

NORFOLK WOODLOT OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.norfolkwoodlots.com



November 2019

President's Message Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The NWOA Board is planning for the **Annual General Meeting at the German Home, Delhi, March 4, 2019. The doors open at 5pm. The meeting starts at 7pm and ends at 9pm.** You should plan to attend and mark it on your calendar because it'll be a great one! Bring a friend or neighbour because we will have many vendor and group booths with lots of information that pertains to your woodlot such as the latest on woodlot management for income and/or habitat for songbirds or monarch butterflies. Our guest speaker, Dr. Christian (Chris) MacQuarrie is a researcher with the Natural Resources Canada's Canadian Forest Service based in Sault Ste. Marie. He has been a member of the Pest Ecology and Management team since 2010. His research interests include integrated pest management of native and introduced forest insects, biological control, insect population dynamics and insect ecology and behaviour. Presently his focus is on the population dynamics of emerald ash borer, developing science-based advice for phytosanitary certification, and optimizing trapping of budworm moths.

To top it off, there is coffee and Timbits while you catch up with other members and friends and don't forget the prizes!

Of course everyone's favourite prize is our early bird membership renewal lottery with the winner receiving a chainsaw donated by Sthil, Premier and Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association. For your name to be included in this lottery all you need to do is renew your membership and have it in the Treasurers hands before March 1, 2020. There is a renewal form enclosed.

Many hands make the work load light! We have a very talented and complementary group of people on our Board. I have a lot of fun working with them. We met 9 times a year, with July, August and December off. We would love to welcome new members to learn what is going on in Norfolk County, wood markets or learn to better manage your woodlot for whatever purpose you see it doing for you. Depending on your talents, perhaps joining our Newsletter Committee would help get your creative juices flowing. Our foray into social media via Facebook could always use more local pictures' perhaps you could share some from your woodlot. Our Workshop/Tour Committee would love some new ideas on woodlot management for specific purposes that would be of interest to the membership. If you wish to volunteer for your community by becoming a Board Member and you have questions contact me or one of the Board members.

We welcome your comments, thoughts and ideas for our newsletter, workshops and Annual Meeting. You can post them on our website www.norfolkwoodlots.com or call me at 519-426-2782 or email me at johndewitt@kwic.com.

PS We just discovered that the current Forest Conservation By-law is proposed to be disregarded and replaced by a new By-law this December 17th. The history of previous by laws, which the current by law reflects, resulted in stabilizing Norfolks' light sandy soils. No input from NWOA was requested nor from many other stakeholders. More information is in the enclosed letter to the Mayor and councillors.

John de Witt

November 25, 2019

To the Mayor and Councillors of Norfolk County, and whomever else this may concern,

I am writing to you today with respect to a presentation to Council on November 19, 2019 regarding Norfolk County's Forest Conservation By-law. I write to you on behalf of the Norfolk Woodlot Owners' Association Board of Directors, and on behalf of our 173 members. Unfortunately, given the seemingly short amount of time provided to allow for public consultation and input on the Draft Forest By-law that was presented last Tuesday, my comments in this letter will have to be kept rather high-level as our Board will not have had time to adequately meet and consult with our entire membership before the December 17th requirement to provide input to Council.

Our organization has been in existence since 1996. We were established largely because of the local interest in sustainable forest management, at a time shortly after the Ministry of Natural Resources had withdrawn its services in respect to assisting private landowners with management of their forest resource. Norfolk County was ahead of many other municipalities in respect to its forest by-law of the time and remains the envy of other southwestern Ontario municipalities. The withdrawal of services and support by the Province left many private landowners, who owned forests, with little access to resources in order to educate themselves about proper forest stewardship. As a result, woodlots were severely degraded through over-harvesting and poor logging practices. Many landowners were also unaware of the actual value of what was being removed from their property and this was being taken advantage of by 'quick profit' logging operators looking for short-term gain. As market prices for local hardwoods peaked, so too did the destruction to area woodlots.

The coming together of local resource owners, the Norfolk Federation of Agriculture, the Norfolk Land Stewardship Council, and the Tree Commission (known today as the Norfolk County Forest Conservation Service) resulted in the formation of the Norfolk Woodlot Owners' Association. Our organization has provided an important network and foundation for landowners looking to learn about forest management techniques, keep current on local forest health issues, and generally how to properly manage Norfolk forests. NWOA efforts has helped inform countless members over the years in these regards and have also acted as a large and important voice for local forest resource owners when it comes to policy development, both at the provincial and local municipal level.

Taking into consideration of our known presence in the community and our goal to "promote wise use and stewardship of Norfolk's Woodlots", it is concerning to our Board that no effort was taken to contact us regarding the proposal of a new Forest By-law. This proposed change in policy has a direct impact on our entire membership, which represent a significant portion of Norfolk County's forest resource owners. Our organization has played an important role in transmitting information to our membership regarding policy that impacts the management of their forests, and as a result, have played an equally important role in providing valuable input on the development of our local forest by-law.

Norfolk County has had a forest by-law in existence since 1947. The by-law has developed and transformed significantly over the years to better promote sustainable forest management and protect private landowners. As a result, Norfolk County boasts a commendable amount of forest cover which supports a strong forest industry keen on the continued sustainable use management of our forests. The most current by-law has been in place since 2006 and is the result of a very long and thorough review process involving forest industry, agricultural industry, local conservation organizations, the general public, and local woodlot owners, including those represented by our membership. This was by no means a one sided approach to by-law development and was very much the result of a grass-roots effort involving all stakeholders. Although the by-law was passed 13 years ago, it is still to this day highly regarded by other surrounding areas as being a very progressive forest by-law. The idea of having this by-law replaced entirely by a different by-law does not seem like a logical approach to change, given the history of the development of our current by-law.

It is the intent of our Board to respectfully request that the Council of Norfolk County defer the matter of approving this proposed Forest By-law to a much later date, one which would allow our Board to communicate with our membership these proposed changes. We would also request that if the current Forest Conservation By-law is to be under review for any proposed changes, that it goes through a much more thorough consultation than what has seemingly transpired to-date. To have this Draft By-law presented to Council on November 19th, and the indication that the Draft By-law could be passed on December 17th, does not seem remotely close to allowing adequate time for consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Lastly, we would strongly recommend that should our current by-law be reviewed for changes, that the review would begin with our existing by-law as a starting point, rather than disregarding 72 years of history that has gotten us to where we are now.

I expect that this letter will be received for your consideration, and we look forward to working with Norfolk County towards a positive resolution on this matter.

Regards,

John deWitt, President of the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association
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Introducing CFI's seventh annual Top 10 Under 40

September 23, 2019 - By Canadian Forest Industries Staff

MIKE PENNER

Owner and president, Townsend Lumber Inc., Tillsonburg, Ont.

A lot has changed for Mike Penner, owner and president of Townsend Lumber, in the past six years. In 2013, Mike was the project superintendent for a local general contracting business, but he switched to forestry after his father-in-law offered him the position of general manager at Townsend Lumber.

“Mike’s first years with the company were challenging, learning the logging and lumber industry while working hard to earn trust and respect from his new colleagues,” Laura Townsend, Mike’s spouse and business partner, says.

But Mike, 38, has since made a number of key cultural changes at the company, improving communication, teamwork, accountability and a focus on quality, Townsend says. Mike has also built key relationships with local private landowners and logging contractors.

In October 2016, Mike’s father-in-law decided to retire. Mike and Laura purchased the company, along with their other related companies, Kitchener Forest Products, Breeze Dried Inc., and BreezeWood Floors, collectively forming the ‘Townsend Penner Group of Companies.’ Since then, Mike has been managing all aspects of these companies, including the raw material supply, production and sales of their three sawmills. Together, the group of companies now has 170 employees and produces over 18 mmbf of high-quality lumber annually.

Mike has also overseen many significant equipment upgrades and projects since he became the owner, focused on improving product quality and consistency. A member of the board of directors for the local Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association, he has become increasingly involved in the industry, working with local municipalities to improve timber harvesting bylaws to protect and preserve southwestern Ontario’s woodlots. He has also worked with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) on several research projects, says Dr. Chris MacQuarrie, research scientist at NRCan, Canada Forest Service.

Mike provided research support and technical information to inform the design and implementation of a research project on the effect of the sawmilling process on reducing the risk of exporting emerald ash borer-infested wood, shares MacQuarrie.

“The results of this research were, and continue to be, used by the Canadian government to convince trading partners that Canadian wood products present little risk to forests overseas from the introduction of potentially-invasive pests,” MacQuarrie explains.

“This research was the first-of-its-kind in the world, and would not have been possible without the help of Mike and his team at Townsend Lumber,” he adds. “He went above and beyond to assist us with this work and I feel that this important contribution will continue to pay dividends for both Townsend and the Canadian forestry industry.”

Hardwood Industry Pleads With Washington For Trade War Relief

November 13, 2019

By: The Working Forest Staff

WASHINGTON, WOODWORKING NETWORK — Made up of 28 U.S. trade and hardwood associations, the Hardwood Federation says the industry has seen a dramatic impact since the start of the trade war, and it plans to amp up pressure on lawmakers.

Nathan Jeppson, CEO of Northwest Hardwoods, will meet this week with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to push for relief, reports The Hill. The Washington-based company – and one of the country’s largest hardwood suppliers – said it was forced to shut down both a Virginia and Washington sawmill this month because of China’s retaliatory tariffs. Northwest says it has laid off 225 employees since 2018.

“Across our industry, the trade dispute has drastically decreased demand for U.S. produced hardwood,” Northwest Hardwoods said in a statement. “As China looks to other countries with less regulated and sustainable hardwood supplies to meet market demand, supply chains may be permanently disrupted.”

The Hardwood Federation has sent a proposal for a relief package to the administration in October but has not heard back.

China responded in to President Trump’s Chinese import tariffs with tariffs of their own in July 2018. Those included 25 percent hits on exports of red oak, walnut, and seven other hardwoods.

“When China slapped a 25 percent tariff rate on red oak logs and lumber, it cratered the price producers can get for red oak. That’s a huge chunk of demand that’s disappeared,” American Hardwood Export Council spokesman Tripp Pryor told Breitbart. “This drop is larger than if all of Europe and all of Southeast Asia just quit buying U.S. hardwoods overnight.”

The industry saw a “dramatic impact,” Hardwood Federation executive director Dana Lee Cole told The Hill.

“We’ve seen about a 43 percent decline in the volume being shipped to China,” Cole said. “There have been domestic impacts, prices have gone down on lumber, there’s a backlog. It doesn’t even financially make any sense for a lot of mills now to process the logs they get in because it would cost them more to process them than they can sell them for.”

The Federation says the hardwood industry employs about 2 million people in the U.S. Sawmills tend to be family-owned and located near timberlands in the Northeast, Pacific Northwest, and South.

In an opinion piece, executive director of the West Virginia Forestry Association Frank Stewart wrote that tariffs have hit like a “buzzsaw” in his region.

“There is no other market to absorb 32,025 shipping containers of American red oak that sold to China in 2017. The tariffs have taken all profits from U.S. hardwood exports to China,” he wrote. “It will drive mills out of business this year, losing jobs and outlets for landowners to sell their timber.”

The export council says the value of U.S. hardwood lumber exports have dropped 57 percent since the start of the trade war to \$54 million as of August.

Some members of the House are in support. A bipartisan group of 38 representatives wrote a letter to the Trump Administration urging the hardwood industry to be included in an assistance package.

The tariffs are polarizing. Jeppson and other executives believe they've been disastrous for the U.S. economy. Others acknowledge they're hurting right now, but believe they're necessary long-term. 67 percent of recently-pollled Wisconsin manufacturing executives said they support the tariffs even though tariffs are hurting their businesses. Others acknowledge they relied too much on China.

Finland Shows the New Forestry

It was interesting to read in the October 19, 2019 issue of "The Economist" about one of the gigantic wood-using industries in Finland. The complex, which is owned by about 100,000 forest owning families, consumes about 6 million cubic meters of wood per year. Most of it is coniferous wood, but white birch is also important. Larger trees are converted into lumber and plywood or engineered glued timber which is starting to replace steel and concrete for building, while the smaller thinnings are converted into pulp that can be made into textiles and a plastic free recyclable cardboard that has been approved for food containers.

The lignin which is a pulp by-product is usually burned to produce the electricity on which all the processes in the mill depend, with any surplus power sold to the local power company. Researchers are working on developing uses for lignin to also be used for making textiles.

The plant consumes a truckload of logs every six minutes and the railroad delivers 70 carloads of timber as well each day. In spite of factories this size the standing timber stands in Finland are increasing by over 20 million cubic meters per year.

By: Dolf Wynia

Tips for Keeping Your Christmas Green

November 18, 2019

By: The Working Forest Staff

FORESTS ONTARIO — One of the biggest decisions Ontarians face during the holidays is whether to purchase a real or fake Christmas tree for their home. Yes, fake trees can be more convenient (if you have the space to store one), but consider the aroma, presence and environmental contribution of a real Christmas tree – the green choice.

"Real trees are 100 percent biodegradable and continue to provide benefits after the holidays are over," observed Rob Keen, Forests Ontario's CEO. "Fake trees, on the other hand, will eventually end up in landfills, where they take an extremely long time to break down."

Even the 50-foot Balsam Fir at the Toronto Christmas Market, donated by Forests Ontario and the Canadian Christmas Tree Growers Association, is re-used after the holidays. The *big tree*, as it's known, is given a second life as mulch,

which is used to nourish the growth of newly planted city trees.

It is easy to make the green choice. Here are some tips for picking out and caring for your natural tree.

- **Plan Ahead** – Measure how much height you have in your home for your tree and remember to leave space for the tree topper and stand!
- **Shake Test** – Hold your tree by the trunk and gently shake to observe how many needles fall off. All trees will shed a few needles, but a fresh tree will shed fewer. As well, you can gently grab a branch and pull your hand toward you. You'll know you've found a great tree when very few needles come loose in your hands.
- **Make a Cut** – When you buy your tree, have a thin slice cut off the bottom of the trunk so your tree can take up water. Be sure the cut is straight, so the tree sits level in a sturdy stand filled with water.
- **Keep it Hydrated** – This is the most important part! Trees are thirsty. Keep the water topped up daily in the stand and away from direct heat to ensure your tree lasts all holiday season.
- **Recycle It** – Christmas trees can be used after the holidays for habitat restoration projects or mulching – check local news for tree recycling information.

After the holidays, your discarded Christmas tree may look sad and bare without its lights and ornaments, but it is getting ready for its next phase of life!

Most Ontario municipalities offer curbside pickups or drop-off depots for your used tree. For instance, each year more than 100,000 Christmas trees are collected in Toronto and chipped into 3,700 tonnes of mulch to be used as compost in city parks.

In places like the Royal Botanical Gardens near Hamilton, discarded trees are placed along shorelines to mitigate the erosion of waterways and creeks, where they also provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

Buying a local tree also means that your money stays in the local economy. More than 500 tree farmers produce and sell over a million Christmas trees every year on Ontario alone. What's more, tree farms are carbon sinks: they soak up the carbon dioxide emitted by cars, planes and our homes. Every acre of planted trees produces oxygen for 18 people daily.

Forests Ontario will be selling real, locally-sourced trees just outside of the Toronto Christmas Market entrance on the weekends of December 6-8 and December 13-15.

For many people, choosing a holiday tree is a cherished tradition. So get out there and fill your house with the sweet smell of Balsam Fir, Fraser Fir or another traditional species!

Members can renew their membership, online, using the NWOA website and pay online with PayPal.

Go to the website and then to **Members Area**, then to **Member Renewal**.

You may also print the membership application form and renew by mail.

Members who renew early would be eligible for the AGM prize draws.
