

NBFWO Member Update to May 6, 2022

Special meeting

NBFWO held its special meeting on Thursday, April 28th via zoom. At this meeting a new set of by-laws was approved, and new board members were elected. The new board members are Rick Doucett (President), Danny Murphy, Jean Guy Comeau, Gerard Dupuis, John Sabine, Ron Smith, David Palmer and Andrew Clark.

Meeting with Hon. Mike Holland, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development

Rick Doucett and Susannah Banks met with Minister Holland, Chris Ward and Tom MacFarlane on Thursday May 5th. Chris Ward updated NBFWO on the progress made to date on the many private woodlot related files they are working on.

The private land wood supply should be available as a written document in June. The wood supply defines the allowable annual cut (AAC) that can be done on private land sustainably. This work is done using computer models. The Federation and Marketing Boards have been working with the Department of Natural Resources on this for some time.

The department is still interest in a registered woodlot owner program. There are no details on what this would mean or how this would function.

The Forest Products Commission (the Commission) will hire a facilitator to lead the discussions about the centralization of administrative functions for Marketing Boards. The department has made it clear that Marketing Boards are to have a major part in the development of this restructuring plan. The Department would like to have roles and responsibilities outlined by the fall and a timeline for implementation.

The changes to the Transportation Certificate (TC) act should be in place this summer and Marketing Boards will be able to refuse to issue new TC books if all books are not returned.

The Department is working on the Private Land Sustainability Fund Act. The new Act needs to go before the legislature for debate next fall if it is to be in place for next year.

There are 3 letters that should go out shortly. One to industry, one to Marketing Boards and one to the Commission indicating the Commission is to track all wood volumes by source. These volumes are to be reported to the Minister monthly. The Commission is also to report to the Minister any restricted deliveries of private wood.

Any temporary assignment of wood from Crown with require a review by Marketing Boards.

A University of New Brunswick master's student is working on an extension project at the suggestion of NBFWO. This project is looking at the ways that extension services are delivered in different jurisdictions. The Department is interested in this work. The student will be sharing the findings with the Department and NBFWO. We hope to be able to apply the recommendations to develop the best forest extension program possible.

Rick Doucett, NBFWO President, made it clear that while we see a lot of potential in what they are proposing we need some assurance that the situation for the coming season will be improved.

A meeting between the Forest Products Commission, the Farm Products Commission and the two Departments is being organized. The Federation has an opportunity to submit questions to this meeting through Chris Ward.

Overall, the tone of the meeting was very good. The Department seems to be trying to create positive change. The Minister is keen to have a public announcement as soon as possible.

Feedback on this update would be appreciated.

Have a great day.

Susannah

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