

Athol Forestry Cooperative Limited

"We are our members"

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SPRING / SUMMER 2010 NEWSLETTER



NOTICE OF **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Athol's 33rd Annual General Meeting will be held

**Thursday , June 17, 2010 at
Knights of Columbus
Robie Street, Amherst**

The itinerary for the evening is as follows:

Reception - 6:00 pm
Roast Beef Buffet (catered by Patterson's) - 6:30 pm
Business Meeting - 7:30 pm

Guest Speaker - Mike Hutchinson - FNSWO
~ **Woodlot Certification** ~

Tickets \$20 /person, including HST

Please call Jane at 667-7299 to reserve your tickets
Visa, MC & Amex Accepted

we all have had extra work on our plates. Some of our major accomplishments include:

- Completed 68 management plans for new and existing members
- Completed 9 Certified Management plans funded through the Federation of Nova Scotia Woodland Owners
- Completed 17.6 km of boundary line renewal
- Harvested approximately 10,000 cords
- Funded a \$240,000 forest improvement program

I personally am pleased with these results and I trust the members whose woodlots we worked on are also satisfied with the quality of the services provided. Our goal is to work with all of our members to increase the quality and diversity of their woodlots and anyone wishing to have their woodlot considered for possible treatments, should contact Neal, Craig or myself for information.

In closing, the success of our Cooperative depends on our ability to meet our members' needs and also to continue to grow by adding new members. If you are satisfied with the service you receive, please tell your neighbours and friends.

Hope to see everyone at the AGM!

Warmest regards

Jane J. Berry

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The forest industry seems to be off to a good start this year, which hopefully will translate into a solid financial year for Athol. With a mild winter behind us and an early opening on the roads, we are already into our 2010 harvesting program, with lots of opportunities opening up to us. There are indications that prices may rebound a bit as the demand for lumber increases.

Over the past year, we have been challenged to do more work with less available staff and time. With Neal and Craig working 4 day work weeks and Lindsay taking a casual position (almost full time) with the Cumberland Health Authority,

TECHNICAL REPORT

It is very difficult to predict what the wood markets are going to be like in the near future and beyond. Rumours are abundant. The larger mills are saying very little. Some are predicting a small rise during the summer and back to it's original status in the fall. At the present time our forest products are in demand, we are able to market all of our softwood and hardwood species. Mill prices; however, are not increasing with demand. It would seem that the mill prices are here to stay. The value of the wood products that the landowner is receiving may be low in comparison to the prices in the mid 90's but are reasonable in today's markets and should not be the only factor when considering harvesting. Other factors to be considered are the vigor and quality of the merchantable trees, the establishment of natural regeneration and the sudden infestation of nasty insects and disease. Harvesting a woodlot marks the beginning of a new forest and the end of an old one. This being said I feel that the previous year went quite well. We were able to harvest approximately 10,000 cords on our landowner's properties creating in excess of 160 ha of new forest; some of which will have to be planted to ensure a future supply of merchantable softwood products. Our forest improvement program included planting 200,000 seedlings on poorly regenerating sites; pre commercially thinning in excess of 200 ha in young dense mixed stands and a small commercial thinning program designed to remove least desirable trees in a middle-aged stand to hasten diameter growth of the selected crop trees and increase productivity. The upcoming year 2010 should also be a success. We have several landowners interested in harvesting and we plan to meet and or exceed last year's volume. Forest improvement treatments will include planting, chemical weeding, pre commercial thinning, commercial thinning and selection harvest. Funding for the treatments will be

covered through the registered buyers program. Increase in funding is not predicted but it will be welcomed if the opportunity arises.

Neal Hewitt CFT
Field Supervisor



CRAIG'S REPORT

I hope everyone's spring is as productive and positive as it is looking here on the marsh. It is a busy time for us here with opportunities to network with others in the industry and catch up on training opportunities to keep our professional skills current. Neal and I attended our respective annual general meetings for the Registered Professional Foresters and Forest Technicians Associations in Truro; as well, the Canadian Woodlands Forum in Moncton. Guest speakers ranged from well-known environmental activists to industry representatives from across the Maritimes. The overall message I seem to have come away with is hopeful optimism.

There has also been some progress in the area of carbon credit trading; which may be focused at the Cooperative or Group Venture level in our part of North America. This could mean that woodlot owners may someday be paid for maintaining environmental value on their woodlot as much as for the products they produce by a largely urban society that recognizes this value. They are already traded in Europe and we are only waiting to see how the U.S. is going to approach the situation. Then we will most likely follow suit. This spring also saw the first Nova Scotia Forest Health Conference in Truro. Topics covered ranged from

insects to climate change with an obvious focus on some well-known culprits. We are looking at the quarantine area for Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle extending into our area this year. This will mean restricted markets for certain products during active flight months for some buyers. There are also indications that the Spruce Budworm may rear its ugly head again in the very near future. We will be looking at Beetle prone stands to see how the problem may be approached proactively and contacting landowners about them. This time I do not think we can expect a large chemical insecticide spray program like the one seen in the late 1970's and 1980's; therefore, the strategy will be proactive management of mature balsam fir stands. There is also growing concern over the effect of global warming on our native tree species and their ranges. Although this is a very long view, managing our forests to have a variety of species, age classes, compositions, well matched to site and soil conditions will be key to maintaining healthy forests for the long term.

Part of being involved in the writing of certified forest management plans involved expanding my practical education in applied ecology. I recently took part in a course based on the provincial forest ecosystem classification, which we use when writing plans and prescribing treatments on certified forests. It involved matching soil and forest types to appropriate treatments based on natural disturbance cycles and how the stand would have naturally developed. In the future we hope to incorporate this to some degree into all of our management planning. Over the past year I have also started the process of getting my Registered Professional Forester designation in Nova Scotia. This process will take another year.

On the certification side, I only have a few more spaces available for free management plans through the Federation of Nova Scotia Woodland Owners CSA program. If

you are interested, please come see me. The registration audit is happening the week of May 17th to 21st for the CSA plans, so by the time you read this; your certified plans may be officially recognized. I have also connected with the Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fiber Producers to provide Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification to landowners. This program is a little more stringent in application, but the benefits are that some sawmills are already offering more money for logs and studwood from these woodlots, which could be a big incentive if you are considering harvesting any time soon.

Over the winter I worked on bringing our computer mapping system up to date, combining all of our current management plans into one, making updating and planning more efficient. As new management plans are written and treatments completed, they will be entered into the system so that eventually we will have up to date information on all of our woodlots available without having to search through thousands of paper documents for the information. As part of this process, anyone with plans over 10 years old will have theirs updated as time permits.

Another project for this year will be the continuation of boundary line renewal for those woodlot owners who signed work orders last year.

As always, you can contact me anytime with questions or concerns about the management of your woodlot, forest certification, and product marketing.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM in June.

Regards,

Craig Tupper, BScF

Nominations for Board of Directors

There are three vacancies to be filled on the Board of Directors this year: Terms of service for **Gerald Read, Don Donkin and Ira Smith** are up for renewal. **Gerald Read and Don Donkin** are re-offering and the Nominating Committee will put forward one other name for consideration.

We would like to invite other members to consider putting their names forward for election to the Board. Nominations are open to all members of the Cooperative. They must be in writing and recommended by two other members.

Please complete the Nomination Form below and submit to Jane Berry, General Manager, on behalf of the Secretary, prior to the commencement of the business meeting on Thursday, June 17, 2010 at 7:30 pm.



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NOMINATION FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The undersigned hereby nominate _____ for appointment to the Athol Board of Directors for a term of three years.

Date

Please print and sign your name

Date

Please print and sign your name