

## Fall Network Meeting Focused on Planning for Future

When the Canadian Model Forest Network met in Fredericton in November, the future direction of the model forest program was at the centre of discussions.

The current funding phase for the Canadian Model Forest program ends March 31, 2007. During the network meetings, general managers, presidents, secretariat staff and representatives from the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) looked at how the model forest expertise and resources can be merged with the new CFS business lines and policy to create a new program.

"The discussions went very well and have given us direction in how we should move forward," said Fundy Model Forest President Dave MacLean, who co-chaired the meetings with Model Forest Program Director Brian Wilson.

Over the past 15 years, Canadian model forests have been on the leading edge of innovation in the forestry sector and have made valuable contributions to sustainable forest management across the country. "We have been adaptable and have been able to form strong, effective collaborations that are responsive to current needs," MacLean added. "We are optimistic that the model forest pro-



*FMF President Dave MacLean*

gram can be carried on past 2007, but we will need to make some significant changes."

Moving forward to advancing sustainability on a landscape level and focusing on building strong, sustainable communities were among the ideas model forest representatives suggested for future directions.

MacLean sits on the network strategic planning committee, which will now work with the CFS to develop the future program priorities and develop a new governance structure for the model forest network.

In addition to planning for the future, representatives also discussed how to successfully conclude this phase of the model for-

ests and possible legacy projects, such as preserving research and publications.

One of the objectives for the fall network meetings was to increase shared knowledge about emerging issues, challenges and opportunities within the CMFN and the forestry sector. A panel presentation titled "What's Happening in the Forestry Sector," which took place on Nov. 28,<sup>th</sup> elicited many questions from participants. Roxanne Comeau from the Canadian Institute of Forestry and Alex Drummond from the University of Alberta presented on the need for a national recruitment strategy for postsecondary forestry programs. Mark Hubert from the Forest Products Association of Canada gave an overview of the challenges facing the Canadian forest industry, while Jim LeLacheur, president of the Foothills Model Forest, and Blake Brunson, chief forester for J.D. Irving, Limited provided perspectives on current challenges in the forest sector in Alberta and New Brunswick respectively.

Dr. John Richards, Director General CFS Atlantic, officially welcomed the network representatives to the meetings, which were held at the Wu Centre, UNB Fredericton.

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## World's Oldest Red Spruce Found in NB

*Mount Allison University Communications*

Mount Allison University student Ben Phillips stumbled on a 445-year-old red spruce while carrying out a research project on climate change during the summer of 2005.

The tree, found along the Fundy Coast, is 40 years older than the next oldest recorded red spruce, which is in New Hampshire. It started growing before 1560, at about the same time that Europeans began exploring North America, and Phillips does not want curiosity seekers accidentally harming the spruce. That is why he is keeping its exact location a secret.

"The tree has survived for so long because it is in a special spot where it has been able to grow undisturbed, away from human contact. There are not a lot of ancient trees left in the Maritimes because of all the human activity over the past few centuries, and I'd like to let the tree continue to grow in peace," Phillips said.

Although the tree is interesting from an historical point of view, it is also important for Phillips' research. Phillips is part of a team of students and professors working at the MAD Lab (Mount Allison Dendrochronology Laboratory) and the tree's age helps them in a number of other projects they are working on. Using dendrochronology, or tree-ring analysis, scientists can better understand past environmental conditions, ecosystem dynamics, and human activities over the last few hundred years.

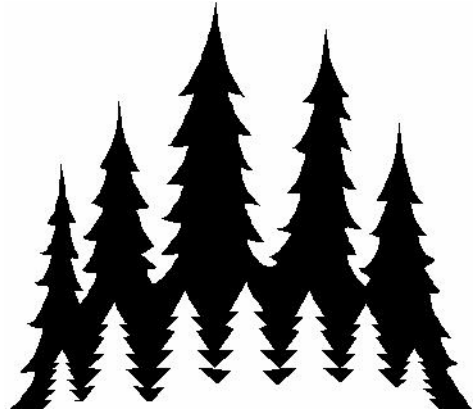
Dr. Colin Laroque, who heads up the MAD Lab, explained, "We were hoping that Ben's searching might produce a tree up to 300 years old, which would have been impressive enough, but we never dreamed he'd find a 400 plus year-old tree. This is a truly spectacular find. Previously, to get that far back in time with tree-ring samples, we had to patch together data using old trees from several of the region's oldest buildings. Ben has delivered to us a single, unbroken record of growth conditions in the region, a record that all other data can now be checked against."

Phillips, a fourth-year environmental studies and geography major, received a grant from the Royal Canadian Geographic Society to look at how climatic changes affect trees in the lowland-fog forest of the Fundy Basin, compared to those growing above the fog zone in the Caledonia Highlands. Phillips is using samples from red spruce trees to establish approximate climatic conditions at both lower- and upper-elevation locations over the last few hundred years. Phillips said, "Current instrumental records in this area only go back about 60 years. There are five other groups doing research on the state of the forest in this area of New Brunswick, and it is very important to them to identify whether or not any long-term cyclical changes in the climate are occurring."

Phillips future plan is to model how different coniferous

trees in New Brunswick will grow under the climatic conditions predicted by Canadian Global Climate Models.

Contact: Dr. Colin Laroque, (506) 364-2390/ [claroque@mta.ca](mailto:claroque@mta.ca) or Ben Phillips, (506) 364-3220/ [bephllp@mta.ca](mailto:bephllp@mta.ca).



### Federation Founded 40 Years Ago

New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners, which represents about 40,000 woodlot owners across the province, celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Dec. 1, 2005 in Fredericton.

The occasion brought together woodlot owners and marketing board staff from across the province, as well as representatives from the forest industry. Hon. Keith Ashfield, Minister of Natural Resources, and Brent Wilkins, chairman of the New Brunswick Forest Products Association, addressed the meeting, as well as Federation President Ed Perry.

The New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners is a partner of the Fundy Model Forest.

### Woodlot Owner of the Year

The Southern New Brunswick Wood Marketing Board named brothers Harley Murray, 77, and William Murray, 75, woodlot owners of the year for 2005. Their woodlot is located on the outskirts of Sussex.

### Living with the Land

Washademoak Environmentalists, a partner of the Fundy Model Forest, has completed a short history of the Canaan-Washademoak Watershed, *Living with the Land: People and Resources*. It explores how human activity has been shaped by the natural resources in the area, and how these activities have changed the landscape. Fundy Model Forest helped fund this project. Copies are available from the model forest or the Washademoak Environmentalists. Contact: 1-800-546-4838 (Maritimes only)/ (506) 432-7575/ [info@fundymodelforest.net](mailto:info@fundymodelforest.net)