programs and projects that were started during Dr. Balch’s 30-year tenure were the Forest Insect and Disease Survey, and the Green River Project.

In the early 1930s, the forests of New Brunswick and Quebec were being ravaged by the European spruce sawfly, and there was a need to develop a means of tracking the outbreak. Dr. Balch, in collaboration with J.J. de Gryse, Chief of the Forest Insect Division in Ottawa, established the Forest Insect and Disease Survey (FIDS). FIDS is recognized as being the longest uninterrupted project in the history of the Canadian Forest Service. During its 60-year run, FIDS was an important component of the federal forestry presence in the Maritimes region, employing more than 70 staff, and benefiting from the expertise of several hundred provincial, federal, industrial, municipal, educational, and private cooperators.

The monitoring and study of forest insects requires extensive field work and, in 1944, in the wake of the birch dieback and great European spruce sawfly outbreak and just as the spruce budworm outbreak of the 1940s and 1950s was getting under way, the Green River Project was formed. The forests of northern New Brunswick were changing, and there was a need to study these changes and find ways to control them. The long-term research installation at Green River was a collaborative effort that included the Forest Biology Division of Agriculture Canada and the Dominion Forestry Service (both antecedents of the CFS), the New Brunswick Department of Lands and Mines, and Fraser Companies Ltd.

The Green River Project’s original objective was focused on forest insect research. However, the scope of the project was quickly expanded to include studies in pathology, small mammals, ecology, utilization, logging methods, management, silviculture, and growth and yield. A field station was established at Fraser Companies’ Summit Depot, and over the years, hundreds of univer-
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To the Editor

CONFOR West 2012

The 3rd Annual CONFOR West graduate student conference in forestry and environmental sciences was held February 2nd – 5th in Canmore, Alberta. Sixty-eight student researchers from fourteen academic institutions across North America shared their research and engaged in interdisciplinary discussion of contemporary resource management issues in western North America. There was a diversity of topics ranging from soil biogeochemistry and weed management in poplar plantations in Alberta to socio-ecological resilience theory and economic valuation of non-timber forest products in northern British Columbia.

The comfortable atmosphere provided by the all-student forum allowed open discussion and presentation of research ideas and findings without the concern of perhaps having to impress professors and potential employers. Students networked with their peers, learnt about research outside their discipline and participated in engaging discussions about the challenges of contemporary resource management. Oral presentations followed the increasingly popular ignite format in four sessions over two days, with each presenter allotted five minutes and twenty slides to present their research goals, findings and implications. This format, first developed in Seattle, Washington in 2006, is meant to “ignite” the audience on a particular subject. A few minutes for questions at the end prompted interesting discussions that were followed up in breakout sessions. Day one included sessions on reclamation and urban agriculture, and policy, ecotourism and community economy. The next day’s topics were on forestry, and ecosystem biodiversity and wildlife management. The ignite format received excellent reviews from all students. It allowed presenters to communicate the most important messages of their research without overwhelming the audience with details that can be hard to comprehend in an interdisciplinary context.

Seventeen poster presentations covered a variety of topics, including invasive species management, habitat selection by elk and assessment of REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) programs in Cameroon. The award for the most interesting poster went to Dennis Aubrey of Evergreen State College, Washington for a Sustainable Prisons Project. His project focussed on linking incarceration with restoration where inmates were being trained to rear endangered butterflies and frogs in captivity as part of a larger restoration program. He spoke with passion about the project and the ecological as well as social benefits generated from this multi-goal approach.

Following presentations students participated in a variety of outdoor activities such as the Green River Project. His project focussed on linking incarceration with restoration where inmates were being trained to rear endangered butterflies and frogs in captivity as part of a larger restoration program. He spoke with passion about the project and the ecological as well as social benefits generated from this multi-goal approach.

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