

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Forest Biodiversity Science Advisory Committee (FBSAC)

1. BACKGROUND

The Department of Natural Resources & Renewables (NRR) is entering a new phase in its implementation of an ecosystem approach to forestry and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The Forest Biodiversity Science Advisory Committee (FBSAC) will provide independent advice on science and research. It will also provide high-level advice on departmental initiatives related to the 2018 Independent Review of Forest Practices.

2. GOAL

To increase NRR's engagement with science and its role in conducting, enabling, and applying the scientific research that is needed to move Nova Scotia in the direction of ecological forestry with healthy forests and thriving forestry-based industries.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. Offer specific and targeted scientific advice and assist NRR in developing a framework to better enable its scientists to undertake the necessary research and to work with the broader scientific community to support ecological forestry (Recommendation 39).
2. Assist department staff in developing an adaptive management framework to guide NRR as it transitions to the triad model of ecological forestry (Recommendation 42).
3. Assist in the review of the science related to watercourse buffers and wildlife clumps (Recommendations 25 and 26).
4. Assist in the review of the department's internal and commissioned science related to concerns about the potential adverse impact of forestry on Crown lands on the following interests (Recommendation 16):
 - a. Sensitive soils, particularly on Crown lands in the western region
 - b. Bird populations
 - c. Tourism operations and developmental plans
 - d. Outdoor recreation activities, including established trails
 - e. Protected Areas
5. Assist with the assessment or review of other forest biodiversity research projects of mutual interest between FBSAC and the department.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CONTEXT

Significant building blocks are now in place within NRR to move forward with implementing ecological forestry. This foundation includes the Silvicultural Guide for the Ecological Matrix, Draft Old-growth Forest Policy, initial TRIAD zoning, and Draft Forest Stewardship Planning Standard.

- The Committee will recognize the current requirements and strategic direction of existing regulations and policy at NRR;
- Fiscal constraints may affect the scale, timing, or decisions to proceed with recommendations for action on science priorities identified by the Committee;
- The Committee's work will complement existing scientific expertise and advice within the department by adding additional perspectives and expertise.
- Communication and knowledge-sharing will be encouraged between Committee members and NRR experts and scientists. Committee members will respect confidentiality around draft documents, data, and analysis not yet released to the public.

5. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee is comprised of six (6) members drawn from the appropriate disciplines necessary to achieve the goal and objectives. Where possible, members shall be drawn from Nova Scotia, or the Atlantic region, if necessary, to maximize efficiency and familiarity with local forest/biodiversity conditions and issues. The Committee should collectively have expertise in forest science, biodiversity, ecological planning, spatial modelling, and other related science knowledge.

Membership will include a Forestry Division representative and a Wildlife Division representative. One of these two members will serve as Chair.

Committee appointments shall normally be for 3-year terms and subject to renewal with the agreement of the Department and incumbent(s).

Additional committee members may be appointed as dictated by the known priorities and associated experience required.

NRR will provide administrative support for the Committee.

6. MEETINGS AND REPORTING

The Committee will meet at least quarterly.

NRR will reimburse members for travel expenses incurred to attend meetings according to established government rates.

Meeting minutes will be taken and reviewed by the Committee, then submitted to NRR, and made available to the public on the government website.

Ongoing communication and advice between the Committee and NRR will be coordinated by the Executive Director of Forestry and Wildlife Branch (or designate) and the Chair of the Committee.

The Committee may provide periodic advice and updates directly to the Minister.

Approved on 26 May, 2022

On behalf of the *Department of Natural Resources & Renewables*:



acting for:

Gerald Post, Executive Director, Forestry and Wildlife

On behalf of the *Forest Biodiversity Science Advisory Committee*:



Dr. Tara Crewe (Chair)
Manager Ecosystems & Habitats, NRR



Dr. Peter Bush
Manager Forest Research & Planning, NRR



Dr. Peter Duinker
Professor Emeritus, Dalhousie University (retired)



Dr. Thom Erdle
Professor, University of New Brunswick (retired)



Dr. Tom Herman
Professor Emeritus, Acadia University (retired)



Dr. Yolanda Wiersma
Professor, Memorial University