

PEI Woodlot Owners

Welcome to the second issue of the PEI Woodlot Owners Association newsletter, a service to our membership, providing them with information to help make informed choices about their woodlots but also to connect woodlot owners around the Island and help share ideas among themselves.

This issue will cover a variety of topics, with a focus on Management plans and how to build one to fit your needs. We hope you enjoy this edition and are always happy to hear your comments.

Events Schedule

Forest Enhancement Seminar Mar 20th Northam Community Center 7-9 PM

Forest Enhancement seminar April 17th Hunter River Lions Club 7-9 PM

Annual General meeting April, 6th Dutch Inn, North River. 8:30-12:00 PM

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A message from the Chair

Dear Members

The first priority of this organization is to provide its members with the tools they need to build a healthy and productive woodlot, my job as Chair is to push this agenda ahead. The woodlot tours staged this fall were a great success and the educational seminars that are coming up over the next few months will be a chance for woodlot owners to answer the many questions they may have regarding the programs available and clear up any misconceptions .

The accessing of the Provincial Forest Enhancement Program, as well as the building of a management plan that suits the needs of the landowner are key steps to establishing a well planned woodlot that will fit in with the lifestyles and economic needs of its present and future owners. The upcoming seminars related to these topics, staged in each of the Counties over the next few months, will provide woodlot owners with the information they need to make the informed choices that can bring them closer to these goals.

The Provincial Government offers many different subsidies to help landowners apply forestry treatments to their woodlots; these can be done by the owner himself, if he has the appropriate skills and tools or can be provided by accredited private forestry workers who can provide services ranging from tree planting to management plans to pre-commercial thinning. Your level of involvement will ultimately affect the outcomes in your woodlot, and by playing an active role you can be left with a finished product that is valuable both economically and aesthetically.

That being said, forestry is a lesson in patience, some treatments show fast and gratifying results whereas many others take many years to bear fruit and some treatments may not work at all, it is important to acknowledge these possible outcomes before starting out so that you can work through the pitfalls without losing focus of what you desire as an end result. Maybe you are new to this whole idea, if that is the case, from my experience, the most important first step is to put a trail or road into your woodlot, this will allow you to spend some time walking in the woods envisioning your ultimate goals.

Think about what you want from your woodlot, and not just in dollars and cents, what do you want it to look like in 20 years? What are your visions for the future and how do you want to get there.

Attending our seminars and woodlot tours and opening up the lines of discussion with other woodlot owners and forestry professionals will also help you gain knowledge and perspective regarding these questions, as with most things in life, engagement is the key to success.

Sincerely,



Winter Woodlot Tour



The booth for the PEI Woodlot Owners

The Winter Woodlot Tour took place on February 2nd after a cancellation for extreme wind chills on the 26th January. It was still a cold day and the recent thaw had eliminated virtually all of the snow, however, that did not stop at least 600 people from showing up to take in the many informational booths, that were spread out over the woodlot of Stuart and Rita MacRae in Wheatley river.

The PEIWOA was there with an informational booth and was represented by board members Bruce Craig, Lawrence Millar, Ira Smith and John Roe, who spent the morning talking to guests about the association and the services it provides, as well as answering the many questions regarding the forest ecosystems of PEI.

A contest was held to guess the age and Height of the large, remnant pine tree adjacent to the booth and many folks entered their best guesses in hopes of winning one of the great prizes donated by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry (See next page for details.) There were also displays regarding the history and ecology of the white pine on PEI that explained how a once abundant species has all but been eliminated from the forests of the Island.

The Wheatley River and Hunter River Watershed groups along with the PEI Model Forest were the main organizers of this event and they presented informative and interesting displays. Our thanks go out to them and all other participants for a successful and entertaining morning.

There were many other attractions at the Tour, including displays by PEI Provincial Forestry showing how to interpret aerial photographs to understand the history and forest composition of your woodlot.

Forestry officials also staged a hands - on workshop for the care and maintenance of chainsaws, showing attendees all the basics in upkeep of their saws as well as professional felling techniques.

Kevin Taylor, a horse logger from eastern PEI was on hand with his draft horse, giving an informative demonstration of small scale horse logging.

Other displays on hand included a woodsman competition with the 4-H, Fisheries and Wildlife, a live raptor, maple syrup production and outdoor survival techniques, courtesy of the Boy Scouts of Canada



PEI Forestry officials explain the history of the woodlot with historical aerial photos

Building a Management Plan for Your Woodlot

Having a management plan is one of the basic essentials of managing a woodlot. However, many owners either do not have a written plan or they are not sure how to go about preparing one. The PEI Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Forest Fish and Wildlife Division have a program to help woodlot owners prepare a plan. Before you ask for this assistance, it is a good idea to have an understanding of what is important to you in your woodlot.

A forest management plan takes into account two distinct guiding principles. The first is the physical conditions of the woodlot (species, age, soil, water courses, roads and any other physical factor). The second principal is the “Human” factor. This factor is guided by the wishes or interests of the woodlot owner, it is this part that is often the most difficult for a forest manager to get an understanding of.

As a woodlot owner you can hire someone to come to your woodlot and write a management plan for you. The person writing the plan can visit the forest and see all the physical conditions of the woodlot. Without your input they could then proceed to write a plan based solely on their perception of what needs to be done. The plan may still be good, but as the owner you may feel something is missing. For instance, the plan may have a heavy leaning towards timber production and “best” perceived use of the trees; however, if your interests are more in line with wildlife management or aesthetics and recreation in your woodlot, the management plan may not take these ideals into account.

It is easier to write a plan that is based on biology and the physical conditions of the woodlot. Things become more complex when someone else is writing the plan and needs to understand the wishes of the owner. The inclusion of the “Human” factor is what will make a plan into something you, the owner, will be happy with and more likely to implement. To help you understand your own needs and interests and to pass this information along to a perspective plan writer (which could be you!) here is a simple chart and list of management objectives. There may be more considerations and limitations in executing your plan; however this will be a big step in helping everyone to understand what is important. A plan that the owner is dissatisfied with will never be implemented.

Here is a chart to illustrate the concept

Management Considerations		Importance to Owner
Economics (Present and future generations)	Very Important (select only two)	1
-growing more valuable trees		2
-maximizing income (high intensity mgmt.)	Medium Importance (select two – four)	1
- Non-timber forest products, economic opportunities.		2
Wildlife Management		3
-song birds		4
-small mammals	Less Important (select two – four)	1
-rare species		2
-birds of prey (hawks & owls)		3
-hunting (rabbits & grouse)		4
Aesthetics	Least Important (select one – three)	1
Recreation		2
Being Close To Nature		3
Social Responsibility		
Protecting all or part of the woodlot		
Spiritual connection		
Maintain/enhance biodiversity		
Fuel wood for owner	-----	-----
Any other specific items		

For example: let's say your most important considerations for management are; 1) Economics - "growing more valuable trees" and 2) Wildlife Management – "birds of prey". Then you would put these two items in the list on the right, next to "Very Important". Continue through the other suggestions in descending importance and place them on the list. When you are finished you will have an idea of the things that are important in your woodlot management plan. Save this list and pass it on to whomever is going to prepare your plan, it will be a great starting point. If you find this exercise hard, just think how hard it would be for someone else to try to understand what is important to you.

This is a small but important part in the preparation of a forest management plan. Some of the management considerations could create conflicts between two of the things that interest you. This is why it is so important to list them in order of importance, helping you to understand what is truly most valuable to you, and helping the planner to create something that you will be proud to have and excited to implement. In the end it will be a most beneficial step in helping to understand and enjoy your woodlot.

Board Members Biographies

The Board of Directors, responsible for the day to day business of this association is a group of dedicated volunteers, who share our memberships concerns and passions regarding their woodlots. These individuals are:

Bruce Craig- Chair: Bruce is President of Craig Construction and Cabinet Making Ltd. He co-owns 155 acres of woodland in the Northam area with his two brothers. His email is info@craigconstruction.ca

Lawrence Millar-Vice Chair, Heatherdale, Co-owns (with his wife) approximately 20 hectares of which 2/3rds is wood land with plantation and natural mixed stands. His email is: millarlawrence@hotmail.com

Dave Carragher –Treasurer: Lives in Charlottetown but manages a woodlot in Kelly's Cross. His email is: dcarragher@pei.sympatico.ca

Ira Smith – Board member: Ira is a retired public servant, and owns several woodlots in the Freeland/Lot 11area of PEI. He can be contacted at ira.smith@bellaliant.net

John Rowe- Board member: John J. Rowe is a retired educator who grew up on the family farm on PEI. He owns several woodlots in Queens and Kings Counties and has been involved with their management plans for over thirty years. His email is: rowe@pei.sympatico.ca

Richard Davies- Board Member: Richard Davies owns 1000 acres of land in Flat River, Belle River and Melville, of which 700 are managed forest land. He joined the forestry program in 1981 and continues to work with the Department of Forestry staff to ensure a productive forest and enhanced wildlife.

Pat MacInnis- Board Member: Pat is the Kings County representative for the Association; he lives in Frenchfort and owns a woodlot located in Launching. Pat has been managing his forest under the Provincial program for 20 years.

Terence MacDonald- Board Member lives in Mount Stewart.

Cyrus Bernard- Board Member: Cyrus is a horse logger, he lives in Tignish.



What we've been up to



4-H woodsman show off their Skills at the Winter woodlot tour

Since the release of our initial newsletter we have been busy with the building of the Association, participating in the Winter Woodlot Tour gave us a chance to meet our members and perspective members, these events give us an opportunity to gauge what woodlot owners are looking for in an organization, giving us inspiration for new events down the line.

The contest winners for the guess the age and height of the pine are as follows: Wes Colicut won a fishing license from The Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Fish and Wildlife Division for guessing closest to the height of the tree (he guessed 90ft with the actual height being 92ft. Ian Handrahan and Ralph Clark both won a coil-ring large scale map road map of PEI for guessing closest to the age (they both guessed 110 years with the actual age being 112 yrs). Thanks to all those who participated in the contest and the Forestry and Fish and Wildlife Divisions for their donations.

The release of our website in January was another milestone for the PEIWOA, giving our membership a resource that will become more comprehensive as we progress. We are always looking for input on events or seminars that you would like to see and they can always be posted on our comments page.

Our first educational seminar regarding the forest enhancement program happened on Feb.27 and was well attended by members and nonmembers alike, Provincial Forestry technician Darlene Hendricken gave an informative talk on the program and answered many questions regarding the accessing of the program. Board member John Rowe also spoke to the attendees regarding his experiences with the program over the years and participants walked away armed with valuable knowledge on building a management plan as well as using these programs to their best extent. Our thanks go out to those who attended the seminar as well as those who presented, with special thanks to the Provincial Dept of Agriculture and Forestry for their participation.

Where we are going



Horse logging with Kevin Taylor

We have a full slate of events coming up in the next few months; the Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday morning, April the 6th at the Dutch Inn from 8:30 - 12. We are inviting all members and non members to come out and listen to Greg Wilson and Dale Thomson from the Dept. Of the Environment, they will speak on the current regulations regarding buffer zones in riparian areas. We invite all members to stay for the business meeting directly afterward.

New members and board members are always welcome, so come on out and sign up as a member or if you would like to become a board member, drop us a line, we are always looking for motivated individuals looking to make a difference in the forests and woodlots of PEI.

There are also more seminars involving the Forest Enhancement Program that will take place in both Prince and Queens Counties over the next month, the next seminar will occur at the Northam Community Center, just outside of Richmond, from 7-9 PM on Wednesday, Mar. 20th with a storm date on the 27th, the Queens County Seminar will be on Wednesday, April 17th at the Hunter River Lions Club, Rennies Rd. from 7-9 PM, check the website news section for the most up to date information.

Links to Other Island Associations

PEI Woodlot Owners Association

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<http://www.gov.pe.ca/environment/buffer-zones>

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/forestry/FEP>

We are a new organization and are interested in forming networks with organizations interested in preserving and enhancing the integrity of our Island forests, if you are a member of an organization that you feel would benefit from a network with us let us know.

MISSION STATEMENT



The PEI Woodlot Owners Association (PEIWOA) is an inclusive organization that will provide the private woodlot owners of Prince Edward Island with sound advice and practical information to let them make the best choices for their woodlot. We will accomplish this objective by working closely with the membership to identify and pursue the issues of concern relating to the forests of PEI, encompassing the economic, environmental and legal aspects of ownership as well as representing members on the Provincial and National stage.

By forging connections between woodlot owners and all other members of PEI's forest communities the PEIWOA will create new and exciting partnerships, and help to develop the frame work for the future of PEI's forest lands.