

NS Forestry Contractors Call for Urgent Government Action

May 20, 2020 -Truro, NS – A contractor group comprised of Nova Scotia’s harvesting, trucking, silviculture and road construction companies have been monitoring and assessing the dramatic impacts of the Northern Pulp mill closure and have compiled their concerns and solutions in a position paper. “The situation is much more dire than we thought it would be by this time. Our industry is in absolute crisis as a result of the loss of this major market. All forestry companies are vulnerable.”, said the contractor group.

It has become even more important to have a vibrant forest sector, with the additional impact of Covid 19 on the economy of the Province.

The Canadian Woodlands Forum through their High Performance Logging (HPL) program coordinated a session with the forestry contractors to assess the impact of the closure of the Northern Pulp mill on the forest fibre supply chain in the province. The purpose of the session was to develop ‘path forward’ solutions to help sustain the forest fibre value chain and ensure a viable, healthy supply to meet current and future needs of the sector.

The forestry contractors agreed the best outcome for the industry would be to restart the Northern Pulp mill as quickly as possible. It was understood that a restart was possibly several years away because it would require a new Effluent Treatment Facility (ETF) to be approved and constructed. The kraft mill, with its central location offered a high-volume and high-value market for softwood and hardwood pulpwood, sawmill chips and residuals, supporting a vibrant forestry sector throughout the province. The contractors urge the Government and Northern Pulp to work together to establish a fair and timely environmental review process for a new ETF.

In the meantime however, to maintain the supply chain infrastructure, the contractors strongly support several strategies that have been proposed to government, that would help sustain the forestry contractor capacity, expertise and employment. These potential interim solutions include a proposed plan to inventory pulpwood in yards as presented to the Transition Team by Great Northern Timber (GNT) and Port Hawkesbury Paper (PHP) to provide feedstocks for potential bio-energy projects; a proposal from LinksEdge Ltd. to export wood fibre to prospective European markets; a proposal from Freeman Lumber and GNT to build a new pellet mill on the Freeman sawmill site in Greenfield, Queens County; and consideration of further expansion of the Province’s proposal to convert public buildings to heating with modern efficient biomass-based heating and energy systems.

“Forestry contractors want to work with the Government. We urge the Minister of Lands and Forestry to meet with us and help guide this industry through this crisis,” said the group. Nova Scotia’s forestry contractors believe in well-managed forests, a sustainable integrated forest industry and access to a diverse marketplace. Serious consideration of all of these viable options are critical to preserving the forestry supply chain and the rural economy of Nova Scotia.

For more information;

Brent MacInnis
Hugh MacInnis Lumber Ltd.
902 371-6512

Ralph Stewart
RES Sustainable Forestry Ltd.
902 318-4275

Matthew MacGillivray
L.G. MacGillivray & Son Lumbering Ltd.
902 890-2501

Andy Looke
Looke CanCut Ltd.
902 644-3422

David MacMillan
MacMillan Forest Inc.
902 897-5889

Calvin Archibald
Next Generation Forest Management Ltd.
902 435-5673