



c/o Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History
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Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3A6
naturens.ca

July 20, 2025

Premier Tim Houston
PO Box 726, Halifax NS B3J 2T3
premier@novascotia.ca

Re. High Production Forestry sites south of Dunraven Bog Nature Reserve, Queens County
in
Mainland Moose Habitat

Dear Premier Houston,

You may remember that several members of the natural history community took the province to the Supreme Court in 2019 for many failures regarding the Endangered Species Act. In 2020 Justice Brothers agreed with us and the province was required to get up to date on recovery planning for all species featured in the case. A former provincial regional biologist and conservation officer, I can tell you that this win was a rare source of encouragement after decades of disappointment in our province's handling of species at risk.

You are a busy man; so I'll be concise. Following that 2020 court verdict Nature Nova Scotia conducted field research in western NS including interviews with many of its knowledgeable residents. Collectively we mapped mainland moose presence on Crown land in western Nova Scotia and sent it to Minister Rushton, with a request to establish meaningful core habitat protections for moose as recommended the Recovery Plan. We have since advocated for the formal designation of core habitat, as recommended by your own experts, for the rest of the mainland and requested a review of the Mainland Moose SMP to better incorporate the new Recovery Plan's recommendations. Neither have materialized. We now coordinate the only active, mainland-wide monitoring program for and are too often shocked, when we step into a forest, at the disconnect between your government's species at risk conservation goals and forest harvest plans. Harvests on public land in southwest Nova Scotia too often have inadequate provisioning for moose, and much needed landscape-level harvest planning has never materialized.

Five years later your government continues to authorize forest harvesting and wind turbine projects on traditional moose sites. One site had been saved 45 years ago from a proposed mining road by John Buchanan's government.

Your government is now authorizing high production forestry, which involves clear-

Member organizations (representing more than 10,000 Nova Scotians):

Annapolis Royal & Area Environment and Ecology Group • Annapolis Waterkeepers • Arlington Forest Protection Society • Blomidon Naturalists Society • Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark • Eastern Shore Forest Watch • Friends of Antigonish Harbour • Friends of Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Society • Friends of McNabs Island Society • Friends of Nature • Friends of the Pugwash Estuary • Halifax Field Naturalists • Healthy Bays Network • Hope for Wildlife • International Crane Foundation • Margaree Environmental Association • Nova Scotia Bird Society • Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society • Protect Wentworth Valley • Save Caribou • Save Our Old Forests • St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association • Stop Clearcutting Unama'ki • Stop Spraying & Clear-Cutting Nova Scotia • The Dirt Gang • Tusket River Environmental Protection Society • Young Naturalists Club of Nova Scotia

cutting, herbicides and planting on the following plots:

Prescription Type DNR ID QU025372

Section AB

Triad Zone High Production Forestry

Ecosite Group Acadian

County Queens

Area (Ha) 37.58

Prescription Final Felling

Comment Expiry July 22, 2025

Nature Nova Scotia made a comment to the harvest plan viewer about these plots but we are so concerned we are also writing to you directly with a request to take broader action.

This area has a breeding population of endangered mainland moose.

Moose country cannot support high production forestry, at least not without landscape level planning ensuring that an adequate mix of forest types is left over the moose's large range, that the road network is minimized, and that larger buffers are maintained.

A lack of landscape level planning necessitates the use of the precautionary principle. Mr. Lahey indicated that, when in doubt, ecologically sound management should prevail. This should be the approach taken to public lands management throughout the core habitat your Recovery Plan identified.

Mainland moose have been listed under the Act as endangered for 22 years. It's time you listened to well-informed individuals for perspectives beyond the industry view. Find some respect for endangered species that share this province with humans. Please show us that your government is acting in good faith and that such poorly planned harvests are simply mistakes stemming from lacking capacity in your Department of Natural Resources. Please direct your Minister to immediately halt these planned harvests and, more importantly, get to work on designating core habitat for our last native ungulate.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the board,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Bancroft", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Bancroft
President, Nature Nova Scotia

Cc Minister Rushton
Minister Holman
Members of the Nature Nova Scotia Board