



Fundy Model Forest

~Partners in Sustainability~

Report Title: Fundy Model Forest Conservation Stewardship Project. Final Report for Fundy Model Forest.

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Year of project: 1996

Principal contact information:

File Name:

Biodiversity_1996_Foley_Fundy_Model_Forest_Conservation_Stewardship_Project_Final_Report_for_Fundy_Model_Forest

***The Fundy Model Forest...
...Partners in Sustainability***

“The Fundy Model Forest (FMF) is a partnership of 38 organizations that are promoting sustainable forest management practices in the Acadian Forest region.”

Atlantic Society of Fish and Wildlife Biologists
Canadian Institute of Forestry
Canadian Forest Service
City of Moncton
Conservation Council of New Brunswick
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Eel Ground First Nation
Elgin Eco Association
Elmhurst Outdoors
Environment Canada
Fawcett Lumber Company
Fundy Environmental Action Group
Fundy National Park
Greater Fundy Ecosystem Research Group
INFOR, Inc.
J.D. Irving, Limited
KC Irving Chair for Sustainable Development
Maritime College of Forest Technology
NB Department of the Environment and Local Government
NB Department of Natural Resources
NB Federation of Naturalists
New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners
NB Premier's Round Table on the Environment & Economy
New Brunswick School District 2
New Brunswick School District 6
Nova Forest Alliance
Petitcodiac Sportsman's Club
Red Bank First Nation
Remsoft Inc.
Southern New Brunswick Wood Cooperative Limited
Sussex and District Chamber of Commerce
Sussex Fish and Game Association
Town of Sussex
Université de Moncton
University of NB, Fredericton - Faculty of Forestry
University of NB - Saint John Campus
Village of Petitcodiac
Washademoak Environmentalists



Fundy Model Forest
Conservation Stewardship Project
Final Report December 1996

FUNDY



MODEL FOREST
NETWORK

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**FUNDY MODEL FOREST CONSERVATION
STEWARDSHIP PROJECT**

FINAL REPORT FOR FUNDY MODEL FOREST

John Foley
Fundy Model Forest

December 1996

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout this project, assistance has been received from many people and organizations. It is with pleasure that I express gratitude to the following persons and groups.

Funding was provided by the Fundy Model Forest Program and the Canadian Forest Service (CFS). In kind support was received from the Southern New Brunswick Wood Cooperatives Ltd. (SNB), New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy (DNRE), the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), New Brunswick Community Land Trust and the Nature Trust of New Brunswick.

Thanks are also extended to Clark Phillips who provided invaluable advice with different stages of the project.

Also thanks must be extended to Debi Perry and Caroline Simpson for help in developing and editing the Conservation Stewardship Options brochure.

Last and certainly not least, Dr. Judy Loo and Andrew MacDougall who provided the field experience and much needed expertise.

INTRODUCTION

The Model Forest program was launched in 1991 by the Canadian Forest Service as a Green Plan initiative. The goal of the program was to establish a network of large-scale working models of sustainable forestry in each of the major forest regions of Canada. To reflect the various types of land tenure and major uses of the forest, and to demonstrate sustainable development in forestry, ten model forests were established across the country, each with a sponsor and a number of partners.

The Fundy Model Forest is a 420,000 hectare working forest located in southeastern New Brunswick between Moncton and Saint John (attached map Appendix 1). The landscape of the area is diverse, containing a mixture of large tracts of forest ranging from spruce-fir bottom lands to hillsides and ledgetops cloaked in hardwood, as well as scenic river valleys, open farmland, lakes, marshes, ponds, bogs and other wetlands. There are presently more than twenty partners in the FMF, including research organizations, industry, universities, Fundy National Park, conservation groups, sport fishing and hunting organizations, the town of Sussex, the local school district, and several provincial and federal government agencies.

The FMF program aspires to balance environmental sustainability with the continued use of its lands for social and economic activities. To meet the challenges faced in the development of a balanced forest management plan, it was recognized that twelve major issues needed consideration. Two of these issues were 1) critical natural area management and 2) protection of biological diversity. The main objective for biological diversity was to maintain genetic, species, and community diversity across the forest. The FMF Gap Analysis project was established to provide some of the biodiversity information required in the development of a balanced management plan for the FMF. The Gap Analysis project was initiated because the critical natural areas issue was identified in the original proposal and the only way to address this was by first locating such areas. It also fills a need for the biodiversity objective of the FMF. Conducted over a three year period, this project was designed to find and fill the "gaps" in the nature conservation efforts in the model forest. To that end, a program was developed to identify areas within the FMF that require protection for a variety of reasons including: the presence of rare species, unusual species assemblages, high species richness, sensitive habitat, or representative remnants of once common, late-successional forest. Of the sixty sites that were identified, thirty-five are located partially or solely on private lands, twenty-seven are located on crown land and twenty-one are located either partially or solely on Irving freehold. Some examples of priority sites found on private woodlots would be the North River Wet Cedar site as well as the Waterford Escarpment site. The North River site is an extensive stand of eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) and black spruce (*Picea mariana*) found around a large stillwater pond off the North River. The understory of the largely undisturbed stand of eastern white cedar contains numerous rare or otherwise significant ground flora species, including: showy lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*) rare and possibly endangered in New Brunswick as well as the boreal aster (*Aster borealis*) which is very rare in New Brunswick. The Waterford Escarpment site includes a variety of habitat types and associated vegetative formations. An old growth tolerant hardwood stand is located on the ridge top with associated ground flora. Also present is an

extensive stand of ironwood highly unusual for New Brunswick. The site hosts several uncommon plant species in association with the cliffs, ledges, and escarpments: hairy rock cress (Arabis hirsuta), drummond's rock cress (Arabis drummondii), bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi), and great-spurred violet (Viola selkirkii). These are only two examples of the types of unique sites that have been identified and are in need of protection. All of the identified areas have been mapped and included in the FMF management planning exercise. In order to implement the management plan, however, a hands-on conservation stewardship program was necessary.

The goal of this project was to secure ecologically significant sites within the Fundy Model Forest through a combination of private stewardship agreements and/or conservation easements and the implementation of an educational program directed at providing landowners with the information needed to help them more efficiently identify and manage ecologically significant sites. The project was designed to provide follow-up for private landowners within the Fundy Model Forest whose properties are part of the sixty sites previously identified by the Gap Analysis project as having special ecological value.

Attempts to obtain stewardship agreements and develop management plans for private lands present a great challenge. Even the smallest sites (eg. several hectares) are often controlled by two or more landowners. Typically, these owners have divergent interests regarding land use, and some owners do not live in the local communities and are thus difficult to contact. The intent is to protect ecologically significant sites through cooperation with private landowners, corporate landowners, community groups, conservation agencies and interested persons.

PRIORITY LISTING

Of the approximately sixty sites that are identified as being ecologically significant, thirty five of these were located on private woodlots. From these thirty-five, seven sites were given higher priority with respect to site securement. This selection was based on 1) environmental sensitivity and 2) the immediate threat to the site. The seven priority sites were rated in the following order. 1) Parlee Brook Valley, 2) North River Wet Cedar Forest, 3) Upper Salt Springs Hardwoods, 4) Havelock Butternut Ridge, 5) Quiddy River, 6) Mount Zachy Jonah and 7) Waterford Escarpment.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada has shown a great interest in this project and have actively worked towards securing several of the priority sites. Such sites include the Parlee Brook site as well as the North River Wet Cedar site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Work plan

1. Follow up with each of the landowners who have responded to the initial letters, providing them with information on options available for conservation stewardship (appendix 2).
2. Contact those landowners who have not yet received letters and provide them with a brochure on stewardship options and also assess their level of interest in stewardship.
3. Contact all landowners who have received letters and have not yet responded and provide them with a brochure on stewardship options and assess their level of interest in stewardship.
4. Work with all landowners who have been contacted and have shown an interest in participating in the conservation stewardship project. In collaboration with Bruce Matson of DNRE extension, help landowners to develop appropriate management strategies for their woodlots.
5. Develop stewardship oriented educational materials (brochures) that will aid SNB technicians in encouraging landowners to practice conservation stewardship.
6. Provide interested landowners with land management options that permit existing land use activities but also maintain existing site values.
7. Develop and conduct a workshop for SNB technicians and key interested landowners to explain “conservation stewardship”, to provide information about what constitutes a “special ecological feature” and to discuss appropriate management strategies for such features.
8. To develop a reward system for participating landowners. This program will help reinforce the value of their participation in the land stewardship program.
9. Work closely with other project partners to identify “community leaders” who are sympathetic to the idea of conservation stewardship, and try to gain their support so they will approach other landowners and disseminate information on how to practice conservation stewardship.
10. Work to secure the top seven priority sites before focusing on remaining sites. These seven sites are owned by approximately forty private landowners. Several of these sites also include some provincial and/or industrial freehold lands.
11. Develop an educational component to foster public interest regarding the understanding of the importance of ecologically significant areas.

1996 ACHIEVEMENTS (Phase 1)

The following are the list of achievements from Phase I of the project.

1. Follow-up with landowners who had responded to initial letters. Six people expressed interest by responding to the letter. All were contacted, five through visits. Of the six, five verbally agreed to protect their properties and its resources and the sixth landowner agreed to donate his property to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Of these six landowners, five of the properties in question were located within the seven priority sites.

2. Contact was made with landowners who did not receive a first letter by forwarding a second letter to their new address. Failure to receive a first letter was due to incomplete addresses or recent relocation by the landowner. Of the twenty new letters that were issued only one was returned to sender.

3. With respect to the seven priority sites four of the ten private landowners at the Parlee Brook Site were contacted and a conservation options brochure was forwarded to them. The remaining lands, which make up more than two thirds of the site, are being secured through land transactions. Two different transactions are occurring, one between the Crown and JD Irving Ltd. and the second between the Crown and several Irving employees. Negotiations between the different groups are being handled by representatives of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The North River Wet Cedar Site is made up of five private landowners. Meetings have been set up with three of the landowners. All three have been very receptive to the idea of protecting the ecological integrity of their lands. Two of the landowners are very interested in obtaining management plans for their properties while the third has entered into a verbal agreement with the Nature Conservancy of Canada stating that the portion of the site that falls on his land will not be disturbed. Attempts to contact the remaining two landowners has not yet been successful.

At the Upper Salt Spring Hardwood site two of the six landowners have been contacted and landowner options brochures have been forwarded by mail. Neither of these landowners were interested in meeting with the coordinator but were interested in receiving information on possible ways to protect the ecological features on their properties.

At the Havelock Butternut site two of the three private landowners were contacted. One of the landowners is interested in meeting with the coordinator but a convenient time has not yet been arranged. This landowner is very interested in participating in the project. The other landowner was not interested in meeting but was eager to receive the conservation options information.

The Quidy River site is solely owned by JD Irving Ltd. The Nature Conservancy of Canada has agreed to contact the company on this matter as soon as the Parlee Brook site is secured.

The Mount Zachy Jonah site is comprised of five landowners. Only two of these landowners could be contacted. Meetings have been held with one of the landowners who has

agreed verbally not to disturb the site. The other landowner, even though not interested in meeting, was anxious to receive the educational information. The three remaining landowners have not yet been located.

Due to time constraints work at the seventh site, the Waterford Escarpment, has not yet been initiated.

There is a definite need for further follow-up with all landowners who have been contacted and/or forwarded educational materials.

4. Collaboration was ongoing with Bruce Matson of DNRE extension and SNB representatives to help those landowners who are interested in developing appropriate management strategies for their woodlots.

5. An educational orientated landowner options brochure was developed to help aid SNB technicians in encouraging landowners to practice conservation stewardship and to provide interested landowners with land management options that permit existing land use activities but also maintain existing site values.

6. A workshop was conducted for SNB technicians and key interested landowners to explain "conservation stewardship", to provide information about what constitutes a "special ecological feature" and to discuss appropriate management strategies for such features.

7. Work was conducted to identify leaders within the community who could influence and distribute information to other landowners concerning the practice of sound conservation stewardship. These leaders were identified by individuals in the different communities who were sympathetic to the project cause.

8. Funding was pursued from several government and non government organizations for the continuation of work within the Fundy Model Forest for 1997/98.

The plans to develop an appropriate reward system for landowners has not been completed. This program would help reinforce the value of landowner participation in the land stewardship program and should be seriously pursued once funds and the opportunity become available.

Of the sixty sites identified by the Gap Analysis, no one entire site has been completely secured, however seven sites are in the process of being secured either through land swaps, land donations or outright acquisition by the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Thirteen landowners have verbally agreed to secure their properties. More than fifty landowner conservation brochures have been forwarded to landowners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The six months of funding that was allocated to the project has only put a small dent into what truly needs to be accomplished with this project. Now that the sites have been identified and securement of these sites has been initiated, it's clear that there is a definite need for follow-up now to avoid missing opportunities. The following are a list of either new objectives or objectives that could not previously be accomplished due to time constraints and their expected benefits, that will be perused if the required funding is available.

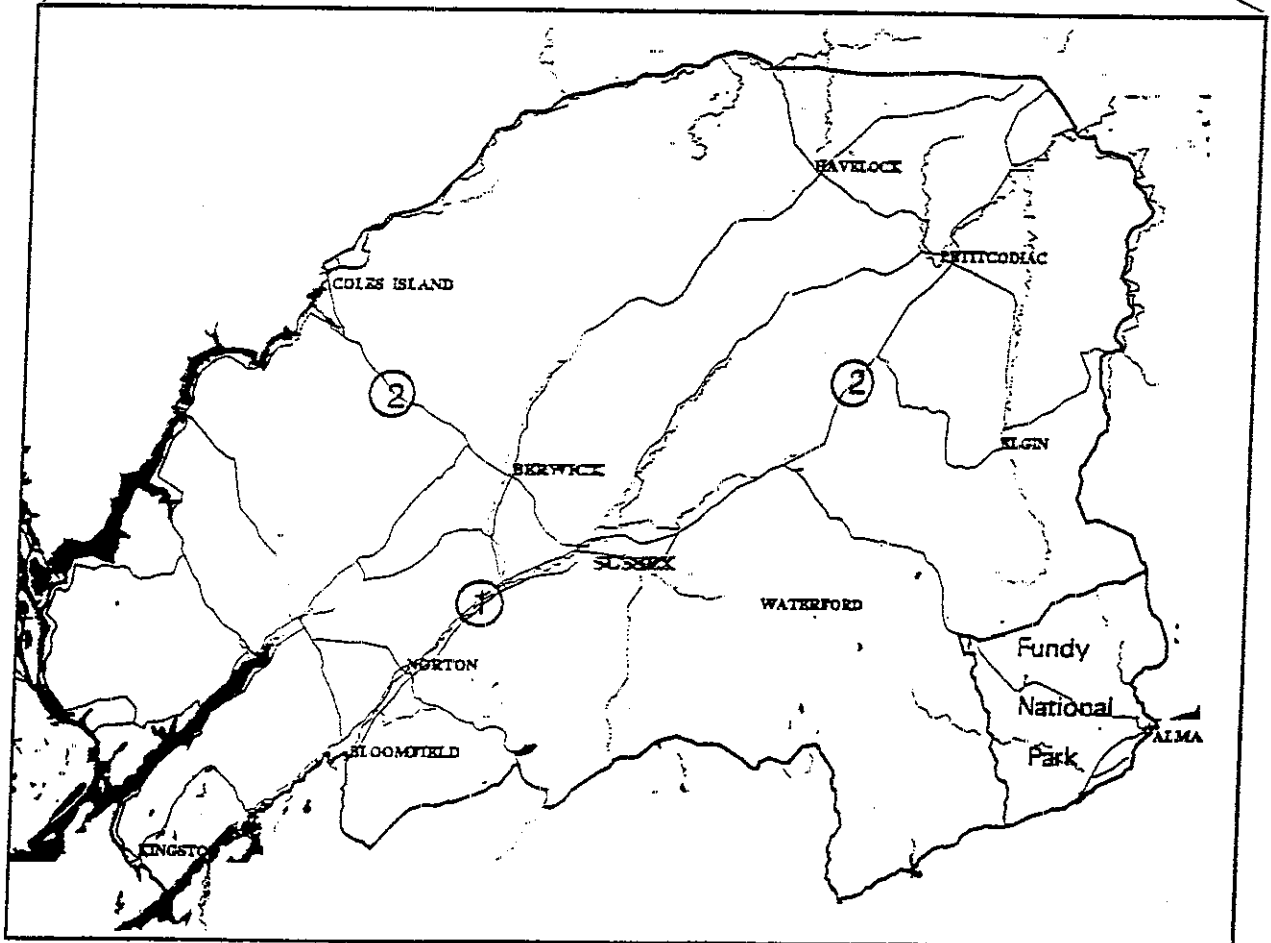
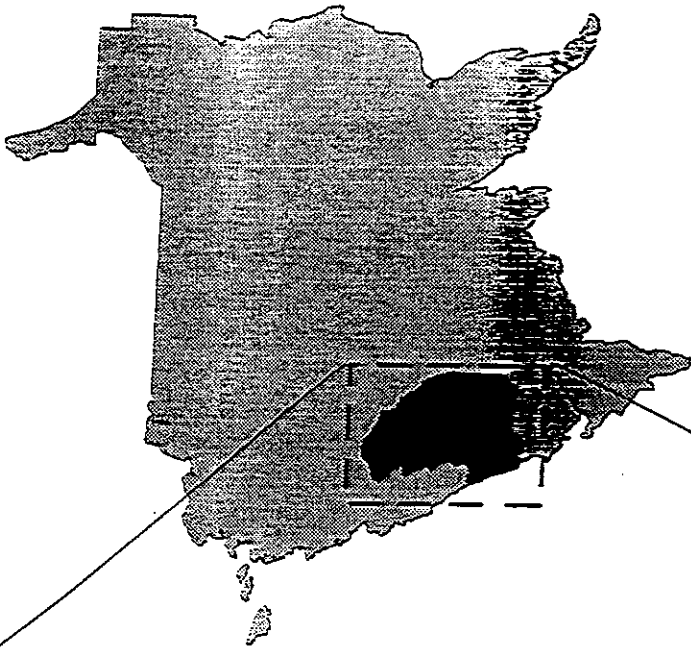
- Objective 1. To secure ecologically significant sites previously identified by FMF Gap Analysis project through cooperation with private landowners, corporate landowners, community groups, conservation agencies and interested persons through stewardship, conservation easements, acquisition and public education. Over the next twelve months, work to secure the remaining properties within the seven priority sites should be completed. This includes approximately fifty landowners and covers more than 1,500 hectares. The objective is to protect these sites by signing at least twenty private stewardship agreements.
- Objective 2. To develop an educational component to foster public interest in the understanding of the importance of ecologically sensitive areas.
- Objective 3. On appropriate sites, provide interested landowners with land management options that permit some existing land use activities but also maintain existing ecological values and also to conduct further follow-up with those landowners who had been initially contacted and/or received the educational material.
- Objective 4. To develop an appropriate award system for participating landowners which will help reinforce the value of their participation in the land conservation program. The awards system will be in the form of plaques and media recognition however, no financial incentives will be offered to landowners.
- Objective 5. To provide for continuation of the work after project completion by capacity building with the Southern New Brunswick Wood Cooperative (SNB) technicians through the provision of the background and materials required to help them more efficiently identify and incorporate these important ecological features in their private woodlot management plans. The information will be directed towards helping the technicians work within the twenty ecologically significant sites.
- Objective 6. To organize a second workshop on conservation stewardship during the spring of 1997 to help SNB technicians expand on recognition and appropriate management of ecologically sensitive sites.

EXPECTED HABITAT BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

The expected benefits of this project are numerous. All twenty sites provide habitat for rare or uncommon species. These sites will be secured through legal protection (conservation easements) or stewardship agreements. This will greatly increase the probability of such habitat being protected. In addition, the distribution of educational materials (brochures and fact sheets on ecologically significant features) will help educate the SNB technicians which in turn will increase the probability of protecting additional habitat. The implementation of this project will heighten public awareness on the importance of protecting these ecological features and thus increase the commitment by private landowners to secure these habitats

APPENDIX I. FUNDY MODEL FOREST MAP

Fundy Model Forest



APPENDIX II. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP BROCHURE