



## Forest Communities Program Newsletter

Issue 4, Fall 2009

Projects highlighted in this issue: Wild blueberries in Ontario, a new birch beer in Quebec, training Manitoban teachers in boreal forest sustainability and Mount Allison University's MAD lab. If you have questions about any of the articles in this issue, please contact the FCP Secretariat at [fcg-pcf@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:fcg-pcf@nrcan.gc.ca) or visit us at <http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/subsite/forest-communities>.

### Wild Blueberries in the Northeast Superior Region

The **Northeast Superior Forest Community (NSFC)** has been successful in its application to the federal government's Community Adjustment Fund (CAF). The proposed \$400,000 project will support the development of a blueberry industry in the Northeast Superior Region, with over half the funding coming from CAF. Together with Level Plains, its private sector partner, the NSFC is working to develop the region's first wild blueberry plantation near the community of Wawa, Ontario.



*Trevor Laing (Level Plains) with future blueberry field in background*

The new blueberry plantation has created 10 jobs so far. The new funding will allow the project to reach the next level of development, moving several aspects of blueberry industry development forward.

Level Plains is a private sector company run by Trevor and Tracy Laing out of Wawa. The project has been an ongoing goal for the family for the past decade. The CAF funding will assist them with the purchase of equipment and materials, accelerating the development of their site. With this support, they expect to have their first blueberry crop ready for harvest by August 2011. "Level Plains is very excited about the progress we have experienced so

far and appreciate the support we have received to date," says Trevor Laing "We see great opportunity in the region and hope to continually work with all the North Shore communities to develop this unique venture going forward."

The blueberry initiative will see the development of a regional brand for wild blueberries and other potential products. Stakeholders believe that such a cooperative will create employment, investment opportunities and encourage local entrepreneurial spirit.



## La Chouape Microbrewery Launches First Birch Beer in Quebec

The La Chouape microbrewery has launched the *Bouleau Blanche* (White Birch), the first birch beer in Quebec. On May 15, 2009 in Saint-Félicien, beer lovers had the chance to enjoy this brand new non-timber forest product made from white birch from the **Lac-Saint-Jean Model Forest (LSJMF)**.

"The idea fermented when employees of the LSJMF told me about their plans for harvesting birch sap. We said we could innovate and launch a birch beer and ultimately we introduced two," says Louis Hébert, a 6th generation farmer and an independent microbrewer for over a year.

Usually, the Hébert farm produces all the cereals and sugar necessary for beer production. To make beer from white birch, 300 litres of sap was provided by the LSJMF as part of its forest research and development program. For the first year of brewing only 680 pints of birch beer were available.

During the preparation of the beer, sap replaces the water typically used to harvest cereal sugars. Then, an infusion of birch branches and buds is added to enhance its flavour. "The taste is subtle, but one feels the difference in the finish, while the flavours are definitely birch," says Mr. Hébert. The beer may even have health benefits, as fermented birch sap is said to stimulate the human immune system.

"We wanted a product made from the *terroir* (local soil) that comes from our forest to represent the interests of the LSJMF. We are currently working on harvesting the sap and its transformation into birch syrup, promoting value-added products derived from this resource," explains LSJMF General Manager, Stéphane Turcot.



*Microbrewer  
Louis Hébert honing his  
craft*



## Teaching Teachers about Boreal Forest Sustainability

While most people recognize the importance of educating our youth about environmental sustainability, they often forget that in order to accomplish this teachers need tools and locally-relevant information to use in the classroom. The **Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF)** has developed 3 free curriculum supplements, focused on boreal forest sustainability and woodland caribou management, directed at middle and senior secondary years.

The MBMF curricula are accredited by the provincial government and are currently used in schools throughout Manitoba. To provide more

direct hands-on training for teachers in the use of the curricula, the MBMF offered an outdoor workshop on boreal forest and woodland caribou sustainability during the first week of July, 2009. Six teachers from across the province, having just completed the school year and ready for their summer vacation, attended a hands-on workshop on the shores of a remote lake in eastern Manitoba.

Teachers participated in walk-and-talk sessions on boreal forest ecology, plant identification, sustainable forest management planning and helped in the collection of forest health monitoring data. They also visited a nearby lake where woodland caribou calve to discuss how the animal's needs are integrated into natural resource planning. The MBMF curriculum package on woodland caribou was used as the foundation for the workshop.

"I got a lot of ideas on how to get students from Grades 5 – 8 involved and interested in forest activities. Also learned the value of our natural habitats," stated Eddie Wollmann, a participating teacher, "We as teachers really appreciate what the Manitoba Model Forest is doing to help teachers, also appreciate the free resources. Keep up the good work."



*Workshop participants with a caribou decoy*



## Fundy Model Forest gone MAD

In 2003, the Mount Allison Dendrochronology Laboratory (MAD Lab) was formed to investigate tree-ring related research questions in Atlantic Canada. The first priority of the MAD Lab was to establish extensive tree-ring chronologies in the region, which form the basis for many projects.



*MSc. student Nigel Selig coring an old growth sugar maple in the Fundy Model Forest*

Over the past two years, with the assistance from the **Fundy Model Forest (FMF)**, the MAD Lab has produced eight radial growth forecasts for eight Acadian Forest Region (AFR) tree species. These forecasts have been wide ranging in their outcomes. They provide evidence that some tree species within the FMF could be greatly affected by a warming climate, but many species have yet to be assessed. The MAD Lab is currently preparing radial growth forecasts for three more species.

These forecasts have illustrated that the future may be challenging for the survival of New Brunswick's sugar maple trees. Research indicates sugar maple trees could face widespread stresses, including disease, insect outbreaks and possibly death by as early as 2025. The province is the third largest maple syrup producer in the world. Approximately 300 producers employ 2000 people to generate \$15 million in annual return. As a result, climate change may have a tremendous effect on the FMF economy, let alone the environment.

The director of the MAD Lab, Dr. Colin Laroque believes that, "The pressures on trees trying to grow under a less-than-optimum climate in the future within the FMF are especially evident in a species like sugar maple. The poor growth and syrup production we currently see in the southern part of their range in the US are the same types of stresses we see occurring in our models 15 and 30 years down the road for New Brunswick".

On a local community level, both the economy and environment will be affected. Such climate change research shows that various stakeholders invested or working in the forest industry will have new needs and face new adaptation challenges in the future.



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Canadian Model Forest Network

*Valuing Ecological Goods and Services from the Forest: Overview and Results of Five Regional Workshops*

Available on the CMFN website

[http://www.modelforest.net/cmfn/en/publications/publications/publications\\_record.aspx?title\\_id=4899](http://www.modelforest.net/cmfn/en/publications/publications/publications_record.aspx?title_id=4899)

Canadian Model Forest Network

*Non-Timber Forest Products*

Available on the CMFN website

[http://www.modelforest.net/cmfn/en/publications/publications/publications\\_record.aspx?title\\_id=5026](http://www.modelforest.net/cmfn/en/publications/publications/publications_record.aspx?title_id=5026)

Forest Communities Program

*Site Fact Sheets, 2009*

Available on CFS Bookstore website

[http://bookstore.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/home\\_e.php?test=1](http://bookstore.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/home_e.php?test=1)

Fundy Model Forest

*Upper St. John River Valley Directory of Forest Goods & Services*

Available on the Fundy Model Forest and Falls Brook Centre websites

<http://fundymodelforest.net> and <http://www.fallsbrookcentre.ca/community/directory.htm>

Model Forest of Newfoundland and Labrador

*Biophysical Inventory Report for the Northern Peninsula and White Bay South Area*

Available on the MFNL and CMFN websites

[http://www.mfnl.ca/files/Biophysical\\_Inventory\\_Report.pdf](http://www.mfnl.ca/files/Biophysical_Inventory_Report.pdf) and <http://www.wnmf.com>

Nova Forest Alliance

*Nova Scotia Our Forest, Our People, Foundations for the Future: Achievements of the Nova Forest Alliance Partnership*

Available on the NFA and CMFN websites

<http://www.novaforestalliance.com/default.asp?cmPageID=77> and <http://www.modelforest.net/cmfn/en/>



## UPCOMING EVENTS

December 10-11, Toronto, ON

Indicators of Assessing the Ability of Forest-based Communities to Respond to Transformative Change – Foundational Change

<http://fundymodelforest.net/cms/uploads/file/Community%20Transition%202.doc>

January 21-23, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON

CONFOR East – Annual Graduate Conference on Forestry and Environmental Sciences in Eastern Canada

<http://conforeast.lakeheadu.ca/index.php>

January 21-24, University of Alberta and University of British Columbia, AB and BC

CONFOR West – 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Graduate Conference on Forestry and Environmental Sciences in Western Canada

<http://www.conforwest.org/>

February 18-19, Truro, NS

From Field to Forest: Non-Timber Forest Products

<http://fundymodelforest.net/cms/uploads/file/Promo%20for%20FMF%20website%20Nov09.doc>

## About the Forest Communities Program

*The Forest Communities Program (FCP) is a \$25-million, five-year program that funds 11 forest community organizations across Canada, as well as national projects. The FCP community partnerships are located in defined geographic areas at a regional scale, and include a mix of urban, rural and Aboriginal communities. Typically, these community partnerships are diverse, with participants drawn from community groups, industry, Aboriginal organizations, and various levels of government, landowners, research groups and educational institutions. The FCP assists forest community organizations in developing and sharing new knowledge, practices and strategies to meet the challenges of forest sector transition and to develop new, forest-based economic opportunities.*

### FCP Contact Information

**Natural Resources Canada – Canadian Forest Service**

580 Booth Street

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E4

Tel: (613) 992-5874

Email: [fcf-pcf@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:fcf-pcf@nrcan.gc.ca)

Web: <http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/index/forest-communities>