

Our purpose is to provide forest management services which meet the economic, environmental, and social objectives of private woodlot owners throughout the seven western counties in Nova Scotia



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No.10

## Spring/Summer 2023 Newsletter

July 31st

Now that summer is in full swing, it's time to enjoy the warm weather while it's here and take advantage of the opportunities to get out on your woodlot and get some work done, or just simply enjoy some time observing what the growing season looks like. This spring has not been as rejuvenating as we had hoped. Our hearts go out to those who have been affected by the fires. They sure have taken their toll on Nova Scotia's Woodlands as well as strained the communities surrounding them.

So far this spring, WWSC staff have been busy organizing and carrying out harvesting and silviculture work for the season. We've also been collaborating with partner organizations to further the ideas and practices surrounding ecological forestry on private woodlands in our service area. We encourage you to keep reading for an update. Without further ado, let the "wood" times roll!

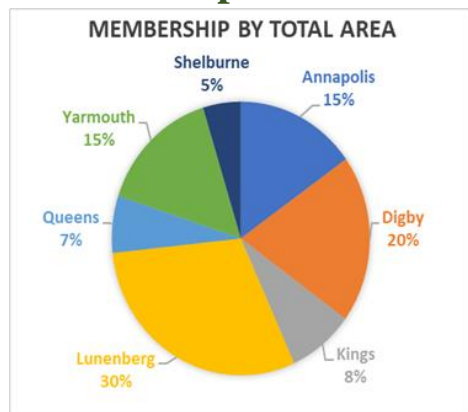
### Summary of the 2023 AGM

The 2023 annual general meeting was buzzing with activity this year. It took place on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Little Brook firehall in Digby County. In the morning, directors gave their respective reports while staff went over our membership, wood sales and markets, silviculture, and outreach activities for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Then in the afternoon, Spec Resources hosted a tour of their wood chip heating facilities at Université Saint-Anne, which included a visit to their wood chip storage yard in Concession as well as Hubert Leblanc's residence. Hubert is the president of Spec Resources. In the sections that follow, a summary of each agenda item will be provided.



Our treasurer, Jean-Marc Leblanc at the 2023 AGM

### Membership



As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, our membership was at 344 representing just over 87,000 acres. We now have 367 members representing around 90,640 acres in Western Nova Scotia! We would like to welcome all our new members who are receiving their very first newsletter from us. As seen in the graph to the left, most of WWSC's land base by area is in Lunenburg County followed by Digby, Annapolis, Yarmouth, Kings, Queens, and Shelburne. The table below is a more thorough snapshot of what our membership looks like across our service area.



| <b>Membership as of March 31st 2023</b> |                     |                  |                  |                        |                        |
|---|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>County</b>                           | <b># of members</b> | <b>Area (ac)</b> | <b>Area (ha)</b> | <b>% by total area</b> | <b>% by membership</b> |
| Annapolis                               | 66                  | 13,323           | 5,392            | 15%                    | 19%                    |
| Digby                                   | 95                  | 17,414           | 7,047            | 20%                    | 28%                    |
| Kings                                   | 41                  | 7,238            | 2,929            | 8%                     | 12%                    |
| Lunenburg                               | 87                  | 26,438           | 10,699           | 30%                    | 25%                    |
| Queens                                  | 24                  | 5,926            | 2,398            | 7%                     | 7%                     |
| Yarmouth                                | 18                  | 13,363           | 5,408            | 15%                    | 5%                     |
| Shelburne                               | 13                  | 4,159            | 1,683            | 5%                     | 4%                     |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>344</b>          | <b>87,861</b>    | <b>35,556</b>    |                        |                        |
| <b>Avg. lot size/member</b>             |                     | <b>255</b>       | <b>103</b>       |                        |                        |

## Your Board of Directors

We have two new members on the WWSC board of directors. Welcome Claude Comeau from Eel Lake, Digby County and Glenn Joudrey from Harmony, Kings County. These members are replacing Reg Clem and filling a vacant seat due to the loss of Arcade Comeau.

Claude Comeau is a second-generation woodlot owner and a previous member of La Forêt Acadienne. Since the 1970's, he has worked extensively with Arcade Comeau to manage his woodlots in the Clare area of Digby County. He retired as the Inspection Manager for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and worked for the Department of Fisheries in New-Brunswick, Meteghan, Digby and Yarmouth for over 33 years. He now works with his sons doing boundary line upkeep, silviculture, selection harvesting, road construction and operating his sawmill on his woodlots. He is also a member of Forest Nova Scotia and has been for many years.

Glenn Joudrey has been an active woodlot owner since 1980, with harvests, silviculture, and road building conducted on his property in Harmony, Kings County. He has extensive experience with agriculture, politics, and rural economic development. From 1980 to 1994, Glenn was an active livestock and produce farmer, selling at the Halifax Farmers Market and serving as President of the Halifax Farmers Market Cooperative from 1992-1994. In 1992, Glenn was elected a Kings County Municipal Councillor and served in that position until 2000. In more recent years, he has worked as a small business consultant and as a rural route mail carrier for Canada Post. Glenn retired from his duties with Canada Post in 2022. He now enjoys spending summers at his cottage in Morden, Kings County with his wife Velvet. He looks forward to bringing his passion and expertise to the WWSC board of directors.

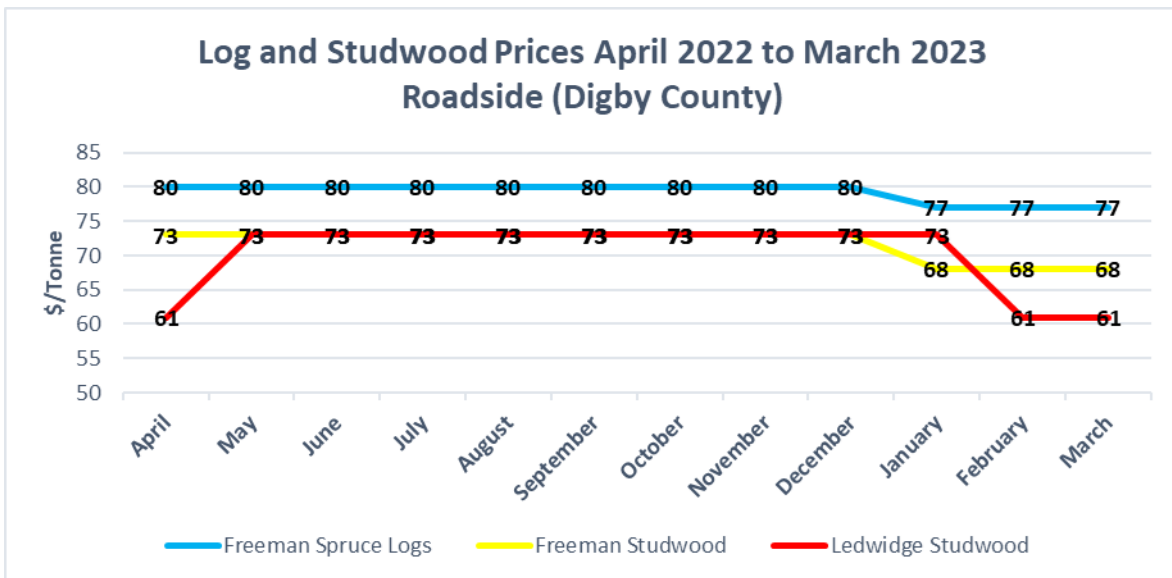


| Your Board of Directors       |            |                                   |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kevin Veinotte                | Chair      | West Northfield, Lunenburg County |
| Glen Rosse                    | Vice Chair | Scots Bay, Kings County           |
| Jean Marc Leblanc             | Treasurer  | Saint Martin, Digby County        |
| Britt Roscoe                  | Secretary  | Port George, Annapolis County     |
| Gary Melanson                 | Director   | Saulnierville, Digby County       |
| Bryan Bent                    | Director   | Mount Hanley, Annapolis County    |
| Gail Mercer                   | Director   | West Northfield, Lunenburg County |
| New Directors as of June 2023 |            |                                   |
| Glenn Joudrey                 | Director   | Harmony, Kings County             |
| Claude Comeau                 | Director   | Eel Lake, Digby County            |

## Wood sales and Markets

For the fiscal year of 2022-2023, prices for spruce and fir logs and studwood were steady from April to December at 80\$/tonne for logs and 73\$/tonne for studwood. There was a slight drop in prices from January to March to 77\$/tonne for logs and 68\$/tonne for studwood at Freeman’s and 61\$/tonne for studwood from February to March at Ledwidge. Prices for pine, hemlock, and hardwood products remain mostly stable but the market for hemlock logs is limited due to an increased supply caused by hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) infestations.

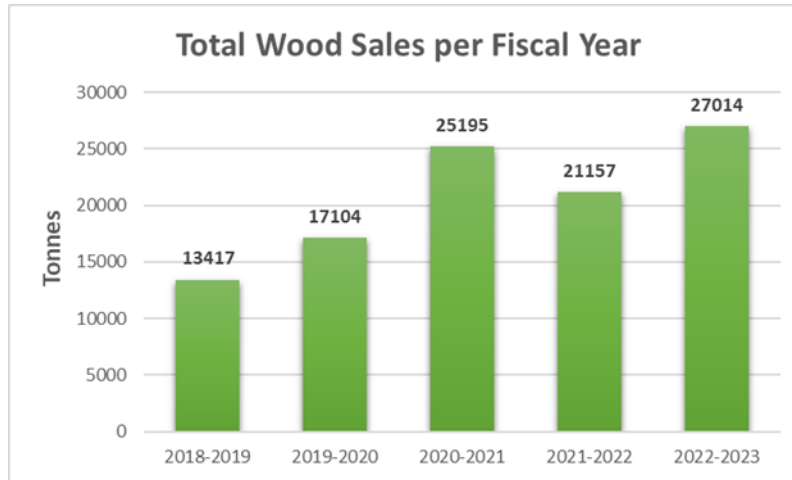
At the start of the fiscal year, lumber prices hovered just over 1000\$/mfbm and steadily declined to just under 400\$ in March 2023. Currently, lumber prices are sitting at ~344\$/mfbm.



Log and Studwood Prices during the 2022-2023 fiscal year



We are proud to announce that this year has been the best yet in terms of wood sales at 27,014 tonnes. Digby County was responsible for producing 79% of that wood volume followed by 9% in Lunenburg County, 7% in Shelburne County, and 5% in Queens County. No harvests were undertaken in Annapolis, Yarmouth, or Kings County. Of these forest products, 68% was sold to Freeman's, 11% to Spec Resources, 10% to J.A. Turner and Sons, and the remaining 11% to other small buyers.



Wood sales per fiscal year

## Silviculture

There has been a total of 128 silviculture assessments in the fiscal year of 2022-2023 and 223.5 ha (552.3 ac) of silviculture funding completed and claimed. The top 3 treatments completed on our members woodlots were commercial thinning (55%), selection management (25%), and pre-commercial thinning (11%). Most of the work was done in Digby (62%) and Lunenburg County (27%), with smaller percentages in Annapolis, Queens, and Yarmouth.



Selection Management on a member's woodlot in Queens Co.



## Outreach

At WWSC, we're always looking for ways to connect with and engage private woodlot owners. In the last year, we have hosted several activities with our members to showcase the broad range of services that we offer.

We had a couple harvest operation field tours last year. One of them was at Rex and Bonnie Veinot's Maplewood Syrup and Christmas Tree Farm in Lunenburg County, and the other was at Reg Clem's woodlot in Kings County. These are opportunities for members and staff to talk about operational considerations, forest treatments, and see the work that has been done on our members' land.

We also had some fun learning how to make Christmas wreaths with our forest technician Bronson Joudrey during the 2022 holiday season. From collecting brush to the finished product, it was a nice way to learn about non-timber forest products.

Finally, we held a series of Avenza maps workshops throughout our service area to end the year. Avenza is a map viewing application that can be downloaded onto a mobile device and has many uses including offline navigation, marking features, recording tracks, and measuring distances and areas in the field. Maps can be accessed through Avenza's Map Store or easily imported into the app. It is free and easy to use, making it a handy tool for woodland stewards! We are looking forward to hosting more events in the months that follow.



*Workshops and Outreach 22-23*

## Tour with Spec Resources

In the afternoon, we went to Université Sainte-Anne in Church Point, Digby County to visit the wood chip heating boiler system. This system was installed in 2009 by Spec Resources and heats 19 buildings on campus. Spec is solely responsible for commissioning and maintaining the heating facility. It was a great opportunity for us to discuss the uses of low-grade wood and the transition from fossil fuel to sustainable wood heating solutions on a larger scale. WWSC supplies the low-grade wood to Spec, who then chips and delivers the wood to supply their various heating systems.

This was followed by a visit to Specs yard in Concession. This is where pulpwood is dried, chipped, and stored. Our last stop was at Hubert Leblanc's home, where we saw the Herz heating system used to heat his home, which demonstrated the potential of wood heating in a residential setting.

As many of you know, it is a big challenge for us to find markets for low grade wood in Western Nova Scotia. Yet, low grade wood markets are essential for us to carry out forest stand improvement work. Working with



Spec Resources Inc. is an opportunity for us to increase markets for low-grade wood from sustainably managed woodlands and invest in our rural economy and communities. We all do what we can to promote and demonstrate the benefits of wood chip heating in retrofits of existing buildings or of new builds. It is a win-win all the way around.



*Tour with Spec Resources Inc.*

## **Meet our new interns: Michele and Garrison!**

Michele started as a forest technician with the cooperative in late May 2023. She is based out of WWSC's New Germany office where she will be serving members in the south shore and the valley alongside Dawson Lake, Andrew Oliver, and Bronson Joudrey. Michele has just graduated from the Forestry Technician program at Fleming College in April 2023. Prior to joining the co-op, she was a tree planter for several seasons, spending many of her summers in the boreal forest of northern Ontario. In addition, she has experience in data collection for urban tree inventories. Michele was born and raised in Ottawa but considers herself lucky to be able to work in Nova Scotia. She spends her off time at the farmer's market on weekends, cozied up with a good book, or outside exploring new places. Currently, she resides in Bridgewater.



*Michele in front of a large sugar maple*



*Garrison in the field*

Garrison started as an intern forester with the coop in May 2023. He is based out of WWSC's concession office where he'll be primarily serving the Yarmouth, Digby and Shelburne counties. Garrison graduated from the Maritime College of Forest Technology in 2020 and has recently graduated from the University of New Brunswick with a B.Sc. in Forestry. Before starting this spring, he spent four summers working for the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables in the western region. Garrison has experience with old growth surveys, plantation assessments, wildfire suppression, wildlife surveys and various GIS projects. He lives in Yarmouth where he grew up and enjoys training in the martial arts, hockey and spending time with family and friends.

## **Silviculture Information**

**Silviculture work on your woodlands may be eligible for funding.**

Many silviculture treatments are funded through Nova Scotia's registry of Buyers program. The silviculture work we do is funded by the Association for Sustainable Forestry and JA Turner & Sons Ltd.

### **Eligible treatments include:**

- Full planting
- Fill planting
- Early competition control
- Pre-commercial thinning
- Commercial thinning
- Crop tree release
- Crop tree pruning
- Selection management

Please note that each category has specific eligibility criteria that must be met for a site to qualify for funding, both pre and post treatment.

Contact us if you think there is silviculture work to do on your land, or if you have any questions about silvicultural treatments.



## What is Pre-Commercial Thinning?

Pre-commercial thinning (PCT) is a silviculture treatment that is done when trees are young and unmerchantable to free them from competition of surrounding overtopping trees. PCT is also known as a “tending” treatment, which is another way of saying “taking care of” to influence the future trajectory of a stand. The goal of this treatment is to promote selected crop trees of a favorable species while removing their competition.

So how do we select crop trees? What makes a particular species favorable versus unfavorable? When doing PCT work, the species you want to promote are long-lived intermediate to shade tolerant (LIT) species. For example, red spruce, white pine, red oak, sugar maple, white ash, and yellow birch that seem healthy and in good condition. On the other hand, the species you want to target for removal are trees of poor form/low quality and early successional short-lived species such as grey birch, balsam fir, aspen, or large red maple clumps. Ultimately, silviculture allows us to speed up the natural process of succession, allowing us to invest in and tap into the economic potential of our woodlands sooner.

To be eligible for a PCT treatment, the area must be 80% stocked with crop-tree species. For example, when we are doing our pre-assessment, 8 out of 10 plots must have at least one crop tree species present. This is measured with a plot cord that has a radius of 1.36m. The density must be greater or equal to 25,000 trees/ha, which can be calculated by multiplying the number of crop trees recorded in a plot by 200 and adding up the totals for each plot. The height of crop tree species must be between 2-7m for softwood species and 6-9m for hardwood species. Finally, the target density post PCT must be between 1500 and 3500 stems/ha. For PCT in plantations, the area must be 85% stocked, the density must be greater than 1500 trees/ha, and the heights must be between 2-6m. The post treatment density remains the same.

A PCT treatment can be a considerable investment in the health and structure of your forest stand down the road. Thinning the stand when trees are of unmerchantable size will allow good quality trees to become bigger faster, which will prepare them for a commercial thinning.

## Closing Remarks

On behalf of WWSC staff and directors, have an awesome summer. We will be sending you another newsletter come fall. In the meantime, know that we are here to serve you so don't be shy!

Get in touch with us for any questions/inquiries about your woodlot needs and feel free to drop in for a visit at any of our offices in Concession, Kingston, and New Germany. We are always happy to help.



*Northern Blue Flag*





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