

Groups demand immediate moratorium on all forest harvesting on public lands until Lahey Report recommendations implemented on the ground

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Kijipuktuk (Halifax) - A group of eight different provincial environmental and community organizations from across Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia held a press conference today in Halifax calling on the Nova Scotia government for an immediate moratorium on all forest harvesting on Crown lands until the recommendations from William Lahey's 2018 [forestry report](#) are fully implemented and operational. The call comes following the [recent evaluation by Professor Lahey](#) highlighting the province's ongoing failure to implement recommendations from his 2018 report and change destructive forest harvesting practices in the province.

The groups responsible for holding the press conference – Ecology Action Centre, Healthy Forest Coalition, Hike Nova Scotia, Nature Nova Scotia, Council of Canadians, Extinction Rebellion Nova Scotia, Friends of Nature and Sierra Club Foundation – insist the demand is urgent and necessary in light of Professor Lahey's findings that important natural areas that would be protected or partially protected under the proposed triad model of forestry management continue to be lost to clearcutting, with no indication of if or when this will change.

"Enough is enough! Lahey's recent evaluation report confirms what we have been seeing on the ground and what Nova Scotians across the province have been saying, reporting, defending, decrying and even going to court or jail for. The situation has hit a breaking point," says Raymond Plourde, senior wilderness coordinator with the Ecology Action Centre. "We demand an immediate suspension of all logging on Crown lands until the government is ready to actually implement the recommendations of Lahey's 2018 report, otherwise by the time they decide to act, there won't be much of any public forest left to protect."

Lahey's 2018 report calls for a triad model for Crown lands that would split forests into three categories: production forests, protected forests and the *ecological matrix*, which allows some "light-touch" forestry, but centres the health and diversity of the ecosystem as its overriding management objective. Although the recently passed Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act contains goals for the implementation of this model, Lahey's recent evaluation states that virtually nothing has been done to change harmful forestry practices on the ground and that more biodiverse forests will continue to be lost if implementation is pushed off for two or more years.

"The government accepted the recommendations in professor Lahey's report which were supposed to be implemented within a year of its release back in 2018," says Gretchen Fitzgerald, national program director with Sierra Club Foundation. "That was three years ago. The current government has now pushed the deadline back another two years for a total of five, while critical habitat for endangered species like the mainland moose continues to be destroyed under the old, discredited clearcutting system at a rapid pace. This is simply unacceptable."

"While the province puts off its responsibility to protect these lands, harvesting operations are destroying areas that would likely be designated as either fully or partially protected under the ecological forestry model," says Eleanor Kure with Extinction Rebellion Nova Scotia. "Forestry companies are trying to get in and cut as much as they can before the new Lahey regulations are put in place, and our provincial government stalling is enabling that. This charade must end now."

"We don't have time to waste on this," says Bob Bancroft, Nature Nova Scotia president. "We're in a climate and biodiversity loss crisis. Every day that our leaders fail to act we lose more crucial

and irreplaceable wilderness - much of which contributes to nature-based climate solutions and is home to some of our most at risk species. We need more than feel-good goals and talk. We need action on the ground immediately."

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