



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

STANDING COMMITTEE

on

RESOURCES

2001 - 2002

Second Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly

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<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/resources.html>

Hon. Murray Scott
Speaker
House of Assembly
Province House
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. Speaker,

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Resources, I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Committee for the Second Session of the Fifty-Eight General Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted

Jim DeWolfe, MLA
(Pictou East)
Chairman
Standing Committee on Resources

Halifax, Nova Scotia
November 2002

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INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Resources, an all-party Committee, was struck at the beginning of the First Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly. Pursuant to Rule 60(2)(e) of the ***Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedures of the House of Assembly***:

(e) the Resources Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters normally assigned to or within the purview of the Departments and Ministers of Agriculture and Marketing, of the Environment, of Fisheries and of Natural Resources. 1987 R. 60(2); am. 1993; am. 1996.¹

During the session the Committee underwent a number of membership changes. The membership of the Resources Committee currently is as follows:

Mr. Jim DeWolfe, MLA - Chairman
Pictou East

Mr. Barry Barnet, MLA
Sackville - Beaver Bank

Mr. Bill Dooks, MLA
Eastern Shore

Mr. David Hendsbee, MLA
Preston

Mr. Bill Langille, MLA
Colchester North

Mr. Howard Epstein, MLA
Halifax Chebucto

Mr. John MacDonell, MLA
Hants East

Mr. Kenneth MacAskill, MLA
Victoria

Mr. Russell MacKinnon, MLA
Cape Breton West

¹ Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, July 1999, Rule 60(2)(e) Pages 61-62.

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During the session the committee underwent a membership change. The change was as follows;

Mr. Barry Barnet, MLA was replaced by;

Mr. Brooke Taylor, MLA
Colchester Musquodoboit Valley

PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

The Resources Committee traditionally meets the last Tuesday of each month. These meetings are held on Tuesday mornings in the Legislative Committees Office. During the Third Sitting in the First Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly the Committee met on the following dates:

September 25, 2001
October 30, 2001
November 27, 2001
January 29, 2002
April 23, 2002
June 4, 2002

NOTICES

Notices of the Committee meetings are sent to all members of the Committee, staff of the caucus offices, the Legislative staff and the House of Assembly Press Gallery. The notices are also posted in Province House and are on the committees' web-site.

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of all Resources Committee meetings are available from the Legislative Library in Province House, the Legislative Committees Office or on-line at the Resources Committee's web page at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/resources.html>

RESEARCH MATERIAL

All research for the Resources Committee is compiled by the Committee's Coordinator, and distributed to the members. Reference material is placed in binders and distributed prior to meetings. This material is also made available to Hansard Recording Services.

ANNUAL REPORTS

All reports from the Resources Committee are compiled and written by the Committee's Coordinator. Once the Chairman has approved the initial draft, it is then sent to the individual Committee members for consideration. The draft review complete, the report is tabled with the Clerk of the House.

Distribution of the report is as follows: to the Speaker, all Members of the Legislature, all witnesses that appeared before the Committee, the Legislative Library in Nova Scotia and in all other provinces and territories, Deputy Ministers, Chairmen of all Canadian Resources Committees, and the Media. This report is also available to the general public upon request through the Legislative Committees Office or on-line at the Committee's web page at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/resources.html>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Committee wishes to extend its gratitude to witnesses for their time and cooperation; Ms. Mora Stevens, Coordinator of the Resources Committee and the staff of the Legislative Committees Office for the organization and research of committee meetings. Others whose assistance has been invaluable to the Committee are: Mr. Robert Kinsman, Editor of Hansard, and Hansard staff; Mr. Don Ledger, Co-ordinator Legislative Television and Broadcast Services, and staff; Ms. Margaret Murphy, Legislative Librarian, and staff.

WITNESSES

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2001 ***NOVA SCOTIA PUBLIC LANDS COALITION and the
TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA***

Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition

Mr. Kermit deGooyer, Ecology Action Centre

Ms. Pamela Langille, Eastern Shore Forest Watch Association

Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia

Ms. Jennifer Archibald, Tourism Industry Association of Nova
Scotia

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2001 ***CHRISTMAS TREE COUNCIL and the LUNENBURG
COUNTY CHRISTMAS TREE PRODUCERS***

Christmas Tree Council

Mr. Shawn Lacey, President

Mr. Len Giffen, Coordinator

Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers

Mr. George Cornelius, President

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2001 ***CHICKEN FARMERS OF NOVA SCOTIA***

Mr. Paul Cook, Chairman

Mr. David Fuller, Director/Chairman, Chicken Farmers of
Canada

Mr. Ron te Stroete, Director

Ms. Catharine Bielak, General Manager

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2002 ***ENTOMOLOGY DIVISION of the
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES***

Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Eric Georgeson, Entomologist, Entomology Centre,
Shubenacadie

Ms. Nancy McInnis-Leek, Director of Forestry

Mr. Edward MacAulay, Executive Director, Renewable
Resources

Mr. Walter Fanning, Manager, Forest Protection

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2002 ***NOVA SCOTIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION***

Mr. Charlie MacKenzie, President

Mr. Boyd Crouse, Member of the Executive Committee,
Board of Directors

Ms. Mary Elizabeth Stewart, Communications Officer

WITNESSES

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TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2002

***TOUR OF THE ENTOMOLOGY CENTRE and the
FOREST PROTECTION ADMINISTRATION CENTRE***

PUBLIC HEARINGS

**NOVA SCOTIA PUBLIC LANDS COALITION and the
TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2001

WITNESSES

Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition

Mr. Kermit deGooyer, Ecology Action Centre

Ms. Pamela Langille, Eastern Shore Forest Watch Association

Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia

Ms. Jennifer Archibald, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia

BACKGROUND

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

In 1994 the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) decided that needed to update fundamental parts of the land use decision making process. The Department goal was to minimize resource conflicts while optimizing environmental, social and economic benefits. Public consultation took place with the introduction of a strategic plan. Specific areas such as planning for minerals, forests, recreation, water, wilderness, energy, wildlife and parks were discussed while keeping in mind commitments the department had previously made concerning Wilderness Areas, Licensing Agreements, Provincial Parks and Crown Land Leases.

In September 2000 the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources proposed the ***Integrated Resources Management (IRM) Plan***. The IRM is a long term land use planning exercise to determine future uses of Nova Scotia's publicly-owned Crown lands. The government selected 31 areas of Provincial Crown land for protection under its Wilderness Areas Act. The IRM process divides Nova Scotia into three planning regions:

Western Region - Kings, Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens and Lunenburg Counties ;

Central Region - Halifax, Hants, Cumberland and Colchester Counties ; and the

Eastern Region - Guysborough, Antigonish, and Pictou Counties and Cape Breton Island.

For each region, DNR has appointed a planning team of government staff to produce a regional land use plan. These teams have assigned every parcel of unprotected crown land into three land use classifications that either allow for resource extraction or offer protection.

The three categories are as follows:

Category 1 Lands: General Use Areas - Crown lands assigned to this category will be available for the full range of resource uses, and include lands for which low level conflict among competing uses is anticipated. Lands will be managed in accordance with provincial acts, policies and commitments ensuring that provincial environmental standards are met, that biodiversity is maintained, and resource development is carried out according to the principles of sustainability

Category 2 Lands : Multiple and Adaptive Resource Use Areas - Lands with conflicting values for land use and resource use will be placed in this category, ensuring that all values are taken into account in the planning process for areas where land use conflicts have been identified. Balancing the interests of all resource sectors may require management practices for one resource to be modified in order to enhance compatibility with others. In some instances, critical values may be identified for overriding consideration in establishing management practices, where as compromise may be most appropriate approach in others. These lands are available for the full range of traditional resource uses however, special management practices could be required due to the presence of other values such as moose habitat, wetlands, scenic value etc.

Category 3 Lands : Protected and Limited Use Areas - Lands that are specifically allocated to special uses and where other resources activities may be limited, modified or denied. Management decisions on these lands will normally reside with the responsible program, but allowed uses should be identified and included in the regional strategy. Management activities that will enhance or maintain the values for which the land is classified Category 3 would be encouraged.

Once all of the crown lands have been placed in the categories, each decision will need to be evaluated and considered. New information and public consultation will take place. The Departmental goal is to have a sustainable resource management plan for over a 20 year planing period.

Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition

The Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition (NSPLC) is an organization comprised of twenty conservation, recreation and tourism organizations. The Coalition was formed in order to save public wildlands. The Coalition believes that Nova Scotia's crown lands are a precious part of the fabric of this province and that all of the crown lands : vast forests, wild rivers, coastal islands and beaches and secluded lakeshores - should be held in trust as a legacy for future generations of Nova Scotians.

The Coalition believes that public lands should remain wild lands in order to:

S provide habitat for wildlife;

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- S provide clean air and clean water;
- S maintain the beauty, solitude and adventure of Nova Scotia wilderness;
- S offer residents and visitors outdoor recreation experience;
- S provide new opportunities for Nova Scotia communities; and
- S to ensure that future generations of Nova Scotians will have public land.

The Coalition believes that the primary role for public lands is that of conservation and accordingly, most public lands require legal protection from industrial development. The Coalition would like to see the government honour their promises to complete Nova Scotia's protected areas system.

When the Department of Natural Resources proposed the IRM Plan the plan recommended protection for less than 1% of current unprotected Crown lands. The Department of Natural Resources has slotted all other lands, including several proposed Wilderness Areas, into land use categories that allow industrial users like clearcutting and mining. The Coalition's concern is that the Department of Natural Resources has designed this plan with not enough public participation in the decision making process.

The Coalition wants to see the proposed IRM plans recognize conservation as the primary role of public lands. The Coalition believes that very little, if any progress has been made in protecting the original 31 areas that were selected for protection.

Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS)

Tourism is Nova Scotia's largest industry. Tourism in Nova Scotia creates over \$1 billion dollars in revenue per annum. In 2000, estimates of revenue were \$1, 256 billion. Over 6500 businesses and 42,000 Nova Scotians work in the field of tourism . The estimated payroll is \$487 million. Provincial and municipal tax revenues totalled over \$250 million. This billion dollar industry depends on a healthy environment. The availability of fresh air, clean water and green space has influenced tourists' choices to visit Nova Scotia.

Adventure Tourism and Recreation and Eco Tourism which focus on nature travel and environmental integrity, needs protected wild areas with abundant wildlife through a variety of landscapes and landforms. TIANS supports the NSPLC position in calling for action concerning the preservation and protection of Crown lands.

TIANS would like to see the following:

- S the protection of the land for future generations;
- S a development moratorium placed on potential and proposed protected sites in order to keep them intact until assessments or designations as protected sites are completed;
- S the Department of Environment and Labour identify existing commitments for development and embark on a transparent re-negotiations of timber agreements and land leases to accommodate wilderness proposals;
- S the Crown afford legal protection of public lands to meet Nova Scotia's completion of Canada's Networks of Protected Areas; and
- S the Crown affords immediate legal protection of coastline and islands owned by the Crown.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focussed on during the meeting:

- S Provincial Crown Lands versus federal crown land policy, development of Eco-Tourism;
- S Integrated Management Plan, public consultation process;
- S Department of Natural Resources versus the Department of Environment and Labour;
- S policies concerning buffer zones, renewable resources, placing controls on private lands;
- S clearcutting, harvesters;
- S Nova Scotia Industries, Scott Paper, Bowater Industries, forest management;
- S Sheet Harbour, Gully Lake, Eigg Mountain, Micmac Trail, Shubenacadie Canal System
Acadian Forest; and
- S Swedish System, Florida model for protecting the everglades.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request any further documentation from the witnesses.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/r/re010925.htm>

**CHRISTMAS TREE COUNCIL
and the
LUNENBURG COUNTY CHRISTMAS TREE PRODUCERS**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2001

WITNESSES

Christmas Tree Council

Mr. Shawn Lacey, President

Mr. Len Giffen, Coordinator

Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers

Mr. George Cornelius, President

BACKGROUND

The Christmas tree industry earns approximately \$32 million annually. Over 1.8 million trees are harvested each year by approximately 3000 growers from some 30,000 acres across the Province. Since 95% of the harvest is sold outside the province, this represents a major source of new dollars coming into the provincial economy. The Industry creates about 2500 seasonal jobs as well as 500 permanent jobs involved in year round plantation operations.

In the Spring 2001 budget two specialists on staff positions at the Department of Natural Resources were eliminated. Other cuts affecting research funding, seed nursery and reduction of services provided by the entomology Centre in Shubenacadie were also announced. However, once the budget was announced the industry initiated a series of meetings with government officials and a number of services were re-established. Through this process the industry has developed a much closer working relationship with the Department of Natural Resources. The industry is also involved in the Department's annual priority planning process. The renewed cooperation has also seen a recent harvest of 50,000 enhanced quality seeds, progress in identifying optimum tree times, updated treatments on insect pests and insect control.

The wreath and bush components of the industry are growing exponentially. It is difficult for the growers to meet the demands of the consumer.

When the *Forests Act - Christmas Tree Levy Regulations** were passed a number of years ago they provided the Christmas Tree Council with a steady source of income which helps to provide a wide range of educational, technical and promotional services to the industry. This has made Nova Scotia's industry a world leader.

* Christmas Tree Levy Regulations can be viewed on-line at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/for16893.htm>

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focussed on during the meeting:

- S possibility of border crossing delays and its effect on sales;
- S cost of shipping, gas prices;
- S labour force, consumer demand for wreaths and bush;
- S Christmas Tree market, other areas growing Nova Scotia Christmas trees, subsidies in other provinces;
- S research and development, need for a Christmas tree specialist; and
- S branding of trees, artificial trees, entomologists, gypsy moth and other insects and pests, eco-tourism, fire regulations.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request any further documentation from the witnesses.

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The Committee wrote a letter to His Excellency Argeo Paul Cellucci, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Canada concerning the Christmas tree trade relationship that exists between the United States and Canada.

The Committee released a joint Press Release in support of the Province's Christmas Tree Industry.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/r/re011030.htm>

CHICKEN FARMERS OF NOVA SCOTIA

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2001

WITNESSES

Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia

Mr. Paul Cook, Chairman

Mr. David Fuller, Director/Chairman, Chicken Farmers of Canada

Mr. Ron te Stroete, Director

Ms. Catharine Bielak, General Manager

BACKGROUND

The Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia Board of Directors was formed in 1966 in order to provide stability to a growing industry. Within a few short years production levels were up and prices increased enough to cover farmers' actual cost. Whole sale prices stabilized and market demands settled. The industry has steadily grown into and contributes a great deal to the economy of Nova Scotia. The industry has experienced growth of over 24% during the past five years and in 2000 contributed over \$47 million to the economy. Chicken production in Nova Scotia has increased by 124% over the last 20 years. There are 83 chicken producers in Nova Scotia. The average chicken producer creates several direct jobs and multiple indirect jobs. There are two processing plants that employ over 650 people. There are four registered hatcheries, five feed manufacturers, two feed suppliers and one drug supplier.

Chicken producers in Nova Scotia are at the forefront of food safety. The Chicken Producers of Canada have introduced the "*On-Farm Safety Assurance Program*", whose objective is to promote the production of safe, quality food. Each of the provincial boards are responsible for the delivery and promotion of the program. A manual has been developed and an audit-validation checklist has been created in order to ensure safe products are reaching the consumer.

The Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia see the development of environmental and nutrient waste management plans and water resources management strategy as both an opportunity and challenge. The Farmers would like to see legislation developed within a consultation process that would create a level playing field among all municipalities. The legislation should incorporate current scientific data that is available.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focussed on during the meeting:

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- S Costal Trade Exemption Regulations, grain prices, foreign vessel access;
- S World Trade Organization, Tariff Rate Quota, international agreements with the United States, European Union and Cuba, and trade barriers, domestic supply system, financial aid;
- S supply management, production costs, market prices, economic factors on prices;
- S National Farm Products Council, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture;
- S food safety, free range or organic poultry; and
- S Valleyfield Farms, Eastern Protein Foods (ACA Co-Operative) Coldbrook processing plant, animal bi-products.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request any further documentation from the witnesses.

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The Committee wrote a letter to the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Agriculture concerning the possibility of changing the Coasting Trade Exemption Regulations in order for the Nova Scotia Chicken Farmers to gain access to grain carried on foreign vessels.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/r/re011127.htm>

**ENTOMOLOGY DIVISION of the
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2002

WITNESSES

Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Eric Georgeson, Entomologist, Entomology Centre, Shubenacadie

Ms. Nancy McInnis-Leek, Director of Forestry

Mr. Edward MacAulay, Executive Director, Renewable Resources

Mr. Walter Fanning, Manager, Forest Protection

BACKGROUND

At any given time in the world there are 10¹⁸ insects in the world. (That is 10 followed by 18 zeros). In order to deal with all of these insects the Department of Natural Resources established the Integrated Pest Management division, to provide accurate information on the health of the Nova Scotia forests and to give information and management options to the forest stakeholders. The key aim of the Department is to monitor the forests and develop better detection methods. An annual survey of the forest is completed in order to have good intelligence on the insect population. From this survey officials can analyze forest health conditions by using the field and survey data. This information is then shared with the stakeholders and educational programs are established. Developing and maintaining good management options and systems is also extremely important especially for early intervention into an infestation.

The Department of Natural Resources has 22 trained technicians in the field doing basic identification. The Department also works closely with the Canadian Forestry Service, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Biosystematics in Ottawa during the identification process.

The Department tries to be proactive rather than reactive to problems. In order to do this a good relationship with the stakeholders has been developed over the years.. Currently there are 650 known pests that can cause significant damage to forests within Nova Scotia. Out of those 650 10-20 are higher risk insects that will cause the most damage. Weather in the Maritime Provinces causes additional complications because of its impact on insect populations. Cold winters and damp summers can stress the insect population. During the past few winters we have experienced warmer conditions than usual which has allowed more of the insects to survive. With little or no frost in the ground the population has been able to survive the winter without much impact to their population. Despite the fact that some areas in the Maritimes have experienced heavy snowfalls, the spring melt has occurred earlier and faster. This has created severe run-offs. Which has created the is perfect environment for insects.

The Department of Natural Resources Entomology division is especially concerned about the following insects:

Eastern Spruce Beetle is causing severe damage to the white spruce in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia has over 1 million acres of white spruce. Over 40% of the white spruce are infected by this beetle. The infection has been caused by the change in weather pattern (ie. warmer winters)

Balsam Woolly Adelgid is the cause of great concern amongst the Christmas Tree Farmers in Nova Scotia. It was introduced into the province sometime in the 1890's however, it has reasserted itself.

North American Gypsy Moth is also an introduced insect. It has started to build in the western region from the Annapolis Valley to the Bridgewater area. Winter survival rate is normally 40%; however, currently their survival rate is estimated at 96%. This has created massive defoliation in the infected areas. The moth has not spread so far but it is being closely monitored.

Hemlock looper, Balsam Fir Sawfly and White marked Tussock Moth are also being monitored. The **Whitemarked Tussock Moth** had a huge outbreak in 1997. It sprung up quickly and destroyed about 500-600 square kilometres of woods almost overnight.

Spruce Budworm has been dormant in Nova Scotia for a number of years but its population has started to increase in New Brunswick. It is being closely monitored.

The foreign or exotic insect introductions are what has caused the most concern amongst entomologist over the past few years. The insect that is causing the most concern at the moment is the **Brown Spruce Longhorned Beetle (BSLB)**. This BSLB attacks the Red Spruce Tree. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is currently in charge of the situation.

There are three stages to any kind of bio-invasion. The first is introduction. This is the process of the insect arriving in a geographical area and adapting.

The second stage is establishment. This is where the introduced organism gets established in its new environment. Once it is able to reproduce and maintain its population, the insect is considered established. This is the stage in which the BSLB is currently in. In this stage there is still a chance to eradicate the population. Unfortunately, Nova Scotia is the only place in North America that has the infestation. There are four ways in which to deal with an infestation. There are physical, mechanical, biological or chemical controls

The third stage is the spread stage. If the insect is not eradicated and it spreads to Nova Scotia's main forest areas the Red Spruce in Nova Scotia will become infected. Progress is being made in the annihilation of the BSLB. Traps have been invented and information is being shared. A task force has been established to direct the efforts to save Point Pleasant Park, the main area that has been infected by the BSLB. A rule of thumb that the Department of Natural Resources uses is that only 35 out of 1000 insects that are introduced species will survive.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focussed on during the meeting:

- S Brown Spruce Longhorned Beetle, Point Pleasant Park, traps, cooperation between the federal and provincial authorities,
- S Spruce Budworm infestation, spray program;
- S Gypsy Moth, provincial jurisdiction, quarantine legislation, Forests Act;
- S climate changes, global warming;
- S elimination of pest services by the federal government, Canadian Forestry Service, control management problems;
- S globalization, United States Drug Administration, trade rules;
- S introduction of foreign tree species, Norway Spruce;
- S impact of infestations on the economy, power line corridors, wildlife areas;
- S spraying programs, pesticides; and
- S tour of the entomology Centre in Shubenacadie.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee requested the following documentation from the witnesses:

- S A copy of a map that outlines the quarantined zones in Nova Scotia for each of the insect populations.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/r/re020129.htm>

NOVA SCOTIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2002

WITNESSES

Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association

Mr. Charlie MacKenzie, President

Mr. Boyd Crouse, Member of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors

Ms. Mary Elizabeth Stewart, Communications Officer

BACKGROUND

The Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association (NSCA) was founded in order to promote and assist in the sustainable development of Nova Scotia's beef production industry in the best interest of the members of the Association and ultimately all Nova Scotians. Canada's beef industry is the single largest commodity source of farm cash receipts in Canada. In 2000, \$6.6 billion was earned in this country by farms from beef alone. This represents 20% of the total all of the cash receipts for farms in Canada. The production of beef adds \$26 billion to the country's economy annually.

In Nova Scotia the beef industry contributes \$22 million in annual cash receipts to the provincial economy. There are 1200 registered beef farmers in Nova Scotia. The industry employees 675 full-time people. In 2000 there were over 26,500 beef cattle in Nova Scotia down from 32,300 cows in 1997.

Since 1996 the number of beef farms in Nova Scotia has been on the decline. The average herd size has increased in order to improve the individual farms viability. . The number of replacement animals for those that have gone to slaughter has continued to decline since the early 1990's as many small farms decide to leave the beef industry.

The last four years have seen a huge liquidation of the beef herds, largely due to the combination of very tight production margins and the added cost of the recent years of drought. Although record high feeder calf prices have been recorded recently, this has not been enough to overcome the continuing escalation of the cost of feed.

The NSCA is currently in the midst of implementing a business plan to guide the development of the industry in the immediate future. An action plan is already in place to use the farm land available to facilitate the increase in beef cattle production.

In Nova Scotia, local beef producers raise less than 25% of the beef consumed in this province. A ready market exists for expanded production of feeder cattle and slaughtered product. It is the NSCA's hope to tap into this market.

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There are a number of federal-provincial programs available to farmers such as the Net Income Stabilization Program (NISA), the Canadian Farm Income Support Program (CFIP) and the Crop Insurance Fund (CIF). Unfortunately, these programs have not been designed for beef farmers. Beef farming has a high cost of seed stock and feed from year to year and when Eligible Nets Sales are calculated for the above mentioned programs it does not take into account the money spent on the herd only the income generated by the beef itself. The one program that has been highly successful for the beef farmers is the Farm Investment Fund. A number of environmental projects on beef farmers have been successfully funded by this fund.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focussed on during the meeting:

- S Hub Meat Packing Plant in Moncton, New Brunswick: only federally inspected beef facility in the Atlantic region, trend to single species plants, Maritime Beef Test Station;
- S Co-op program, Atlantic Tender Beef Classic;
- S recent outbreak of Hoof and Mouth disease in Great Britain, Mad cow disease;
- S proposed changes to federal-provincial regulations;
- S Occupational Health Safety, and roll bars in tractors, land use;
- S feeding regimes, water safety promotion of food safety, Ecoli outbreaks, sticker program, Taste of Nova Scotia;
- S River breeze Farms, Steve's Meats, Armstrongs, Sobeys, Sunrise Beef; and
- S hides and tanneries

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request any further documentation from the witnesses.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/r/re_2002apr23.htm

***TOUR OF THE ENTOMOLOGY CENTRE and the
FOREST PROTECTION ADMINISTRATION CENTRE***

TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2002

After meeting with the Department of Natural Resources concerning Entomology, the Resources Committee was invited to take a tour of the Entomology Centre in Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia.

The Committee would like to thank the Department for a fascinating look into the world of entomology. The Committee was shown an excellent presentation by the staff concerning the insect species that inhabit Nova Scotia. One of the highlights of the tour was the experimental trap section of the facility. The Centre houses an extensive insect collection as well as having laboratories that are used in the identification process as well as for research purposes.

Also located at this facility is the Forest Protection Administrative Centre. The Committee has a tour of this facility with an in depth look into the equipment used for fighting forest fires.

APPENDICES

(The Appendices of this report do not appear in the on-line version. Please contact the address at the end of the report if you require a copy of the Appendices)

STATEMENT OF SUBMISSION

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All of which is respectfully submitted to the
House of Assembly this 26th day of November, 2002

Jim DeWolfe, MLA
Chairman

I concur

I concur

Muriel Baillie, MLA

Howard Epstein, MLA

I concur

I concur

Bill Dooks, MLA

John MacDonell, MLA

I concur

I concur

David Hendsbee, MLA

Kenneth MacAskill, MLA

I concur

I concur

Bill Langille, MLA

Russell MacKinnon, MLA

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