

Envirothon NB



Study Guide Forestry

The New Brunswick Envirothon Study Guide for Forestry for Middle Schools will assist students and teachers in preparing for the New Brunswick Envirothon program.

Every year, more than 500,000 students, teachers and families across North America take part in the unique learning experience of Envirothon. The program engages students in learning more about four main areas of the environment—soils, aquatics, wildlife and forests. Students learn in the classroom and through interactive workshops aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge of our natural ecosystems and helping develop foundational skills needed to pursue studies and careers in the environmental sciences.

The program supports students in developing:

- A scientific understanding of natural ecosystems (soils, wildlife, forests, aquatics);
- Each year a fifth topic is chosen to highlight an important and current environmental issue;
- Practical experience in resource management practices and technologies;
- The ability to apply scientific knowledge and creativity in developing innovative and sustainable solutions to major environmental challenges; and
- Stronger communication, collaboration, and problem solving skills.

North American Envirothon is a program of the National Conservation Foundation. It partners with 56 provinces and states that coordinate events in which students receive training in essential resource management technologies and practices such as invasive species monitoring, habitat restoration, water and soil analysis, and forest management. Students are tested on their ability to apply these practices.

1.0 FORESTRY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Key Point 1—Forestry in New Brunswick

Knowledge of the history of forestry in New Brunswick, land tenures, and some New Brunswick forestry statistics.

Key Point 2—Forestry in Canada

Knowledge of Canadian forestry statistics, land tenures, our changing forest, and sustainability of Canadian forests.

Key Point 3—Tree Physiology and Tree Identification

Know the parts and tissues of a tree, twig, and leaf and be able to explain how a tree grows. Understand the processes of photosynthesis and respiration and be able to identify common tree species without a key, and identify specific or unusual trees using a key.

Key Point 4—Forest Ecology

Knowledge of the typical crown classes of trees and of the Forest Regions of Canada, particularly the Acadian Forest Region and the Boreal Forest Region. Understand forest ecology concepts and factors affecting them, including forest succession, shade tolerance, and the ecosystem services that our forests provide.

Key Point 5—Forest Management

Understand the various silvicultural treatments associated with reforestation, stand improvement, stand regeneration, and harvesting in even-aged and uneven-aged forest management systems and non timber forest products that our forests provide.

Key Point 6—Forest Measurements

Be able to recognize some basic features on aerial photographs and know how to determine distances and area on aerial photographs. Knowledge of how to use forestry tools and equipment to measure tree age, diameter, and height and basal area.

Key Point 7—Forest Health

Identify the abiotic and biotic factors in a forest ecosystem, and understand how these factors affect tree growth and forest development. Consider factors such as climate, insects, microorganisms, and wildlife.

Key Point 8—Climate Change and Canada's Forests

Knowledge of the impacts of climate change on Canada's forests.

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2.0 FORESTRY IN NEW BRUNSWICK

2.1 History of forestry in New Brunswick

The profound relationship between New Brunswickers and their forest heritage began many centuries ago. Early aboriginal inhabitants relied on the forest for food, clothing, and shelter. They developed spiritual traditions based on trees, and gathered woodland plants for medicine. European settlers used wood to make everything from barrels and furniture to buckets and sewer pipes. Trees were burned as fuelwood, charcoal, and fertilizer production.

Forestry is the largest industry in New Brunswick today. It has been our economic mainstay since the early 1800s. The history of forestry in New Brunswick came of age in the late 17th century and can be broken down into several distinct periods:

2.1.1 Trade in great ship masts and spars (1760 – 1800)

The first, shortest, and least disruptive phase in the New Brunswick forest industries – the trade in great ship masts and spars for the British Navy – was a product of environmental conditions and the political conflict in the 1770s caused by the American Revolution.

From a production standpoint, mast making was an uncomplicated industry that involved felling trees and floating them to a harbour where they could be loaded for transatlantic shipment. However, the industry was limited by the need for enormous white pine trees that were straight and free of defects. Large masts could exceed 30 meters in length with a diameter of 75 cm at the small end. They required trees that measured 45 meters in height and 2 meters in diameter at the stump. Masts were moved by teams of oxen in winter and usually cut within sight of a body of water that was deep enough to float a 30-meter stick of wood weighing several tons. It was a highly selective industry that was, on the one hand, wasteful and prone to rapid resource depletion. However, it did not impose a significant drain on the forest reserves of the colony.

Mast making reached its peak during the 1790s and 1800s when New Brunswick produced up to 3,000 masts per year, a substantial proportion of the total shipped from the loyal British North American colonies.

2.1.2 Coming of age (1800 – 1900)

During the nineteenth century, trees were used to build bridges and make railway ties, but the primary purpose was to build houses and clear tracts of land for agriculture. Farmers used wood from trees to make harrows, tool grips and handles, and toys for their children. Fishermen used wood to build boats and make oars and shipping containers. In the home, fir and spruce were used for making pails, basins, salt boxes, and butter churns, while cedar was often used for containers that did not come in contact with food.

The forests were also an important source of added annual income. It was commonplace and indeed expected that men would go work in the lumber camps in October and not return until the following spring.

Figure1. This photo shows loggers working in a camp in winter. This log building was typical of those found in lumber camps. (Photo credit: Provincial archives of New Brunswick).



The disappearance of ice from the rivers and streams in April heralded the end of the tree felling season and the beginning of the log drive. The logs were thrown into the water and, if possible, assembled into timber rafts to be taken to a port or to a shipyard or sawmill.



Figure 2. The log drive consisted in sending the logs floating downriver, sometimes aided by drivers who kept everything moving in the right direction. Driving was hazardous work, given the ever-present risk of toppling into the icy water. (Photo credit: Provincial archives of New Brunswick).

Sawmilling was a much more appropriate industry for facilitating the transition of New Brunswick from a resource frontier to a settled colony. The value added in manufacturing lumber made the cost of transportation across the Atlantic a smaller proportion of the overall cost of production. By mid-century, there were 640 sawmills in the province.

New Brunswick's extensive river system gave loggers easy access to the interior with its rich stands of pine, spruce and hemlock. Sawmills churned out square-cut timber for domestic and overseas consumption. At mid-century, forest products accounted for more than 80 per cent of the province's total exports. Most of the product was shipped to Britain, but New Brunswick shipbuilders also consumed their share.

From the early 1800s, sailboat construction was a major occupation in many places around New Brunswick. Several other types of boats were also built in the province during that time. They included fishing boats and freighters. Boat building was one of New Brunswick's leading industries in the 19th century.



Figure 3. The photo shows builders at work in the interior of a boat. In the mid-19th century, shipbuilding was going full steam in New Brunswick. Each ship was built to its own specifications, depending on its intended use: hauling large cargos over the seas, speeding across the Atlantic, or carrying passengers. (Photo credit: Provincial archives of New Brunswick).

Yet despite the improved infrastructure and apparently unlimited forest resources, New Brunswick's timber trade began to decrease. After 1880, foreign tariffs, world recessions, competition from Pacific Coast logging, and the demise of wooden shipbuilding took their toll. The province also experienced a growing shortage of large and accessible trees, caused by years of wasteful cutting practices.

2.1.3 Pulp and paper mills

Pulp mills first appeared in New Brunswick in the late 1800s and grew more numerous after 1900. By 1930, the pulp and paper industry surpassed the lumber industry in terms of its economic output. Although several large pulp mills have closed in recent years, their economic output remains greater than wood products and manufacturing combined (which includes sawmills). Products produced from softwood trees in temperate forests, such as those in New Brunswick, have a long fibre length that make it very desirable because it gives strength to the products that are produced.

Pulp and paper mills created large numbers of jobs: first for building the mill and then actual production work, as well as all the logging and transportation jobs. The raw materials sought after were small softwood trees such as balsam fir and spruce. Paper mills played a major role in the 20th-century economy of New Brunswick.

The laws of supply and demand eventually caught up with the pulp and paper industry. The advent of computers, which decreased the need for paper and newsprint, coupled with less expensive pulp from South America produced from fast-growing species, decreased the demand for pulp products from New Brunswick.

Today, the wood used to feed the pulp mills consists mainly of sawmill residues (wood chips and sawdust). Pulp mills are an important part of the supply chain as they provide sawmills with a market for their wood residues.

2.1.4 What does the future hold?

New Brunswick's forest industry faces many challenges in the coming years. Our forests are an incredibly valuable resource that provide economic, social and cultural benefits. One advantage of forests is that they are a renewable resource that, when managed sustainably, will continue to provide benefits to society.

Society needs forest products. We need lumber to build our homes and wood fibre is used to produce products that we use on a daily basis. The Coronavirus pandemic in 2020 illustrated the need for everyday products such as toilet paper and paper towels. More importantly, the use of wood fibre in the production of masks, gowns, swabs, and other products used by health care workers demonstrated the importance of wood products.

Finding new uses for our forest is important and the forest industry in New Brunswick has already started to explore new and innovative uses for our forest products. An excellent example is two hardwood pulp and fibre mills owned by the Aditya Birla Group and located in Nackawic and in Atholville, two forest-dependant communities. The mills produce high content dissolving pulp or specialty cellulose for the manufacturing of natural-based, viscose staple fibre, used to make rayon in the apparel and home textile industry.

Our history has demonstrated that how we use our forest changes over time. In order to remain competitive and satisfy the needs of society, our forest must continue to provide important forest products such as lumber and pulp and paper. More importantly, the forest must continue to provide ecological and societal functions such as clean water, clean air, and a place for recreation and spiritual fulfilment.

2.2 New Brunswick by the numbers

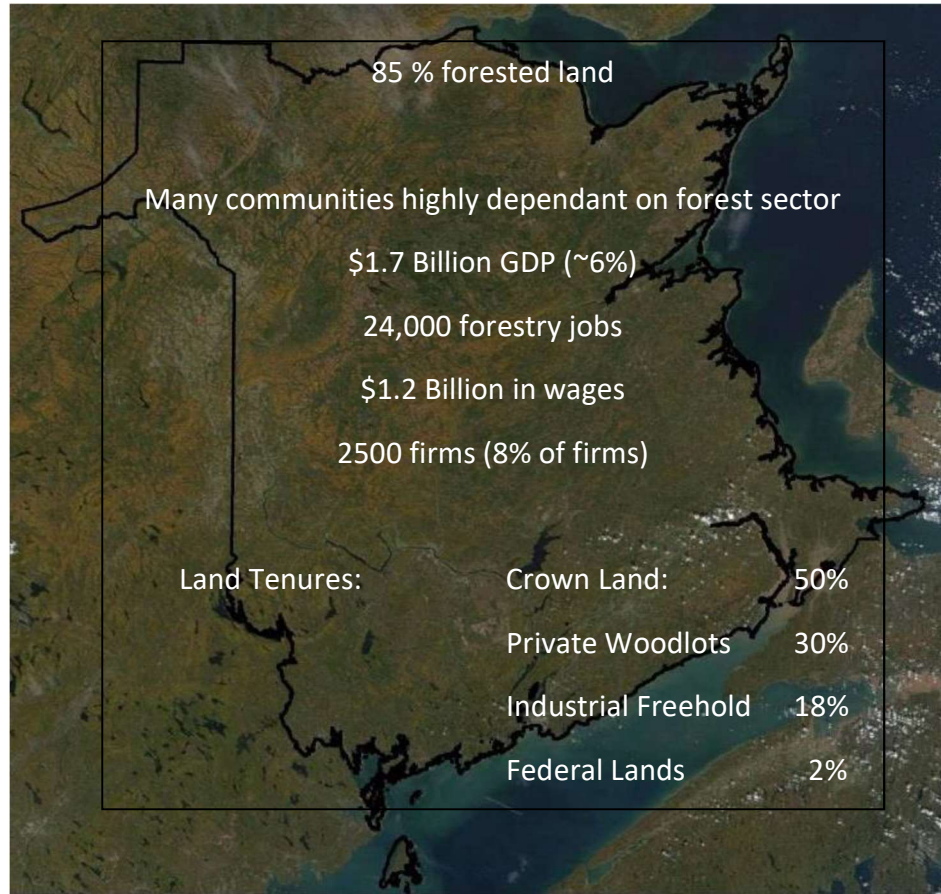


Figure 4. New Brunswick by the numbers.

3.0 FORESTRY IN CANADA

3.1 Canada's forests by the numbers

Canada's 347 million hectares (ha) of forest make up 9% of the world's forests. Twenty-four percent of the world's boreal forests are found within Canada's borders. Much of Canada's forest land is in remote, sparsely populated areas and is not under the same pressure to be cleared for agriculture or urban development as forests in many other countries. Canada has nearly 10 ha of forest land per person, more than 17 times the world average.

In order to measure Canada's forest, we need to define "forest." Canada uses the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' definition of forest:

- land spanning more than 0.5 ha
- tree canopy covering more than 10% of the total land area
- trees growing to a height of more than 5 metres

This definition does not include land that is predominantly urban or used for agricultural purposes.

Forest land that temporarily has no trees – for example, after a natural disturbance like fire or after harvesting – is still considered forest, because trees grow back.

Deforestation occurs when forest is converted to a different land use, such as urban development or agriculture. Afforestation is the opposite of deforestation. It means that new forest is created through planting and/or seeding on land that was previously agricultural, urban, or some other non-forested land use. Between them, afforestation and deforestation are drivers of forest area changes.

Canada's forests by numbers



Figure 5. Canada by the numbers (The State of Canada's Forests. Annual Report 2016)

3.2 Forest land ownership in Canada

The majority of Canada's forest land, about 94%, is publicly owned and managed by provincial, territorial and federal governments. Only 6% of Canada's forest lands is privately owned.

This means that all those jurisdictions – provincial, territorial and federal – together have the ability to create and enforce the laws, regulations and policies required to meet Canada's commitment to sustainable forest management across the country.

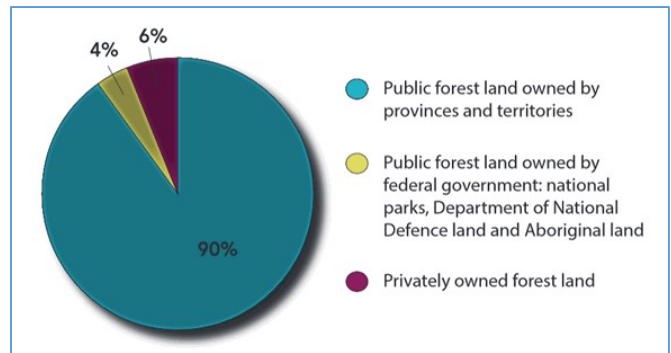


Figure 6. Land ownership in Canada (Natural Resources Canada).

3.3 Is timber being harvested sustainably?

Timber harvesting is sustainable in Canada thanks to strong laws, oversight and management, and the requirement that all harvested public lands be regenerated.

About 90% of Canada's forests are located on provincial and territorial Crown lands. The provincial and territorial governments are therefore responsible for forest management. They specify an allowable annual cut, which includes both the annual level of harvest allowed on a particular area of Crown lands and the minimum forest age at the time of harvest. Regulating harvest levels in this way helps to ensure sustainability over the long term.

All provincial and territorial lands that are harvested for commercial timber in Canada must be regenerated either naturally or by planting or seeding. Each province and territory has its own regeneration standards and regulations, addressing such areas as species composition, density and stocking level, and the distribution of various forest types across the landscape.

Whether by natural or artificial regeneration, harvested areas grow back. Regeneration ensures that Canada's forests continue to produce wood fibre for commercial uses, offer recreational opportunities and provide ecosystem services, such as storing carbon, regulating water quality and creating wildlife habitat.

4.0 TREE PHYSIOLOGY AND TREE IDENTIFICATION

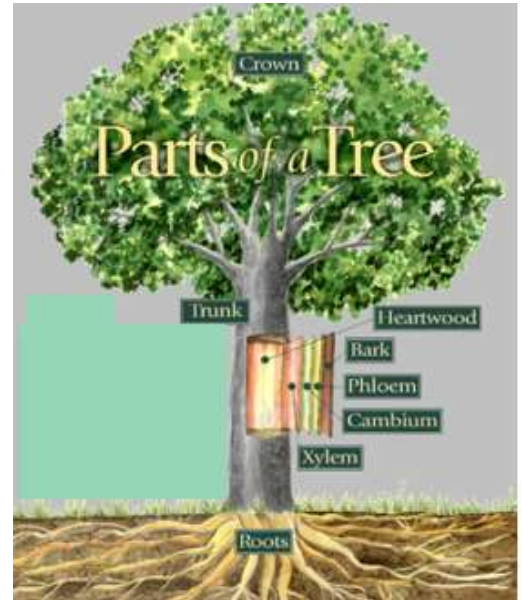
4.1 Parts of a tree

Crown

The crown, which consists of the leaves and branches at the top of a tree, plays an important role in filtering dust and other particles from the air. It also helps cool the air by providing shade and reduces the impact of raindrops on the soil below.

The leaves are the food factories of a tree. They contain chlorophyll and give leaves their green colour. Through a process called photosynthesis, leaves use the sun's energy to convert carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and water from the soil into sugar and oxygen. The sugar, which is the tree's food, is either used or stored in the branches, trunk and roots. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere.

Figure 7. Parts of a tree (North Carolina Forestry Association)



Roots

A tree's roots absorb water and nutrients from the soil, store sugar and anchor the tree upright in the ground. All trees have lateral roots that branch into smaller and smaller roots and usually extend horizontally beyond the branch tips. Some trees have a taproot that reaches down as far as 4 to 5 meters. Each root is covered with thousands of root hairs that make it easier to soak up water and dissolved minerals from the soil. The majority of the root system is located in the upper 30 to 50 cm of soil because the oxygen that roots require to function properly is most abundant there.

Trunk/Stem

The trunk, or stem, of a tree supports the crown and gives the tree its shape and strength. The trunk consists of four layers of tissue. These layers contain a network of tubes that runs between the roots and the leaves and acts as the circulatory system for the tree. These tubes carry water and minerals up from the roots to the leaves, and they carry sugar down from the leaves to the branches, trunk and roots.

Heartwood As a tree grows, older cells in the center of the tree become inactive and die, forming heartwood. Because it is filled with stored sugar, dyes and oils, the heartwood is usually darker than the sapwood. The main function of the heartwood is to support the tree.

Sapwood The sapwood comprises the youngest layers of wood. Its network of thick-walled cells brings water and nutrients up from the roots through tubes inside of the trunk to the leaves and other parts of the tree. As the tree grows, sapwood cells in the central portion of the tree become inactive and die. These dead cells form the tree's heartwood.

Cambium The cambium is a very thin layer of tissue that produces new cells that become either sapwood, phloem or more cambium. Every growing season, a tree's cambium adds a new layer of wood to its trunk, producing a visible growth ring in most trees. The cambium is what makes the trunk, branches, and roots grow larger in diameter.

Phloem The phloem is found between the cambium and the outer bark. The phloem acts as a food supply line by carrying sap (sugar and nutrients dissolved in water) from the leaves to the rest of the tree.

Bark The trunk, branches and twigs of the tree are all covered with bark. The outer bark, which originates from old phloem cells, acts as a suit of armor against the world by protecting the tree from insects, disease, storms and extreme temperatures. In certain species, the outer bark also protects the tree from fire.

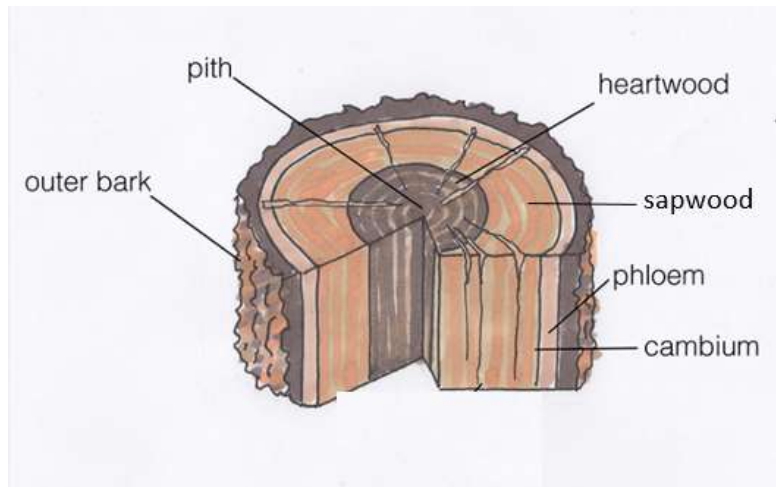


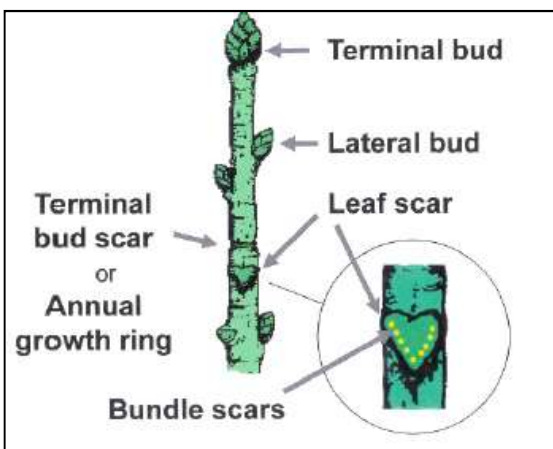
Figure 8. Transverse slice of tree trunk, depicting parts of the stem.

4.2 Parts of a twig

Terminal bud: Bud at the tip of a stem.

Lateral bud: bud that grows from the leaf axils on the side of a stem.

Leaf scar: Mark left on stem where leaf was attached. Often used in woody plant identification.



Bundle scar: A small mark on a leaf scar indicating a point where a vein from the leaf was once connected with the stem. Used in woody plant identification.

Lenticel: Pores on the twig that allow for gas exchange.

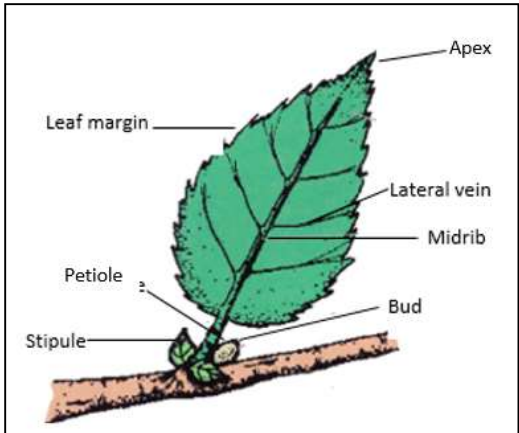
Terminal bud scale scars or annual growth rings: Marks left on stem from the terminal bud scales in previous years. Terminal bud scale scars are an external measure of annual growth. Therefore, they are important in assessing plant vigour.

Figure 9. Parts of a twig. (Colorado State University Extension)

4.3 Leaf function and structure

Apex -- The outer end of the leaf opposite the petiole

Lateral vein – veins provide support for the leaf and transport both water and minerals (via xylem) and food energy (via phloem) through the leaf and on to the rest of the plant.



Midrib – the central rib of a leaf, usually continuous with the petiole

Bud: forms at base of leaf during late summer

Stipule – a small leaf-like appendage to a leaf, typically borne in pairs at the base of the leaf stalk

Petiole – attaches the leaf to the plant, also called leaf stalk

Margin – the outer part of a leaf

Figure 10. Parts of a leaf (Colorado State University Extension)

4.4 Photosynthesis

Photosynthesis is the process through which light energy is used to convert carbon dioxide (CO₂) and water (H₂O) to carbohydrates (sugar).

A primary difference between plants and animals is the plant's ability to manufacture its own food. In *photosynthesis*, carbon dioxide from the air and water from the soil react with the sun's energy to form *photosynthates* (sugars, starches, carbohydrates, and proteins) and release oxygen as a by-product (Figure 12).

Photosynthesis literally means *to put together with light*. It occurs only in the *chloroplasts*, tiny sub-cellular structures contained in the cells of leaves and. A simple chemical equation for photosynthesis is:

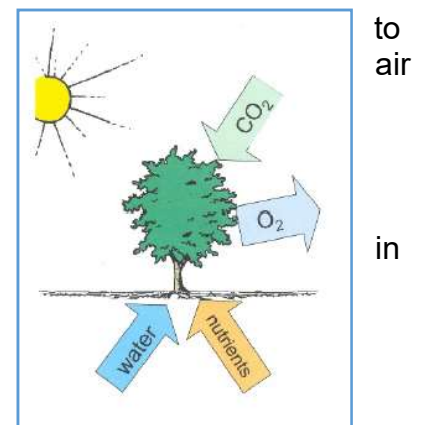


Figure 11. In photosynthesis, the plant uses water and nutrients from the soil and carbon dioxide from the air, with the sun's energy to create photosynthates. Oxygen is released as a by-product. (Colorado State University Extension)

This process is directly dependent on the supply of water, light, and carbon dioxide. Limiting any one of the factors on the left side of the equation (carbon dioxide, water, or light) can limit photosynthesis. For example, a severe drought can reduce photosynthesis and result in a decrease in plant vigour and growth.

4.5 Tree Identification

4.5.1 Twig and Cone Key for Softwood Trees of the Acadian Forest

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Leaves not needle-like..... | 2 |
| 2. Small, flat, scale-like leaves, soft, yellow-green in colour, 1-2 mm long; cones egg-shaped, 7-12 mm long. | <u>Eastern white cedar</u> |
| 1. Leaved needle-like..... | 3 |
| 3. Needles in bundles or groups..... | 4 |
| 4. Two needles in each bundle..... | 5 |
| 5. Needles straight, 10-16 cm long, needles will break or snap when bent; cones roundish, 4-7 cm long, cone scales thicker at tips..... | <u>Red pine</u> |
| 5. Needles yellow-green, 2-4 cm long, divergent (split apart) and twisted; cones 3-7 cm long, serotinous, usually curved..... | <u>Jack pine</u> |
| 4. More than two needles in each bundle..... | 6 |
| 6. Needles in bundles of 5, 10-15 cm long, soft, blue-green; cones 8-20 cm long, cone scales broader towards tip..... | <u>Eastern white pine</u> |
| 6. Needles 15-60 per bundle, soft, bluish-green colour, deciduous; cones roundish, 10-15 mm long, attached to twig by a curved stalk (petiole)..... | <u>Tamarack</u> |
| 3. Single needles..... | 7 |
| 7. Needles flattened (do not roll between fingers)..... | 8 |
| 8. Needles glossy green above with two white bands and three darker bands below, attached to twig by short stalk (petiole); cones egg-shaped, 12-20 mm long | <u>Eastern hemlock</u> |
| 8. Needles dark green above with two white lines and one dark line below. Fragrant odour when crushed; cones cylindrical, erect, 4-10 cm long, break apart when seeds are mature leaving a vertical spike..... | <u>Balsam fir</u> |
| 7. Needles 4-sided (roll between fingers)..... | 9 |
| 9. Needles yellow-green, curved; cones egg-shaped, 3-5 cm long, cone scales stiff, margin usually not toothed or serrated..... | <u>Red spruce</u> |
| 9. Needles straight, dull greyish-green; cones 2-3 cm long, cone scales toothed or serrated and brittle..... | <u>Black spruce</u> |
| 9. Needles straight, stiff, pungent odour when crushed, bluish-green; cones 3-6 cm long, cone scales are pliable when squeezed | <u>White spruce</u> |



Balsam fir



Tamarack



Eastern hemlock



White spruce



Black spruce



Red spruce



Jack pine



White pine



Red pine



Eastern white cedar (cedar)



4.5.2 Leaf Key for Hardwood Trees of the Acadian Forest

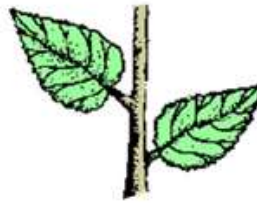
| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Leaves opposite | 2 |
| 2. Leaf simple..... | 3 |
| 2. Leaf compound..... | 6 |
| 3. Five distinct lobes, leaf edge wavy, leaf sinuses “u-shaped”..... | <u>Sugar maple</u> |
| 3. Three to five lobes, leaf edge toothed..... | 4 |
| 4. Underside of leaf not silvery, leaf edge double toothed..... | <u>Striped maple</u> |
| 4. Underside of leaf silvery..... | 5 |
| 5. Leaf sinuses deeply lobed and “u”-shaped..... | <u>Silver maple</u> |
| 5. Leaf sinuses notched “v-shaped”..... | <u>Red maple</u> |
| 6. Leaf compound..... | 7 |
| 7. 5-9 leaflets, leaflets stalked, egg-shaped to lance-shaped leaflets, leaf edge smooth or wavy..... | <u>White ash</u> |
| 7. 7-11 leaflets, leaflets not stalked, finely and sharply toothed leaf edge..... | <u>Black ash</u> |
| 7. 5-9 leaflets on a hairy central stalk, hairy underneath, leaf edge smooth towards base of leaf and toothed towards tip..... | <u>Green ash</u> |
| 1. Leaves not opposite | 8 |
| 8. Leaf compound, 11 to 17 finely toothed leaflets..... | <u>Butternut</u> |
| 8. Leaf simple..... | 9 |
| 9. Leaf edge double toothed..... | 10 |
| 9. Leaf edge not double toothed..... | 11 |
| 10. Leaf shape triangular..... | <u>Gray birch</u> |
| 10. Leaf shape not triangular..... | 12 |
| 12. Underside of leaf rough, leaf base asymmetrical..... | <u>White elm</u> |
| 12. Underside of leaf not rough, leaf base not asymmetrical..... | 13 |
| 13. 7-9 veins, leaf edges coarsely double toothed except near stem, bark white and peeling..... | <u>White birch</u> |
| 13. 9-13 veins, leaf edges coarsely double toothed, bark yellow..... | <u>Yellow birch</u> |
| 13. Leaf stem short, finely double toothed, leaf feels thin..... | <u>Ironwood</u> |
| 11. Leaf stem (petiole) flat..... | 14 |
| 11. Leaf stem (petiole) not flat..... | 15 |
| 14. Large teeth..... | <u>Large-tooth aspen</u> |
| 14. Small teeth..... | <u>Trembling aspen</u> |
| 15. Leaf lobed..... | 16 |
| 15. Leaf not lobed..... | 17 |
| 16. Several pointed teeth on each lobe..... | <u>Red oak</u> |
| 16. Lobes rounded (not pointed)..... | <u>Bur oak</u> |
| 17. Leaf edge coarsely toothed..... | <u>American beech</u> |
| 17. Leaf edge fine toothed..... | 18 |
| 18. Leaf heart-shaped..... | <u>Basswood</u> |
| 18. Leaf egg-shaped, dark green, shiny, rusty blotches on underside of leaf..... | <u>Balsam poplar</u> |



Simple leaf



Compound leaf



Leaves alternate



Leaves opposite

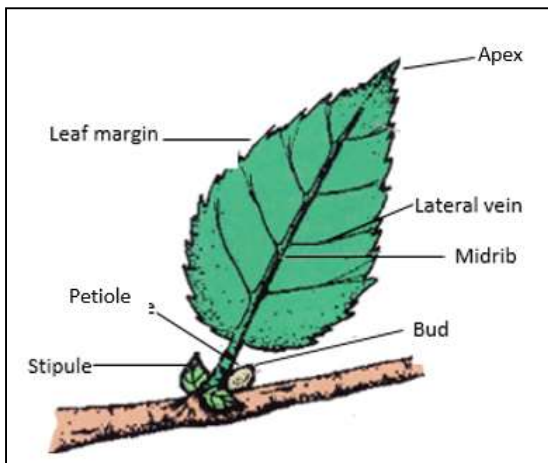
Simple leaf: A single blade attached to the stem by a petiole (birches, poplars)

Compound leaf: Leaf composed of several leaflets attached to the stem by a petiole (ashes, butternut)

Leaves alternate: Arranged in staggered fashion along stem (birches, poplars, oaks)

Leaves opposite: Pair of leaves arranged across from each other on stem (maples, ashes)

PARTS OF A LEAF



LEAF FORMS



Oval



Lanceolate



Cordate

Ovate : Leaf is broadest below the middle and about 2x as long as the width (egg-shaped)

Lanceolate: leaf is 3x or more longer than width and broadest below the middle

Cordate: Heart-shaped

LEAF MARGINS



Entire



Crenate



Dentate



Doubly serrate



Incised



Lobed

Entire: leaf edge is smooth

Crenate: leaf edge has blunt, rounded teeth

Dentate: leaf has triangular or tooth-like edges

Doubly serrate: edges with saw like teeth that have even smaller teeth within the larger ones

Incised: leaf margins have deep, irregular teeth

Lobed: leaf edges are deep and rounded

5.0 FOREST ECOLOGY

5.1 Crown classes

Crown class is a term used to describe the position of an individual tree in the forest canopy. In the definitions below, “general layer of the canopy” refers to the bulk of the tree crowns in the size class or cohort being examined. Crown classes are most easily determined in even aged stands, as shown in Figure 14. In an uneven aged stand, a tree’s crown would be compared to other trees in the same layer.

- **Dominant trees:** These crowns extend above the general level of the canopy. They receive full light from above and some light from the sides. Generally, they have the largest, fullest crowns in the stand.
- **Codominant trees:** These crowns make up the general level of the canopy. They receive direct light from above, but little or no light from the sides. Generally, they are shorter than the dominant trees.
- **Intermediate trees:** These crowns occupy a subordinate position in the canopy. They receive some direct light from above, but no direct light from the sides. Crowns are generally narrow and/or one-sided, and shorter than the dominant and codominant trees.
- **Suppressed trees (overtopped trees):** These crowns are below the general level of the canopy. They receive no direct light. Crowns are generally short, sparse, and narrow.



Figure 12. An illustration of crown classes. “D” = Dominant; “C” = Codominant; “I” = Intermediate and “S” = Suppressed. (Creative Commons).

Crown classes are a function of tree vigour, tree growing space, and access to sunlight. These in turn are influenced by stand density and species shade tolerance.

Crown class distribution can also infer overall vigour of an even aged stand. If most trees are in the intermediate crown class, the stand is likely too crowded and the trees are stagnated. A stand with nearly every tree in the dominant category is either very young, with all of the trees receiving plenty of sun, or very sparse and may be considered “understocked.” A typical even aged stand has the majority of trees in the codominant class, and the fewest trees in the suppressed class. The relative ratios of dominant and intermediate classes are generally a function of species composition.

5.2 Forest regions of Canada

A **forest region** is defined as a major geographic belt or zone characterized by a broad uniformity in physiography and in the composition of dominant tree species. Different forest regions exist because of differences in soil types, topography, climate and precipitation. Canada has eight forest regions, each geographically characterized by dominant species and stand types of vegetation. The Acadian Forest Region is the main forest region in New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces and the Boreal Forest Region is the largest forest region in Canada.

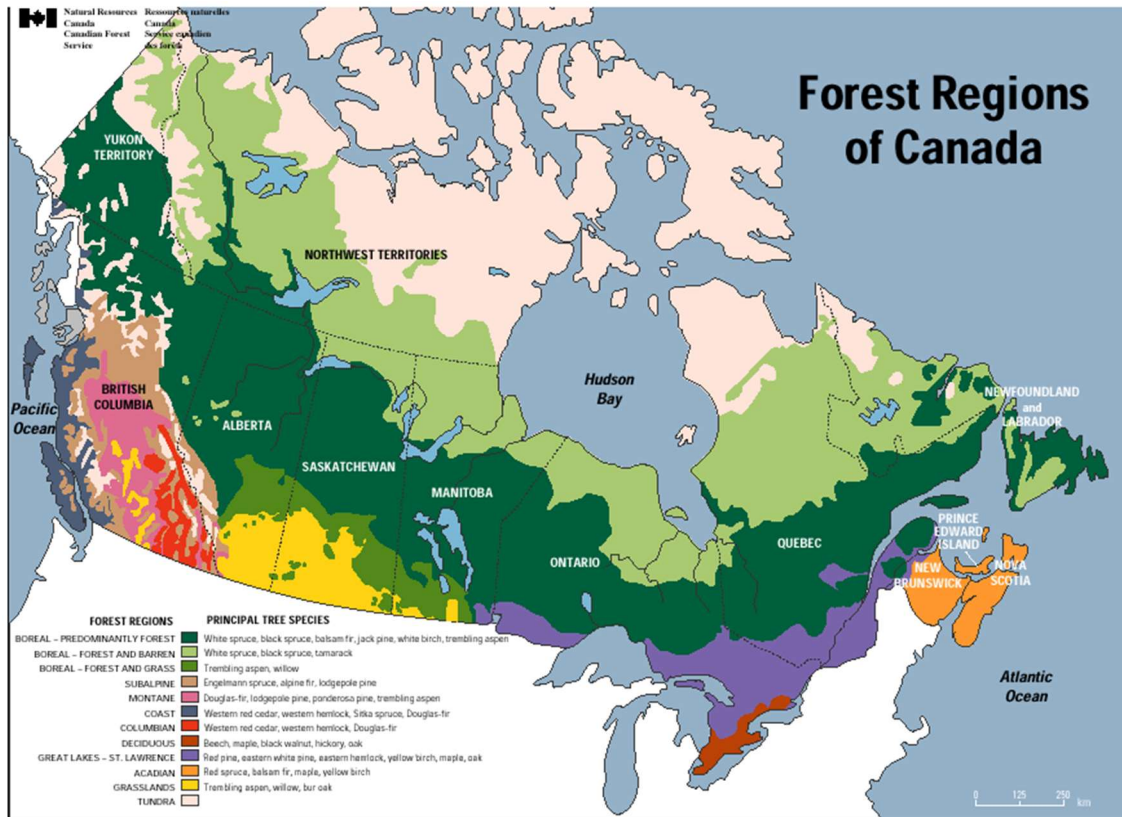


Figure 13. Forest Regions of Canada. (Natural Resources Canada)

Acadian Forest Region

This region covers Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and most of New Brunswick. Its makeup most closely resembles that of the Great Lakes-St Lawrence region, with beech, red oak, white elm all common to the region. Also found are black spruce, balsam fir, yellow birch, sugar maple and the trembling aspen, which is also common to the Subalpine and Boreal Forest Regions.

Boreal Forest Region

Canada has 24% of the global boreal forest. The Canadian portion of the boreal region stretches from the Yukon and northeastern British Columbia across the northern parts of the Prairie Provinces, Quebec and Ontario to Labrador and Newfoundland. It forms a band more than 1000 kilometres wide. This area is primarily publicly owned and is rich in natural resources. Boreal tree species are well adapted to colder conditions and include black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, tamarack, jack pine, trembling aspen, balsam poplar and white birch. Encircling the earth's Northern Hemisphere just south of the Arctic Circle, this green mantle of mainly coniferous forest comprises about 16.6 million square kilometres, or roughly one-third of the planet's boreal forested area.

5.3 Forest succession

Fire, along with disease, insect infestation, and weather (i.e. snow, ice, wind, and lightning) are major environmental disturbances that alter ecosystems. Destructive as they may seem, they leave in their wake space for new plants to grow. A gradual and complex series of changes (both biotic and abiotic) called **succession** must occur to re-establish the forest.

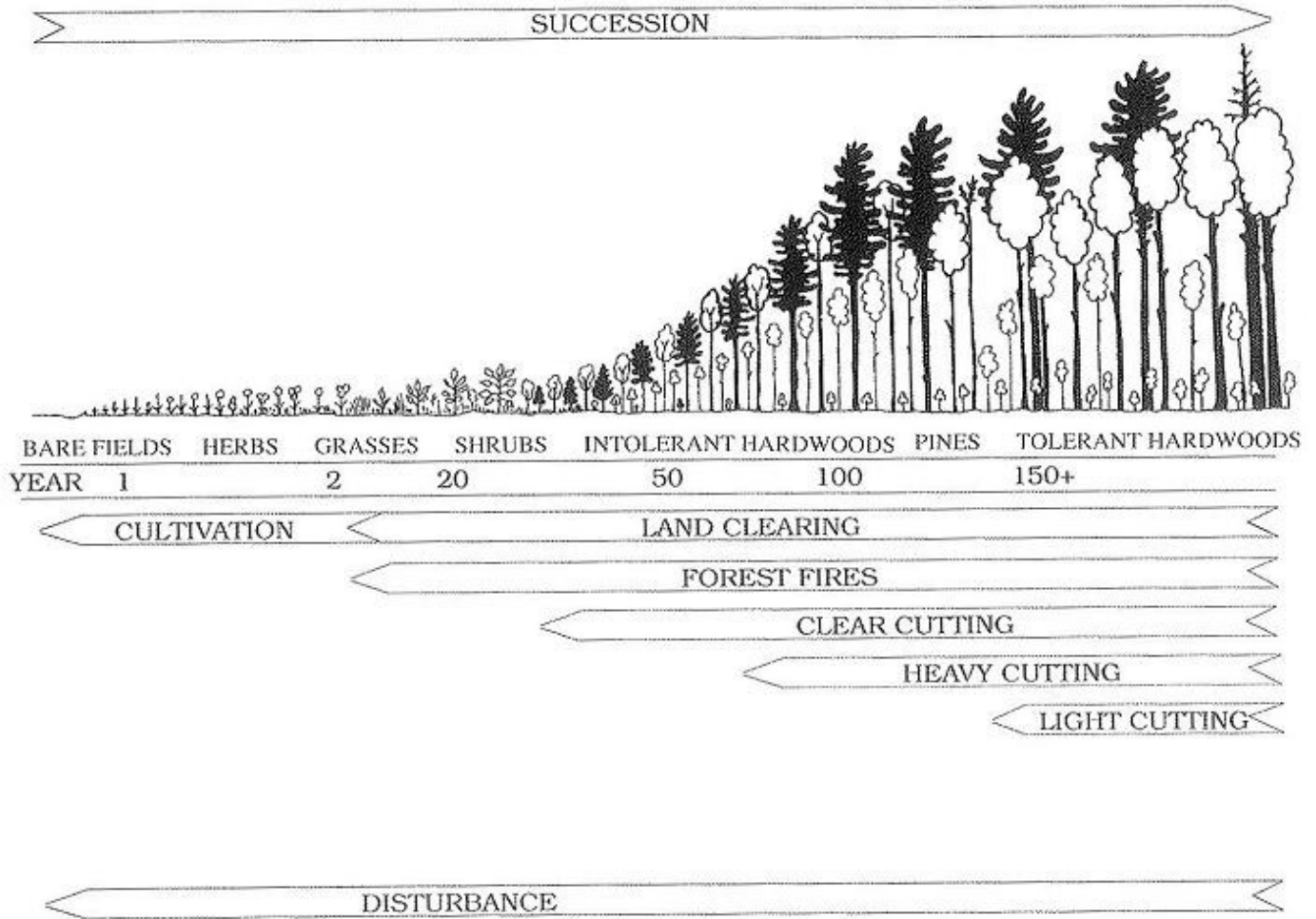


Figure 14. Stages of succession (Focus on Forests, 1987)

Succession is the directional change in vegetation resulting from the interactions between the living and the nonliving factors of the environment. New plants germinate, grow, and reproduce to successfully inhabit the vacant ecological niche. As the plants increase in size and in number, competition and environmental change begin to change the ecosystem. A new series of plants germinate, grow, and reproduce to repeat the cycle of change. The rate of change becomes more gradual with time until the system stabilizes. This is the final stage of succession in the ecosystem and is called the **climax**. However, it must be emphasized that forests are complex, dynamic communities that are continually evolving at varying rates. Even a climax community is constantly undergoing changes. At any time in the series of changes from the beginning to the climax, a new disturbance may interrupt the series and create a new beginning.

There are two major forms of succession: primary succession and secondary succession.

Primary succession begins on bare areas that did not previously support vegetative growth. These may be areas of water, sand, or rock. Primary succession begins with soil building. Soils develop from primitive plants called colonizers reacting with the rock over long periods of time to eventually provide bits of soil that, in time, will support larger vegetation. With the accumulation of soil, new plants germinate, grow, and reproduce to begin the stages of a new succession.

Secondary succession occurs in areas in which vegetation does grow, but which have been altered by such external forces as fire, logging, and land clearing. New plants germinate, grow, and reproduce to begin the cycle to the forest stage.

5.4 Shade tolerance

Shade tolerance is the relative capacity of tree species to compete for survival under shaded conditions. It is a tree trait, a functional adaptation that varies among species. Because of its pronounced influence on tree survival and stand growth, shade tolerance is a pillar of silviculture.

Shade tolerance in trees ranges along a continuum from very shade intolerant to very shade tolerant. Foresters often consider shade tolerance when deciding which silvicultural prescription is best for a given species.

It is important to understand that shade tolerance is not the same as shade preference as most plant species grow well, and in most cases even prefer, full light conditions. Being shade tolerant means that they have a competitive advantage when shade conditions exist. For these species, a bit of shade makes them more competitive than they would be under more light because they can outgrow less shade-tolerant species. They compete better in shade.



Figure 15. Understory of shade-tolerant sugar maple regeneration under sugar maple stand. (Photo credit: Natural Resources Canada)

Shade-tolerant species, such as eastern hemlock and American beech, can become established and survive on less than 5 percent full light. They typically have longer crowns with lower branches that stay foliated longer than intolerant species. They generally grow slowly and live long. By contrast, shade-intolerant species, such as trembling aspen and red pine, may require as much as 60 percent of full light to remain competitive. Typically, they have shorter, more open crowns, and grow in lower stand densities. They tend to mature early, fruit sooner, and die younger. There is also a class of intermediate shade-tolerant species. Yellow birch and white pine, for instance, work the middle ranges of light availability, remaining competitive with 10 to 30 percent of full light. Many species that are intermediate in shade tolerance germinate and establish under the existing forest canopy, where they will wait until a local disturbance provides new light, at which point they can respond with accelerated growth to fill a gap in the canopy.

Table 2. Shade tolerances of tree species native to New Brunswick

| Intolerant | Intermediate | Tolerant |
|--|--|--|
| White birch, Trembling aspen Largetooth aspen Jack pine Red pine Tamarack | Red oak White ash White pine Yellow birch White spruce Basswood | Eastern hemlock Northern white cedar Sugar maple American beech Red spruce Balsam fir |

5.5 Forest ecosystem products and services

Forests play a vital role in Canada's economic health with the forest industry accounting for some 297, 000 direct and indirect jobs. At the same time, forests also store carbon, preserve soils and nurture a diversity of species. These non-timber benefits are known as "ecosystem services".

Canadians increasingly recognize the many ecosystem services provided by forests and resource agencies are starting to assess and estimate forests' economic, social and environmental values.

The benefits provided by forest ecosystems include:

- Goods such as timber, food, fuel and bioproducts
- Ecological functions such as carbon storage, nutrient cycling, water and air purification, and the maintenance of wildlife habitat
- Social and cultural benefits such as recreation, traditional resource uses and spirituality

The first challenge to achieve sustainable forest management is finding ways to continue to benefit from ecological services without compromising the forest's ability to provide those services.



6.0 FOREST MANAGEMENT

A silviculture system covers all management activities related to growing forests — from early planning through harvesting, replanting and tending the new forest. Forest managers consider a variety of ecological, economic and social factors when choosing a silviculture system.

Each silviculture system is named after the cutting method with which the regeneration is established. The silvicultural systems most commonly used in Canada are the clearcut, the shelterwood and the single tree selection systems. The clearcut and shelterwood systems are used to manage even-aged forests, which are defined by relatively small age differences between individual trees. The selection system is used to manage uneven-aged stands, which means the forest has trees in various stages of development. It is appropriate for species that thrive in shade.



A typical silviculture system (BC Ministry of Forests)

6.1 Silviculture

Silviculture can be defined as the art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, composition, health, and quality of forest vegetation to meet forest objectives.

A silvicultural system is a series of planned and scheduled treatments with the objective of:

- Harvesting trees
- Establishing one or several species on a site
- Improving wood quality of trees in a stand using a variety of stand improvement techniques,
- Creating or improving wildlife habitat,
- Etc.

6.2 Harvesting systems – even-aged stands

Trees in even-aged stands are of the same age or almost the same age. Natural even-aged forests occur after a major disturbance such as fire or insect epidemics such as spruce budworm. Many fire-origin even-aged stand are still present in New Brunswick. Most of these stands are softwood and consist mainly of a single species – jack pine and black spruce being the most common. Even-aged stands generally have a well-developed canopy with a regular top at a uniform height.



Even-aged stand
(BC Ministry of Forests)

Even-aged stands can develop from the following silvicultural systems:

- Clearcut
- Patch cut
- Seed tree cut
- Shelterwood cut
- Coppice method

6.2.1 Clearcut system

In a clearcut system, all merchantable trees are removed in a single operation. A new even-aged stand is established either naturally through seedlings already on the site or through plantation.

Clearcuts can create habitat for a variety of wildlife not found in mature forests particularly where snags or live trees with cavities and perches are left throughout. Raspberries, pin cherry, aspen, and white birch often sprout soon after cutting, providing valuable sources of berries and seeds (mast), browse, and cover for many species of wildlife. Black bear will forage throughout the summer on the edges of these cuts.

The maximum clearcut size in New Brunswick is 100 hectares although the average is much smaller at about 35 hectares.

6.2.2 Patch cut system

The patch cut system involves removal of an entire stand of trees (less than one hectare in size) from an area. Each patch cut is managed as a distinct even-aged opening. If an area contains several patch cuts, each opening is still managed as a distinct opening. Regeneration is obtained either by artificial or natural regeneration, or a combination of the two. This system is a clearcut variant.

6.2.3 Seed tree system

In a seed tree system the entire cutting unit is managed as it is with clearcut systems. However, for a designated period, those trees selected for providing seed are not harvested. As seed trees are left to supply seed for the next crop, the best trees should be selected to encourage desirable genetic traits.

A classic seed tree system depends on natural regeneration, although the seed trees may not be relied upon entirely and some planting may occur under seed trees. Usually, the seed trees are harvested in a "removal cut" once regeneration is established.



Figure 16. Seed tree cut where yellow birch trees were retained to regenerate the site. The ground was purposefully disturbed (scarified) during extraction to create a suitable seedbed to encourage regeneration. (Photo credit: Natural Resources Canada)

6.2.4 Shelterwood system

The objective of the shelterwood system is to open up the canopy in order to release pre-existing regeneration or to create favourable conditions for the establishment of new regeneration. The smaller and poorer quality trees are cut leaving an overstory of larger trees with good characteristics to provide seed for the new seedlings. If many overstory trees are left, the shady conditions are good for tolerant species such as red spruce, eastern hemlock or sugar maple. Fewer overstory trees provide partial shade for oak, yellow birch or white pine. Once an understory of desirable seedlings is established, the overstory trees are carefully removed to release the new stand.

Trees selected as leave-trees in shelterwood systems should be:

1. larger, dominant trees
2. wind firm trees
3. desirable species
4. desirable physical characteristics



Figure 17. White pine shelterwood cut (left) and white pine regeneration (right). (Photo credit: Natural Resources Canada)

6.2.5 Coppice system

The coppice system is an even-aged silvicultural system through which the main regeneration method is through vegetative propagation – sprouts from the existing root systems or suckers from cut stumps. This system is limited to the management of hardwood species.

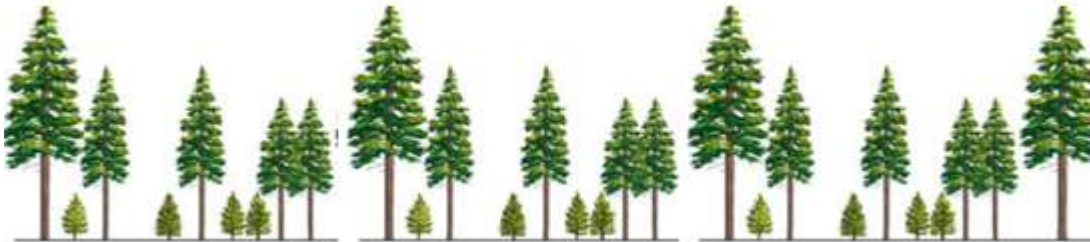
A good example of a coppice stand originating from sprouting in New Brunswick is trembling aspen regeneration following the harvest of a stand with a trembling aspen component. Trembling aspen roots do not die after the tree is cut but will produce hundreds if not thousands of root sprouts that will quickly occupy the site. As sprouts do not have to develop their own root system, they grow very rapidly often reaching 1-2 meters in height after one year.

Red maple will regenerate through vegetative reproduction from suckers originating from the stump after the tree is cut. As is the case with trembling aspen sprouts, maple suckers will grow very quickly. The number of suckers from a single stump can easily range from 20-30. The wood quality is poorer than trees grown directly from seed.

Although coppicing is an easy method to regenerate a harvested area (providing the area has tree species capable of regenerating from suckers and sprouts), the quality of the wood and the species that are regenerated are not always the preferred species of forest managers.

6.3 Harvesting system – uneven-aged management

Uneven-aged stands have an uneven and highly broken or irregular canopy (often with many gaps). This broken canopy allows for greater light penetration and encourages deeper crowns and greater vertical structure in a stand. Most stems occur in the smallest age/size class, as regeneration quickly fills the frequent canopy gaps. Because regeneration is initiated in small gaps, more shade-tolerant tree species are generally favoured.



*Uneven-aged stands have at least three well-represented and well-defined age classes, differing in height, age, and diameter. Often these classes can be broadly defined as: regeneration (or regeneration and sapling), pole, and mature.
(BC Ministry of Forests)*

Uneven-aged management is generally considered to be more difficult than even-aged management since all age classes are mixed together and therefore can be difficult to isolate and quantify. However, uneven-aged management may be an objective for many reasons such as visuals, regeneration of shade-tolerant species, health, soil, habitat, and fire protection.

Under this management regime, trees are removed either as single scattered individuals or in small groups. In order to ensure that a proper age class distribution is maintained, uneven-aged management requires interventions in the stand every 15-20 years. Regeneration should occur throughout the life of the stand with pulses following harvest entries.

New regeneration develops in small scattered openings created in small gaps. Since regeneration is always being recruited and larger mature trees are scattered, or in very small groups, these stands appear quite open, with many gaps. The system is generally used for the most tolerant species in an area.

A good example of uneven-aged management is sugar maple stands managed for the production of maple products. As only mature trees can be tapped for maple products, the owner must maintain trees of all sizes to ensure that as the older trees die, younger ones are there to replace them.

6.4 Reforestation

All provincial and territorial lands that are harvested for commercial timber in Canada must be regenerated either naturally or by planting or seeding. Each province and territory has its own regeneration standards and regulations, addressing such areas as species composition, density and stocking level, and the distribution of various forest types across the landscape.

The benefits of natural regeneration include the need for minimal human assistance and generally lower costs than for artificial regeneration. However, planting and seeding provides more control over what grows, so they are often used to ensure that provincial and territorial regeneration standards and forest management objectives are met. More than half of Canada's harvested areas are regenerated through planting and seeding activities.

In New Brunswick, about one third of the harvested area on Crown land is planted.

6.5 Pre-commercial thinning

Because the trees have not yet reached a size where they are commercially marketable for timber, this treatment is called pre-commercial thinning (PCT). Thinning can be carried out in stands of natural or planted trees that are of similar age and size.

Some of the best growing sites exhibit the densest thickets of trees. It is not unusual for some softwood thickets to contain over 30,000 trees per hectare. This silviculture treatment can be compared to thinning carrots in a garden and allows the best crop trees to obtain more sunlight, growing space, water, and nutrients.

PCT is usually carried out with a clearing saw, also called a spacing saw or brush saw, which enables the user to avoid the back strain and danger associated with a chain saw. Softwood trees are usually spaced to 1.8 m to 2.4 m between trees (1,500 to 3,000 trees per hectare).



Figure 18. Silviculture worker doing pre-commercial thinning in young softwood stand.

Choice of crop trees is ultimately up to the landowner but higher-value trees such as spruce are often chosen over balsam fir, tamarack, and poplar.



Figure 19. This image shows the increase in growth resulting from PCT.

6.6 Commercial thinning

The main difference between a commercial thinning and a pre-commercial thinning (PCT) is the size of the trees. A commercial thinning is generally done as trees are moving from a juvenile to a mature stage of growth whereas pre-commercial thinning is done when the trees are still in the juvenile stage. Hardwood, softwood and mixedwood stands can all benefit from a commercial thinning.



Commercial thinning is usually carried out when the stand has reached a point where too many trees are competing for nutrients and light. When left to grow naturally, trees that have poor access to light and nutrients will slow in growth and will eventually die.

The objectives of a commercial thinning include:

- improve the growth of residual trees
- recover wood that would otherwise be lost to mortality
- improve stand composition
- improve the quality of the stand by removing dead, diseased and deformed trees

Figure 20. Commercial thinning in a softwood stand.

6.7 Sustainable forest management

Sustainable forest management means ensuring that forests provide a broad range of goods and services over the long term. Forest managers plan for harvest levels that will not affect the long-term sustainability of the forest resource. To determine the yearly level of harvest allowed, governments estimate the wood supply, which is the maximum volume of wood that can be harvested sustainably. Both the estimated wood supply and the volume of wood harvested fluctuate in response to a wide range of ecological, social and economic factors. Changes in wood supply are largely a result of adjustments in provincial forest management objectives. Comparing the amount of timber actually harvested to the estimated sustainable wood supply is one way to track forest management.

6.8 Annual allowable cut (AAC)

The annual allowable cut (AAC) is the amount of wood (volume) that can be harvested each year without affecting the sustainability of the wood supply. The AAC is measured in cubic meters or cords (English system) of wood and is based on what the forest is able to grow. The AAC can vary over time depending on what is happening to the forest. Certain factors or activities can increase the AAC while others may cause a reduction. Following are examples of how AAC can increase or decrease over time.

- Better forest inventory data (can increase or decrease AAC)
- Area available for harvest (can increase or decrease AAC)
- Insects and diseases (reduction in AAC)
- Forest fires (reduction in AAC)
- Silviculture (increase in AAC)
- Age class structure of forest (can increase or decrease AAC)

In New Brunswick, about 1.3 % of the forest is harvested every year.

6.9 Non-timber forest products

The economic wealth of Canada's forests has long been measured in terms of the trees used to make conventional forest products, notably softwood lumber, newsprint and wood pulp.

In fact, numerous forest-derived resources make a significant contribution to many rural communities and households across Canada through sales revenue and seasonal employment.

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) refers to products of biological origin other than timber, derived from forests. The range of NTFPs is very diverse and includes those that are:

- Gathered from the wild, in either timber-productive or non-timber-productive forests and lands (e.g., mushrooms, blueberries, fiddleheads, etc.)
- Produced in forests under varying levels of management intensity (e.g., maple syrup, Christmas trees)
- Produced in agroforestry systems (e.g., forest species such as wild ginseng planted as field crops)

Types of non-timber forest products (NTFPs)

- *Forest-based foods* – These include maple syrup, wild blueberries, wild mushrooms and native understory plants such as wild ginseng and fiddleheads. By-products of the forest industry can also be converted into prepared foods (e.g., lignin, a natural constituent of wood is used to make artificial vanilla).
- *Ornamental products from the forest* – These include: horticultural species bred from wild species (such as cedars and maples); and decorative or artistic products such as Christmas trees and wreaths, fresh or dried floral greenery (e.g., salal), and specialty wood products and carvings.
- *Forest plant extracts used to make pharmaceuticals and personal care products* – These include paclitaxel (commonly known by the trade name Taxol®), which is most often extracted from yews like the Canada yew (ground hemlock). Taxol is widely used as a chemotherapy agent. Other forest plant extracts, particularly conifer essential oils, are used in a wide range of creams and other personal care products.

Value of NTFPs to Canada's economy

- Maple products represent a \$354 million dollar industry in Canada. In 2009, the country produced over 41 million litres of maple products, including maple syrup. Canada produces 85% of the world's maple syrup.
- More than 1.8 million Christmas trees were sold in Canada's domestic and export markets in 2009. This seasonal industry is worth about \$39 million annually.
- Canada is the world's largest producer of wild blueberries. It exported \$207 million of fresh and frozen berries in 2014. Most wild blueberries are produced commercially in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces as field crops.

7.0 FOREST MEASUREMENTS

There are a variety of measurements and information that forest managers use to help them decide how forest should be managed. Although some information can now be obtained remotely, through LiDAR and other remote sensing technologies, foresters still need to verify this information by doing on site measurements and sampling.

Some basic forest measurements include age, height, diameter, basal area, density, stocking and volume. Some of these can be obtained directly through measurement (age, height, diameter, density, basal area) while others must be calculated or determined from graphs or charts (volume, stocking).

The most basic unit in forest management is the stand. A stand is a community of trees possessing sufficient uniformity in composition, height, maturity and health that allows them to be grouped together. A stand can measure anywhere from 0.5 hectare to hundreds of hectares in size. Measuring all of the trees in a stand is not practical and therefore sampling is used to determine the characteristics of the stand.

7.1 Working with aerial photography

Aerial photographs are a valuable tool that has been used for decades to assist foresters in managing their woodland resources. For the purpose of this discussion, an aerial photograph is a photograph taken from above the ground, usually by a plane. An aerial view of the landscape provides a much clearer image of what the landscape contains. This is extremely useful to foresters who need to understand what is on the landscape and what landscape features need to be considered when planning their activities.

The identification of landscape features is both an art and a science. A good photo interpreter can identify buildings, rivers, lakes, wetlands, power lines, and roads; distinguish between hardwood and softwood stands and measure heights, distances and areas.

A single photograph provides the user with a two dimensional view of an object. It is not possible to see depth (i.e. three dimensions) using a single photo. In order to see in 3D an object must be viewed from two different angles. Close one eye and look at an object – that object is seen in two dimensions as it is only viewed from a single point of reference. If you open your other eye the object can now be seen in 3D because the object is now viewed from two different points of reference.

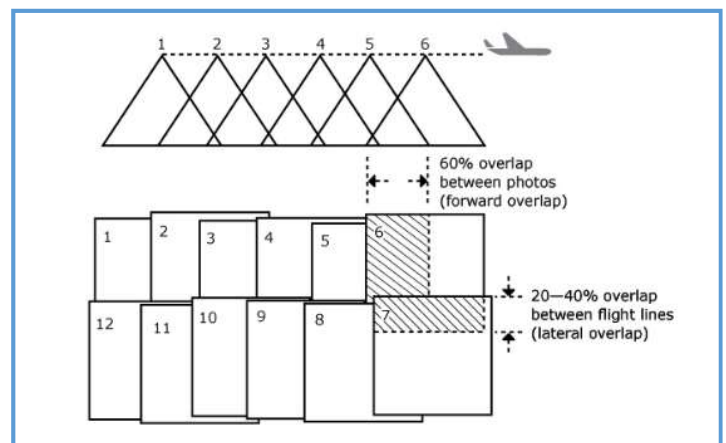


Figure 21. Flight lines are flown so that overlap occurs along flight lines (20 – 40 %) and between photos along a flight line (~ 60 %). This overlap makes seeing in 3D possible when using a stereoscope. (Natural Resources Canada)

In order to view aerial photos in 3D, two photos are needed that show the same object from different perspectives. The image on the right shows the overlap that allows photo interpretation in 3D to take place. A stereoscope is the instrument used to “bring together” the two images and allow the viewer to see in 3D.



Much information can be obtained from an air photo without the use of a stereoscope.



On this photo, you should be able to identify the following:

- Roads
- Watercourses
- Clearcuts
- Hardwood (lighter colour)
- Softwood (darker colour)
- Beaver dams
- Wetlands

When looking at a map or air photo north is always “up” unless otherwise indicated. This means when reading text on a map the top of the map will be north. Below is an explanation of the text located at the bottom of the above photo.

- DNRE Department of Natural Resources and Energy
- 98519 – 63 Flight line and photo number.
- 98-07-27 Date photo was taken
- 21J-02 Map reference
- 1:12 500 Scale of photo

The scale of the photo is very useful when determining distances. In this case 1:12 500 means that one unit on the map represents 12 500 units on the ground. For example:

1 cm on the photo is equal to 12 500 cm or 125 meters on the ground

The scale can be used to calculate actual distances and areas.

7.2 Tree measurements

7.2.1 Measuring the age of a tree

The age and growth history of a tree can help determine what management strategy to employ. As trees grow, they form rings made up of a band of light wood produced in the spring (earlywood) and a band of darker wood that forms later in the summer (latewood). This means the wood produced in one year can be measured by the width of one ring of light and dark wood. Counting the number of rings from the outer bark to the centre of the tree – or pith – tells you how old a tree is.

The size of a tree is not always representative of its age. A tree's age can easily be determined after a tree is cut by counting the number of growth rings on the stump.

An increment borer is a tool that drills a small hole in a tree. It is important to drill straight and far enough into the tree so that the bore reaches the center (pith) of the tree. A small core (below) can then be extracted and the annual rings counted to determine the age of the tree.



7.2.2 Measuring tree diameter

Diameter at breast height (DBH) is a very important measurement as it provides critical information as to the value of the trees in the stand (larger trees usually are more valuable). By combining tree diameter and height, tree volume can be determined.

Tree diameter is measured 1.3 meters above the ground. This height for measuring DBH was chosen because:

1. Easy to reach
2. Avoids butt swell
3. Ensures consistency



In New Brunswick, tree diameter measurements are taken with either calipers or diameter tape.

Calipers are quicker to use but provide less accuracy as measurements are recorded in 2 cm diameter classes.

The diameter tape provides a much more accurate diameter measurement (nearest 0.1 cm) and is used where more precise measurements are required such as in permanent sample plots where measurements are taken periodically to determine tree growth over time. A note of caution when using the diameter tape is that one side measures diameter and the other side measures circumference.

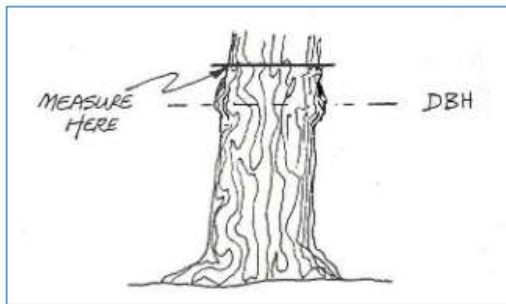
Trees with deformities

There are instances where diameter should not be measured at 1.3 meters above ground. Trees with deformities (bumps, swellings or depressions) located at 1.3 meters should be measured above the deformity.

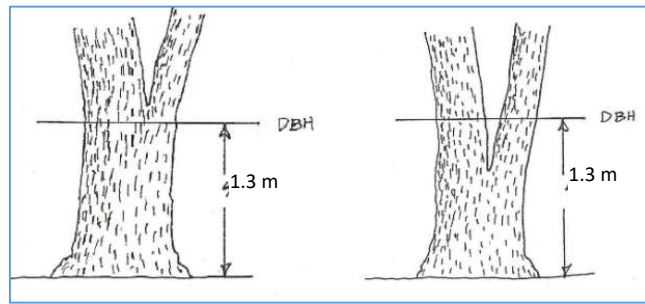
Forked trees

If the fork occurs above 1.3 meters, DBH should be measured at the smallest point below the fork.

If the fork occurs below 1.3 meters, you should consider these as two separate trees and measure above the swell caused by the fork.



Trees with deformities



Forked trees

7.2.3 Measuring tree height using Suunto hypsometer

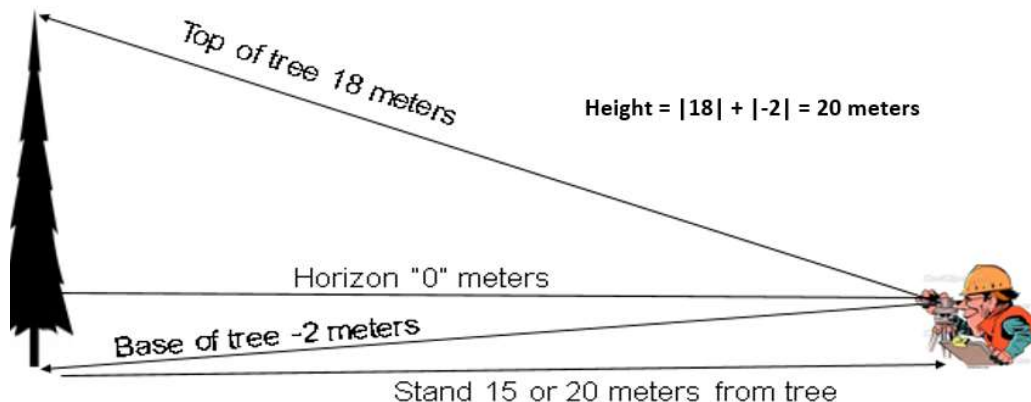
The instrument we use for measuring tree heights for Envirothon is the Suunto hypsometer. There are several types of Suunto hypsometers and the user should be familiar with the different types that are available.

We will discuss two types here.

1. 15 meter (scale labeled 1/15) where $45^\circ = 15$ units
2. 20 meter (scale labeled 1/20) where $45^\circ = 20$ units

Using the 15 metre or 20 metre scale

When using a Suunto with a 15- or 20-meter scale you must stand at exactly 15 or 20 meters from the tree (depending on which scale you are using. When looking through the Suunto, the "0" reading indicates the horizon. If you and the tree are on flat ground, the measurement taken at the top of the tree will be a positive number while the measurement at the base of the tree will be negative. By adding the absolute value of both numbers, you will determine the height of the tree.



7.2.4 Measuring basal area

The basal area of a single tree is the cross-sectional area of that tree measured at breast height (DBH, 1.3 meters above the ground). To calculate the basal area of a single tree simply use the formula for the area of a circle:

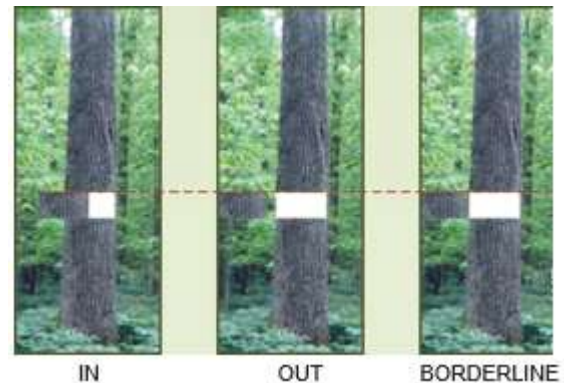
Area of a single tree

$$\text{Area} = \pi r^2$$

However, it is more practical to refer to basal area on a per hectare basis, which means that it corresponds to the sum of the basal areas of all the trees on a hectare.

The wedge prism is the tool most commonly used to measure basal area. The prism consists of a thin layer of glass or plastic that refracts light thus displacing the image of an object (tree) when viewed through it. The prism is held above the plot centre and remains in that position while the person using the prism rotates around that point. It is a good idea to mark the plot centre with a stick and maintain the prism directly above the stick as measurements are taken. There are three possible outcomes for each tree that is assessed:

1. The displaced image touches the tree trunk, the tree is inside the plot and is counted (tree is "IN").
2. The displaced image does not touch the tree trunk, the tree is outside the plot and is not counted (tree is "OUT").
3. The displaced image is perfectly aligned with the tree trunk. This tree is considered borderline and every second tree is counted (tree is "BORDERLINE").



Trees that are counted must be living and have a diameter of greater than 9 cm at breast height.

All prisms have a basal area factor. The basal area factor most commonly used in New Brunswick is 2m²/ha, which means that any tree that is IN the plot represents 2 square meters of basal area on a per hectare basis

For example, if your plot contained 9 "IN" trees the basal area for that plot would be 18m²/ha

However, when sampling a stand, several plots are usually taken to get an average of the stand. When more than one plot is taken, you must divide the total basal area by the number of plots and multiply that number by the basal area factor.

For example if you measured four plots and the total number of "IN" trees in those four plots was 44, the basal area represented by those four plots would be 44/4 = 11 x 2m²/ha = 22 m²/ha.

Basal area is a very useful measure of the density of trees in a stand. Trees in a stand with a high basal area compete for space (sunlight) and nutrients, which affects tree growth. Basal area is one of the main criteria used by foresters to determine what treatment a stand should receive and how intensive the treatment should be (i.e. how much basal area should be removed).

8.0 FOREST HEALTH

8.1 Biodiversity

Biological diversity – or biodiversity – includes all of the life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. Biodiversity includes genetic, species and ecosystem diversity. Abiotic components are also part of an ecosystem's biodiversity as they contribute to ecosystem functioning. Biodiversity drives many natural processes and functions that are required for the survival of humans. These processes include purification of air and water, recycling of nutrients and fertilization of crops. Without these vital ecosystem services, humans would not be able to survive.

Trees play a crucial role in many ecosystems and are very important to animals as they offer habitat and food sources. Insects, birds and mammals eat the leaves, flowers, fruit, bark and twigs of many trees. Birds and animals use trees for nesting areas. Many animals use trees as a shelter from harsh weather. Other plants have a symbiotic relationship with trees and require their presence for survival. Trees are also very valuable to humans. Trees offer us shade and create beautiful colours for us to enjoy in the fall. Trees provide us with many products such as wood to create furniture, houses and fuel, and materials such as sap and nuts for food and bark for medicines.

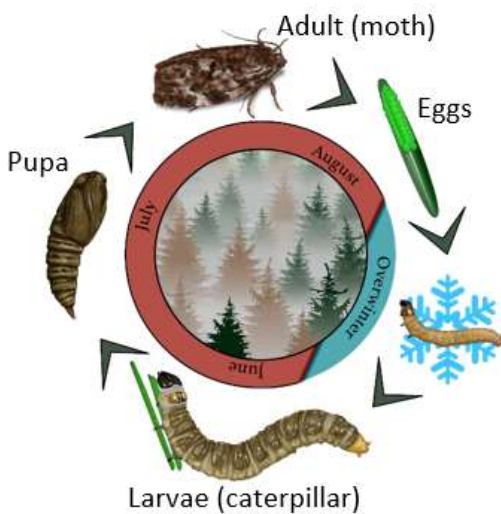
The main threats to forest biodiversity include habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation, invasive alien species and climate change. Many human impacts are resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation and the degradation of the landscape. The building of roads, urban sprawl, recreation, logging and agriculture has an effect on the number of species in an area. This not only affects forest biodiversity but the biodiversity of all species living with and depending on the trees. With fragmentation, seeds are not able to spread and invasive species are more likely to expand into forest ecosystems and out compete native vegetation. Climate change is also a major threat to forest biodiversity. With temperature changes, trees may not be able to adapt quickly enough.

8.2 Native insects and diseases

Native insects and disease can cause severe impacts on forest ecosystems through defoliation and mortality. However, these ecosystem changes are not always detrimental as it can help to renew forests by removing older trees and allowing younger trees to thrive. Some insect species can cause outbreaks periodically, and have large-scale impacts on healthy forests. An example of this is the spruce budworm, which has periodic outbreak cycles every 30 to 40 years in the boreal forest. These outbreaks can be quite large, and repetitive years of defoliation can result in significant mortality. In addition, dead trees provide high quantities fuel sources that increase the risk of wildfires.

8.2.1 Spruce budworm

The spruce budworm (*Choristoneura fumiferana*) is a native forest insect that inhabits the spruce-fir forests of northeastern North America. Spruce budworm completes its life cycle in a single year. After emerging from its pupa, the female moth mates and lays an average of 180 eggs on the needles of spruce and fir. The eggs hatch in about ten days and shortly after, the young larvae crawl into bark crevices, under bud scales, or other sheltered areas and overwinter in a small cocoon (hibernaculum). Sampling of overwintering larvae provides estimates of population levels for the following year.



Life cycle of spruce budworm



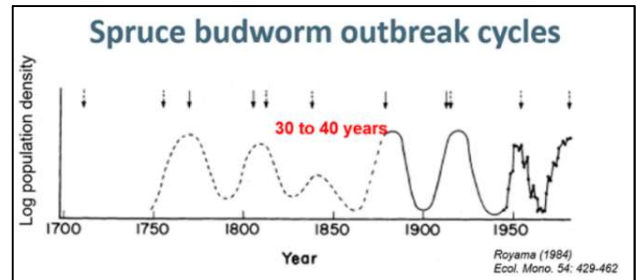
Damage (defoliation and tree mortality during outbreak)

Spruce budworm prefer to feed on the tender current-year shoots of balsam fir and spruce. The spruce budworm's prefers balsam fir and during severe uncontrolled outbreaks, up to 85% of the mature balsam fir can be killed by spruce budworm. Mortality in spruce is also significant with up to 30-40% mortality of mature spruce occurring during severe uncontrolled outbreaks.

Spruce budworm damage starts in May. Defoliation begins at the top of the tree and quickly progresses to the edge of the crown from the top downwards. Current-year needles are partially or completely consumed and, if large numbers of larvae are present, previous-year needles may also be affected. Evidence of an infestation includes the destruction of buds, abnormal spreading of new shoots, defoliation of current-year shoots and the presence of large numbers of larvae suspended from strands of silk.

A single year of defoliation generally has little impact on the tree. However, it does cause weakening of the tree, making it more susceptible to attacks by other insects. Defoliation over several consecutive years causes tree growth loss. If defoliation continues over several years, tree mortality will occur. Balsam fir, the species most vulnerable to spruce budworm attacks, will begin to die after four consecutive years of severe defoliation.

Outbreaks of this insect generally occur every 30 to 40 years. During this cycle, populations of spruce budworm range from being very low (endemic) to very high (epidemic). If left unmanaged, these outbreaks can result in millions of hectares of dead fir and spruce trees. During past epidemics, forest managers would wait until budworm numbers were high and the trees were at risk of dying before intervening. A foliage protection approach was used to protect the forest and insecticides were applied over large areas with the objective of keeping the trees alive until the epidemic cycle ended.



The last outbreak of spruce budworm in Atlantic Canada ended around 1990. Since then, natural controls (natural enemies and climatic factors) have kept spruce budworm numbers at almost undetectable levels.

In 2006, a new outbreak started in Quebec and by 2014, had grown to 4.6 million hectares and was approaching the northern border of the province of New Brunswick.

In response to this threat of a new outbreak in Atlantic Canada, a group called the Healthy Forest Partnership (HFP) was formed. The HFP acquired funding to test a new approach to managing budworm populations. A research program called the early intervention strategy (EIS) for spruce budworm was undertaken to explore if it could be used to control hotspots at the leading edge of an outbreak with the objective of limiting further spread or reducing the magnitude of an outbreak in New Brunswick.

The EIS relies on intensive sampling to identify areas where spruce budworms are beginning to rise and treating these areas with biological insecticides to keep numbers low. The approach used in Quebec is the more traditional strategy of foliage protection. It differs from EIS in that populations of spruce budworm are allowed to rise and begin to cause defoliation before insecticides are applied.

By 2020, the outbreak in Quebec had grown to over 13 million hectares and defoliation by spruce budworm was occurring along the northern New Brunswick border. However, very little defoliation was occurring in New Brunswick.

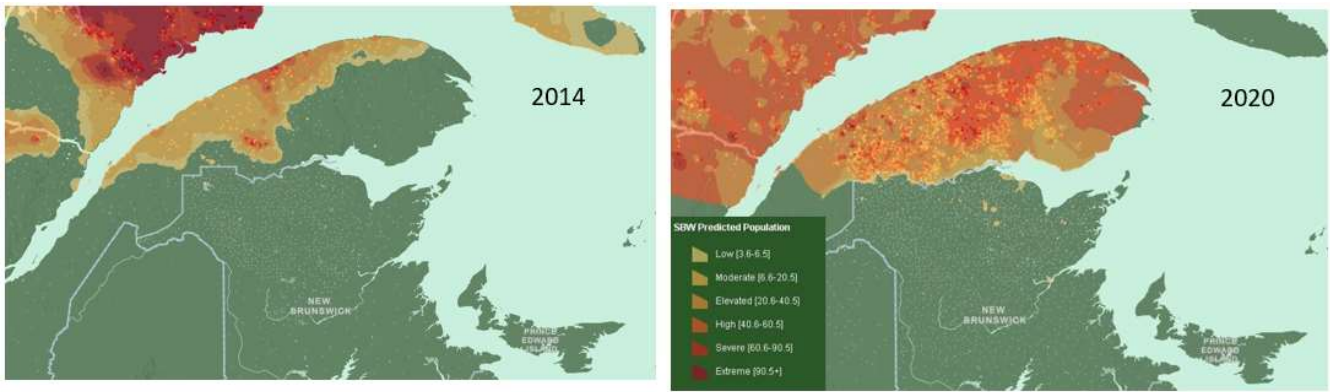


Figure 22. Spruce budworm defoliation in Quebec and Atlantic Canada in 2014 at the beginning of the early intervention strategy and in 2020 after six years of early intervention against the spruce budworm in Atlantic Canada.

The risk of a budworm outbreak in Atlantic Canada still exists as the outbreak in Quebec continues. During spruce budworm outbreaks, massive dispersal events can occur which help spread the outbreak in new areas. The last massive moth dispersal event in New Brunswick was in 2016 but moths continue to move into the province on an annual basis. This dispersal event was captured on Environment Canada weather radar (below).



Figure 23. Environment Canada weather radar showing mass dispersal event in July, 2016 (left) and photos of moths in Campbellton, New Brunswick following the mass dispersal event (centre and right).

Researchers remain cautiously optimistic that the EIS is a viable strategy to control budworm populations and potentially prevent large-scale outbreaks. The spruce budworm issue is extremely complex and the answer to the question of whether EIS will work will not be known until the outbreak in Quebec has ended.

Since the beginning of the EIS in 2014, there has been no mortality of balsam fir or spruce in New Brunswick that can be attributed to the spruce budworm and only light defoliation levels have been reported in small pockets in northern New Brunswick. However, the risk of an outbreak remains high due to the continuing epidemic in Quebec and from the risk of additional moth migration into Atlantic Canada.

8.2.2 Forest tent caterpillar

The forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria*) is the most widespread defoliator of deciduous trees. Its range extends from coast to coast.



Infestations are generally short and parasitoids are very important in the natural control of populations. The most important parasitoid is the large flesh fly, which acts quickly after the start of an infestation, and can destroy up to 80% of the pupal population.



Defoliation is caused by the caterpillar, which begin to feed on the new leaves as soon as they appear in May. Given this insect's voracious appetite and gregarious behaviour throughout most of its development, its presence can be quickly detected. Older larvae devour entire leaves and, when the tree is completely defoliated, migrate in search of other sources of food.

Larvae can also be observed in colonies on tree trunks sheltered from the sun's rays. During massive invasions, trees can be completely defoliated over large areas. Even when severely defoliated, trees withstand infestations relatively well. Infestations generally last no more than three consecutive years. Denuded trees will produce another crop of leaves during the season.

8.2.3 White pine weevil

The white pine weevil (*Pissodes strobi*) occurs throughout the range of white pine in eastern Canada.

Damage is caused mainly by the larvae, which feed under the bark of the tree's terminal leader. Feeding punctures made by the adult weevils can also damage the leader.

The presence of the insect is easily detected by the dropping, wilted appearance of the current year's leader, which resembles a shepherd's crook.

Tree mortality due to the white pine weevil is rare. In white pine with recurring annual damage, wood quality is affected, reducing merchantable timber volume by sometimes up to 60%.



Adult



Larvae



Damage

8.3 Invasive species

Invasive alien species are plants, mammals, fish, insects, other invertebrates, birds, reptiles, molluscs, microbes, and diseases that are introduced to an area and survive and reproduce, causing harm economically or environmentally within the new area of introduction. Invasive species can have devastating impacts on our native forest ecosystems because they can outcompete native species.

Invasive species are introduced through a variety of means from importing goods from other countries, ballast water in ships, within wood containers, and through recreation. Their management can be challenging because the impact of the new species is often unknown. Risk analysis and prevention are essential in protecting our environment, economy and society from the impact of invasive species.

8.3.1 Emerald ash borer (EAB)

The emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is native to eastern Asia. This pest was first discovered in Canada and the U.S. in 2002. It has since spread to 35 US states and 5 Canadian provinces. In 2018, it was found in New Brunswick (Edmundston) and Nova Scotia (Bedford near Halifax). In 2019, it was found in two other locations in NB (Oromocto and Moncton) and in 2020 was discovered in Fredericton.



The EAB has killed millions of ash trees in Southwestern Ontario, Michigan and surrounding states, and poses a major economic and environmental threat to urban and forested areas in both countries.



The EAB attacks and kills all species of ash (except mountain ash, which is not a true ash). Adult emergence starts in June and ends in late July. A few days after mating, female will lay 60 to 90 eggs, one at the time, on the bark and crevices of ash trees. After hatching, the larvae dig into the bark and start feeding, creating s-shaped galleries in the phloem in order to feed themselves. They hibernate in the bark and pupate in April or May.

While the EAB can fly up to several kilometres, a more significant factor contributing to its spread is the movement by humans of firewood, nursery stock, trees, logs, lumber, wood with bark attached and wood or bark chips.

8.3.2 Butternut canker

Butternut canker infects butternut trees through buds, leaf scars, insect wounds and other openings in the bark. It is believed that rain splashing can move the fungal spores from infected branches to other branches and that insects and birds may inadvertently carry the spores to the trees.

A characteristic sign of infection in a butternut is cankers that leak a blackish fluid from cracks in the bark after a rainfall or in humid weather. These cankers join together and eventually girdle the main trunk, killing the tree. Controlling infected trees is not possible. This fungal disease is a fundamental threat to butternut and has caused this species to die out throughout much of its natural range.



In 2005, butternut was listed as Endangered by the Species at Risk Act (SARA) in Canada.

8.3.5 Beech bark disease

Beech bark disease results from the combined action of the beech scale insect and a pathogenic fungus, *Nectria coccinea*. Most affected beech end up succumbing to the disease, either directly or as a result of being attacked by other pathogens. In mid-summer, the female deposits her eggs in the bark fissures. The larvae hatch and stays in the same place or migrates to other cracks. In fall, the nymph becomes stationary again and secretes a woolly envelope. This woolly envelope makes the tree look like it is covered with snow.

The scale insect over winters in the bark of the tree. The fungal spores are spread by rain splash or by the wind and penetrate into the tree through wounds created by the scale insect. The fungus first causes a depression in the bark of the affected region and cankerous blisters of various sizes also form. On severely affected trees, there are so many cankers that they end up merging. Although the disease is widespread, some trees (around 4-5 %) appear to not be affected.



Healthy beech



Diseased beech

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE AND CANADA'S FOREST

9.1 Canada's forests in a changing climate

The climate is changing and so are Canada's forests. Increased numbers of large fires, greater drought frequency and intensity, shifting patterns of disease and invasive insect outbreaks: all of these trends over the last five decades are impacting Canada's forests and have even resulted at times in loss of jobs and homes in some communities.

How the climate will continue changing is difficult to predict. However, because Canada is a northern country, the changes are expected to be greater than the global average. How Canada's forests will respond is also hard to know. However, scientists and other researchers are working to find answers that will reduce these uncertainties.

If global efforts to address climate change are successful in limiting the world's increase in temperature to 2°C, the increase in Canada is still forecast to average 4°C by 2100.

With the likelihood of new climate conditions, forests are expected to evolve, and in some areas become quite different from what they are now. Species composition, average age, geographic range and growth rates are all likely to change over the coming decades. This makes adaptation by the forest sector – such as planting drought-tolerant species – more important than ever.

While Canada's forests will be affected by climate change, they may very well be part of the solution. Trees absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and store it in their trunks, roots, branches and leaves. Increasing the area and growth of forests therefore reduces the amounts of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, helping to slow temperature rise. Using wood products and bioenergy also helps lessen the need for products made with processes that result in high GHG emissions and reduces the use of fossil fuels.

Canada's scientists have long been studying how changing climate conditions are affecting the country's forests. Milder, drier climatic conditions over the past 50 years are thought to be a major reason for longer fire seasons and the increase in the number of severe forest fires and the size of areas burned.



9.2 How forests could look in the future

Research on the biological, economic and social implications of climate change for Canada's forests and forest industry is constantly improving our understanding of what the potential changes might be and how they could affect forest habitat and biodiversity, timber supply and communities.

Most areas in Canada are expected to experience at least a two-fold increase in annual area burned by forest fires and a 1.5-fold increase in the number of large fires by the end of the 21st century. This means that the average age of the country's forests is likely to decline in some areas, with increases in the number of young trees regenerating in burned out areas.

Forest growth rates and the distribution of species may also change. Climate conditions have already shifted, affecting the distribution of certain tree species in Canada. The rate of climate change is projected to be 10 to 100 times faster than the ability of tree species to migrate. This means that some tree species will benefit (for example, growing faster or spreading more widely), while others will become increasingly stressed, potentially dying out over time.

Such changes pose broader ecological consequences as well, affecting vegetation and wildlife, which would need to adapt or migrate under changing climate and forest habitat conditions.

Adapting to climate change means adjusting decisions and activities to take into account observed or expected changes in climate. In the forest sector, that means integrating climate change knowledge into sustainable forest management planning and practices to help maintain both ecosystem integrity and the flow of social, economic and environmental benefits. Planting a greater diversity of tree species in a forest, for example, is one way of reducing the forest's vulnerability to future insect infestation or fire risks.

Adaptation measures are specific to a region and forest type and therefore vary widely. What best suits the local environmental and socio-economic needs in a region on the east coast might not offer the best solution on the west coast or in the northern boreal forest.

Adaptation will also be important to industry and communities as they adjust to the changing forests they rely on. Harvest levels, for instance, may need to be reduced as more-frequent natural disturbances reduce the available timber supply. Forest companies will need to increase their efforts to find innovative ways to use more dead or low-quality wood salvaged from burned areas or areas invaded by insects or disease. Communities located in forested areas are already being encouraged to be "fire smart" by clearing trees and general forest brush (living and dead) from areas between buildings and forest.

9.3 Using Canada's forests to help mitigate climate change

At the climate change conference in Paris in December 2015, Canada joined the international community in aiming to achieve near-zero GHG emissions by 2050. Canada has committed to a 30% reduction in its emissions (below 2005 levels) by 2030. Further emission reductions will be needed after that in order to meet the international ambition of keeping the global temperature increase to below 2°C.

Given the current and projected impacts of climate change on Canada's forests, it may seem counterintuitive to think that forests can also be part of the climate change solution. However, the carbon-storing capacity of forests, together with the ability of wood products to replace fossil-fuel-intensive products, can contribute to keeping CO₂ out of the atmosphere.

The ways in which forests are managed (tended, harvested and regenerated) and harvested wood is used can therefore make important contributions to Canada's efforts to meet its climate change commitments. Among the mitigation actions being considered by various jurisdictions are the following:

Increase the overall forest area

Landowners could plant new forests on lands not currently part of the managed forest.

Use sustainable forest management practices that reduce GHG emissions and store carbon

- Forest managers could limit on-site burning of harvest waste (such as stumps, bark and branches), using it for bioenergy instead;
- Make more complete use of the material harvested;
- Speed up reforestation after natural disturbances; and
- Increase growth rates in appropriate locations through intensive management.

Use more wood in construction

Builders could use more wood from sustainably managed forests in non-traditional construction applications in place of other materials whose manufacture, use and disposal involve higher amounts of GHG emissions. The practicality and environmental benefits of using wood in construction are already being demonstrated in ever larger and taller wood buildings.

Use more wood waste for energy and other bioproducts

Industry and individuals could increase the use of waste wood for energy to replace fossil fuels or use bioproducts that replace similar products made from fossil fuels.

Some of the emission-reducing benefits from these activities would be immediate. Other benefits would take more time to achieve. For this reason, the sooner mitigation actions are undertaken, the more they will help Canada meet its GHG emission reduction target for 2030 and its longer-term move to a low-carbon economy.

9.4 Adapting to climate change in Canada's forests

As a biological resource, forests are on the front line in experiencing the effects of climate change. Trees are a renewable resource made of carbon and as such, they are part of the climate change solution. Some of the ways we can help our forests remain healthy and continue to provide essential services are:

Planting tree species with greater drought tolerance

Drought conditions reduce tree growth and productivity and can lead to tree mortality. Researchers are studying plant traits to identify tree species with greater drought tolerance and increased ability to reproduce following drought.

Fire-proofing neighbourhoods and communities

As fire activity in many regions increases, communities and homeowners are conducting hazard assessments and following FireSmart recommendations – for example, selecting fire-resistant plants with moist, supple leaves for landscaping and removing potential fuel such as dry grasses and dead branches from around homes.

Planting trees from a wider range of seed sources to maintain productivity

A tree planted today will mature in a warmer climate and may not grow as well in that regime. Foresters are therefore planting seedlings from a range of seed sources, favouring species from southern or lower-elevation populations – sources already adapted to warmer conditions.

Adjusting forest harvest schedules to minimize severe insect damage

As the incidence of severe insect infestations increases, foresters can adjust harvest schedules to remove vulnerable stands of trees ahead of pest attacks and harvest insect-damaged trees to maintain overall stand health.

Reducing damage to forests from wind storms

As temperatures warm, the early thaw and delayed freezing of soils provide less support for tree roots, making them more prone to uprooting during spring and fall wind storms in eastern Canada. Silviculture techniques such as varying the size and shape of harvest blocks and leaving patches can help reduce forest vulnerability to wind damage.

Finding ways to use the wood from dead and damaged trees

To offset the effects of damage to forests caused by insect and disease outbreaks, forest companies are salvage-logging and adjusting wood-processing techniques to create new products from dead and lower-quality trees.

9.5 Forests and Earth's carbon balance

The “carbon cycle” refers to the constant movement of carbon from the land and water through the atmosphere and living organisms. This cycle is fundamental to life on Earth.

Forests are a vital part of the carbon cycle, both storing and releasing this essential element in a dynamic process of growth, decay, disturbance and renewal. At a global scale, forests help maintain Earth’s carbon balance.

Over the past four decades, forests have moderated climate change by absorbing about one-quarter of the carbon emitted by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels and the changing of land uses. Carbon uptake by forests reduces the rate at which carbon accumulates in the atmosphere and thus reduces the rate at which climate change occurs.

How well forests will continue to remove the proportion of carbon now being emitted by human activities will affect the future rate of carbon increase in the atmosphere.

As a major forest nation, Canada is working to understand how today’s changing climate will affect the global carbon balance, the health of the country’s ecosystems and the flow of goods and services provided to Canadian society.

Forests can act as either carbon sources or carbon sinks.

- A forest is considered a carbon source if it releases more carbon than it absorbs. Forest carbon is released when trees burn or when they decay after dying (because of old age or of fire, insect attack or other disturbance).
- A forest is considered a carbon sink if it absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere than it releases. Carbon is absorbed from the atmosphere through photosynthesis. It then becomes deposited in forest biomass (trunks, branches, roots and leaves), in dead organic matter (litter and dead wood) and in soils. This process of carbon absorption and deposition is known as carbon sequestration.

For the past century, Canada's managed forests have been a significant carbon sink, steadily adding carbon to that already stored. In recent decades, however, the situation has reversed in some years. Canada’s forests have become carbon sources, releasing more carbon into the atmosphere than they are accumulating in any given year.

Several factors have contributed to this shift. The annual total area burned by wildland fires has increased substantially. Unprecedented insect outbreaks have occurred and annual harvest rates have shifted in response to economic demand, increasing in the 1990s and decreasing sharply with the global economic recession.

The combination of these events and activities has resulted in Canada’s managed forest acting as a net carbon source in years when large areas are burned.



9.6 How climate change will affect the Acadian Forest

Researchers are using models to help determine how climate change will affect the trees of the Acadian forest region. To project the impacts of climate change on tree species, we need to know what changes in climate are likely to occur in the future. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has adopted four climate change scenarios that describe possible climate futures to the year 2100. The climate scenarios are referred to as “representative concentration pathways” (RCP 2.6, RCP 4.5, RCP 6.0 and RCP 8.5). They represent different radiative forcing (warming) narratives (i.e. story lines) that humanity may follow depending on our future dependence on fossil fuels and on the level of greenhouse gas emissions. Scientists use these climate scenarios to predict future impacts under different levels of greenhouse gas concentrations.

The results shown here are from a paper by Dr. Anthony Taylor who used RCP 2.6 and RCP 8.5 in his models to project what changes would likely occur to the Acadian Forest. It is important to note that Dr. Taylor’s results are consistent with other research conducted on the impacts of climate change on the trees of the Acadian Forest Region.

RCP 2.6 assumes that greenhouse gas emissions will peak sometime between 2010 and 2100 and then start to decline. This situation represents a mean annual temperature increase of about 3°C from current conditions in the Acadian Forest region by mid-century, at which time it will start to decline. RCP 8.5 represents a “business as usual” scenario in which carbon dioxide levels continue to rise unchecked, and the mean annual temperature continues to rise to about 7°C above current conditions by the year 2100.

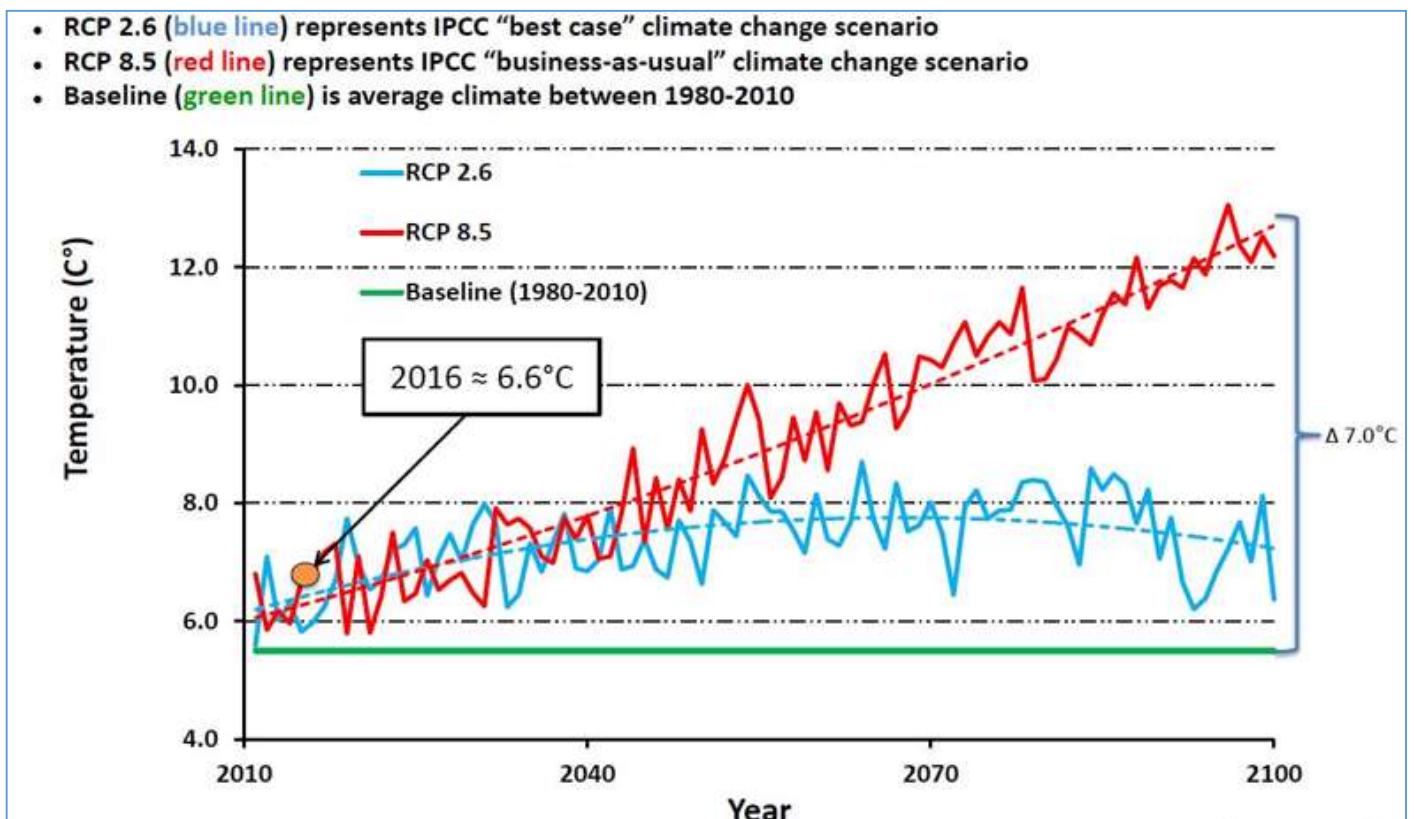


Figure 24. Climate change projections for the Acadian Forest under RCP 2.6 and RCP 8.5.

Forest composition

The Acadian Forest region is a mosaic of softwood, hardwood and mixedwood forests. The Acadian Forest consists of tree species that are representative of the conifer-dominated boreal forest to the north and temperate deciduous forest to the south.

Boreal tree species such as balsam fir, black spruce, white spruce, white birch and trembling aspen are at the southern limit of their ranges. Temperate species such as red maple, red oak, American beech, eastern hemlock and eastern white pine are at their northern climatic limits.

Species that exist on the fringes of their home ranges are particularly susceptible to a changing environment. As the climate warms, tree species that characterize the temperate forest will find the conditions more favourable, while cold-adapted species of the boreal forest will find the conditions more challenging.

In the short term (years 2011 to 2040), little or no difference in forest composition is projected between the baseline (current climate) and RCPs 2.6 and 8.5. No discernible changes in forest composition were detected under RCP 2.6 over the long-term.

However, under RCP 8.5, the relative abundance of warm-adapted temperate tree species gradually begins to increase by mid-century while the cold-adapted boreal tree species (e.g. spruce and fir) decrease. By the end of the century, the abundance of spruce and fir is projected to decrease by 20 to 30% under RCP 8.5

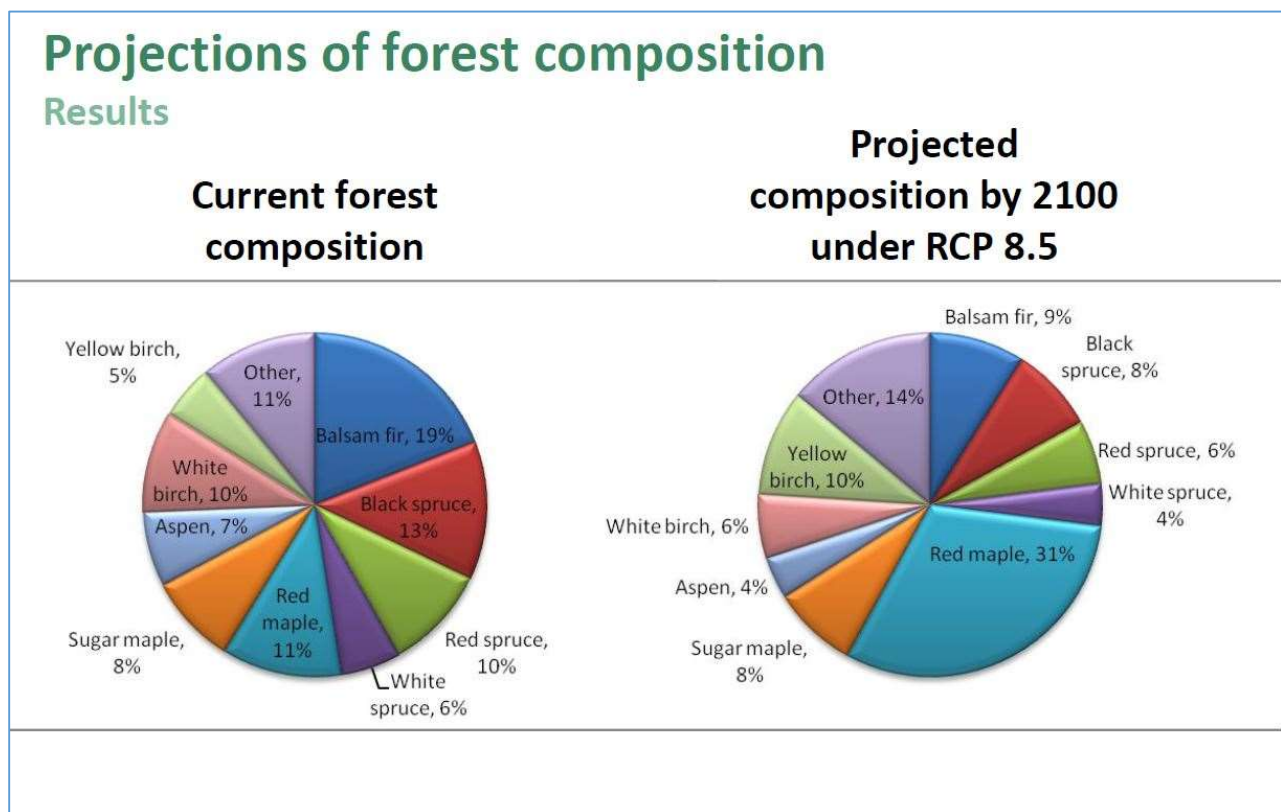


Figure 25. Comparison of current forest composition in the Acadian Forest and what the forest composition could look like under RCP 8.5

Forest growth

Similar to forest composition, in the short-term (2011 to 2040), little or no difference in forest growth is projected between the baseline and RCPs 2.6 and 8.5. In the long-term, growth rates under RCP 2.6 are slightly lower than baseline, showing a 6% decrease in growth by the year 2100. The greatest difference occurs under RCP 8.5, where a 42% reduction in growth is projected.

The main reason for the loss in productivity is a reduction in growth of the boreal species component of the Acadian Forest. This decrease in growth of boreal species is exacerbated by what Taylor and colleagues are calling a “blocking mechanism.”

What happens is maladapted boreal species are physically blocking the establishment of better-adapted temperate trees by continuing to occupy space. Because the climate is expected to change very rapidly under RCP 8.5, the forest is unable to adapt quickly enough, causing a lag effect. The effect is that there may be a temporary adjustment period for the warm-adapted temperate trees to gradually replace the boreal component.

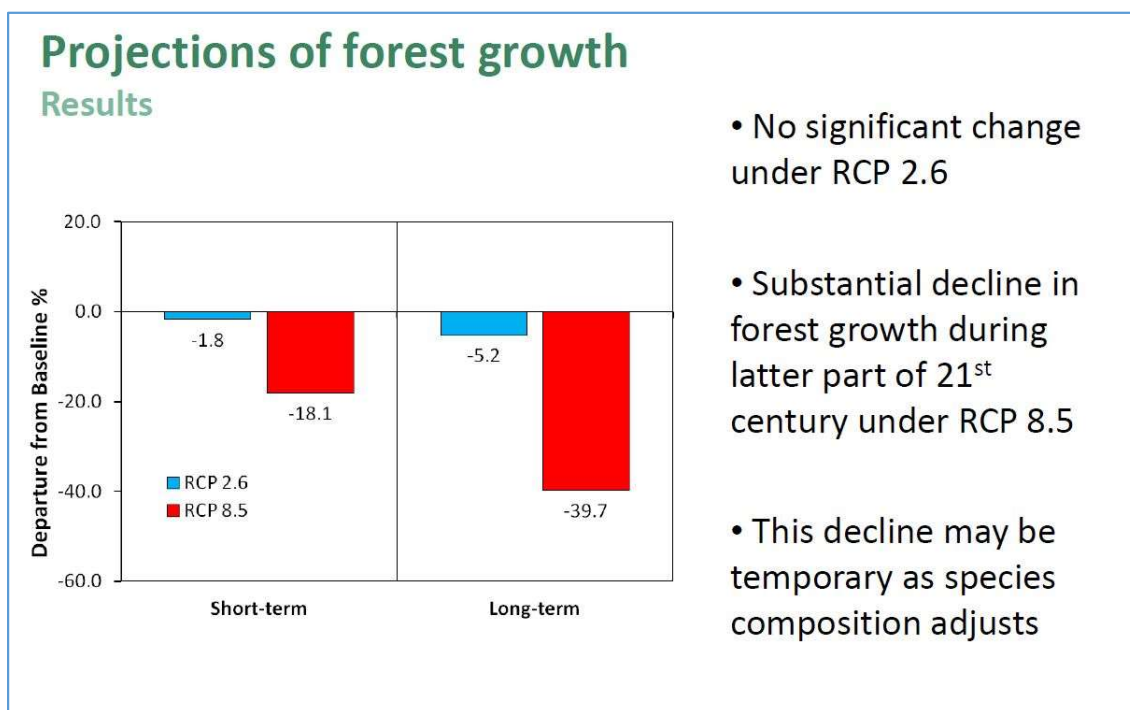


Figure 26. Projections of forest growth in the Acadian forest in the short and long-term under RCP 2.6 and RCP 8.5.

Forest managers need to be aware of the effects that a warming climate may have on our forest, especially under a “business as usual” scenario represented by RCP 8.5. In this scenario, a reduction in valuable boreal species such as balsam fir, black spruce and red spruce will occur and will likely affect forestry in the region.

The forest industry in the Maritimes needs to be aware of these potential changes and consider how best to manage the forests as our climate changes.

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