



## **UINR Forest Products Report**

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# Executive Summary

This report was commissioned to provide information in anticipation of the Mi'kmaw communities of Unama'ki gaining control over Crown land in eastern mainland Nova Scotia and Unama'ki, resulting from the Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative. Specifically, this report was commissioned to provide information on (1) traditional forest product markets (pulpwood, studwood and logs); (2) current and potential non-timber and value-added forest products, along with strengths, challenges, opportunities, and a database of community assets regarding production of these products; (3) the possibility of establishing an 'Indigenous' and 'sustainable' brand for non-timber and value-added forest products; and, finally, (4) a database of people, funding and training opportunities, and partnership opportunities related to forestry and value-added and non-timber forest products.

## *Findings and Recommendations:*

1. Not unexpectedly, this report finds that making money from the sale of pulpwood, studwood, and biomass in Nova Scotia is difficult. If low-impact forest management is used, it is next to impossible to generate profit from these forest products given the low prices paid for such products and given the generally degraded nature of Nova Scotia's forests. High-quality logs remain a valuable product, but are generally few and far between. Furthermore, once appropriate infrastructure is in place, it may be economically advantageous to locally process the limited supplies of high-value logs into value-added products rather than sell them in the round.

This report recognizes that restoration-based forest management tends to result in harvesting low-value trees (which gradually increases the quality of the forest). This report recommends exploring options to create local, value-added markets for such trees, including sustainably produced firewood and sustainable produced woodchips for specially designed institutional building heating systems.

2. Non-timber and value-added product production is currently very limited in Nova Scotia; however, there are ample examples of thriving non-timber and value-added product business (including forest-based eco-tourism businesses), both in Nova Scotia and elsewhere in Canada; there is likely much opportunity for Unama'ki communities to create these types of business and thereby reduce the need to rely on biomass, pulpwood and studwood.



Challenges to developing such businesses include a lack of business skills training and, in some instances, skills specific to creating such products. Challenges also include a lack of primary processing capacity within the communities; there are no commercial sawmills or lumber-drying facilities within the communities presently.

Strengths include a dedication to implement and demonstrate sustainable forest stewardship; a passion for Mi'kmaw language, culture and traditional crafts; some highly-skilled craft makers and some highly knowledgeable business people in Unama'ki communities; and community members that know traditional uses of forest plants and animals. Strengths also include the opportunity to benefit from an 'Indigenous' and 'sustainable' brand for non-timber and value-added forest products (including forest-based eco-tourism).

3. As mentioned above, Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities have an opportunity to create an 'Indigenous' and 'sustainable' brand to help market non-timber and value-added forest products (including forest-based eco-tourism and educational programs). Numerous small and large businesses across Canada are branding themselves and their products as Indigenous to boost their marketing potential. Europeans, in particular, have a strong interest in North American Indigenous cultures, which likely would translate into demand for Indigenous-branded forest products, eco-tourism services, and educational programs. Some regions in Canada have created certification programs to designate businesses as Indigenous-owned and products as Indigenous-produced, and it may be advantageous to create a similar program for Mi'kmaw businesses and products.
4. This report includes a number of business funding and training opportunities provided by non-profit and government entities, many of which are focused on Atlantic Canada, Nova Scotia or Cape Breton. This report also identifies specific training opportunities with respect to forestry and business skills, and suggests strategies to increase non-timber and value-added product making skills such as mentorships and engaging technology-transfer entities such as FPIInnovations.
5. This report recommends that product development, branding, marketing, training, and financing applications could be handled by a specifically created organization, such as a Forest Product Co-operative. Such an organization could also buy raw materials and finished products from members in order to increase market access for these members.



6. Finally, this report recommends creating an entity that is separate from forest product development to oversee forest stewardship. This entity could be a Mi'kmaq Forest Co-operative, or some such similar entity. Importantly, such an entity would encourage a separation in governance between forest stewardship and forest product development, in order to ensure that forest product development does not unduly influence forest stewardship decisions.

In conclusion, Unama'ki Mi'kmaq community members (who participated in this report) appreciate that there is little economic benefit to be had from cutting and selling biomass, pulpwood, and studwood, especially if low-impact forestry practices are to be implemented within the Mi'kmaq Forest. Furthermore, community members are passionate to implement a Netukulimk-based stewardship of the Forest, and to explore non-timber and value-added forest products, including forest-based eco-tourism and educational programs. Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities have significant potential to benefit from an 'Indigenous' and sustainable brand, which includes branding of the Mi'kmaq Forest itself as a well-stewarded source of raw materials for Indigenous-created forest products, eco-tourism experiences and educational programs. Importantly, communities will need to ensure that current knowledge-holders and skillful craft makers are given ample opportunity to share their knowledge and skills with others, especially younger community members. Further, communities will need to take advantage of training opportunities to increase forestry and product-making skills, and business and marketing skills. Finally, community members can potentially benefit from business loans and financing opportunities from various government entities.



# Part I:

## Traditional Forest Products: Trends, Buyers and Prices

This section of the report summarizes recent trends in traditional forest-product markets and provides current (February 2018) buyers and prices for these products.

### 1.0 Reality of Traditional Primary Forest Product Markets in Nova Scotia

#### 1.1 Pulpwood and Studwood

*Profit margins for selling primary forest products such as pulpwood and studwood are thin or non-existent, even when using heavily mechanized clearcutting methods*

Making money from traditional forest products in Nova Scotia, while undertaking good forest management, is no easy task. “Spoiler alert: markets are terrible,” said New Wave Forestry forester Matt Miller when I asked his thoughts on forestry in Nova Scotia.

The present reality is that the profit margins for selling primary forest products such as pulpwood and studwood are thin or non-existent, even when using heavily mechanized clearcutting methods. Without significant silviculture funding support, making money (or even covering costs) selling low-quality products while undertaking careful forest stewardship is difficult if not impossible. Some forestry contractors have discontinued their businesses or have moved their businesses out west due to these market conditions and declining supply of higher-quality trees.

This reality is partially a legacy of past forestry practices that have left us with a degraded forest containing an over-abundance of low-value trees. This reality also reflects the fact that Nova Scotia has only a few buyers of low-value products (it is largely a buyers’ market) and, more recently, the fact that global competition is making Nova Scotia’s pulpmills and studwood sawmills less economically competitive. Nova Scotia recently lost one of its three pulpmills (Bowater Mersey), and the remaining two pulpmills have changed ownership several times in recent memory and are likely kept alive only with government money and concessions. There is speculation that one of the two remaining pulpmills may

also close within several years. In any event, pulp and paper production in Nova Scotia may be a 'sunset' industry, at least in part. According to a 2012 report by Don Roberts of CIBC World Markets Inc., the North American demand for paper compared to 2002 was down 30 to 50 percent depending on the type of paper.

According to research by Nova Scotia forester Patricia Amero, the cost of performing sustainable forestry operations can range from \$24 to \$32 per tonne, depending on the harvest method and wood volumes on the site. Combined with trucking costs and royalties or stumpage costs, it is not difficult to see that covering costs while harvesting only low-value products is nearly impossible. In the absence of silviculture funding, low-impact harvesting of low-value products rarely makes economic sense.

Mary Jane Rodger, manager of the Medway Community Forest, notes that she cannot afford to sell pulpwood from the community forest operation because the trucking costs are too high. With respect to studwood and logs, Rodger notes that the Community Forest makes about \$2.00 per tonne of wood cut once the contractor, the trucker and stumpage fees are paid. As described in Part II of this report, the Medway Community Forest is currently making ends meet, according to Rodger, only because they have been able to add value to low-grade hardwood by processing it into cut, split and delivered firewood for Kejimikujik National Park and local residents. The bottom line in the Community Forest's experience is that within their current management agreement, it is almost impossible to be viable with traditional primary forest product sales alone.





***Many woodlot owners are not undertaking forestry on their lands due to the low prices paid for primary products.***

Christie Verstraten (project coordinator) and Andy Kekacs (executive director) of the NS Woodlot Owners and Operators Association both note that markets are challenging in Nova Scotia, suggesting that Nova Scotia generally needs more markets for both low- and high-value primary products. They report that they hear from numerous woodlot owners throughout the Province who are frustrated with both lack of markets and the low prices paid. Many woodlot owners are not undertaking forestry on their lands due to the low prices paid for primary products. Verstraten and Kekacs also note that there may be a shortage of forestry contractors who are able to carry out low-impact cutting practices.

Pulpwood producers in eastern Nova Scotia have the advantage of being relatively close to the Northern Pulp mill and the Port Hawkesbury Mill, and at least have the option of selling softwood pulpwood if the price (currently \$42 per tonne road-side) can justify the costs of producing it. Kari Easthouse, forester with the Private Lands Partnership, notes however that Port Hawkesbury Paper at times stops buying pulpwood on very short notice, occasionally leaving pulpwood cutters with cut pulpwood that they are unable to sell. Markets for hardwood pulp are limited in Cape Breton; Easthouse notes that due to trucking costs firewood is by and large the only market for low-grade hardwood. The closest market for softwood studwood for eastern NS producers is the Scotsburn mill in Pictou County. Kekacs (NSWOOA) notes that trucking costs are a limiting factor for many woodland owners in various parts of the province.

The following two graphs, created by NS's Department of Natural Resources, demonstrate the on-the-ground impacts of market and forest resource realities, from 2002 to 2015. The first documents forest industry exports from Nova Scotia, and the second documents jobs in the forestry industry. The take-home message is that recent trends in Nova Scotia's traditional forestry industry are not promising. Of course, these trends could be due to cyclic ups and downs in the forestry industry, but given changes in global market forces (less demand for paper and lower production costs in southern countries), it is doubtful that pulp and paper will provide a strong long-term market for low-quality wood in Nova Scotia.

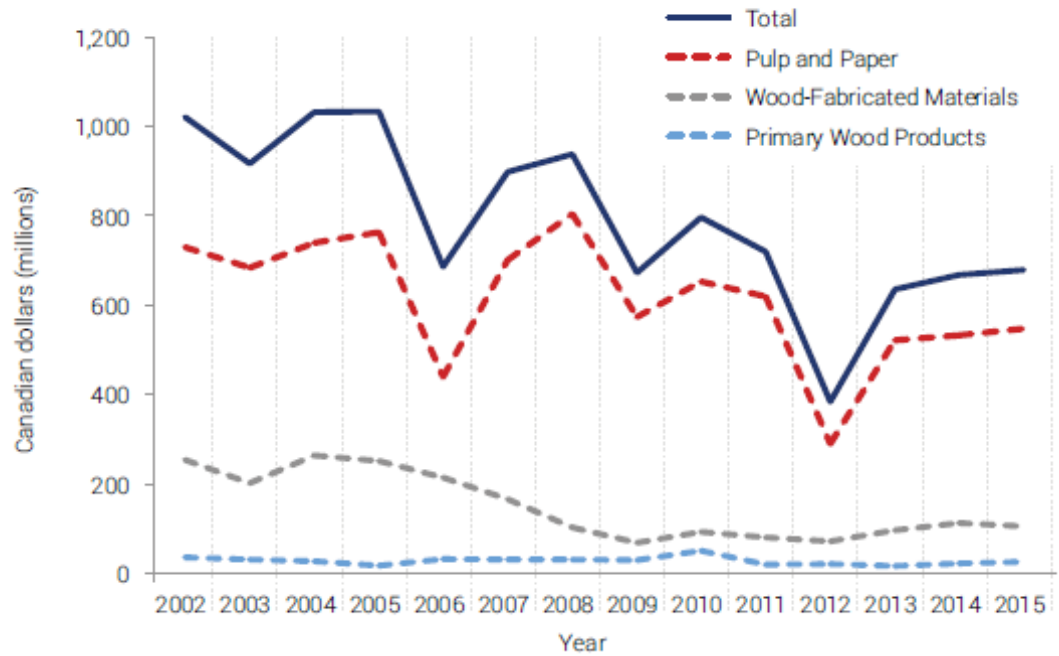


Figure 1: Export revenue in Canadian dollars (millions) from 3 major forest sectors, 2002 – 2015, Nova Scotia. Source: Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, State of the Forest Report, 2016



Figure 2: Direct jobs in the forest sector, 2002 – 2015. Source, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, State of the Forest Report, 2016



Studwood prices have fared better than pulpwood, and the long-term viability of the lumber market is more promising than pulpwood according to Don Roberts (CIBC World Markets 2012), but prices paid for studwood have tended not to move much over the past few decades. After adjusting for inflation, forestry contractor Tom Miller reports that the relative price he receives for studwood has actually decreased over the past two decades.

On the positive side, Nova Scotia's lumber producers are currently benefiting from not being subject to tariffs imposed by the United States, whereas New Brunswick mills are subjected to a tariff. For sellers of studwood, Nova Scotia also has the advantage of some amount of competition which may help to keep prices paid to wood producers a little higher than in other eastern Canada provinces. Primary forest-product broker Andrew West notes, "markets are very good in NS as compared to NB and Maine. We are fortunate to have competition in this province."

David Palmer, forester and former manager of the YSC Forest Products Marketing Board in New Brunswick, notes that softwood lumber markets are doing well right now, relative to recent years. This is likely the reason for the small recent increases in prices paid for softwood studwood and logs.

## 1.2 Logs and other Higher Value Primary Products

The markets for softwood logs are somewhat limited for Cape Breton and eastern NS producers. Williams Brothers buys a limited quantity of softwood logs, and otherwise softwood logs must be trucked to central NS.



Photo: Dan Hutt

***High-quality logs are generally scarce.***

***Training in bucking high-value logs is essential.***

Markets for hardwood sawlogs and hardwood veneer logs are better. There are, however, three key challenges to growing and selling high-value hardwood logs. The first is that high-quality logs are generally scarce and so any given harvest will typically produce relatively few quality logs and a lot of lower-value product. This means that high quality logs must be sorted from the lower-value products, set aside and aggregated until enough are harvested to sell a full truck load (usually thirty tonnes minimum). Apparently, many contractors are not willing or able to sort higher-value logs in this manner and instead add these logs to the lower-value piles. Part of the challenge here may be that high-quality logs have a relatively short 'shelf life'; if they cannot be trucked to market within approximately five weeks (or one to two weeks if cut during May to October), they can decrease significantly in value.



The second key challenge is that higher-value logs must be bucked in very specific ways in order to obtain a high price for them. Without proper training, woodworkers do not know how to identify trees with high-value potential or how to buck them in order to maximize the value of these trees. Specific training in bucking high-value logs is essential.

The third key challenge is that active management designed to grow higher-value trees usually produces a lot of lower-value product. Without markets for the lower-value product, there is less incentive to carry out the silviculture work necessary to grow the higher-value trees.

Each of these challenges can be overcome. First, pre-harvest tree marking can help identify high-quality potential before trees are cut. Second, harvesting crews can coordinate to ensure that high-value logs are sorted from lower-value material and then aggregated in order to sell the product by the truck-load before they decrease in value. Third, woodworkers can be trained to identify high-quality logs and how to buck them to attain highest potential value. John Vautour of Groupe Savoie indicated he would be pleased to spend some time with cutters for the FN community forests to demonstrate hardwood log bucking techniques. Training may also be available through FPInnovations.



Finally, the challenge of growing high-quality trees can be met by (a) maximizing the use of silviculture funding available, which enables treatments like crop-tree release and pruning to take place without the need to sell wood to pay for the treatment, and (b) developing a community-based opportunities to use low-value products such firewood businesses and district heating (as discussed in Part II of this report).

## 2.0 Buyers and Brokers of Primary Forest Products, with Prices and Specs

Prices for primary wood products are often quoted as either 'roadside' or 'delivered'. If roadside, then the mill covers the cost of trucking and the price offered is for wood piled at a location accessible to the truck. If delivered, then the price paid is for product delivered to the mill and thus the cost of trucking is covered by the seller.

### 2.1 Brokers of Primary Forest Products

Currently, the only general broker of primary wood products (roundwood and chips) operating in eastern Nova Scotia is H.C. Haynes Inc. The contact person is Andrew West (902 893-1978 / [andrewwest@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:andrewwest@ns.sympatico.ca)).

Current prices are listed at <http://hchaynesnovascotiaprices.blogspot.ca/>). Most of the prices below are from the Haynes wood prices report, which is issued roughly once a month or so.

### 2.2 Softwood Pulpwood

The main markets for low-value softwood in eastern Nova Scotia are Port Hawkesbury Pulp and Paper (PHP) in Cape Breton and Northern Pulp (NP) in Pictou. PHP currently pays \$40/tonne roadside for softwood pulpwood, and NP currently pays \$36/tonne roadside for softwood pulpwood. For NP, pulpwood specs are minimum top diameter of 3.5 inches, maximum top diameter of 18 inches and lengths from 8 to 20 feet. For PHP, minimum top is 3 inches, and maximum top is 28 inches.

Note, prices paid for pulpwood fluctuate and the mills may stop receiving pulpwood on very short notice. Also, because pulpwood is sold by weight, it is important to get cut wood to the mill quickly to avoid losing weight to drying (depending on the season).

## 2.3 Low-grade Hardwood

*Perhaps the best market option for low-grade hardwood is firewood.*

Until recently the largest low-grade hardwood market in eastern Nova Scotia was Nova Scotia Power Inc.'s biomass plant in Port Hawkesbury. However, since the province repealed the law requiring the biomass plant to operate continuously in 2016, NSPI is operating the plant only on an as-needed basis and is currently obtaining whatever hardwood it requires from Crown land operations. However, NSPI could be approached to determine whether they would be interested in purchasing low-grade hardwood. In the past, prices paid for biomass have been low (less than \$40/tonne delivered); it is not known what NSPI might pay for biomass today.

Great Northern Timber Inc. (GNTI) in Sheet Harbour is a potential option for low-grade hardwood, although it's questionable whether wood can be trucked that far without losing money on the deal. GNTI pays \$47/tonne delivered for hardwood trucked from less than 100 kilometres' distance, and \$51/tonne delivered for hardwood trucked more than 100 kilometres' distance. Specs are minimum top 3.5 inches, maximum top 18 inches, and 8 to 18 foot lengths.

Perhaps the best market option for low-grade hardwood is firewood. UINR and/or one or more communities could consider creating a business or cooperative to process and sell firewood to residential customers within the region. Efforts could be made to educate band members on the benefits of heating with high-efficiency woodstoves in order to increase local demand for firewood. As well, the opportunity exists to develop district heating infrastructure within band communities, whether for community institutions or for residents, or both. Numerous communities in Europe have developed such infrastructure, and there is currently a similar project underway in Prince Edward Island. Should district heating be developed for band communities, it would create a stable and long-term market for low-grade hardwood. Firewood and district heating are both described in more detail in Part II of this report.



## 2.4 Studwood and Softwood Logs

There is not a great market for studwood and softwood logs in Cape Breton. The main market for studwood in eastern NS is Scotsburn Lumber Ltd in Scotsburn. They pay \$72/tonne delivered. Specs: minimum 4 inch top, maximum 15 inch top, and 8'4" lengths. They accept spruce, fir, and jack pine.

Port Hawkesbury Paper may be buying studwood on behalf of Scotsburn Lumber. If a harvest site is close to PHP, then it would be worth checking whether this is an option.

The nearest largish mill for softwood logs is Williams Brothers Ltd. in Barneys River Station (Pictou County). Williams currently offers \$71/tonne delivered (\$60/tonne road side), which is a dollar less than what Scotsburn is currently paying for studwood. Depending on the trucking distance, it may be more worthwhile to sell softwood logs as studwood to Scotsburn. Specs: spruce only; minimum top 6 inches, maximum top 36 inches; and 10'6", 12'6", and 16'6" lengths.

The next closest may be Taylor Lumber Co. Ltd in Middle Musquodobit. Taylor pays \$71 - 74/tonne delivered depending on trucking distance. Specs: minimum top 6 inches, maximum top 24 inches, lengths 10'6", 12'6", and 16'6"; spruce only.

Finally, JD Irving's Sproule Lumber near Truro pays \$74/tonne delivered. Specs: spruce with maximum 50% fir; minimum top 4 inches, maximum top 14 inches; lengths 9'2" and 10'4".

Several smaller softwood sawmills operate in Cape Breton and eastern Nova Scotia. Examples include River Ryan Lumber in New Waterford and Hugh MacInnis Lumber in Frenchvale. Given the small nature of these and similar operations, it would be necessary to arrange for case-by-case sales of logs to these mills.

An option to consider is to encourage opportunities for bands or individual band members to start small-scale sawmilling businesses. Scattered throughout the Maritimes are examples of successful one to several person businesses operating portable bandsaw mills doing custom sawmilling. For entrepreneurs, this could be a good business opportunity and could be integrated into construction projects within band communities, thereby integrating forest management, forest harvesting, trucking, sawmilling, lumber finishing and construction. If this option is pursued, it may be worthwhile for someone within the community to obtain certification as a lumber grader, with the ability to grade and stamp lumber produced by local sawmills. Non-graded lumber can only be legally used for projects other than structural components of buildings.

## 2.5 Hardwood Logs

BA Fraser is not currently purchasing logs as they are not currently milling; a seller would have to call ahead to confirm whether Fraser is buying and what the specs would be.

The main market for hardwood logs in eastern Nova Scotia is Groupe Savoie in Westville (near New Glasgow). Prices paid vary substantially depending on log quality (including proper bucking), and sellers should call Groupe Savoie directly for up-to-date specs and prices. Specs: minimum top 9 inches; lengths 7'6" and 8'6"; red maple must be sound (no rot); maximum sweep is 2 inches per 8 feet; maximum heart in red and sugar maple of grade #2 and up is 50%; summer-cut logs must be delivered within 2 weeks of felling.

Current prices for Groupe Savoie (road-side):

Species: grade and # of clear faces	Diameter (inches)	Price (per 1,000 board feet, NB Log rule)
Sugar Maple		
Prime (4)	10+	\$600
#1 (3)	10+	\$500
#2 (2)	9+	\$400
Veneer (4)	11+	\$800+
Red Maple		
Prime (4)	14+	\$400
#1 (3)	10+	\$300
#2 (2)	9+	\$250
Birch		
Prime (4)	10+	\$575
#1 (3)	10+	\$380
#2 (2)	9+	\$300
Veneer (4)	11+	\$800+
Ash		
Prime (4)	10+	\$400
#1 (3)	10+	\$300
#2 (2)	9+	\$275
Oak		
Prime (4)	10+	\$400
#1 (3)	10+	\$350
#2 (2)	9+	\$275

## 2.6 Hardwood Veneer and other High-quality Hardwood

Columbia Forest Products (Presque Isle, Maine) purchases high quality hardwood logs from eastern Nova Scotia. If a seller has a sufficient quantity of veneer logs, the logs possibly can be trucked and sold directly to Columbia Forest Products. If a seller has only a few veneer logs, they can be trucked along with non-veneer hardwood logs to Groupe Savoie where the logs are sorted and the highest quality logs are then sold by Groupe Savoie to Columbia Forest Products.

The price of hardwood logs is highly dependent on grade. A key factor is to aggregate enough high-quality hardwood logs to be worth trucking a load to Groupe Savoie (or directly to Columbia Forest Products). Cutters must be specially trained to recognize quality logs and buck them appropriately. According to Columbia Forest Products, half the dollar value of a quality tree can be lost by poor bucking. Specs for Columbia: Logs must be cut square and have no rot; minimum top 11"; lengths 8'9" and 9'5"; heart size no limit; only 1 defect permitted (and no larger than size of a playing card); trees cut no more than 5 weeks previously. Columbia must be called directly for current prices. Specs and prices for Groupe Savoie are obtained by calling Groupe Savoie directly.

There may be potential to initiate small businesses that would mill, dress and dry high-quality and specialty hardwoods to be marketed to furniture makers and other users of high-end woods. Again, such an operation could be integrated with band-based furniture-making and craft businesses, and would be a local market for high-quality hardwood lumber. A benefit of processing hardwood logs into lumber and drying it is an increase of 'shelf life'. Once properly dried and stored hardwood lumber can be kept almost indefinitely and sold whenever markets are favourable.



## 2.7 Other Species

### 2.7.1 Tamarack Logs

Larch Wood Enterprises Inc. in East Margaree makes specialized cutting boards from tamarack. The company, however, uses a minimal amount of wood, so sellers would have to call ahead to determine if the company is buying. Larch Wood, incidentally, is a forest product manufacturing success story worth investigating and is described in Part II of this report.

Tamarack could be a good candidate for small-scale sawmilling and processing businesses. It is relatively rot-resistant, which makes it a useful lumber for outdoor building projects. It can also be made into attractive flooring.

### 2.7.2 Hemlock Logs

Dave's Lumber Ltd in Saltsprings pays \$100/cord road-side for hemlock logs.

Specs: minimum 8 inch top, maximum 26 inch top, length 10'4".

Similarly to tamarack, hemlock is somewhat naturally resistant to rot, making it another useful wood for outdoor building projects. It would be another good candidate for small-scale sawmilling operations.

### 2.7.3 Poplar Logs

The only market for poplar logs at present is Burgess Baskets in Newport Station, which may be too far to economically truck logs, depending on the harvest location. They pay \$125/cord delivered, and may offer a bonus if trucking from long distances. Specs: minimum top 10 inches, maximum top 26 inches, length 8'6".

## 3.0 Primary Forest Product Purchasers Chart

Prices and specs are current to October 26, 2017. This chart includes markets relevant to eastern Nova Scotia as well as markets that may be too distance to be relevant. The most likely relevant markets are those discussed in section 2 above. RS = Roadside price; DEL = Delivered price.

Company	Address	Species Purchased	Specifications	Price Oct 2017 () = 2012 price	Contact Information
AFT Sawmill Ltd (lumber)	75 F.Comeau Rd, St. Joseph, NS (south of Weymouth)	hardwood	Min 8" top; 8'6" length	Price by grade; must call	902 769-3368 brian@aftsawmill.com
BA Fraser Lumber Ltd	1031 Egypt Rd, Margaree Valley	hardwood	Not currently buying	Must call for grade and prices	902 248 2307
Burgess Baskets (veneer)	1736 Wentworth Rd, Newport Station, NS	poplar	Min 10", Max 26" top; 8'6" length	\$125/CD DEL; \$140/CD DEL if north of HYW 104 (\$125)	866 423 0085 / 902 798 2200 www.burgessbaskets.com michelle@burgessbaskets.com
Dave's Lumber Ltd (hemlock lumber)	3806 Central West river, Salt Springs, NS	hemlock	Min 8", Max 26" top; 10'4" length	\$100/cd RS (\$95 RS)	902 925-2099 www.facebook.com/daveslumber/
Elmsdale Lumber Company Ltd.	604 HYW 2, Elmsdale, NS	spruce	Min 6", Max 24" top; 12'6", 16'6" lengths	\$72 - 74/T DEL (\$75/T)	Robin and Chris Wilber 902 883-2276 elco@ns.aliantzinc.ca
Harry Freeman & Son Limited	4804 Medway River Rd, Greenfield, NS	spruce	Min 8", Max 24" top; 12'6", 16'6" lengths	\$77/T DEL; \$62/T RS (\$62/T RS	902 685 2792, ext 5 chrissy.hunt@freemanlumber.com www.freemanlumber.com NOTE: prices may be affected by distance from mill – call to check

"		spruce, fir studwood	Min 4.5" top; 9'2", 10'4" lengths	\$70/T DEL; \$55/T RS	
"		white pine	Min 6" top; 12'6", 14'6", 16'6" lengths	\$61/T DEL; \$46/T RS (December 10 – May 30 only)	
Great Northern Timber	Sheet Harbour, NS / Head office: 201-1883 Upper Water St. Halifax NS	harwood pulpwood	Min 3.5", Max 18" top; 8' to 18' length	\$47 - 51/T (\$42/T)	admin@gnti.ca
Great Northern Timber	Sheet Harbour, NS	Red pine, hemlock pulpwood	Min 3.5", Max 18" top; 8' to 18' length	\$42/T DE	admin@gnti.ca
Hefler Forest Products	230 Lucasville Rd, Middle Sackville, NS	spruce	Min 6", Max 24" top; 10'6", 12'6", 16'6" lengths	\$79/T DEL \$83/T DEL if north of HWY 104 (\$72/T)	902 865 1158 www.hefler.ca info@hefler.ca
J.D. Irving Sproule Lumber	529 Valleydale Rd, Valley, NS (Truro)	spruce, fir (max 50% Fir)	Min 4", Max 14" top; 9'2", 10'4" lengths	\$74/T DEL (\$68/T)	Walsh.justin@jdirving. com 902 895 4451 / 902 896 4239 www.jdirving.com
"		fir, jack pine and min 50% spruce	Min 4", Max 14" top; 9'2", 10'4" lengths	\$69/T DEL	
"		red pine	Min 5", Max 14"; 9'2" length	\$57/T DEL	
Ledwidge Lumber Co Ltd	195 Old Post Rd, Enfield, NS	Spruce (max 15% fir)	Min 4", Max 13"; 8'4", 9' lengths	\$78/T DEL (\$115-155/CD)	902 883 9889 sales@ledwidge.com Jim Ledwidge, Manager
"		spruce, fir	Min 4", Max 13"; 8'4", 9' lengths	\$70/T DEL	
Louisiana- Pacific Canada Ltd (East River mill)	2005 Highway 3, East Chester, NS	hardwood pulpwood	Min 3.5", Max 22"; 8' or random length	\$46/T DEL (\$38/T)	902 275 3556
Louisiana- Pacific Canada Ltd (East River mill)	2005 Highway 3, East Chester, NS	poplar	Min 3.5", Max 22; 8' or random length	\$34/T DEL	902 275 3556



Louisiana-Pacific Houlton	240 Station Rd., Houlton, ME	poplar pulpwood	Min 4", Max 30"; 9'4" +/- 3"	\$67/T DEL	1 888 820 0325
Northern Pulp Nova Scotia Corporation	260 Granton Abercrombie Banch Rd, Abercrombie, NS	softwood pulpwood	Min 3.5", Max 18"; 8' to 20' length	\$36/T RS (\$40/T RS)	902 752 8461
"		hardwood and poplar pulpwood	Min 3.5", Max 18"; 8' or random	\$45 - 48/T DEL	902 752 8461
Port Hawkesbury Paper LP	120 Pulp Mill Rd, Port Hawkesbury, NS				902 625 2460
Groupe Savoie, Westville Division	2649 Foxbrook Rd, Westville, NS (near New Glasgow)	hardwood	Min 9"; 7'6", 8'6" lengths	Price by grade, must call	902 396 3960 general@groupe-savoie.com / procurement@ groupe-savoie.com
Scotsburn Lumber Ltd.	65 Condon Rd, Scotsburn, NS	spruce, fir, jack pine studwood	Min 4" top, Max 15"; 8'4" length	\$72/T DEL (\$68/T)	902 485 8041
Taylor Lumber Co. Ltd.	Middle Musquodoboit, NS	spruce	Min 6" top, Max 24"; 10'6", 12'6", 16'6" length	\$71 - 74/T DEL	902 384 2444 info@taylorlumber.ca
Williams Brothers Limited	19 Mill Rd, Barneys River Station, NS (Pictou County)	spruce	Min 6", Max 36" top; 10'6", 12'6", 16'6" lengths	\$60/T RS; \$71/T DEL (\$72/T)	Eric Williams 902 924 2570 wilbros@ns.sympatico.ca
Port Hawkesbury Paper LP	120 Pulp Mill Rd, Port Hawkesbury, NS	pulpwood, spruce, fir	Min 3" top, Max 28"	\$40/T (7 Eastern counties and Colchester)	902 625 2460

## Part II:

# Opportunities for Non-timber and Value-added Forest Products and Strengths and Challenges Analysis

This section of the report (1) describes various opportunities for non-timber and value-added forest products, including some of the logistics necessary to create such businesses, and (2) provides an analysis of strengths, challenges and opportunities regarding the potential to develop non-timber and value-added forest product businesses in Unama'ki communities.

## 1.0 Introduction to Value-added and Non-timber Forest Products

### 1.1 Slow but Growing

Value-added product manufacturing is all about getting more value out of a given amount of cut trees. It's not a new idea in Nova Scotia. A report by Aktrin-Dossenbach Associates in 2003 for example provided a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the potential and need for value-added forest products industry in Nova Scotia, and strategies to cultivate it. Similarly, the Natural Resources Strategy expert review in 2010 called for a focus on promoting value-added forest products.

Yet, development of the value-added industry has been slow. One interviewee (Andy Kekacs) commented, "there's no doubt the potential for value-added is there, but I think part of the problem is a resistance to change within the forestry sector. Some people are pretty happy with the way things are now, and have no interest in promoting a new approach."

While the value-added industry has been slow to develop in Nova Scotia, recognition of its potential and necessity is growing. Barry Tupper, a Nova Scotia-based value-added wood product expert, believes there is a lot of opportunity in value-added wood products. "If you're creative," says Tupper, "I know from experience that there's all kinds of market potential, all kinds of opportunities."

***Larch Wood embodies the simple but brilliant idea of using an often ignored local species to make an attractive and highly value-added product.***

The success of Larch Wood Enterprises in East Margaree Cape Breton is an example. Using only some three-hundred cords of wood a year, Larch Wood employs 19 people, has developed markets around the world for its end-grain tamarack cutting boards, and has revenue in the \$100 million range. Larch Wood embodies the simple but brilliant idea of using an often ignored local species to make an attractive and highly value-added product. Their success is inspirational and no doubt can be replicated.



## 1.2 ‘Value’ broadly defined: Value-added People and Communities

***Integrated economic activity simply means that more dollars circulate locally instead of leaving the community***

Value usually means getting more money per unit of wood harvested. However, wood can offer communities a lot more value than just dollars. Value-added also means:

- *generating more employment per unit of wood harvested;*
- *increasing community involvement with every tree that is cut;*
- *promoting cultural identity through increased involvement with crafts and other wood products;*
- *engendering a closer connection to nature and to the beauty of trees and wood; and*
- *fostering opportunities to increase community members’ skills and expertise in various areas of forest product production, from careful directional cutting of trees in the forest, to expert bucking and grading of logs for best value, to kiln-drying expertise, to increased numbers of skilled craftspeople, to marketing and retail expertise.*

A focus on value-added products can also help to integrate economic activity within a community. Integrated economic activity simply means that more dollars circulate locally instead of leaving the community, and dollars circulating



locally promotes local economic well-being and employment opportunities. For example, hardwood trees can be cut and professionally bucked by local woodworkers to produce quality logs. These logs can be milled by an expert hardwood sawmilling business based in the community, and then air-dried or kiln-dried locally as well. The lumber can be sold to various local craftspeople to make canoe paddles, flooring or any number of other high-end products. In this way, value is added both to harvested trees and to local people and communities.

## 2.0 Challenges to Value-added Industries

### 2.1 Raw Material Supply

Challenges to value-added industries are many but they are not insurmountable. A key challenge for some Nova Scotian value-added businesses has been access to sufficient and timely raw material. Fine Wood Flooring is an example of a company that had a successful business selling a value-added product to domestic and foreign markets, yet shut down due in part to a lack of steady supply of hardwood lumber. Don Beamish of Larch Wood notes that even though his raw wood requirement is small, he has some trouble accessing a secure supply from year to year. This may not be a problem if UINR gains control of a sufficiently large land base. Logs from UINR lands could be supplemented with purchases from other woodlands as well. In any event, it may be prudent to ensure that primary material demand is linked to what the land can sustainably supply.

### 2.2 Expertise

Increasing value requires increased knowledge and technical skills. Bucking and grading of logs, running a mill, kiln-drying lumber, making wood products, and marketing and selling products all require significant professional expertise. While potentially a challenge to overcome, building professional expertise is an opportunity to increase community capacity, employment and well-being. There are opportunities to obtain assistance with training. FPInnovations, for example, may be able to provide training in a range of value-added product manufacturing skills, from kiln operation to running a mill. The Nova Scotia Community College offers business skills courses and one cabinetmaking course. Furthermore, there may be opportunities to establish apprenticeships with existing businesses to find necessary training that is lacking in the current formal education system.

## 2.3 Financing

*Keeping costs under control and growing only as demand grows is an important element of success.*

Of course, some value-added industries require significant financial investment. Possibilities exist to obtain financing through banks, investors, and government development organizations (see the section below on government funding opportunities). Key to obtaining financing is a strong business plan that demonstrates the viability of an enterprise. However, it would be a false barrier to think that all value-added businesses require significant financial investment. Dozens of opportunities exist to create and sell value-added products that require only minimal tools and facilities. Many craftspeople can produce value-added products with little more than a workshop, a few power tools, and hand tools.

I do not endorse any specific supplier, but several interviewees have mentioned the benefits of Wood-Mizer mills, particularly their industrial-grade mills. No doubt there are other similar options available. An advantage of such technology is that it can hold value over time. If an operation wishes to up-grade or cease using a particular piece of machinery, simply un-bolt it from the floor, advertise it for sale, and ship it off to a new owner. Unlike some sawmill machinery, this machinery is not likely to become a stranded asset taking up space.

According to Don Beamish of Larch Wood, keeping costs under control and growing only as demand grows is an important element of success. Beamish notes that it can be easy to get too deep in debt and that can be the downfall of a value-added product business.

## 2.4 Marketing

*The best product in the world is worthless until people know about it.*

The best product in the world is worthless until people know about it. Marketing is an essential element of a successful value-added product business. Candace and Peter Christiano (Finewood Flooring) and Don Beamish (Larch Wood) all note the importance of attending trade shows, both retail and wholesale (depending on the nature of the product). Trade shows enable businesses to connect with a wide array of potential buyers, both domestic and international buyers. The Nova Scotia government provides some assistance to help cover the costs of attending trade shows (and see the list of retail and wholesale trade shows below).

Depending on the product, a retail outlet can be a useful way to market value-added forest products. Surprisingly, Don Beamish notes that approximately 25% of his company's sales are from two retail outlets in Cape Breton. Cape Breton's tourism draw is an advantage not to be over-looked.

*The fire to persevere through the difficult times must come from individuals who want to see their business succeed.*

Of course, successful marketing begins with a good product. It's worth investing time in product design and skillful crafting or manufacturing to ensure production of attractive and high-quality products.

## 2.5 Passion

Finally, embarking on a successful value-added business requires passion. A lot of passion. Without passion, most people will give up on a value-added business because it is the passion that gets people through the inevitable rough patches. As the son of a small-business owner, and the partner of small-business owner, I know the ups-and-downs of this type of enterprise. The key message is that small business development cannot be imposed top-down. It can be fostered and cultivated with consistent supply of raw materials, education opportunities and financing support, but the fire to persevere through the difficult times must come from individuals who want to see their business succeed.

## 3.0 Non-timber Forest Products

The situation with non-timber forest products (NTFPs) is similar to value-added wood products: development has been slow, yet the potential is widely recognized. One marker of change is that students in the forestry program at the University of New Brunswick now take a course in NTFPs. As well, wild foods gathered from forests are increasingly finding their way to dinner plates in up-scale restaurants. And of course ecotourism continues to rise in popularity.

The challenges with NTFPs largely mirror value-added wood products. Expertise is essential: to be successful, someone must know how to find and harvest the NTFP, how to prepare the product, and how to market it. One important difference can be in marketing. While potential customers know what a canoe paddle is, they may have no idea what chaga tea is. Marketing some products will require cultivating markets where none exist and opening people's eyes and minds to products they didn't know existed.

*A growing sector of forest-based business is ecotourism and other 'experience-based' products.*

Importantly, non-timber products are not limited to physical things like mushrooms, berries and decorative wreaths. A growing sector of forest-based business is ecotourism and other 'experience-based' products. The possibilities are numerous: guided bird-watching trips, for example, or guided trips combined with forest-based accommodations, or combined further still with meals prepared in the forest, perhaps including some ingredients collected from the forest. Many people love to learn about forests and many people want to learn crafting skills. People would love a guided opportunity to learn more



about Mi'kmaw people and cultures. This provides a tremendous opportunity to bring people to the area, both locally and from around the world, for workshops and events.



In my view and experience, and based on the interviews I've conducted, it makes sense to start small with projects that have a high likelihood of success. Build a base of expertise, build a base of successful small businesses, and then grow from there. Nothing encourages success like success. Nothing can dampen spirits more than being overwhelmed with trying to take on too much too soon.

## 4.0 Opportunities for Value-added Forest Products

### 4.1 Firewood

*“Firewood warms you twice; once in the cutting and once in the burning.”*

Mary Jane Rodger, general manager of the Medway Community Forest Cooperative, notes that the Co-op’s firewood business is the most profitable work they are doing at the moment and is currently keeping the Co-op financially viable. Mary Jane explains that they buy back low-value hardwood logs from their contractors for \$50 a tonne, process the logs into firewood and sell at a profit after paying their employee and the delivery cost.

Mary Jane notes that she has no problem selling firewood. “People are calling us for firewood, and we have trouble keeping up with demand,” she says. The Co-op was fortunate to secure a contract to supply firewood to Kejimikujik National Park, which so far is about half of their total firewood sales. It’s possible that UINR could secure a similar contract with Highlands National Park. The rest of the Co-op sales are to individual residential customers who are looking for some assurance that their firewood is coming from a well-managed forest. Mary Jane notes that she offers people the chance to come and see their operation, and that’s enough to convince them even if most never take her up on the offer. Residential customers are likely willing to pay a small premium for firewood that comes from a well-manage forest.

Acadia First Nation also operates a small firewood business to provide a market for the lower-value hardwood trees it harvests from its woodlands. The Acadia First Nation sells firewood to band members at a discounted price (\$175 per cord, limit of six cords and must be delivered to the member’s residence) and to non-band members for \$240 per cord.

As with any product, quality counts. Challengingly, the measure of quality can differ somewhat from customer to customer. Some want 14-inch lengths; some want 16-inch. Some want large chunks and some want finely-split chunks. Of course, everyone usually wants wood with the highest heat value: beech, sugar maple and yellow birch. In any event, ensuring that customers get their desired lengths, get close to the desired chunk size, and get at least a mix of the higher and lower heat value woods will ensure happy customers. There is also

the option of offering lower-quality woods, such as tamarack and poplar, for a discounted price. It is also important to let customers know exactly how much wood they are buying, as some people occasionally feel they do not receive as much firewood as they think they should.

As with woodchips, firewood is one way to create more market demand for low-value hardwood, thereby helping make forest-improving harvesting more economically viable. A firewood business also has the advantage of providing jobs, supporting the local economy, and reducing reliance on foreign oil supplies.

In my experience with the firewood market in Nova Scotia, virtually no-one, other than the Medway Co-op, is offering firewood from well-cared for forests. If UINR can distinguish its firewood as coming from well-managed forests, there is no doubt that UINR will be able to establish firewood markets in Eastern Nova Scotia. A challenge with firewood is trucking costs, given that firewood has a relatively low dollar to weight value. Ideally, firewood customers should be within 100 kilometres of where the firewood is cut. An option to reduce costs is to truck large loads of firewood logs to a firewood processing location closer to customers.

A down-side of burning wood is increased local air pollutants. However, the air pollution impacts of firewood can be greatly reduced by burning properly seasoned (dry) firewood and by using the highest efficiency woodstoves available. Modern woodstoves can operate at 80 to 90 percent efficiency when burning properly seasoned wood, thereby greatly reducing harmful air pollution. It may be an interesting side project to host workshops on responsible firewood burning.

## *Processing firewood*

There are a variety of ways to turn logs into firewood. When I was younger with a stronger back I worked for a logging contractor who did firewood on the side. We felled and yarded trees most of the day and then junked and split two cords every afternoon for my boss to deliver on his way home from the woods. We junked the hardwood with chainsaws and split most of it with a splitting maul. At the end of the week we brought in a hand-loaded hydraulic wood-splitter for the pieces that wouldn't split with one easy swing of the maul. For the easy-to-split wood, the splitting maul is faster than a hydraulic hand-loaded wood splitter. It was an efficient system and worked well given my boss sold only a few dozen cords of firewood a year. Of course, expertise with a splitting maul is essential. Without this expertise, and without the necessary physical ability, it is sensible to

use a hydraulic splitter. A good-quality splitting maul can be had for about \$75, and a new gas-powered hydraulic splitter can range from \$1,500 to \$3,000 or so. A 3-tonne truck with a dump or a trailer with a dump is necessary to deliver the firewood.

Larger firewood operations should consider a firewood processor. Processors cut logs consistently to the desired firewood length and then split them. Depending on the accessories purchased, processors can come equipped with hydraulic log lifters, chain-driven feeding system, and conveyor shoots that load firewood directly into a truck or trailer. The most expensive units are fully automated and have relatively fast outputs. Prices range from about \$5,000 (plus shipping and tax) for the least-automated and slowest output units to over \$100,000 for the highest-end units. For a typical firewood business in Nova Scotia, \$35,000 to \$40,000 is likely an appropriate price range. Of course, some sort of machinery to load logs onto the processor is also necessary; this can be a log lifter purchased as an accessory to the processor or a tractor with a front-end loader.

Range Road Enterprises Ltd. based in Alberta offers a basic firewood processor ranging in price from \$5,000 to about \$7,100 and is sold in Nova Scotia through DM Cavanagh Enterprises in Wolfville (phone: 902 670 0063). The units are made in China and their output reportedly ranges from about 1 to 1.5 cords per hour.

Cord King Ltd. based in Ontario offers Canadian-built higher-end processors ranging in price from \$35,000 to \$140,000. All come with a lift-time warranty and the company offers a 100% trade-in value for those wanting to upgrade to a larger model. Output ranges from 1.5 to 10 cords per hour depending on the model. Videos of the units in action can be found on YouTube. Website: [www.cordking.ca](http://www.cordking.ca); phone: 1 888 219 9663.





MC Power Equipment Ltd. in Truro sells Palax Firewood Processors made in Finland. These processors come with the option of running off a tractor's PTO or off an engine pack. The basic model is the KF35, selling for \$15,500 plus \$4,600 for the engine pack if desired. A log lifter is an additional \$2,600. Depending on the diameter of the log, the KF35 can process about 1 to 2 cord an hour. Jason Monk of MC Power mentioned that this model may not be available for much longer. The KF40 is the next model up and sells for about \$25,000 plus the engine pack and log lifter if desired. Jason mentioned he has one used KF40 available now for \$19,000. With its faster splitting speed the KF40 processes about 2 cord an hour. The next model up is the KF45, which sells for \$36,900, although Jason informed me that it is not really appropriate for most firewood processing situations in Nova Scotia. It does well with large-diameter wood, but cannot outperform the KF40 with smaller-diameter wood which is typically used for firewood in Nova Scotia. Jason can be reached at 902 895 2400. Videos of the Palax models in action are found here: <https://youtu.be/lj0qiH4HgX0>; <https://youtu.be/Q8PhtHC5icw>, and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghMJINi9Izc>.

## 4.2 Wood Chips: Heating Homes and Institutions

***Prince Edward Island has managed to reduce their annual fuel oil consumption by several million litres (and save tens of thousands of dollars) by installing small-scale woodchip heating systems in government buildings***

Over the past five or six years, Prince Edward Island has managed to reduce their annual fuel oil consumption by several million litres (and save tens of thousands of dollars) by installing small-scale woodchip heating systems in government buildings such as schools and hospitals. One tonne of woodchips can provide as much heat energy as 580 litres of fuel oil.

Mathieu LeBlanc of ACFOR Energy is a leader in this move to wood-heat energy. As a vertically integrated company, ACFOR builds, owns, operates and supplies the woodchip heating plants. ACFOR also harvests wood and chips the low-value trees for fuel. LeBlanc notes that the quality of the woodchips is a huge factor in the success of a woodchip heating system. Chips with high moisture content, or chips with dirt and twigs, can cause heating systems to malfunction. By producing their own chips, LeBlanc is able to avoid these problems, and his heating systems reportedly run very smoothly. An important innovation for LeBlanc was to develop a delivery truck with a woodchip auger installed in it, thereby eliminating the need for storage bins to have their own augers.

LeBlanc's goal is to provide a market for low-value trees that are cut during forest-improvement silviculture activities such as thinning or crop-tree release. LeBlanc also recognizes that even when cutting higher-value trees, there is often lower-value material cut as well and having a market for the lower-value material can make the difference between an economical harvest or not.

Given the lack of markets in Cape Breton for low-value hardwood, installing facility-based or district woodchip heating systems may be an option to provide a market for low-value hardwood and reduce fuel oil consumption. Burning woodchips instead of fuel oil also boosts local employment, helps keep dollars circulating locally, and reduces dependence on foreign oil supplies. And as LeBlanc points out, it's a lot easier to clean up a woodchip spill than an oil spill.

## 4.3 Sawmilling: Softwood and Hardwood

### *Portable Bandsaw Mills and Small-scale Stationary Mills*

***small-scale mill  
operators can  
find success  
with niche and  
custom milling***

It doesn't make sense to attempt to compete with large-scale, high-volume dimensional lumber mills. However, small-scale mill operators can find success with niche and custom milling. One option is the portable bandsaw mill, which can be moved from site to site and saw small quantities of logs into desired products. These are generally one- or two-person businesses and can offer a combination of custom sawmilling for hire at a set hourly rate (or board-foot rate) and custom lumber sales, often with a focus on niche dimensions and/or qualities generally unavailable at conventional lumber stores.



Photo: Dan Hutt

I don't endorse any manufactures, but I will use Wood-Mizer (<http://woodmizer.ca/en/>) as an example of a manufacturer of both portable bandsaw mills and stationary small-scale mills. According to Wood-Mizer Canada, more than half of Wood-Mizer sawmill owners operate small milling businesses either full-time or part-time. While promotional

material created by Wood-Mizer should be taken with a grain of salt, their website includes a number of small-business success stories (<http://woodmizer.ca/en/Resources/Success-Stories>). Wood-Mizer suggests that for those interested in operating a small business, a mill with full hydraulics is optimal. If the sawmill



is intended to supply one or more value-added business that will require large volumes of lumber, it makes sense to invest in a stationary rotary mill. Wood-Mizer (and other companies) supply a range of stationary mills.

While stationary mills require a greater up-front investment, there is no question they are superior to bandsaw mills; they are easier to operate and produce more uniform lumber at a higher production rate. Although there are plenty of commercial bandsaw operations, most commercial operations are tending towards stationary rotary mills. A significant down-side of rotary mills, however, is that they have a larger kerf than band-saws, and so more of each log ends up as sawdust. Production rates from hydraulic bandsaw mills are roughly 3,000 boardfeet per day (varies a lot depending on factors such as size and length of logs and type of lumber being sawn). Stationary mills can produce about 10,000 boardfeet per day. Costs for hydraulic bandsaw mills are roughly \$40,000 and stationary circular mills are closer to

\$100,000. Of course, prices vary substantially depending on make, model and accessories. The University of New York's extension department produced an excellent introduction ([click for link](#)) to setting up a small sawmilling business. Although some of its material is relevant only in the USA, much of the document is applicable in Nova Scotia.

Various niche markets for custom lumber milling can be explored. Live-edge boards are in demand by some architects, carpenters and fine woodworkers; some lobster fishermen make their own traps and need a supply of certain trap components; furniture makers are often looking for a supply of custom cut lumber. ATF Sawmill is an example of a sawmill that has taken advantage of the niche market for lobster trap component in Western Nova Scotia.

## *Hardwood Flooring, Custom Lumber and Speciality Furniture*

Hardwood logs can be sawn and kiln dried to make lumber suitable for manufacturing into flooring. Peter Christiano of Fine Wood Flooring noted that a key element of success when making flooring is to figure out markets for the lumber that is not made into flooring. A ten-inch one-by-two piece of maple might seem like scrap destined for the woodstove, but Peter found markets even for small off-cuts such as these and according to him, that made a huge difference in their bottom line.

Fine Wood's lumber kiln in Middle River, Cape Breton may be the site of a Wood Hub project, led by Larch Wood's Don Beamish and Victoria County councillor Jim Mustard. The potential plan is to create a co-operative association that would operate the kiln and provide a space that can be rented to value-added wood product businesses. The hope is to promote local wood-based crafts and manufacturing, and the Wood Hub could be a worth-while association for UINR to partner with (perhaps UINR already is!).

Custom sawing and kiln-drying lumber goes hand-in-hand with creating specialty furniture. Jeff Amos of Amos Wood ([www.amoswood.ca](http://www.amoswood.ca)) successfully does just this. Jeff operates a mill, a kiln, a wood-working shop and a retail outlet. Jeff's business motto is "every piece of wood tells a story." His business relies on creating unique wood products (or, at least, unique in the eyes of his customers). If you want low-cost generic, go to IKEA; if you want a jaw-dropping conversation piece, go to Amos Wood. Eastern Nova Scotia may not have a large enough population to support a similar business, but it may be possible to tap the Halifax market, or possibly even reach further afield.

## *Waste Not*

Taylor Lumber is an example of a small conventional sawmill that has learned to do more with less wood. Their sawdust, shavings and off-cuts are burned on-site to produce electricity that powers their sawmill and they sell excess power to NS Power Inc. Heat not used otherwise in their operations will be used to warm a large greenhouse operation that they are currently constructing. Other mills sell their wood shavings as animal bedding. The key is to ensure that as far as possible all components of the raw log are used to some end.

## *Windows, Doors, Cabinets, Countertops, Mouldings, Turned Products*

House components are a value-added industry that may be difficult to establish in Eastern Nova Scotia. At present, low-cost imports of these products are readily available so local manufacturers must rely on niche markets that will pay higher prices in order to obtain custom- and local-made products. Unlike wooden crafts, locally-made doors and window frames are not easily distinguished, in the eyes of consumers at least, from imported versions. Furthermore, people are more willing to pay extra for a locally-made wooden toy or cutting board that they give as a gift or which is displayed in their home, but not for an item as generic as a door. Given the small population base in Eastern Nova Scotia there may not be enough people to generate a critical level of demand. This is not a product line to completely dismiss, but it must be explored with extra caution.



## *Toys, Utensils, Cutting Boards, Crafts, Paddles, Walking Sticks... the List is Long!*

Every farmers' market seems to have at least one craftsperson selling hand-made wooden utensils and attractive cutting boards of various sizes and shapes. The list of possible products is long, and people want to buy them. As mentioned above, Larch Wood Enterprises is a local success story that has taken the production of a simple wooden craft item – cutting boards made from end-grain blocks of tamarack – from the level of farmers' markets to international export in the range of \$100 million. Larch Wood uses only about 300 cords of tamarack a year and employs about twenty people. Don Beamish, Larch Wood's general manager, has a wealth of experience in marketing wood products and is willing to mentor people who want to develop wood-craft businesses.

The take-home message for potential wood craft producers is that there is potential to produce and market numerous types of crafts, and there is potential to increase sales through wholesale and export markets. The key is to do market research to develop a quality product that people will want to pay money for, and then market the product through retail and wholesale trade shows.



## 5.0 Opportunities for Non-timber Forest Products

### 5.1 Wild Foods, Body-Care, Decoratives, Tree Nurseries

Forests abound with opportunities to collect and create non-timber products, from foods to body-care products to nutraceuticals.

#### *Nutraceuticals*

Fundy Spores ([www.fundyspores.wordpress.com](http://www.fundyspores.wordpress.com)), for example, is a small Nova Scotian business that creates several products from mushrooms gathered in the forest, including an ink made from chaga fungus and 'health-promoting' tinctures made from turkey tail, chaga and reishi fungi. The tinctures are sold individually or as a set in an attractively designed wooden box. The company advertises that they collect the fungi according to ethical wild-crafting practices (although they do not state what these are). The company also offers mushroom workshops and walks throughout the year.

#### *Teas*



Boreal Forest Teas is another example of a small business making a non-timber product from the forest. This company collects blueberries, cranberries, rosehips, yarrow and other products from forests and fields to make herbal teas. There is no reason a similar business could not be created in Nova Scotia. Sweetfern, Labrador tea, wintergreen, conifer tips and chaga are just a few examples of forest-based ingredients for teas found in Nova Scotia's forests.

#### *Body Care*



Aroma Borealis (<http://www.aromaborealis.com>) is yet another example. This company creates herbal teas and body care, aromatherapy, and herbal skin care products, all with ingredients collected from forests. Examples include spruce tip tea, lip balm made with spruce tips, rose petal face cream, and aromatherapy oil with fir and spruce.

## Nursery

The MacPhail Native Plant Nursery (<http://macphailwoods.org/nursery/>) in Prince Edward Island is an example of another type of non-timber forest product. Seeds are collected from native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants to create a native forest nursery. Seedlings of native trees can be collected from woods-roads and ditches where they otherwise would be killed eventually. Nursery plants can be sold to landscapers, homeowners, schools, government institutions, and those interested in carrying out restoration projects.

## Birch Bark Oil

Birch bark oil may one day be a viable non-timber forest product. Two researchers (Mi'kmaw scholar Tuma Young and chemist Matthias Bierenstiel) at Cape Breton University are studying birch bark oil with the hope of creating an over-the-counter therapeutic product. Mi'kmaq traditionally used birch bark (masgwi) for therapeutic purposes, and the researchers are interviewing elders at Membertou First Nation to learn more about these uses.

## Maple Syrup

Of course, everyone knows maple syrup and other maple sugar products. If the lands acquired by the Mi'kmaw communities include significant stands of sugar maple trees, then a maple sugary would be a 'sweet' option to consider. While pictures of maple syrup operations often depict buckets hanging from spiles tapped into maple trees, most modern sugar maple operations employ tube-based systems, sometimes with vacuum pumps to gather sap more quickly, and some use reverse osmosis systems to reduce water content before the boiling process.



Sugar maples are the best tree to tap as their sap has the highest sugar content, but red maples can be tapped as well. Tapped trees should be at least 10 inches (25 centimetres) at breast height; trees between 18 and 24 inches can handle two taps, and larger trees can handle three. In Nova Scotia, maple operations range up to 15,000 or so taps, but most are less than 4,000 taps, and average yield is approximately 0.38 litres of syrup per tap.

## *Birch Syrup*

A small but growing alternative to maple syrup is birch syrup. Yellow birch sap has less sugar content than sugar maples, and is a bit trickier to reduce to syrup due to a narrower temperature range for processing, but it produces excellent and unique syrup with a slight wintergreen flavour. White and yellow birch sap can also be used to make a specialty wine. Who knew?

## *Sugar Bush Meals and Tours*



Some maple sugar operations add value to by offering pancake breakfasts and sugar bush tours. Such events are also, of course, a good opportunity to sell maple syrup and talk about forest stewardship. One example of this sort of value-added sugar operation is Sugar Moon Farm in Earletown, Nova Scotia (<https://www.sugarmoon.ca/>). Sugar Moon has taken the pancake breakfast to a new level, with professionally cooked breakfasts and occasional 'chef nights' with gourmet dinners. Another is Elmhurst Outdoors, in New Brunswick (<http://www.elmhurstoutdoors.ca/>). Both Sugar Moon and Elmhurst also offer snow-showing and hiking trails and educations tours about forests and maple syrup production.

## *Balsam Fir Resin*

A less popular but very useful tree sap product is balsam fir resin. This sticky product is used in numerous commercial and pharmaceutical applications, from cough syrups to paints to optical lenses for microscopes. Balsam resin can be collected from fir trees using a small tool known as a picoué, which has a sharp tooth (or teeth depending on the model) that puncture sap pockets and a reservoir that collects the sap. Only the largest sap pockets should be harvested to avoid harming the tree, and sap is collected during the warmer months when the sap flows better. With practice, an experienced collector can gather six to eight pounds of sap (two to four litres) a day from a good stand. Selling resin to a wholesaler is an option; creating a new wholesale company is also an option. An example of an existing wholesaler of balsam resin is Gomme de sapin Robin St-Gelais Enr (<http://gommedesapin.com/english/index.php>). This company buys balsam fir resin from individual collectors and then sells the resin in quantities ranging from 4-pound to 450-pound buckets.



***Given the various uses for balsam fir sap and boughs, and the low prices paid for pulpwood, it may well prove more economical to focus on non-timber product uses for balsam fir.***

## Aromatic Pillows

Still considering balsam fir, some enterprising crafters have had success selling small pillows stuffed with balsam fir needles. These products provide a woody, 'Christmassy' fragrance year-round. Amazingly, these pillows retain their smell for years. (Other forest products can be used in aroma pillows too, such as sweet fern and pine needles.) Of course, Christmas wreaths and bough sprays are always a seasonal favourite use of balsam fir. There may be year-round demand for various types of forest greenery at weddings and other large banquet-type events. Given the various uses for balsam fir sap and boughs, and the low prices paid for pulpwood, it may well prove more economical to focus on non-timber product uses for balsam fir.

## 5.2 Ecotourism and Educational Programs

Mi'kmaw communities may be ideal places to develop forest-based ecotourism and educational programs. There is growing interest in nature education and hands-on workshops. Workshop possibilities include cooking traditional Mi'kmaw meals utilizing some ingredients gathered from forests, creating Mi'kmaw crafts with forest materials such as basket weaving, and forest walks to learn Mi'kmaw names of trees and other plants. Workshops can be coupled

with accommodations to create opportunities for over-night, weekend-long, or even longer events. Accommodations could be traditionally built wigwams, rustic cabins, or high-end retreat-style buildings.



Ski Tuonela (<http://skituonela.com>) in St. Annes, Cape Breton, is a small business based on a 400-acre forestland property. The owners created cross-country ski trails and built rustic cabins located about four kilometres back in the forest. Visitors ski or hike to the cabins and Tuonela staff bring their bags in

by skidoo. Visitors bring their own food and the cabins are equipped with gas stoves, pots, pans, dishes and utensils. The cabins are off the grid and electricity is provided by several solar panels. Each cabin has a woodstove for heat. And yes, bathroom facilities consist of a "luxury two-holer outhouse."

Ski Tuonela has become very popular and is often fully booked every weekend through the winter, mostly with visitors from Halifax despite the four-hour drive to get there. Being located four kilometres from a road and off-grid may seem like disadvantages, but for Ski Tuonela these attributes give the place a special feel not available elsewhere. Urban visitors leave their busy city lives behind for a weekend and enjoy the deep forest, starry nights and peaceful quiet (and the outhouse?). Three days of skiing and two nights' accommodation in the rustic cabins costs about \$300 for two people. For many it is a perfect 'stay-cation' option.



Ski Tuonela's success stems from combining unique accommodations with an outdoor activity. No doubt there are many ways that Mi'kmaw businesses could create similar forest-based ecotourism experiences for any season of the year.

Of course, ecotourism opportunities need not be exclusively based on Mi'kmaw culture. Several forms of forest-based adventure courses have become popular in recent years. Ontree Park ([www.ontreepark.com/](http://www.ontreepark.com/)) near Martock, NS, is one example. It consists of a series of obstacles suspended in the forest canopy, including ziplines, Tarzan ropes, climbing walls, and various rope walks. Guided photography, canoeing, fishing and hunting trips are also possibilities.

## 5.3 Carbon

***It may sound improbable, but the owners of an 800-odd acre woodlot in New Brunswick have raised approximately \$300,000 by selling carbon credits.***

It may sound improbable, but the owners of an 800-odd acre woodlot in New Brunswick have raised approximately \$300,000 by selling carbon credits. The carbon sale is not thanks to random good luck. Rather, the owners, Community Forests International (CFI), have an expert in forest carbon storage among their staff, Dale Prest. CFI partnered with Dialog, a Canadian architecture and engineering firm based in Toronto, who wished to off-set its carbon emissions (and benefit from creative advertising) by purchasing carbon credits from CFI. A second company, Free and Easy Traveler, has now also purchased carbon credits from CFI's woodland.

The carbon credits are tied to the carbon stored on CFI's woodland, as calculated according to an established formula. CFI has to demonstrate that they have long-term management control over the forestland, and that the forestland is managed to increase carbon levels over time. The UINR Forestry Program may be perfectly situated to sell carbon off-sets, provided that whatever agreement reached with the Nova Scotia Government includes the right to benefit from carbon offset sales.

Currently, marketing is a key component of woodland-based carbon offset sales. There is no established market into which a landowner can simply sell carbon credits. Rather, the UINR Forestry Program would have to seek out potential purchasers, much in the same way that CFI did to find buyers for their forest carbon. Dale Prest is an excellent contact person to begin discussions about the logistics of finding buyers and determining how much carbon can be sold. The take-home message is that selling carbon is a potential option to generate funds while restoring ecological value to forests.

## 6.0 Getting Products to Customers

Marketing channels for non-timber and value-added wood products can be grouped into six general categories: websites, tradeshow, fairs and markets, brokers, traditional print-based advertising, and word-of-mouth. Naturally, some products lend themselves to certain marketing approaches and some approaches overlap. Websites, of course, are fundamental to marketing any product or service.

### 6.1 Websites

If a product does not have a website, does it actually exist? In the eyes of many today, the answer is essentially 'no'. Websites are the first place people look to learn more about a product or service, and a website defines the business for many people. Fresh, clean, crisp websites suggest to potential customers that the business provides high quality products or services. Websites are the central forum to describe the business's philosophy and engender a personal connection with a potential customer. Websites also provide critical details about products or services offered, and where and how they can be purchased. Naturally, websites reach customers whether they are next door or around the world.

In addition to a business's own website, craftspeople may find it useful to take advantage of sites that provide a venue to sell crafts and other merchandise. Etsy is a popular site for buying and selling everything from art to craft supplies to vintage clothing to toys to crafts (<https://www.etsy.com/>). Of course, sellers are charged a fee for items they list and sell.

## 6.2 Wholesale Shows and Retail Shows



Tradeshows are the heart of marketing for many businesses. This is where the action happens. Recognizing this, the Nova Scotia government provides some assistance for Nova Scotia business to attend tradeshows in some instances (more information on this is the Partnership section below).



Some shows are exclusively for wholesale producers, and are where producers of products do business with the sellers (retailers) of products. The general public is not allowed to attend these shows. Thus, only producers who are able to and interested in wholesaling their product should consider attending these types of shows. Retail shows, on the other hand, connect producers directly with customers and include craft fairs and farmers' markets. Of course, many small businesses attend both wholesale and retail shows.

***Tradeshows are the heart of marketing for many businesses.***

The examples of on products that fall a few cases tourism numerous shows

shows provided below focus into the category of 'gifts' or in businesses. There are, however, that cater to specific types of



products. There are shows for kitchen ware, for flooring, for manufactured wood products... if it's a common product, chances are there is a specific tradeshow for it. Thus, producers should always seek out shows related specifically to the products they are producing as well as more general 'gift' type shows. Producers of wood flooring, for example, would benefit from attending the National Wood Flooring Expo, held once a year in different cities throughout the United States: (<https://www.nwfaexpo.org/NWFA2018/Public/Content.aspx?ID=326&Role=E>).

Large-scale producers of furniture, for another example, might consider the Interzum tradeshow in Germany: (<http://www.interzum.com>). Interzum calls itself "the world's leading trade fair for furniture production and interior design." They state that "this is where the most important business is conducted and momentum for the global furniture supply industry is created. Decision makers, opinion leaders and disseminators from all over the world keep up with the innovations in the industry, seek and establish new contacts ...."



## 6.2.1 Local, National and International Wholesale Shows

Maritime Gift Show (<http://www.maritimegiftshow.ca/>): This wholesale show happens twice a year and does not require that producers make their own product. Essentially, the produce just has to be associated with the Maritime Provinces. The show has a special section dedicated to craftspeople, artisans and small producers.

Craft East Buyers' Expo (<https://craftalliance.ca/projects/craft-east-buyers-expo-2018/>): The Craft Alliance hosts this show in February in Halifax. The purpose of the show is to provide marketing opportunities for Atlantic Provinces producers of quality craft, apparel and giftware products. The Craft Alliance also offers other services designed to promote craft in Atlantic Canada (more on this in the Partnership section below).

Canadian Gift Association (<https://www.cangift.org>): The CGA hosts several wholesale gift shows, with the Toronto show in January being the biggest. CGA states that the Toronto show is the “top national gift fair and largest trade fair in Canada – where consumer trends begin. Attracts an international audience of buyers who come to network, conduct business, see new trends, celebrate innovation and engage in new business opportunities with the Canadian manufactures, importers, exporters, wholesalers, distributors and suppliers who exhibit here.” Exhibitors must be members in good standing of the Canadian Gift Association.

Vancouver Gift Expo (<http://vancouvergiftexpo.com/>): Smart Shows hosts two shows per year in Vancouver and they feature gifts, apparels, novelties, home décor, jewellery, bed and bath products, gourmet items, and handcrafts.

By Hand Artisan Gift Show (<http://byhand.ca/>): By Hand calls itself Canada's premier wholesale show, providing retailers with an opportunity to purchase the highest quality Canadian handmade goods. The show is held in January in Toronto.

New York Now (<https://www.nynow.com/about-us/>): New York Now calls itself the leading market for all that's new and 'on trend' in specialty home and lifestyle products. The show is offer twice a year and is divided into three themes: home, lifestyle and handmade. Don Beamish of Larch Wood Enterprises attends this show, among others.

American Craft Retailers Show (<https://www.acrephiladelphia.com/show/>): ACRC showcases high quality hand-made crafts by both American and Canadian craftspeople. The show is held in Philadelphia in February.

## 6.2.2 Local and National Retail Shows:

Saltscapes (<https://saltscapesexpo.com/>): Saltscapes hosts two gift shows each year in Nova Scotia, the Harvest Greet the Holidays Expo in November at the Masstown Market, and Saltscapes East Coast Expo in April in Halifax. These shows celebrate all things East Coast, and features crafts and tourism businesses with a connection to the Maritime Provinces. Sellers are not required to have made the products themselves, which is different from many craft shows.

Ideal Home Show Expo (<http://www.idealwholehomeexpo.ca/>): This show features products relevant to homes and renovations as well as hand-crafted gifts.

Signatures (<http://signatures.ca/>): Signatures Shows hosts 20 gift and craft fairs in 13 cities across Canada, featuring Canadian handmade products by artists, artisans, craft makers, and designers. Exhibitors must be the designer and creator of the product.

One of a Kind (<https://www.oneofakindshow.com/toronto/en/plan-your-visit/whyooak.html>): One of a Kind is one of the largest and best-attended craft shows in North America, featuring unique, handmade crafts and the talented, dedicated artisans who make them.

Craft Nova Scotia Designer Craft Show (<http://craftnovascotia.ca/>): Craft Nova Scotia hosts two craft shows, a summer and a winter show, both in Halifax. They are juried and can be difficult to get into, but they are popular.

Folk Music Festivals (various): Folks music festivals throughout the Maritimes and across Canada usually have a craft fair section.

Farmers' Markets (various): Numerous farmers' markets exist throughout the Maritimes, including the Historic Farmers' Market, the Seaport Farmers' Market, and the Alderney Landing Farmers' Markets in the Halifax area. Farmers' markets always have craft vendors; most limit vendors to those who create the product themselves.

***Brokers  
or trading  
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## 6.2.3 Brokers / Trading Companies

Brokers or trading companies can help producers break into foreign markets. Brokers can also help producers who can make small amounts of various products by coordinating multiple buyers for shipments containing a diversity of products. Finewood Flooring in Cape Breton, for example, worked with the Jacob Jürgensen trading company, based in Germany. The company can assist producers with product consulting and shipping and warehousing logistics. Jacob Jürgensen trades in numerous wood and paper products including hardwood and softwoods from Canada, components for bed frames, mouldings, and flooring. Finewood found it advantageous to work with this company because they could ship flooring as their main product but also various other by-products of the flooring manufacturing process such as dimensional hardwood lumber of various sizes and species. Jacob Jürgensen might let Finewood know, for example, that they had a demand for pieces of one-by-one-by-ten inch white ash in addition to certain types of flooring, thus a container could be filled with several products which on their own wouldn't be enough product to be worth the shipping expenses.

## 6.2.4 Print Advertising

Is print advertising dead? It may be on the decline, but there remains a place for traditional print-based marketing yet. Every business should seek out opportunities for free advertising by making themselves into media stories. If there is something special or unique about a business, or even if it is simply a newly created business, media will often do a story on the business. Presto: free marketing.

Beyond media articles, advertising can be targeted for certain audiences by selecting certain publications, either by region or by theme. Rural Delivery Magazine and Atlantic Forestry Review Magazine, for example, cater to an audience that might be particularly receptive to forest products (and these magazines also do stories on forest product producers). Saltscapes Magazine caters to those with an interest in local products and local tourism opportunities, many of whom seem to be urban residents seeking out rural products and adventures.

## 6.2.5 Word of Mouth

We endorse products and services to each other almost every day. Do you have a mechanic you like? How was your weekend at Ski Tuonela? Would you buy one of those chairs again? It is stating the obvious, but good customer service and quality products brings new customers and keeps old ones coming back for more. Furthermore, in today's internet age, some customers post comments or reviews online; if the product is good, hopefully the reviews are too.

How else to promote positive word-of-mouth marketing? One important technique is to ask participants in workshops or education events to complete a post-event survey that invites them to provide feedback on the event. Another important technique is to observe and chat with customers at tradeshow and farmers' markets; a lot can be learned from their comments and by their actions towards the products.

## 7.0 Business Partners, Industry Experts and Funding Opportunities

### 7.1 Industry Experts and Business Partners

#### *Craft Council (Atlantic Canada)*

Largely supported by the provincial governments of the four Atlantic Provinces, the Craft Alliance (<https://craftalliance.ca/>) is dedicated to helping craft artisans and small businesses enter into wholesale and export markets. The Alliance also assists small business people with education and skills training, and undertakes research to benefit the craft sector, including market research, and promotes tradeshow, export missions and workshops. The Alliance also hosts the Craft East Buyers' Show (formerly known as the Atlantic Craft Trade Show). The Alliance is an important potential partner for any small craft-based business considering wholesale marketing and/or exporting. Contact person is Bernard Burton (902 441 0071, [Bernard@craftalliance.ca](mailto:Bernard@craftalliance.ca)).



## *Craft Ontario*

Craft Ontario (<https://craftontario.com/>) offers on-line courses in marketing, on-line sales and other skills designed to assist small-scale craft producers and artisans. While based in Ontario, much of what the organization offers is applicable to small craft businesses in Nova Scotia.

## *Local Businesses*

There are numerous retail businesses throughout Nova Scotia, Atlantic Canada, Canada and indeed the world that may well be interested in selling NTFPs produced in Nova Scotia. Some local examples include Jennifer's of Nova Scotia, Made in the Maritimes Artisan Boutique, Inkwell Boutique, and The Herring Choker. Of course, this is a tiny subset of all the possible business opportunities. Connections with local small businesses can be made by simply making an appointment with the owner, or by attending wholesale tradeshow where large numbers of retail businesses gather in order to meet with and buy from craft producers operating at a wholesale level.

## *Don Beamish*

Mr. Beamish is the general manager of Larch Wood Enterprises in Cape Breton. He is an expert in marketing of value-added wood craft products and would be an expert worth collaborating with. He has indicated that he would be pleased to assist Mi'kmaw small business in this sector.

## *Peter and Candace Christiano*

Mr. and Ms. Christiano operated FineWood Flooring, also in Cape Breton. Although they are retired, and not interested in consulting work, they may be willing to chat informally with UINR about their experiences in producing, marketing and selling (domestically and internationally) their value-added wood products.

## *Nova Scotia Co-operative Council*

The Council calls itself the voice of the co-operative movement in Nova Scotia. It can assist people with creating new co-ops by providing information on incorporating, forming boards of directors, and creating by-laws and policies. It can also provide feasibility assessments and assist in obtaining business financing from credit unions. The Council also has experience in developing Community Economic Development Investment Funds (CEDIFS).

## *Common Good Solutions*

Common Good Solutions (<http://commongoodsolutions.ca/>) assists social enterprises (entrepreneurs, non-profits, and cooperatives) with business planning, marketing, training and collaboration. They believe that businesses can and should be part of the change towards a better society and healthier environment, and work extensively with businesses in rural Nova Scotia. They have staff living and working in Cape Breton.

## *National Co-operative Research Organisations*

Canadian Co-operative Research Network (CCRN): conducts research on co-operatives in Canada and shares its results (<http://ccrn.coop/>).

Coop Zone: network of people and organizations that help others to start and develop co-operatives by offering training and resources (<http://www.coopzone.coop/>).

Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC): member-driven association that supports, promotes and unites co-operative and mutual organizations. It strives to advance the co-operative economy by organizing co-op development, advocating with government and conducting research to improve public policy. It assists co-operatives to get established and to thrive and provides advice, information and tools to support co-op development in Canada (<http://canada.coop/en/about-cmc>).

## **7.2 Funding Opportunities**

### *Creative Industries Fund,*

### *NS Communities, Culture and Heritage Dept*

(<https://novascotia.ca/programs/creative-industries-fund/>)

This Nova Scotia government fund is designed to assist businesses that are focused on exporting their product and wish to increase their capacity to export. Eligible businesses include those engaged in making crafts. Contact person is Mickey Quase (902 424 3701, [mickey.quase@novascotia.ca](mailto:mickey.quase@novascotia.ca)).

## *Nova Scotia Business Inc.*

*(<https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/export>)*

Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) offers numerous programs for Nova Scotian businesses including expanding export capacity, assistance with small businesses, market intelligence, and trade missions to promote businesses internationally. Contact person is Debbie MacIsaac (902 424 4242, [dmacisaac@nsbi.ca](mailto:dmacisaac@nsbi.ca)).

NSBI offers a small business program geared towards assisting businesses with exporting, marketing education, product development, and trade missions, and offer \$15,000 grants towards these. (<https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/export/small-business-development-program>).

NSBI also offers a Small Business Loan Guarantee Program that can help businesses borrow up to \$500,000 in form of a loan, line of credit or working capital to start or grow a business. Eligibility for the program is based on business plan, viability and character, and typically is accessed by high-risk sectors (including social enterprise) that are not able to attain financing through traditional means. (<http://www.novascotia.coop/programs/small-business-loan-guarantee-program/>).

## *Nova Scotia Government, Labour and Advanced Education*

The Nova Scotia government offers partial financial assistance to train employees in workplace innovation and productivity skills (<https://novascotia.ca/programs/workplace-innovation-productivity-skills-incentive/>).

## *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)*

ACOA has several programs designed to assist businesses in Atlantic Canada, although they are generally not geared towards retail/wholesale businesses or small businesses. Nonetheless, ACOA is such an important player in Atlantic Canada, it would be important to meet with the Agency to discuss potential business plans to see if ACOA may be able to support some aspect (<http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/Eng/Pages/Home.aspx>). ACOA also offers helpful educational materials to those interested in starting a new business or expanding a business.

## *Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC)*

Community Business Development Corporation is supported by ACOA. It provides social enterprise loans and financing in Atlantic Canada, with a focus on rural communities. Social enterprises are businesses that produce and/or sell goods and services to generate income to support social and community development goals, and are non-profits or non-profit cooperatives. CBDC provides loans up to \$150,000 per eligible applicant to buy assets, renovate existing assets or expand. (<http://www.cbdc.ca/en/programs/cbdc-social-enterprise-loan>)

The CBDC also provides loans, loan guarantees and equity financing to entrepreneurs (who generally can't get it from traditional sources) as well as training, business counselling and advice for small businesses. (<http://www.cbdc.ca/en/what-is-cbdc>).

## *Canadian Government, Industry Canada*

Industry Canada offers a Canada Small Business Financing Program to help small businesses purchase, lease or improve land or buildings, and purchase new or used equipment. (<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csbfp-pfpec.nsf/eng/home>). The Canadian government also offers businesses a summer-job wage subsidy for hiring students (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html>).

## *Ulnooweg Development Group*

Ulnooweg provides loans, grants and business services, including training opportunities, to Indigenous endeavours in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland (<http://ulnooweg.ca/>).



## 8.0 Value-added and NTFP Strengths and Challenges Analysis

### 8.1 Strengths for Value-added and Non-timber Forest Product Development

A workshop on strengths and challenges was held with community members in Membertou on February 7th, 2018, and a previous workshop on vision and values for the forest was held on October 18th, 2017. The following is based on the results of this workshop, interviews with people involved in value-added and non-timber products in the Maritimes region, and research of published reports on value-added and non-timber products.

The central strengths possessed by Mi'kmaq communities in Unama'ki, as identified by this research, are (1) the passion shared by many community members for a netukulimk approach to caring for the forest that will come under Mi'kmaq control; (2) skills and passion for traditional non-timber forest products such as baskets and forest foods; (3) a passion to explore alternative approaches to forest-based businesses such as eco-tourism and a variety of value-added and non-timber forest products; (4) the potential to benefit from an 'Indigenous' and 'sustainable' brand to market products produced; and (5) the popularity of Cape Breton as a known brand both in Canada and internationally.

#### *Netukulimk Vision*

The community members who participated in the Membertou workshops share a well-defined vision for the stewardship of the forest. They wish to ensure that the forest remains healthy for future generations, while at the same time using its resources in a responsible manner. Provided that this vision is put into practice on-the-ground through low-impact and restoration-based forestry practices, then this vision is a powerful asset for the Mi'kmaq in Unama'ki. First, it will ensure that the forest resource is not abused or squandered, and that it will be available to provide for the communities continuously into the future. If it is well managed, the trees in the forest will gradually become more and more

valuable over time. In other words, it is like having a secure bank account where the principle is maintained and it is continually earning interest. Second, such a vision, again if put into practice, creates the necessary conditions to market carbon credits from the forest. Finally, this vision offers the potential to create a genuine 'sustainable' and 'Indigenous' brand to help market any products coming from the forest.

## *Product and Business Skills*

Some community members possess product-making skills such as making baskets, wooden flowers, drum rings and many others. Very few people in Nova Scotia possess such knowledge, thereby making these skills particularly valuable. Community members also possess a number of business skills such as book-keeping and website development. Some community members also have silviculture and harvesting skills.

## *Passion for New Approaches*

Community members expressed a strong desire to move beyond traditional forestry products such as pulpwood and studwood, and experiment with value-added products, non-timber products and eco-tourism possibilities. Community members saw the potential in offering guided wildlife tours to Europeans that would include exposure to Mi'kmaw language, culture and history. This willingness and desire to try new approaches and think 'outside of the box' is a valuable asset; it demonstrates that community members are not stuck in the rut of current forestry practices and products.

## *Indigenous, Sustainable and Cape Breton Brand*

Unama'ki communities have the opportunity to take advantage of the popularity of Indigenous and sustainable-branded products and eco-tourism services. 'Indigenous' may not be a well-known brand in Nova Scotia, but is a strong brand in Europe and Mi'kmaw businesses can take advantage of this. Furthermore, Cape Breton is a well-known brand in both Canada and internationally. Numerous tourists visit Cape Breton each year, each of which is a potential customer for Mi'kmaw businesses.

UINR can consider the costs and benefits of seeking FSC certification for the land to be under Mi'kmaq control in order to provide further assurance of sustainable forest management. Furthermore, UINR can consider the possibility

of developing guidelines for sustainable collection and gathering of non-timber forest products such as mushrooms and other foods, decorative materials, etc. Elders could be engaged to help instruct younger community members in ethical gathering techniques.

### *Allies and Resources*

There are a number of people and organizations, many of which are listed in this report, that can be called upon for information, training, financing and funding. Some of these people and organizations are available to be hired, and many are willing to discuss questions and challenges for no charge. There is a lot of advice and information available just a phone call away.

## **8.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Value-added and Non-timber Forest Products**

### **8.2.1 Training**

Workshop participants noted that while some community members have forestry, business and product-making skills, these skills are not as wide-spread as they could be, especially among younger community members. Participants saw a critical need to ensure that more community members, especially young people, have more training in these areas.

The following are several possible opportunities to increase skills and knowledge.

### *Forest Ecology, Plant Identification and Low-Impact Harvesting and Silviculture Courses*

- UINR can organize a series of weekend courses for interested community members to learn the basics of forest ecology, plant identification and restoration and low-impact harvesting and silviculture techniques.
- UINR can organize workshops on chainsaw use and management, and directional felling techniques.
- UINR and communities can sponsor or seek sponsorships to enable community members to attend chainsaw and/or brushsaw workshops

and courses held in Nova Scotia or at the Maritime College of Forest Technology in New Brunswick.

- UINR can identify and work with young adults who may wish to attend the Nova Scotia Community College natural resources program or the Maritime College of Forest Technology.

### *Product Making and Other Skills Workshops*

- *INR and communities can host skill-sharing workshops whereby community members with expert skills can share their knowledge with interested community members. This can include product-making skills, plant identification, and business skills.*

### *Mentorship / Apprenticeship Program*

- UINR can create a mentorship and apprenticeship program that connects community members with expert skills with other members who wish to learn these skills. The mentor would provide one-on-one instruction to the apprentice.
- 

### *Business Skills and Financing Workshops*

- UINR can host workshops designed to connect business owners and would-be business owners to organizations that offer business skills training, financing and grants. These organizations are listed and described in Part IV of this report.

### *Facilitated Technology Transfer*

- UINR can act as a liaison between FPIInnovation and business owners or would-be business owners who are seeking specific technical information about particular manufacturing equipment or techniques (setting up a mill, for example).

### *Training New Educators*

- Ideally, where knowledge and skills gaps exist within local communities, community members will gain these skills and knowledge so that they can become trainers and educators to pass their knowledge to fellow community members.



## 8.2.2 Financing

Community members identified that access to funding and financing can be a challenge to creating or expanding businesses in Unama'ki. UINR can address this challenge by facilitating business development skills that are required in order to access business financing and grants. UINR can connect potential business owners with the organizations listed in this report that provide business development training. One organization in particular, Ulnooweg Development Group, works exclusively with Indigenous people from Atlantic Canada who want to establish or expand businesses.

## 8.2.3 Primary Processing

Community members noted that there is essentially no community-based primary processing for logs in Unama'ki. That is, there is no commercial-level sawmilling, planning, or kiln-drying capacity to create lumber necessary for making value-added products. If community members are to make value-added products from trees from the Unama'ki Community Forest, then primary processing is a critical and currently missing link. Unama'ki can help to address this issue by identifying community members who may be interested in developing primary processing capacity and then assisting them in gaining the necessary training to create a business based on sawmilling, planning and drying. The business, likely, would be a stand-alone business not reliant on selling to community members, but of course would supply raw materials to community members as demand increases.

Another option to consider would be for UINR (or other organization) to create a non-profit organization responsible for operating, at cost, a sawmill, planer and kiln in order to provide raw materials for value-added product makers. Of course, the operation would look to all options to generate revenue to remain viable.

In either event, UINR or others interested in creating a sawmilling business can learn from Acadia First Nation, which has operated a sawmilling business since 2004. Acadia First Nation's sawmill supplies lumber for local housing and other building projects, thereby supporting value-added businesses and providing local employment and economic development. They also have a certified lumber grader to ensure that the lumber can be used in load-bearing building projects that require stamped lumber.

## 8.2.4 Markets for Low-value Primary Products

Economical silviculture and harvesting designed to grow high-value trees often requires cutting and selling lower-value trees. Unfortunately, markets for such products are generally not good in that prices paid are often less than the cost to cut and truck the product when low-impact harvesting techniques are used. Given that the lands to be acquired by Unama'ki communities are likely to contain large amounts of low-value hardwood, firewood and wood chips for domestic and institutional building heating may be an option to create a local demand for the by-product of restoration-based forest management. Similarly, small amounts of low-value trees could be a resource for certain value-added products. Many products such as cutting boards and kitchenware utensils can be made from small trees.

## 8.2.5 Lack of Government Support for Value-added Forest Products

To date, the Nova Scotia government has not embraced value-added or non-timber forest product development, thus this sector has not benefited from product development, research, marketing or targeting financing.

The benefits of targets support can be seen from efforts made by the Quebec government to promote non-timber forest products in the Gaspé region. The province created a 'Coordinator of Alternative Natural Resource Development' for this region of the province. Within a few years of targeted support, forest mushroom harvest, for example, went from roughly 100 pounds per year to 10,000 pounds per year. British Columbia, similarly, created a Buy BCwild program to promote forest foods.

## 8.2.6 Chicken-and-egg Dilemma: Marketing Versus Market- Readiness

There is a challenge in determining when to ramp-up marketing of Unama'ki forest products and eco-tourism. Demand helps encourage people to start new businesses and to expand existing businesses, but unless there are sufficient businesses that are ready to supply that demand, such efforts will backfire by harming the reputation of fledging businesses that are not ready to meet high demand.

This challenge can be addressed in part by developing a program to evaluate businesses and help them attain market-readiness. The Indigenous Tourism Association of British Columbia has created a checklist of market-readiness for businesses to help ensure that businesses are ready to be marketed to potential customers (see the section in this Part on eco-tourism).

## 8.2.7 Lack of Market Awareness of Certain Products

Some products that Unama'ki community members may want to produce, such as wooden flowers, walders, traditional instruments, and many forest foods, may not be well-known outside of Mi'kmaw communities. Marketing these products will require extra effort to make potential customers aware of what these products are. One strategy is to piggy-back unfamiliar products with familiar products. When customers look on-line or in retail stores for products they are familiar with, they will be exposed to new products that they may have interest in once they know of their existence.

## Part III:

# Potential for Indigenous Brand and Sustainable Forestry Brand

This section of the report describes the potential to utilize an 'Indigenous Brand' and a 'sustainable forestry' brand to help market non-timber and value-added products from Mi'kmaq communities in Unama'ki.

## 1.0 The Heart of Marketing

*Branding creates a sense of who you are in the minds of others. It is the heart of marketing.*

Branding creates a sense of who you are in the minds of others. It is the heart of marketing. Almost every commercial or advertisement for a product is designed to sell not just the product itself, but also an image of how the product will "improve" your life. Buying a Coca-Cola is not just buying a fizzy sugary drink; it is also buying into (often subconsciously) an image of youthful fun times with lots of friends – or so the marketing firm for Coca-Cola wants you to believe.

Companies also use branding to let potential customers know about their values, whether these values are honest reflections of a company's practices or not. Many companies, of course, try to convince customers that their products are environmentally friendly or otherwise ethically produced. Some of these claims are valid and others are not, and unfortunately it seems the truth of a claim doesn't always matter. At times, companies find they need to 're-brand' themselves or a product to change the way people feel about the company or product. A company may have a certain image in the minds of the public that the company believes to be a disadvantage to sales.

Does branding and re-branding work? Companies wouldn't spend heaps of money to establish, maintain and refine their brands if it didn't.

## 1.1 Indigenous Brand

Manitobah Mukluks (<https://www.manitobah.ca>) is a prime example of a company that recognizes the value of telling a story to sell its product. For this company, that story is that fact that it is an Indigenous business creating a traditional Indigenous product. "A Past that Lasts" is one of the company's slogans. The fact that much of the company's product is now produced in



foreign factories doesn't seem to be hurting their business. Manitobah Mukluks discovered that there is tremendous interest in Indigenous arts and crafts, and much of which is outside of Canada. For their foreign customers, their product represents Canada, and they announce to customers that they are "Indigenous-



Photo: Aboriginal Tourism Association

Owned, Proudly Canadian." Their website provides a snapshot of their Indigenous story, the history of mukluks as an Indigenous craft, and a brief explanation of how purchasing their products directly benefits Indigenous communities.

Manitobah Mukluks is certified under CAMSC (the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council, [https://](https://www.camsc.ca)

[www.camsc.ca](https://www.camsc.ca)). With this designation, Manitobah Mukluks is able to provide a certificate to each customer that confirms the company is Aboriginal-owned and controlled.

***In British Colombia, Indigenous artists and craft makers are able to have their products certified as Indigenous under the Authentic Indigenous Artists Certification Program***

In British Columbia, Indigenous artists and craft makers are able to have their products certified as Indigenous under the Authentic Indigenous Artists Certification Program (<http://www.authenticindigenous.com/>). No such program currently exists in Atlantic Canada, and Mi'kmaq communities in Unama'ki could take the lead on creating such a program.

When I think of Mi'kmaq First Nations, I think of resilience in the face of long-running adversity. I think of a people with an intimate connection to the land. I think of friendly people who are quick to smile and quick to make a joke, and who have a deep sense of pride in who they are and where they live. I also think of a language that has been spoken for millennia, a language that is the only truly native language to this land. I think, too, of the help Mi'kmaw people gave to the first Europeans to arrive on these shores, and of how Mi'kmaq and Acadians lived together in mutual benefit for many decades, initially. I think of how the first Europeans tried to advance themselves in society by marrying 'up' into Mi'kmaw families. Finally, I think of a people with knowledge about the land and an abundance of crafting and artistic skills.

However, other perceptions of First Nations in Canada are prominent as well: missing and murdered women and girls, boil water orders, residential schools, housing crises, to mention a few. These are extremely important issues that must not be ignored or covered up. Ideally, a Mi'kmaq brand initiative will present additional perceptions of who Mi'kmaq are in the minds of the public and, more specifically, potential customers.

Mi'kmaw people and communities can decide how they wish to brand their businesses and products. Possible general components of an Indigenous brand could include the following:

1. Of this land: Mi'kmaq have thousands of years of connection to and respect for this land.
2. Kind and welcoming: Mi'kmaq lived in cooperation and mutual benefit with the Acadians for many generations when Europeans first arrived; Mi'kmaq helped the first Europeans to survive in this land, and have much to offer still today.
3. Knowledgeable and skilful: Mi'kmaq know much about the land and about making crafts and artistic items.
4. Pride in language and culture: Mi'kmaw is a beautiful sounding language spoken by many Mi'kmaq today, and cultural traditions have been passed down to present generations.
5. Resilient: Mi'kmaq continue to thrive on this land, facing and overcoming challenges.

Personally, I have also been impressed with the keen sense of humour possessed by many Mi'kmaq. This could be another brand element to build into some marketing strategies, if done appropriately. Smart, humorous irony is a powerful way to reach people's hearts and minds.

## 1.2 Stewardship / Sustainable Brand

Based on what I heard during our workshops, there is a strong desire to demonstrate Mi'kmaq communities' stewardship of the land. In my view, sustainability goes hand-in-hand with the Indigenous brand: it is part of the very essence of many Mi'kmaq people's relationship with the land and natural resources. Furthermore, non-First Nations people already have a general perception that First Nation peoples have a close connection with the land. Indigenous and sustainable fit seamlessly into a Mi'kmaq brand.

People care about forests. As Mary Jane Rodger has discovered with the Medway Community Forest Co-op, there is a demand for firewood from well-managed forests (see Part II for a description of Ms. Rodger's experience). Especially for products such as baskets, kitchen-items and furniture, for which customers want to know something about the maker and source of the products, there is potential to gain greater market access by establishing a sustainable forestry brand for those products.

Unfortunately, there is currently little opportunity to realize much benefit from achieving sustainability certification for primary forest products (roundwood products). To my knowledge, the large mills are not paying premiums for certified pulpwood or studwood at the moment, although this may change in time.

With respect to forestry certification, there are several certification systems operating in Nova Scotia. Of these, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is recognized as the most 'green' certification system. Numerous private woodland owners in Nova Scotia have achieved FSC certification by participating in large group certification programs, such as the Cape Breton Private Lands Partnership program ([www.cbwoodlots.org](http://www.cbwoodlots.org)). A thorough discussion of the merits of FSC certification are beyond the scope of this report, but the possibility of seeking FSC certification for the Crown lands that come under Mi'kmaq control is an important question to discuss. There is already some experience with FSC certification of First Nations land in Nova Scotia, as described in section 2 below.

## 1.3 Quality Brand

It goes without saying that quality is an important element of many brands, and of course must be backed up with products and services that are well made and well delivered. Ensuring quality products and services requires investing time in developing and testing products, as well as investing time in determining what customers want.

Market research does not need to be an expensive research project. Rather, market research can be as simple and straight-forward as studying products and services that are already in high demand. A lot of this research can be done through internet searches. Someone who wishes to start a nature-based ecotourism business can study a dozen existing successful Indigenous-owned and operated ecotourism businesses for inspiration and ideas. The same goes for crafts and other value-added and non-timber forest products. A first step to a successful business is to learn from existing successful businesses.

## 1.4 Nova Scotia / Cape Breton Brand

Nova Scotia and in particular Cape Breton are recognized brands to many. Cape Breton has become one of the best-known destinations in North America, in part thanks to various initiatives such as Destination Cape Breton (which received nearly \$2 million from the federal government last year to promote Cape Breton

***It may be a bit odd, but some Europeans, especially Germans, are obsessed with North American First Nations.***

***Our colonial history is, in other words, rather 'ho-hum' to most Europeans. Indigenous culture and history, and a sense of wilderness, however, is a brand that fascinates Europeans.***

as a premier destination). And of course, there was the famous “Trump Bump” campaign to bring disaffected US citizens to the Island. The actual number of people moving to Cape Breton from the US may be small, but the publicity has only bolstered Cape Breton as a tourist destination and as a recognized brand. Mi’kmaq forest product and eco-tourism businesses can ‘piggy-back’ on this already-established brand, and can partner with organizations that are promoting the island.

## 1.5 The Europe Phenomenon

It may be a bit odd, but some Europeans, especially Germans, are obsessed with North American First Nations. The National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project (2015) found that out of all visitors to Canada, Europeans are the most interested participating in Indigenous tourism and purchasing Indigenous products. Part of the “Europe Phenomenon” may be due to a series of highly popular books by German author Karl May, some of which were made into popular films. May presented a fictional, romanticized version of ‘cowboys and aboriginals’ but in his books, the First Nations were the heroes. While it may be based in fiction, there is nonetheless tremendous opportunity to exploit this obsession and fascination to market Indigenous products and eco-tourism to Europeans.

Importantly, Canadian history, other than Indigenous history, is not particularly interesting to Europeans. Whatever we have, they already have ten times over. Our colonial history is, in other words, rather ‘ho-hum’ to most Europeans. Indigenous culture and history, and a sense of wilderness, however, is a brand that fascinates Europeans. This is a key message to communicate to government tourism and marketing people: if Nova Scotia wants to sell more products and tourism to Europeans (Germany and France in particular), then embrace and promote the Indigenous brand. At present, most Europeans seem to associate Indigenous peoples with the United States, but with a little marketing this perception can be broadened to include Mi’kmaq First Nations.

## 2.0 Indigenous Sustainable Forestry Examples

### *Menominee Forest (<http://www.mtewood.com/>)*

***The Menominee Tribe has carefully managed some 230,000 acres of forestland since the 1850s. The result is a swath of intact forest that can be seen from space***

One of the most famous and successful Indigenous 'brands' in forestry is the Menominee Tribe in north-eastern Wisconsin. The Menominee Tribe has carefully managed some 230,000 acres of forestland since the 1850s. The result is a swath of intact forest that can be seen from space, standing out from the surrounding clearcuts and developed land. Impressively, the Menominee Tribe has cut the entire volume of the forest twice since the 1850s (2.25 billion board feet of timber), and yet their forest has more volume of timber standing today than it did when harvesting began over 160 years ago. According to the Menominee



Photo: Menominee Nation Sustainable Development Institute

Tribe, they saw in the 1850s that the survival of their Tribe depended on their forest, and so they refused to undertake any forestry practices that would harm the long-term health of their forest.

The Menominee blend modern forest science with their traditional stewardship

ethic. The result is a focus on diversity and quality when choosing which trees to cut, and a desire to grow a thriving old-growth forest with an abundance of high-quality trees of various species. The Menominee Forest sustains 30 species of trees and numerous wildlife species, and, apparently, its streams abound with trout.

***The survival of their Tribe depended on their forest, and so they refused to undertake any forestry practices that would harm the long-term health of their forest.***

The Menominee have received numerous awards for their work, including one from the United Nations for their dedication to practicing excellent forestry. They are also certified as a sustainable forestry operation by the Rainforest Alliance, an organization that offers third-party verification of sustainable forestry claims. Rather than selling raw logs, the Menominee process as much of the timber they harvest as they can in the local community. They sell rough and finished lumber, kiln-dried lumber, moulding, cabinets, butcher-block counter-tops, cutting boards, pizza paddles, and custom millwork. They also sell their woodchips and sawdust by-products. Their products are certified and labelled as coming from a well-managed forest under the Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC) independent certification program.

Without doubt, the Menominee have created a solid brand based on sustainability, their Indigenous identity, and quality products.



***By separating the forest management from the forest product business, the Council is able to ensure that the forest is managed first and fore-most for sustainability.***

***The Pictou Landing First Nation's 1,025 acre forest was, in 1999, the first Indigenous land in Canada to achieve FSC certification as a well-managed forest.***

## *NorSask Forest Products Inc. and Mistik Management Ltd.*

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council in Saskatchewan owns a forest products company (NorSask), and a forest management company (Mistik). By separating the forest management from the forest product business, the Council is able to ensure that the forest is managed first and fore-most for sustainability. By owning the forest products company, the Council is also able to ensure that money and jobs stay in the local community. Meadow Lake Tribal Council has built a brand based on quality forest products (with a dedication to consistent quality of products and excellent service to customers) and sustainable forest management (by achieving FSC forest certification for their woodlands operations).

Part of the Council's success has been to involve their community in making decisions about the operation of the company and the management of their forests. Perhaps for this reason, the companies strive to provide reliable employment for band members through down-turns in the industry.

## *Manitou Forest Products (<http://www.manitouforest.com/>)*

Manitou Forest Products is a joint venture between a non-Indigenous businessman and the Rainy River First Nation, in Ontario, undertaking sawmilling, lumber drying, planning, moulding and operating a remanufacturing facility. The company sells dimensional lumber, interior and exterior pine siding, pine lumber, flooring, tongue & groove, decking, posts and timber, log cabin siding, drill core trays (for the mining industry) and cedar and ash products. They strive to shift towards increasingly value-added products, and this has helped reduce their dependency on exporting dimensional lumber and mitigate the ups-and-downs of the seasonal building period. Manitou Forest Products worked with FPIinnovations to give their employees additional training, to help decide which equipment to invest in, and to assist with their shift towards increased value-added products.

## *Pictou Landing Woodlot*

Here in Nova Scotia, the Pictou Landing First Nation's 1,025 acre forest was, in 1999, the first Indigenous land in Canada to achieve FSC certification as a well-managed forest. In addition to low-impact forest harvesting, Pictou Landing uses the forest for community education and to help connect children with nature. Their management of the forest is based on the Mi'kmaw tradition of netukulimk.

## 3.0 Indigenous Ecotourism

### Examples: An Unconventional Non-Timber Forest Product

*Canada-wide, tourism branded as 'Indigenous' is growing by leaps and bounds.*

*However, this growth has not been equally distributed across Canada.*

Canada-wide, tourism branded as 'Indigenous' is growing by leaps and bounds. According to a 2015 National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project, there were some 892 Indigenous tourism business in Canada in 2002; by 2014 this number had increased to more than 1,500.

However, this growth has not been equally distributed across Canada. Most of the growth has so far been in British Columbia. One reason for this is the fact that the province of British Columbia has invested in developing and promoting Indigenous tourism in the province, including implementing a five-year Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Strategy from 2012 to 2017. British Columbia also has an Aboriginal Tourism Association, which is dedicated to fostering the growth of Indigenous tourism businesses. The Association markets aboriginal tourism opportunities to tourists with the following pitch: "Add some culture to your BC vacation. Each of our travel packages includes unique ways to explore our Aboriginal landmarks and traditions."

While tourism is not usually thought of as a non-timber forest product, many eco-tourism businesses are directly tied to forests. Hiking trails, wildlife viewing, hunting trips, birdwatching tours, educational plant walks, and back-country cabins are all directly dependent on an intact forest. If properly managed, forest-based eco-tourism is a product that generates revenue without cutting trees (or, at least, without cutting many trees – a few may be cut to create trails and spaces for cabins, etc).

Nova Scotia's government has not yet taken measures to promote Indigenous tourism, save for including some Mi'kmaw tourism businesses on the province's tourism website. Ideally, Nova Scotia and/or the government of Canada may be convinced to undertake programs similar to British Columbia to promote the development of Indigenous tourism opportunities in Nova Scotia. At this stage, given that there are not a large number of "market-ready" ecotourism businesses, the key requirement is to assist with business development and training.

As with forestry practices, there are opportunities to certify eco-tourism businesses as 'green'. Green Tourism ([www.greentourismcanada.ca](http://www.greentourismcanada.ca)) is one example.

### 3.1 Sample of British Columbian and Nova Scotian Indigenous Eco-tourism Businesses

**Xwisten Experience Tours** (<http://www.xwistentours.ca/>), owned by the Bridge River Indian Band near Lillooet in interior British Columbia, offers educational walking tours of culturally significant areas, including archaeological sites and traditional salmon fishing locations. Participants also get a hands-on



Photo: Aboriginal Tourism BC

demonstration of how the St'at'imc people preserve salmon by wind drying it, and of course are given a sample of wind-dried salmon to taste. After the tour, visitors can relax and order a meal at the Bearfoot Grill, also owned and operated by the Band. The Band established both businesses in 2004 and has slowly expanded them over the years to accommodate increased demand and to provide higher quality services to visitors. The package price for the tour and a BBQ meal is \$60 per person, with special rate for children and families.

**Sasquatch Crossing Eco Lodge** (<http://www.sasquatchcrossing.ca/>) offers a private get-away location for those looking for a home-base for kayaking, birding, mountain biking, fishing, or hiking. The Eco Lodge offers meals and also arranges a variety of out-door activities for its customers. Visitors just have to show up, and the rest is taken care of. Importantly, the Eco Lodge also offers tours and workshops that teach visitors about Sts'ailes culture, traditions and crafts.

**Bear River's 7 Paddles** is an eco-tourism initiative that intends to provide guided trips on traditional Mi'kmaq canoe routes. Bear River hopes that the initiative will create business opportunities while helping to strengthening their community's ties to the land.

**Stone Bear Tracks and Trails** ([www.stonebear.ca](http://www.stonebear.ca)) is an outdoor education facility operated by Frank Meuse on Bear River First Nation land. Mr. Meuse's facility includes a central lodge, a cook tent, rustic accommodations, camp-fire pit, out-door classroom spaces and wi'kuoms (wigwams). Stone Bear offers programs that connect youth with nature and help them deal with the stresses of modern life. Stone Bear also offers retreats for up to twenty people for one to several days, during which visitors participate in interpretive walks, story-telling, Mi'kmaw history and culture talks, campfire circles, and arts and crafts among other activities.

**Eskasoni Cultural Journeys** (<http://www.eskasoniculturaljourneys.ca/index.html>)

is a collaborative effort between Eskasoni First Nation and the Highland Village Museum to offer multi-culture tours for visitors to Unama'ki. Eskasoni invites visitors to

*"discover authentic Mi'kmaq culture along our picturesque 2.4 KM trail on Goat Island in Eskasoni. ... You will be guided along the trail by one of our Mi'kmaq cultural interpreters ... and you can take part in a smudging ceremony; learn to make four-cent cakes over an open fire; learn the art of basketry; learn and join in our traditional dance; ... play the ancient game of Waltes; and learn about hunting and fishing techniques. Top this all off with a traditional snack of luskinigan and tea!"*

## 4.0 Creating a Brand: Indigenous + Sustainable + Quality + Cape Breton (Unama'ki)

**According to the National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project, an Indigenous brand should be based on providing "authentic" experiences and products.**

Unama'ki Mi'kmaw communities and businesses have an excellent opportunity to promote their identity and culture by cultivating an Indigenous brand, and to benefit from the already established brand of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. As demonstrated in British Columbia, there is a large appetite for Indigenous products and eco-tourism experiences.

According to the National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project, an Indigenous brand should be based on providing "authentic" experiences and products. In other words, products should be rooted in Mi'kmaw traditions and cultures. Most customers who are intrigued by the Indigenous brand are not looking for cheaply produced products that aren't connected to Mi'kmaq. Tourists seeking an Indigenous eco-tourism experience are not looking for a "Hollywood" version of Indigenous life. Rather, they want hands-on and immersive experiences with traditional knowledge, culture and craft-making.

Similarly, claims of sustainable products need to be backed up with good forest management practices. This can be accomplished by providing customers with photographs and videos of the managed forest, and by offering tours of the managed forest. Inviting prominent forest ecologists and journalists to tour the managed forest can also be useful. For Mary Jane Rodger of the Medway Community Forest Co-op, this minimalist approach has worked well and people are satisfied that the firewood they purchase is sustainably harvested.

Self-proclaimed sustainability, however, may not work for all customers. Certification by a third-party, such as the Forest Stewardship Council, is an option to demonstrate that the products come from a well-managed forest. Of course, there are costs to certification programs and require a solid cost-benefit analysis before proceeding with one. Ultimately, an open dedication to good forestry practices will build the Indigenous brand, whether the practices are certified or not. Of course, poor forestry practices will quickly discredit the brand.

## 4.1 Strategies to Build an Indigenous Brand

### 1. *Each forest product or eco-tourism service tells a story*

Every forest product should include a description of (1) how the product relates to Mi'kmaw traditions and culture, or (2) how the forest where the product came from is managed according to Mi'kmaq's respect for the land and stewardship practices.

Every eco-tourism service should similarly include a description of how the service relates to Mi'kmaw traditions and culture, or how the service depends on a forest that is carefully stewarded according to Mi'kmaw values.

### 2. *Invite the world to see the on-the-ground impacts of Mi'kmaq's stewardship of the forest*

Practicing good forestry is not enough. A brand only exists when people know about it, so it is critical to let as many people as possible know about the stewardship that takes place. This can be accomplished through photos, videos, and inviting people for tours of the forest. The forest itself may become a key element of the marketing plan for the products from the forest.

If UINR decides that independent certification of forestry practices is worth the costs, then achieving certification can be a powerful marketing tool to help build the Indigenous brand.



### 3. *Market Ready Businesses*

There is always a “chicken and egg” challenge when promoting new businesses and a new brand. Businesses need demand for their product to help spur development, but too much demand too soon results in disappointed customers. A brand should only be promoted once the business is ready to respond to customer demand. With respect to Mi’kmaq communities in Unama’ki, a well-designed promotion of an Indigenous brand will likely generate demand for products and services, and it is critical to ensure that products and services are ready to meet that demand. Otherwise, the brand will be quickly tarnished. “Build it and they will come,” but don’t invite them until you’ve built it!

According to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia, the following are key elements of market readiness for eco-tourism business. Until these elements can be checked off, a business should not advertise itself.

- Has liability insurance
- Is a registered business with necessary operating licences etc
- Has a well-designed website that honestly and accurately represents the business
- Accepts credit and debit cards
- Handles reservation by phone and email year-round
- Able to provide confirmation of booking arrangements within 24 hrs
- Offers a quality product

### 4. *Targeted Skills Training*

Following from number 3 above, UINR and/or other Mi’kmaq associations (perhaps in partnership with the Nova Scotia and Canadian government) can create workshops and other training programs designed to fill specific gaps in skills, such as crafting/manufacturing certain products, business management, tour guiding, book-keeping and customer service skills.

### 5. *Integrated Brand Development*

As much as possible, brand development should include a diversity of products, services and locations. A wide net catches more fish. As well, brand development can include partnerships with existing businesses and organizations that are compatible with the Indigenous brand. The partnership between Eskasoni Cultural Journeys and the Highland Village Museum is a good example, and there are likely many more similar possibilities.

## *6. Partnerships with Government for Tourism and Product Advertising*

Once there are market-ready businesses ready to meet demand, the provincial government should be asked to include Mi'kmaq services and products in its provincial advertising campaigns. Furthermore, government assistance may be available to attend tradeshow for both forest products and eco-tourism.

## *7. Regional Indigenous Marketing Association and Indigenous Product Association*

As Indigenous businesses grow, there will likely come a time to establish a regional Indigenous forest products marketing association and a regional Indigenous tourism association to represent and promote the interests of all forest product and eco-tourism businesses in the region (either Nova Scotia or perhaps the Maritimes or Atlantic Canada). Furthermore, it may be sensible to establish a regional association to certify Indigenous products and services in order to provide customers with a guarantee of authenticity.

## *8. Gateway Product*

Establishing a 'gateway' product, or signature product, is an excellent way to build a brand. A gateway product is one that customers instantly associate with the company that makes it. It also draws customers to a company's website where the customer is introduced to various other products or services that are less 'famous' than the gateway product. For Larch Wood Enterprises, their gateway product is, of course, their cutting boards. Visit their website and you will find a diversity of other products for sale, but it is the cutting board that draws you to their website in the first place. All of their publicity is focused on the cutting boards.

For the Unama'ki communities, a gateway product could be baskets: it is a product already associated with the Mi'kmaq and it is a well-made and beautiful product to showcase. Similarly, a gateway eco-tourism product could be developed, such as an eco-lodge or other venue that offers accommodations, workshops, and outdoor activities. Importantly, these gateway products are not meant to be the only products advertised, but rather are designed to pique customers' interest and establish a few key products that Unama'ki communities will be known for.

## 9. *Logos and Artwork*

Individual businesses may want to develop their own logo and graphic design artwork, but there is also opportunity to create a Unama'ki forest product logo that could be adopted by any person or business selling value-added or non-timber forest products sourced from the Unama'ki controlled forestlands.

## Part IV:

### Forestry Industry Database: People, Funding, Training, Partnerships

This section of the report provides (1) a list of people, businesses, and organizations that are potentially useful contacts regarding forestry, forest products and non-timber forest products; (2) opportunities for training in various aspects of forestry skills, creating non-timber and value-added forest product, and basic business development skills; and (3) opportunities for business financing and grants.

## 1.0 Forestry Industry Database: People, Businesses, Organizations and Brokers

Below is a list of key individuals in the forestry industry from both the production side and the manufacturing and processing side. A table with their contact information is included following the individual descriptions.

### *Kari Easthouse*

Kari is a forester with the Cape Breton Private-land Partnership and has a wealth of experience with forestry operations in eastern Nova Scotia. Kari has a particular interest in figuring out the necessary logistics to get high-value logs sorted and diverted to high-end markets. To this end, he has been working on developing a high-value hardwood sorting and concentration yard in Cape Breton. Kari is also very supportive of trying to develop capacity in eastern Nova Scotia to process high-value logs, rather than having them shipped out of the

region. Along these lines Kari has been working with Jim Mustard (Inverness County councillor) and Don Beamish (Larch Wood) to create a co-operative that will own the kiln facilities associated with the former Fine Wood Flooring business. The kiln will be available to woodworkers to dry with raw product and thereby stimulate (ideally) both value-added wood products and a market for high-value logs. Kari is willing to be contacted and consulted; he is busy but is easy to talk with and willing to help out to the extent he has time.

### *Peter and Candace Christiano*

Peter and Candace are retired co-owners of Finewood Flooring, a flooring manufacturing business in Margaree. Unfortunately, the business closed due in part to a difficulty in sourcing a steady supply of high-quality local hardwood. Peter and Candace have a tremendous amount of experience in running a value-added forest product business and marketing their product both domestically and internationally including the US and European markets. Peter and Candace are enjoying their retirement and are not keen to take on any consulting work. However, they may be open to answering questions and giving a bit of advice on specific challenges. They are very keen to see UINR succeed in this project.

### *Don Beamish*

Don is the general manager of Larch Wood Enterprises Inc, of East Margaree. Don has help build Larch Wood into a thriving value-added wood product business. If there is a local success story in the value-added industry, this is it. Larch Wood started with three employees, and now employs nineteen people. Don and his staff purchase about 300 cords of tamarack logs from the region, mill them and then kiln-dry the lumber. Larch Wood uses a Nyle Kiln with a capacity of about 18,000 board feet and a turn-around time of between sixteen and twenty-two days. The best lumber goes into cutting boards while the rest finds uses in flooring and various other applications to ensure that the log is put to the highest end-use possible.

Don notes two critical elements to a successful value-added wood products business. First is offering a quality product. As he says, “you have to have something that people will want to pay for.” Second is marketing. “The best product in the world won’t sell itself,” Don states. Don is open and willing to work with UINR and Mi’kmaq communities to develop value-added businesses in the region.

### *Matt Miller*

Matt is a forest technician and a forester, having studied at both the Maritime College of Forest Technology and the University of New Brunswick's Forestry School. Matt has a lot of on-the-ground experience in value-enhancing forestry practices, and knows the challenges of making a living working in Nova Scotia's forests. Matt is currently working with New Wave Forestry, in eastern Nova Scotia, and is available to discuss ecosystem-based silviculture and harvesting.

### *David Palmer*

David is a forester and the retired general manager of the YSC Forest Product Marketing Board in New Brunswick. While working with YSC David played a role in creating a sorting yard for high-value hardwood logs, and opening a sawmill. David is also an expert in current forest product markets. David is available and willing to discuss market trends and the realities of opening a sawmill.

### *Andrew West*

Andrew is a primary forest products broker working for Haynes Inc, mostly in eastern Nova Scotia. He is more than happy to talk about market trends and realities.

### *Anne Lebrun Ruff*

Anne is a forester with FPIInnovations, an organization dedicated to assisting businesses and communities with training and knowledge about value-added forest product manufacturing. FPIInnovations has worked with several First Nations across Canada, and is currently working with at least one First Nation community in New Brunswick. FPIInnovations may be able to secure funding to provide training to UINR and/or First Nations communities in Unama'ki.

### *Barry Tupper*

Barry was employed for about a decade with FPIInnovations, mentioned above, and before that he ran several value-added wood product businesses. Barry is currently partly retired but does occasional contract work for FPIInnovations. Barry is very knowledgeable about the value-added forest product sector, and through his involvement with FPIInnovations may be able to secure training opportunities that are of interest to UINR and Unama'ki communities. Barry is keen to get involved with UINR and/or local communities, and has specific buyer contacts and other ideas he would like to share.



## *John Valtour*

John buys hardwood logs for Groupe Savoie and knows the ins and outs of quality hardwood logs. John is willing to meet with forest workers and others with UINR to discuss hardwood quality and bucking techniques to attain the highest value possible for hardwood logs.

## *Wade Prest*

Wade is a forester and woodlot owner in Mooseland, eastern shore. Wade also has operated a bandsaw mill and produced custom-milled lumber. Wade is one of the founders of the Otter Ponds Demonstration Forest, which strives to provide an educational example of low-impact, sustainable forestry practices in eastern Nova Scotia.

## *Mary Jane Rodger*

Mary Jane is a forester and the manager of the Medway Community Forest Co-op in Caledonia, Nova Scotia. Mary Jane knows first-hand the harsh realities of trying to run a viable community forest operation in Nova Scotia on Crown land. Mary Jane is an excellent resource person regarding the financial realities of undertaking low-impact forestry operations in poor-quality forest stands. She also has valuable insight into creating value-added businesses, including a firewood operation.

## *Patricia Amero*

Patricia is a forester with many years' of experience with low-impact forestry in Nova Scotia. Patricia runs Picea Forestry, based near New Germany in western Nova Scotia.

## *Christie Verstraten and Andy Kekacs*

Christie and Andy work with the NS Woodlot Owners and Operators Association, as project manager and executive director, respectively. Christie has a lot of on-the-ground experience with low-impact forestry and works with woodland owners throughout Nova Scotia.

## *Otter Ponds Demonstration Forest*

This demonstration forest, located near Mooseland in eastern Nova Scotia, was created by several groups including the NS Woodlot Owners Association and the Ecology Action Centre. The forest is used as an educational place for students and others to learn about forest ecology and low-impact forestry techniques. The forest is also certified as sustainably managed under the Forest Stewardship Council program. Andy Kekacs (above) is the contact person for the OPDF.

## *Dale Prest*

Dale is the Ecosystem Service Specialist with Community Forests International, based in Sackville New Brunswick. Dale's speciality is forest carbon storage and forest carbon credits. He helped secure the sale of carbon credits from his organization's 800 acre woodlot in New Brunswick, and is working to create a program that would enable woodland owners throughout the Maritimes sell carbon credits from their woodlands. Dale would be thrilled to work with UINR on the topic of forest carbon credits.

## *Jeff Amos*

Jeff is a woodworker and a woodlot owner near Blockhouse on NS's south shore. Jeff created a business selling unique Nova Scotia-sourced lumber and custom high-quality furniture, with a retail location in Halifax. Jeff is an excellent resource person regarding the realities of creating a value-added wood product manufacturing and retail business.

## *Mathieu LeBlanc*

Mathieu is the owner of ACFOR, a company that builds, installs and supplies wood-chip heating systems. Mathieu is an ideal resource person to talk about creating wood-chip heating systems for large buildings in Unama'ki communities.

## *Ron Smith*

Ron Smith is a long-time advocate for NTFPs. Ron is an adjunct professor with UNB's Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, and was a research scientist with the Canadian Forest Service from 1978 to 2005. Ron has been a NTFP consultant and promoter for over a decade, and is keen to discuss his knowledge of NTFP possibilities with UINR.

## *Jacob Jürgensen*

Jacob Jürgensen is a trading company and wood product broker based in Germany. The company can assist producers with product consulting, and with shipping and warehousing logistics. Jacob Jürgensen trades in numerous wood and paper products including hardwood and softwoods from Canada, components for bed frames, mouldings, and flooring. Finewood Flooring found it advantageous to work with this company because they could ship flooring as their main product but also various other by-products of the flooring manufacturing process such as dimensional hardwood lumber of various sizes and species.

## *Gary Schneider*

Gary is the guiding force behind the MacPhail Ecological Forestry Project, which undertakes hands-on forest restoration work throughout Prince Edward Island and operates a native plant nursery. MacPhail's website offers a lot of practical information on forest restoration and propagating native plants. Visitors to the MacPhail's woodlot in PEI get to see the on-the-ground impacts of Gary's restoration vision, as well as their native plant nursery. Gary would be pleased to chat about their success in operating a nursery and their experiences in managing forests to both produce forest products for sale and restore ecological (and economic) value to the forest.

## *Jamie Simpson*

Jamie is a forester and a lawyer experienced with forest ecology and low-impact forestry practices. Jamie teaches workshops in woodlot management, including tree identification and techniques such as crop-tree release and selection management. Jamie is the author of *Restoring the Acadian Forest: A Guide to Forest Stewardship for Woodlot Owners in Eastern Canada*.

## *Peter Neily*

Peter is a forest ecologist with Nova Scotia's Department of Natural Resources. Peter has extensive knowledge of Nova Scotia's forest soils and forest types, and is a co-author of reports on Forest Ecosystem Classification and Ecological Landscape Classification for Nova Scotia.

## *Simon Mutabazi*

Simon is the Woodlot Education Coordinator with the NS Department of Natural Resources, and as such is responsible for the Department's woodlot owner education course. The course is usually available on-line; however in recent months the website for the course has not been operational, thus those interested in taking the course must order a hard-copy of the course from the Department. The course includes information on a diversity of harvesting and silviculture practices, and has a section on non-timber forest products.

## *Bob Bancroft*

Bob is a retired wildlife biologist and is an expert in the impacts of forestry practices on various species of wildlife. He is also very knowledgeable about forest restoration practices.

## *David Sutherland*

Dave is the coordinator of the Association for Sustainable Forestry, which administers a silviculture program for the province. The Association has produced educational materials, both written and video, on various silviculture techniques including pruning and crop-tree release. Dave also has an interest in non-timber forest products, and has researched their potential in Atlantic Canada.

## *Jane Barker*

Jane is the Community Outreach officer with the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute. Although based in south-west Nova Scotia, MTRI is a good organization to connect with; Jane and other staff have extensive experience with FSC forest certification, species at risk, old forest identification and conservation, and low-impact forestry techniques.

## *Lloyd Mapplebeck*

Lloyd has experience in creating and marketing NTFPs including decorative products, nutraceuticals, nurseries, and wild foods. Lloyd is based in Truro where he operates Hillendale Perennials.

## *Jonathon Forbes*

Jonathon operates Forbes Wild Foods in Toronto Ontario, and buys wild foods from across Canada.

## *Fred Dardenne*

Fred operates FD Wild Foods and Fine Products near Halifax, Nova Scotia. He purchases wild foods from gatherers across Nova Scotia.

## *Contact Information Chart*

Name	Organization	Profession	Contact Information
Kari Easthouse	Cape Breton Private-land Partnership	Forester	902-625-0304
Peter & Candace Christiano	Retired owners of Finewood Flooring	Woodlot owner and flooring manufacturer	--
Don Beamish	Larch Wood Enterprises	Manager	902-235-2949 don@larchwoodcanada.com
Matt Miller	New Wave Forestry	Forester	902-476-5922
David Palmer	Retired manager of YSC Marketing Board, NB	Forester	506-444-9180
Andrew West	Haynes Inc.	Wood broker	902-893-1978 andrewwest@ns.sympatico.ca
Anne Lebrun Ruff	FPIinnovations	Forester	506-261-1197 anne.lebrunruff@fpinnovations.ca
Barry Tupper	FPIinnovations	Forest product specialist	tupperbandw@gmail.com
John Valtour	Groupe Savoie	Hardwood logs buyer / broker	902-396-3960 or 902-759-0398 john.vautour@groupesavoie.com



Wade Prest	Otter Ponds Demonstration Forest	Woodlot owner and forester; former mill owner and operator	902-885-7123
Mary Jane Rodger	Medway Community Forest	Forester, manager	902-701-0505 maryjane@medwaycommunityforest.com www.medwaycommunityforest.com
Patricia Amero	Picea Forestry Consulting	Forester, low-impact harvesting	902-527-1222 or 902-890-4038 piceaforestry@gmail.com
Christie Verstraten	NS Woodlot Owners and Operators Association	Program manager	902-209-6535 www.nswooa.ca
Andy Kekacs	NS Woodlot Owners and Operators Association	Executive Director	902-817-4763 Andy.nswooa@gmail.com
Andy Kekacs	Otter Ponds Demonstration Forest	Contract person	902-817-4763 Andy.nswooa@gmail.com
Dale Prest	Community Forests International	Forest carbon expert	dale@forestsinternational.org 506-536-3738
Mathieu LeBlanc	ACFOR	President and CEO	506-531-8526; admin@acfor.ca www.acfor.ca
Jeff Amos	Amos Wood	Owner	902-624-8206; jeff@amoswood.ca http://www.amoswood.ca/
Ron Smith	NTFP Consultant	Research scientist	pigotsmith@gmail.com
Jacob Jürgensen	Jacob Jürgensen	Trading company / wood product broker	+49 40 22705-0 jj@juergensen.de http://www.juergensen.de Germany

Gary Schneider	MacPhail Ecological Forestry Project	Restoration forestry and native plant nursery	902-651-2575 macphailwoods@gmail.com <a href="https://macphailwoods.org/">https://macphailwoods.org/</a>
Jamie Simpson	Juniper Law & Consulting	Forester	902-817-1737 Jamie@juniperlaw.ca
Peter Neily	NS Department of Natural Resources	Forest ecologist	902-893-5692 peter.neily@novascotia.ca
Simon Mutabazi	NS Department of Natural Resources	Woodlot Education Coordinator	Simon.Mutabazi@novascotia.ca
Bob Bancroft	NA	Forest ecologist / wildlife biologist	wild1@eastlink.ca
David Sutherland	Association for Sustainable Forestry	Forester, Silviculture Program Coordinator	902-895-1179 <a href="http://www.asforestry.com/">http://www.asforestry.com/</a>
Jane Barker	Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute	Jane Barker, Community Outreach Officer, FSC certification	902-682-2371 jane.barker@merseytobeatic.ca
Lloyd	Hillendal Perennials	NTFP promoter	902-897-6791
Jonathan Forbes	Forbes Wild Foods	Buyer of wild foods	877-354-9453 forbes@wildfoods.ca <a href="http://wildfoods.ca/">http://wildfoods.ca/</a>
Fred Dardenne	FD Wild Foods	Buyer of wild foods	902-297-1151 freddardenne@hotmail.com <a href="http://www.fdwildfoods.net/">http://www.fdwildfoods.net/</a>

## 2.0 Opportunities for Training, Funding and Partnerships

### 2.1 Training Opportunities in Forestry, Forest Product Manufacturing, and Small Business Skills

#### *FPIinnovations*

Barry Tupper and Anne Lebrun Ruff of FPIinnovations offer customized training in forest product manufacturing, such as sawmill set up. They and other staff with FPIinnovations have worked with Indigenous communities in the Maritimes and across Canada to assist with hands-on manufacturing training and business setup. In some cases, FPIinnovations can offer training at no cost; once Unama'ki communities decide on specific businesses to explore, they can contact FPIinnovations to inquire about what training may be available. FPIinnovations is a not-for-profit organization specialized in "technology transfer" in the forestry sector (<https://fpinnovations.ca>).

#### *Nova Scotia Community College*

NSCC offers a two-year diploma program in natural resources environmental technology, at its Bridgewater and Port Hawkesbury campuses. Once land is under Unama'ki Mi'kmaq control, there may be potential for partnership between the Community College and UINR to use the land to teach and demonstrate low-impact forestry practices and forest restoration. ([https://www.nsc.ca/Learning\\_Programs/Programs/PlanDescr.aspx?prg=NRETD&pln=NATRESTD](https://www.nsc.ca/Learning_Programs/Programs/PlanDescr.aspx?prg=NRETD&pln=NATRESTD))

#### *Maritime College of Forest Technology*

MCFT offers a number of forestry-related courses at its campus in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Courses include Chainsaw Safety, Operation and Maintenance (Basic and Advanced), brush-saw safety and use, a Professional Forest Workers program, and an Introduction to Tree Identification. MCFT is also offered a course

in drying lumber in a kiln, in conjunction with the University of New Brunswick and FPInnovations. Costs vary depending on the length of the course. A three-day course is typically around \$400 plus tax. MCFT used to offer courses in sawmilling and hardwood log optimization, but unfortunately these courses are no longer offered. The contact person is Todd MacPherson (phone: 506 458 0649). Mr. MacPherson mentioned that he does not know of any sawmilling courses in eastern Canada. (<http://mcft.ca/en/continuing-education/upcoming-courses>)

## *Maritime Lumber Bureau*

The Maritime Lumber Bureau offers a lumber-grading course. Successful participants receive a certification in softwood lumber grading and the authority to grade and stamp softwood lumber. The course is two-weeks long and is usually held in Amherst, NS, although if there is sufficient demand they can offer the course in other locations in the province. There is no fixed time for courses, but they hold at least one course per year and often more than one per year. Courses are usually limited to ten people, and cost \$450 per person. If Unama'ki communities decide to create a sawmilling operation that intends to sell dimensional softwood lumber, then having a certified lumber grader in the community could be an important asset. The contact person for the course is Patty Gilroy ([pgilroy@mlb.ca](mailto:pgilroy@mlb.ca)).

## *Association for Sustainable Forestry*

The Association for Sustainable Forestry has educational and training materials, both in print and in video, for stand-improvement silviculture techniques such as crop-tree pruning and crop-tree release cutting. ASF's manager Dave Sutherland may be available to facilitate some training for these silviculture techniques. (<http://www.asforestry.com/>)

## *Gary Schneider and the MacPhail Ecological Forestry Project*

Gary teaches courses in ecological forestry at the MacPail site near Orwell, PEI, as well as at Acadia University in Wolfville, NS. Gary may be available to come to Unama'ki to offer workshops or courses. Gary has a wealth of knowledge and experience with managing low-value forest stands to increase their ecological and economic value.



## *Woodmizer Sawmills*

Woodmizer offers on-line learning materials covering topics such as building and operating a wood kiln, starting a portable sawmill business, which sawmill to choose, understanding bandsaw blades, quarter-sawing lumber, charging for sawmilling services, basic sawmilling techniques and others. While no substitute for hands-on training, articles found at this website and other websites can be a valuable first step in the learning process (<http://woodmizer.ca/en/Resources/Learning-Center>).

## *YouTube University*

YouTube University is a tongue-in-cheek reference to the growing phenomenon of learning skills through YouTube videos. Is it a good idea? There is no quality control so there is no way to know whether the information one receives is reliable. Nonetheless, countless skills and techniques can be learned through tutorial-style videos on YouTube. Just remember it's a case of 'viewer-beware.' Here's one of many examples of a video about small-scale sawmilling (more of an overview of the possibility than an instructional video): <http://ruralnetwork.ca/tools-resources/small-scale-sawmilling>.



## *Apprenticeships*

Once upon a time everyone who learned a trade or a practical skill learned it from a mentor through some sort of apprenticeship arrangement. Although this practice has faded in recent years, there's no reason not to explore apprenticeships as a valuable education tool. Given the lack of formal sawmill training available in eastern Canada, for example, someone who wants to start a portable sawmilling business could approach a sawmiller in another part of the province and offer to work for free for a number of weeks in exchange for the chance to learn about lumber milling and sawmill maintenance. If one sawmiller says no, then approach another one until one says yes. Often, such arrangements are best made in person, so that each party has a chance to evaluate the other. A trial period of a few days can also be useful to ensure that the relationship will work. On a personal note, I have undertaken several apprenticeships to learn various practical skills. Usually I have worked for free in exchange for the learning opportunity, although in one situation I paid my mentor in exchange for the instruction.

## *Craft Council (Atlantic Canada)*

Largely supported by the provincial governments of the four Atlantic Provinces, the Craft Alliance (<https://craftalliance.ca/>) is dedicated to helping craft artisans and small businesses enter into wholesale and export markets. The Alliance also assists small business people with education and skills training, and undertakes research to benefit the craft sector, including market research, and promotes tradeshow, export missions and workshops. The Alliance also hosts the Craft East Buyers' Show (formerly known as the Atlantic Craft Trade Show). The Alliance is an important potential partner for any small craft-based business considering wholesale marketing and/or exporting. Their contact person is Bernard Burton (902 441 0071, [Bernard@craftalliance.ca](mailto:Bernard@craftalliance.ca)).

## *Craft Ontario*

Craft Ontario (<https://craftontario.com/>) offers on-line courses in marketing, on-line sales and other skills designed to assist small-scale craft producers and artisans. While based in Ontario, much of what the organization offers is applicable to small craft businesses in Nova Scotia.

## *Common Good Solutions*

Common Good Solutions (<http://commongoodsolutions.ca/>) assists social enterprises (entrepreneurs, non-profits, and cooperatives) with business planning, marketing, training and collaboration. They believe that businesses can and should be part of the change towards a better society and healthier environment, and they work extensively with businesses in rural Nova Scotia. CGS has staff in Cape Breton.

## *Nova Scotia Co-operative Council*

The Council calls itself the voice of the co-operative movement in Nova Scotia. It can assist with creating new co-ops by providing information on incorporating, forming boards of directors, and creating by-laws and policies. It can also provide feasibility assessments and assist in obtaining business financing from credit unions. The Council also has experience in developing Community Economic Development Investment Funds (CEDIFS). (<http://www.novascotia.coop/>)

## *Business Cape Breton*

Business Cape Breton provides business development training and mentorship for existing and potential businesses in Cape Breton, including business counselling, business plan development, and entrepreneurship skills. (<http://www.businesscapebreton.ca/>)

## **2.2 Funding Opportunities for Small Businesses**

### *Creative Industries Fund, NS Communities, Culture and Heritage Department*

(<https://novascotia.ca/programs/creative-industries-fund/>)

This Nova Scotia government fund is designed to assist businesses that are focused on exporting their product and wish to increase their capacity to export. Eligible businesses include those engaged in making crafts. Contact person is Mickey Quase (902 424 3701, [mickey.quase@novascotia.ca](mailto:mickey.quase@novascotia.ca)).

## *Nova Scotia Business Inc.*

*(<https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/export>)*

Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) offers numerous programs for Nova Scotian businesses including expanding export capacity, assistance with small businesses, market intelligence, and trade missions to promote businesses internationally. Contact person is Debbie MacIsaac (902 424 4242, [dmacisaac@nsbi.ca](mailto:dmacisaac@nsbi.ca)).

NSBI offers a small business program geared towards assisting businesses with exporting, marketing education, product development, and trade missions, and offer \$15,000 grants towards these. (<https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/export/small-business-development-program>).

NSBI also offers a Small Business Loan Guarantee Program that can help businesses borrow up to \$500,000 in form of a loan, line of credit or working capital to start or grow a business. Eligibility for the program is based on business plan, viability and character, and typically is accessed by high-risk sectors (including social enterprise) that are not able to attain financing through traditional means. (<http://www.novascotia.coop/programs/small-business-loan-guarantee-program/>).

## *Nova Scotia Government, Labour and Advanced Education*

The Nova Scotia government offers partial financial assistance to train employees in workplace innovation and productivity skills (<https://novascotia.ca/programs/workplace-innovation-productivity-skills-incentive/>).

## *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)*

ACOA has several programs designed to assist businesses in Atlantic Canada, although they are generally not geared towards retail/wholesale businesses or small businesses. Nonetheless, ACOA is such an important player in Atlantic Canada, it would be important to meet with the Agency to discuss potential business plans to see if ACOA may be able to support some aspect (<http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/Eng/Pages/Home.aspx>). ACOA also offers helpful educational materials to those interested in starting a new business or expanding a business.

## *Community Business*

### *Development Corporation (CBDC)*

Community Business Development Corporation is supported by ACOA. It provides social enterprise loans and financing in Atlantic Canada, with a focus on rural communities. Social enterprises are businesses that produce and/or sell goods and services to generate income to support social and community development goals, and are non-profits or non-profit cooperatives. CBDC provides loans up to \$150,000 per eligible applicant to buy assets, renovate existing assets or expand (<http://www.cbdc.ca/en/programs/cbdc-social-enterprise-loan>).

The CBDC also provides loans, loan guarantees and equity financing to entrepreneurs (who generally can't get it from traditional sources) as well as training, business counselling and advice for small businesses (<http://www.cbdc.ca/en/what-is-cbdc>).

### *Canadian Government, Industry Canada*

Industry Canada offers a Canada Small Business Financing Program to help small businesses purchase, lease or improve land or buildings, and purchase new or used equipment. (<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csbfp-pfpec.nsf/eng/home>).

The Canadian government also offers businesses a summer-job wage subsidy for hiring students (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html>).

### *Ulnooweg Development Group*

Ulnooweg provides loans, grants and business services, including training opportunities, to Indigenous endeavours in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland (<http://ulnooweg.ca/>).

## 2.3 Opportunities for Partnerships

Partnerships enable each of the partners to do more or accomplish more than each partner could do on her or his own. One example is the partnership between Eskasoni Cultural Journeys and the Highland Cultural Museum, which allows these partners to offer a more valuable and attractive product to potential customers than either could on their own.

### *Educational Institutions*

Educational institutions often lack out-door training facilities. Once Unama'ki communities have control over forestland, UINR may be able to partner with institutions such as the Nova Scotia Community College and Cape Breton University to create hands-on and in-the-forest educational and training programs. Forest ecology, plant identification, silviculture and low-impact harvesting techniques, Mi'kmaw language, and gathering NTFPs could all be taught in part on the land controlled by Unama'ki Mi'kmaq.

### *Woodlot Owner Organizations*

If Mi'kmaw communities undertake low-impact forestry and silviculture on the land they control, UINR could team up with local or provincial woodlot owner organizations to offer workshops on the land such as hardwood bucking for value, tree identification, low-impact harvesting techniques, and portable sawmilling.

### *Don Beamish and Kari Easthouse*

Don and Kari (and others) are in the process of creating a co-operative to purchase and operate the lumber kiln formerly used by Fine Wood Flooring. There may be opportunity to team up with this co-operative to have a place to dry high-value lumber from Mi'kmaw forestry operations, and facilities in which to carry out woodworking businesses.

### *Community Forests International*

CFI may be interested in working with UINR to help develop carbon credit sales from the forestland once it is under Mi'kmaq control. UINR and CFI could potentially work together to secure funding to undertake a carbon credit project.



## *Local Businesses*

There are numerous retail businesses throughout Nova Scotia, Atlantic Canada, Canada and indeed the world that may well be interested in selling NTFPs produced in Nova Scotia. Some local examples include Jennifer's of Nova Scotia, Made in the Maritimes Artisan Boutique, Inkwell Boutique, and The Herring Choker. Of course, this is a tiny subset of all the possible business opportunities. Connections with local small businesses can be made by simply making an appointment with the owner, or by attending wholesale tradeshows where large numbers of retail businesses gather in order to meet with and buy from craft producers operating at a wholesale level.

Other than retail businesses, Bed & Breakfast businesses in Cape Breton could be excellent partners for eco-tourism initiatives. B&B guests often want to know what local eco-tourism options are available, and B&B owners may be interested in partnering with Mi'kmaw eco-tourism operations in order to encourage their guests to stay longer.

## **Part V:**

### **Community Assets Database: Forestry and Forest Products**

This section of the report presents the results of workshops with community members designed to identify community values and vision with respect to forests and forest-products businesses as well as community strengths and challenges with respect to developing these businesses. This section also presents a database of community assets including individuals trained in forestry and silviculture, craft people and their needs, and potential entrepreneurial opportunities identified by community members.

## **1.0 Workshops with Community Members**

This section describes the strengths and needs identified by Unama'ki community members with respect to creating value-added and non-timber forest product business opportunities in Unama'ki. This section also provides a database of community member skills and interests with respect to forestry and value-added and non-timber forest products.

Overall, community members noted that there are a wide range of skills and expertise present in the communities, and thus there is a lot of potential to create value-added and non-timber forest product businesses once a land base, additional training and business skills and financing are available. Furthermore, community members cautioned that business development must be done carefully in a way that respects the limits of the forest resources. Stewardship of the forest is fundamental.

## 1.1 Vision and Objectives for Forestry and Forest Products

### *Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR)*

The mission of UINR's Forestry Division is to strive for "an environmentally sound way to use our natural resources while creating employment for members of our communities and further strengthening relationships between local industry and Mi'kmaw people."

***"We, Mi'kmaq," Clifford stressed, "are part of this ecosystem."***

Jason MacLean, Director of Forestry for UINR, echoed this mission when he commented that he wishes to see UINR move towards better forestry practices. He acknowledges that at the moment, UINR has basically just one forestry contract, which is with the Port Hawkesbury Paper mill. Jason would like to see UINR move away from focusing on one product (pulpwood) once other opportunities are available. Jason notes that once UINR has control of blocks of Crown land, they will have an opportunity to demonstrate a Mi'kmaw approach to forest stewardship. UINR's forest technician Garrett MacVicar is also excited to see UINR move towards careful forest management practices.

Lisa Young, executive director of UINR, is similarly keen to see UINR fulfil its mission to create employment through environmentally sound stewardship of the forest. Lisa also sees the potential to rediscover language and culture through developing value-added and non-timber forest products.

Clifford Paul, UINR's Moose Project Coordinator commented that he's seen all of his favourite places cut down, and that the forest is a critical source of medicine and food. Clifford is passionate that Mi'kmaq should lead the discussion about better forestry management, not only in Unama'ki but in Nova Scotia generally, and pointed out the importance of using natural law and traditional knowledge to guide harvests. "We, Mi'kmaq," Clifford stressed, "are part of this ecosystem." Clifford was confident that Mi'kmaq will figure out ways to make valuable use

***Eric stressed the need to create jobs and revenue while at the same time demonstrating Mi'kmaq stewardship values and giving Mi'kmaq communities a say in how forests are used.***

of the forestland, even recognizing that much of the forest has suffered from poor management in recent decades. Clifford suggested a number of potential options to pursue, including creating culture camps for youth and others; developing walking trails for medicine walks and other eco-tourism activities; creating a Mi'kmaq version of the Gaelic College; creating a forest-based school; and selling decorated moose calls and better yet, teaching people how to make moose calls.

Eric Zscheile, lawyer for the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative, noted that the current forestry model (largely based on pulp) is likely coming to an end, and focusing on pulp does not make economic sense. The goals of the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative, Eric noted, include (1) exclusive management control over pieces of forestland, (2) stewardship of the forest based on netukulimk, (3) increased opportunity and capacity for communities and individuals to participate in the forestry sector, and (4) development and marketing of secondary forest products. Eric noted that it may be worthwhile to consider separating responsibilities for forest management and forest product development. With respect to forest products, Eric emphasized that it makes sense to focus on maximizing value, to get more people working instead of fewer (but not by creating sweatshops). Eric suggested focusing product development on those products that Mi'kmaq are already good at creating. Finally, Eric stressed the need to create jobs and revenue while at the same time demonstrating Mi'kmaq stewardship values and giving Mi'kmaq communities a say in how forests are used.

## ***Community Members***

Community members and other UINR staff who participated in the workshop included Angela Deny, Emma Garden, Peter Paul, Ernie Johnston, Lawrence Wells, Judy Googoo, Joe Googoo, John Syliboy, David Denny, George Paul, Freda Paul, Danny Paul, and Tyson Paul. The following is a point form list of values and objectives expressed by these community members:

- We want to see well-looked after forests, to make us proud;
- I belong to the forest; I depend on it; I collect tepee poles and other materials for traditional crafts; white birch, particularly, is a very important tree for the Mi'kmaq;
- We can produce more craft products;
- I think there should be small sawmilling businesses;
- I'm a trapper, hunter, and a woodworker and I'm concerned with poor forestry practices;
- I collect medicinal plants, and I'm disgusted with clearcutting and resulting dirty water;

***We want to see well-looked after forests, to make us proud***

***We, as a people,  
can survive so  
long as the trees  
are there; we need  
the trees, trees  
don't need us.***

- I fish and hunt to provide food, and I see a lot of places devastated by clearcutting;
- I see a loss of diversity due to clearcutting; too much exploiting of the forests;
- I have to go further and further into woods to find what I need;
- We need to bring back Mi'kmaq law with respect to land and the forest;
- We need to demonstrate stewardship, to bring it back and show our people;
- We should maximize potential while using the least amount of resources;
- We are responsible stewards; we need to live up to our name, and wear it responsibly;
- Who is speaking for the trees?; and
- We, as a people, can survive so long as the trees are there; we need the trees, trees don't need us.

From these and similar statements, it is clear that those community members who attended the workshops share a passion for the forest and its careful use, in line with traditional Mi'kmaw values. They see that current practices are damaging the forest and know that these practices must change to ensure that their communities will continue to survive.

## 1.2 Resources and Challenges for Non-Timber Forest Products

Workshop attendees were asked to identify products currently being produced or collected by Unama'ki community members, in order to identify what crafting, product-making and product collecting skills exist at present.

- Ash baskets
- Wooden flowers
- Parts for hand drums
- Eel and salmon spears
- Axe handles
- Waltes (traditional game)
- Stretchers for pelts
- Musical instrument (fan like)
- Bent-wood and wicker chairs
- Dream catchers (willow)
- Wood carvings
- Teepee poles

- Sweat lodge housing
- Totem poles
- Canoes
- Cabinets
- Variety of Christmas decorations
- Dowels
- Toboggans / Sleighs
- Kinikinick 'tobacco' (mix of dried herbs, traditional tobacco)
- Tupsi (medicine cough/cold remedy)
- Alder hockey sticks
- Wooden snowmen crafts (Potlotek)
- Pitch (glue) to make canoes and other products
- Birch bark containers
- Chaga and other fungi
- Labrador tea (also a medicinal)
- Maple syrup (Mary Louise, former chief of Wagmatook, is doing this)
- Balsam resin, medicine etc
- Spruce resin (for gum, medicine and other products)
- Quill crafts

Community members stated that many of the above products are produced or collected by only a few individuals. They noted that essentially all of the skills associated with making and collecting these products should be more widely known throughout the communities, and especially that these skills need to be taught to young people. Specific opportunities for training included instruction for the following:

- Drum rings
- Canoes
- Baskets
- Cabinets
- Cutting boards
- Waltes
- Moose calls
- Fire makers (bow drills)
- Natural dyes
- Birchbark soap
- Birch bark oil for medicine
- Willow for medicine
- Wooden flowers
- Maple syrup
- Snowshoes
- Quill work
- Furniture



Specific people were noted to have specific skills in making various crafts:

- Natalie Googoo was noted to be an excellent maker of quill crafts;
- Mary-Julia Francis, Susan Poulette, Margaret Paul, and Dusty Muise have taught children to make wooden flowers;
- Shanna Francis, Verick Francis, Roseanne Bernard, and Lynn and Annette Gabriel have skills in making and teaching others how to make baskets;
- Lawrence Paul has skill in making carvings, walking sticks and spears;
- Michael R Denny makes traditional drumsticks;
- Terry Denny makes hockey sticks and sleighs;
- Chad Denny and Jordan Marshall are spear makers;
- Lawrence Paul and Maurice make moose calls; and
- Luke Denny does wood burning designs.

## 1.3 Resources and Challenges for Ecotourism and Educational Programs

Community members noted that several ecotourism operations are currently running in Unama'ki, including,

- Cultural Journeys at Goat Island in Eskasoni
- Sky River Trails in We'koqma'q
- Glooscap Campground
- Sweat lodge at the Membertou Heritage Park
- Basket making classes

Also mentioned was the cultural camp run by We'koqma'q, and the fact that many community members speak Mi'kmaq. Numerous skills that could be useful in ecotourism businesses were noted, including

- Medicine walks
- Hunters
- Fishers
- Snowmobile use
- Hiking
- Photography
- Collecting wild plants
- Making walking trails
- Storytelling (Terry Denny specifically mentioned)
- Tours of Kluscap caves (by Clifford and Lawrence)

Community members suggested a number of potential ecotourism and educational activities that could be pursued, including,

- Cultural education experiences at Glooscap
- Guided tours, such as for collecting and making wigwam poles
- Canoe making
- Talks about traditional ways and modern ways (making teas from native plants)
- Mi'kmaq language, either on its own or as part of other workshops
- Traditional foods (beech bark used in bread); other traditional uses of plants (Hemlock, birch bark oil)
- Connecting trails to larger provincial trail networks
- A walk-in camp in the park; something like the Coxheath trail cabin that can be rented out
- Maple syrup operation with an ecotourism component (maple syrup is a traditional Mi'kmaq food)

Community members pointed to existing forestry and eco-tourism project outside of Unama'ki, including the Bear River and St. Croix silviculture programs, and Bear River's 7 Paddles project (canoe trips along traditional Mi'kmaq routes).

## 1.4 Resources and Challenges for Forestry, Sawmilling and Lumber and Log Grading

Community members reported that a number of people have silviculture and tree harvesting skills, and a few people process and sell firewood. At present, only one person was noted to have sawmilling skills, and this person largely mills only for personal uses. No one reported anyone trained in log grading, and community members noted this is likely because trees cut are generally for pulp, biomass, firewood or studwood so there has been no need for log-grading skills.

The following people and companies were reported to have silviculture and/or logging skills:

- Doug Denny, logger, Eskasoni
- Maurice Denny, logger, Eskasoni
- Al Denny, logger, Eskasoni
- Warren and Jip (last names not recorded), loggers, Membertou
- Gilbert Bernard, logger, Membertou
- Tree of Life silviculture company, We'koqma'q

Furthermore, UINR staff members Jason MacLean, Director of Forestry, and Garrett MacVicar, Forestry Technician, have specific forestry skills and knowledge that will be valuable in designing and implementing management planning for the Unama'ki forest.

Jason MacLean is a forest technician with many years of experience in the forestry sector; specific skills include

- Supervising forestry workers and harvesting operations;
- Silviculture block layout;
- Supervision of forestry operations and monitoring contractors' work quality, production and harvest block layout; and
- Ensuring jobs comply with environmental guidelines, among others.

Garrett MacVicar is also a forest technician; specific skills include

- Analysing forests;
- Tree marking for cutting;
- Monitoring contractor work quality, production and harvest block layout; and
- Ensuring environmental guidelines are met, among others.

Desirable training identified by the community related to forests, logging and sawmilling included,

- Sawmilling;
- Hands-on business training;
- Trapping, hunting and fishing;
- Wild foods collecting and processing;
- Truck-driving;
- Machinery maintenance;
- Safety training; and
- Tree and plant identification.

## 1.5 Resources and Challenges for Business Skills

Community members identified a number of skills and resources within the communities. The Ulnooweg Development Group (operating throughout Atlantic Canada) was mentioned as a potential source of business loans and grants, and assistance with running a business. The organization also can provide assistance for training and education. (<http://ulnooweg.ca/>)

Also mentioned was the First Nations Help Desk, located in Membertou. This organization's website provides links to various language and cultural information, as well as a link to an Aboriginal Bursaries program. Another resource is the Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office (MEBO), which offers assistance with webpage design, marketing and other skills to the five Unama'ki communities. MEBO's focus is on finding employment for community members with large industry, but it may be able to provide some support for small business development as well. Finally, Robert Bernard of We'koqma'q offers assistance with setting up businesses and marketing through his I Do Business. (<http://www.idobusiness.ca>)

Business skills present in local communities include know-how to make various products (including baskets, wooden flowers and drum rings), the use of social media, the hosting of gatherings (powwows, etc), accounting, and operation of forestry, construction and craft store businesses.

Several members stressed the need to encourage young people to learn marketing and business skills.

## 1.6 Resources and Challenges for Marketing

Community members reported that products are sold online through buy and sell sites such as Kijiji and on Facebook, as well as out of individuals' homes, at local craft shops and other stores, and at powwows. Several members noted that some cultural craft products are in high demand and thus marketing is easy for these products; whatever is created is quickly purchased through the marketing means already in use.

Some noted that Mi'kmaw products are extremely popular in Germany, and that Europe should be explored for marketing potential.

Members reported that a challenge with respect to marketing products is not having enough products to keep pace with demand, thus there is a strong need to increase production. Others reported that those doing the harvesting and gathering make very little money and thus there is not enough incentive for gathering the primary products from which to make products.

Other challenges noted included,

- No land base from which to gather or acquire raw materials (especially for Membertou);
- Very low market exposure; there is a strong need to connect with a larger audience outside of Unama'ki;
- There is a strained relationship with local government, which reduces effective cooperation;
- Funding to help promote products would be useful;
- Few places locally to display and sell products;
- Eskasoni community members noted they their community is not along a main road, so they do not have a direct physical presence to sell to tourists;
- Lack of organizational structure to coordinate and market products; perhaps an artisan co-op would be useful; and
- Some types of craft production are tedious work; doing a small amount is good, but a sweatshop approach to crafting is detrimental.

## Part VI:

### Suggestions / Recommendations

***A co-operative entity could facilitate the development of non-timber and value-added wood products in Unama'ki***

The following are possible suggestions and recommendations for steps to foster value-added and non-timber forest product businesses in Unama'ki, based on the research presented in this report.

#### ***1. Forest Products Co-operative***

A co-operative entity could facilitate the development of non-timber and value-added wood products in Unama'ki. Members could be producers of non-timber and/or value-added products, sellers of such products, and gatherers of raw materials for such products.

The co-op could be responsible, for example, for creating and promoting a unified Indigenous and sustainable brand for products, cultivating markets for products, and applying for business loans and grants for itself and its members.

It could also be responsible for creating guidelines for ethical gathering of forest products, investigating potential for carbon credits, organizing training opportunities, pursuing partnership opportunities, and disseminating practical information on non-timber and value-added products.

The co-op could also serve as a buyer of forest products, such as conifer boughs, resin, mushrooms, poles etc, gathered by members who do not wish to engage in selling such products to individual customers. The co-op could also, similarly, buy finished non-timber and value-added products from members who do not wish to sell directly to customers. In essence, the co-op could serve the role of wholesale buyer; the difference, of course, is that the co-op does not make profits for itself and instead returns profits to its members, at a rate based on how much each member participates in the business activity of the co-op.

Finally, a co-op could create a sawmilling and wood drying enterprise that, in part, could produce lumber for members who wish to create value-added products. It could also create a firewood enterprise to provide a market for low-value hardwood harvested from the Mi'kmaq Forest.

***A second co-operative entity, separate from the forest products co-operative, could oversee the stewardship of the Mi'kmaq Forest.***

## ***2. Forest Stewardship Co-operative***

A second co-operative entity, separate from the forest products co-operative, could oversee the stewardship of the Mi'kmaq Forest. Its members could be representatives of Unama'ki Mi'kmaw communities, and include those representing silviculture and harvesting interests, biodiversity interests, recreational interests, hunting, fishing and trapping interests, and forest-product producers' interests, among others.

Importantly, the Forest Stewardship Co-op would be a separate entity from the Forest Product Co-op in order to ensure that forest management is driven by stewardship goals and community interests, rather than solely by business and commercial interests. The two co-ops would, however, work closely together for mutual benefit and broad community benefit.

## ***3. Forestland Inventory***

The Mi'kmaq Forest should be inventoried for non-timber and value-added product potential. Standard forest inventories do not generally include such information. If non-timber and value-added products are to be promoted, then it is important to have at least a rough idea of what potential the forest holds for these products.



#### 4. *Community Guidelines for Ethical Gathering*

It may be advantageous to create guidelines and instructions for how to gather forest products without compromising their abundance. These guidelines could apply to products such as mushrooms, moss and other greenery collected for decorative products, boughs, balsam resin, and birch bark. Establishing and following such guidelines would help build the 'sustainable brand' as well.

#### 5. *Whether Co-ops are formed or not, Establish Cornerstone Businesses*

***Focus should be given to encouraging several 'cornerstone' businesses to get underway***

Focus should be given to encouraging several 'cornerstone' businesses to get underway, including (1) a sawmilling and wood-drying business (both air and kiln drying), (2) a sustainably-harvested firewood business, and (3) one or several 'gate-way' forest product businesses, such as a basket-making business and an eco-tourism business.

A sawmilling business is critical because it will provide a market for some of the logs cut on the Mi'kmaw Forest, and it will provide lumber for local building projects and value-added wood products. The sawmilling can also undertake custom sawmilling for customers, and produce lumber for niche markets such as instrument and furniture makers, lobster trap makers, etc.

A firewood business is critical because it will provide a market for low-value hardwood cut on the Mi'kmaw Forest. Very likely, forest-improvement silviculture work will produce a lot of low-value hardwood, and firewood is a much higher-value use than selling it for hardwood pulp or biomass. A locally owned firewood business also keeps money circulating locally.

Gateway products, such as Mi'kmaw baskets, are well-known and established products that should be reasonably easy to market and sell. They are the 'low-hanging fruit' of non-timber and value-added products. These products can be used to establish an Indigenous and sustainable brand, and marketing plans. Once branding and marketing is established for these 'easy-sell' products, other products can be introduced and benefit from the infrastructure already in place.

## 6. *Marketing and Branding*

Whether done by a co-operative or done by another entity, a dedicated, cohesive and systematic approach to marketing and branding is important. Marketing and branding should focus on (1) presenting the story of the Mi'kmaw Forest (that is, a forest carefully stewarded according to Mi'kmaw cultural values and knowledge, and ecological science) through media articles, videos, written information, and public tours, (2) presenting the story of the people or businesses that make the non-timber or value-added forest products, (3) developing an 'Indigenous' certification for Mi'kmaw crafts, art, other forest products, and eco-tourism (perhaps in conjunction with mainland Mi'kmaq), and (4) considering obtaining FSC certification of the Mi'kmaw Forest.

## 7. *Training*

Whether undertaken by a forest products co-operative or another entity, providing training is likely a critical component of establishing value-added and non-timber forest product businesses in Unama'ki. Training can include (1) providing opportunities for skilled community members to teach their skills and knowledge to other (especially younger) community members, either through workshops or one-on-one mentorships, (2) sponsoring community members to travel to teaching institutes such as the Maritime College of Forestry Technology to learn skills such as chainsaw use, (3) partner with organizations that offer business training to hold community workshops or courses, (4) identify experts to bring into communities to offer specific training on desired topics, (5) partner with FPInnovations to deliver industry-specific training, such as setting up and running a sawmilling operation.

## 8. *Local Partnerships*

It may be worthwhile to explore partnerships with local entities such as the lumber-drying kiln co-operative underway by Don Beamish and Kari Easthouse. It may also be beneficial to explore a partnership possibility with ACFOR (Mathieu LeBlanc) regarding woodchip building heating systems.

## 9. *Carbon Credits*

It may be worthwhile to explore the possibility of selling carbon credits from the Mi'kmaw Forest in a voluntary carbon market (that is, in one-on-one buy and sell agreements). The ability to sell carbon credits will depend on the nature of the agreement reached with the Province. Carbon credit sales may not be possible depending on the nature of the agreement.

## 10. Trade Shows

Once forest products are being produced and branding has been developed, it will be advantageous to attend trade shows (either retail or wholesale or both) to gain greater market exposure.

## Part VII: Reference Materials

The following references were relied upon in the creation of this report. Many of these references present more detail than is included in this report and therefore I recommend anyone interested in more detailed information to consult these documents. Should anyone have difficulty locating these documents please contact me and I will send a copy.

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