
**Summary of Public Comments
from IRM Public Information Sessions
Fall 2000**

Forward

Increasing pressures for access to the limited Crown land base and its resources have led the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources to implement an integrated resource management (IRM) process for provincially managed Crown lands.

By definition integrated resource management is a planning and decision making process that coordinates resource use so that the long term sustainable benefits are optimized and conflicts among users are minimized. IRM brings together all resource groups rather than each working in isolation to balance the economic, environmental, and social requirements of society. IRM includes planning for minerals, forests, recreation, wilderness, energy, wildlife, and parks.

The Department has adopted a planning process that considers all potential uses and users of Crown land and strives to achieve an appropriate balance, recognizing that while many uses can be carried out simultaneously, there are cases where one resource interest many dominate.

The Public Consultation Process

In September 2000 DNR initiated Public Consultation Phase 2 by conducting 24 public information sessions across the province. These sessions attracted nearly 800 people. Visitors to each public information session could view maps of that region which displayed the proposed IRM Regional Strategic Plan with Land Use Categories – C1, C2 or C3(see Appendix 1) – depending on each land block's suitability for resource use. Block information data bases, which outlined all the information used in arriving at each categorization, were also available. Two overview presentations explaining the IRM process and project were given at each session.

Input collected at the public information sessions was wide ranging and included comments about both the content and process of IRM and the content and process of the public information sessions. A total of 670 comments were recorded at the information sessions or received in writing up to approximately one month after the conclusion of the sessions. Some participants provided new information on resources and land use, which in some cases meant a change in category, and in others, new values have been added to the inventory. The numerous comments received concerning process and policy did not impact on the plan's land categorization directly. However it will be used to guide the Department in future policy making and planning processes.

Approximately 675 copies of an electronic postcard were received up to October 9, 2001. The postcard was developed by, and hosted on, an environmental coalition group's website. Visitors to the website were invited to add their name and any additional comments to the pre-formatted text of the postcard, and by one click, submit same electronically to the office of the Premier. (see Appendix 2).

All of the information received has been considered in the proposed strategic plan for each of the three regions and will play a role in the development of Long Range Management Plans (LRMPs).

This document is a summary of the public comments received in response to the September 2000 public information sessions. Input was divided into issue categories to enable easier inclusion in the decision making process of the IRM strategic plan and utilization in the more detailed Long Range Management Planning (LRMP) process. The issue categories were:

- **Conservation and Preservation:** Comments regarding the Department of Natural Resources placing a higher priority on biodiversity and preservation concerns on Crown land. Examples being higher protection for Old Growth Forests and stopping resource extraction completely.
- **Harvesting:** Comments about changes to present harvesting agreements on Crown land. Examples ranging from banning clearcutting entirely to selective cutting on Crown land bordering watercourses.
- **Industry Development:** Comments suggesting more and different types of industrial development opportunities for Crown land. Examples being maple sugar production and specialty hardwoods.
- **Planning Process:** Comments dealing with the planning process. Examples ranging from all Crown land should be C3 to good work or a professional job.
- **Presentation:** Comments received on the DNR presentations at the sessions. Comments ranged from a good presentation to bad question and answer format.
- **Policy:** Comments suggesting provincial policy changes in DNR. Examples ranged from placing a moratorium on Crown land until a more comprehensive plan is developed, to leave all Crown land open to mineral exploration.
- **Recreation:** Comments requesting increased recreation opportunities on Crown land. Protection of canoe routes and canoe carries to recreation is not given its due weight.
- **Specific Area Protection:** Suggestions for specific land areas to receive greater protection through the IRM process. There were a large number of specific parcels of Crown land where protection was suggested. Very little additional inventory information was received to support these requests.

Conservation and Preservation
Stop resource extraction -- preserve

Total Comments Received: 33
(15)

Higher protection for old growth	(8)	
More planning for biodiversity	(7)	
Impact assessment before forestry	(2)	
Recognition of cougar habitat	(1)	
Harvesting	Total Comments Received:	43
Ban clearcutting	(9)	
Selective cutting on Crown land bordering watercourses	(4)	
Stop legal agreements/volume agreements	(4)	
No sprays, herbicides etc.	(3)	
Unfair stumpage rates	(3)	
Concern about sustainable forestry practices	(3)	
All Crown land should be under public management for stewardship	(3)	
Forestry on Crown land is losing money	(2)	
Large vs. private companies on Crown land	(2)	
Educate the public on sustainable forestry practices	(2)	
No planting of exotics	(1)	
Utilize hardwood	(1)	
Tenure should be area-based; not volume based	(1)	
Clearcutting only in special cases	(1)	
Selective cutting on Crown land bordering special leases	(1)	
Allowing selective cutting on all Crown lands	(1)	
Moratorium on harvesting for future use	(1)	
How will you deal with co-owned land	(1)	
Industry Development	Total Comments Received:	2
Make sugar maple stands available	(1)	
Make hardwood available for sawmills	(1)	
Planning Process	Total Comments Received:	233
All Crown land should be C3	(66)	
Good work; professional job	(15)	
More public involvement needed in the process	(16)	
More involvement from other gov't depts was required	(16)	
Not enough C3	(11)	
DNR took our comments seriously	(9)	
More meetings in Halifax	(8)	
Include economics and the job base in IRM planning	(7)	(8)
How much C3 was in addition to legislated C3	(7)	
Negative comments about C2	(7)	
Public input was ignored	(6)	
Licensed/leased lands should be highlighted on maps	(6)	
Coastal islands should be C3	(5)	
More input from tourism industry needed	(4)	
Start IRM process over from scratch	(4)	
Will government go back to the public again	(4)	
C3 buffer zones adjacent to protected areas, parks, federal lands	(3)	
Depts of Tourism/Recreation/Environment should be part of next planning stage	(3)	
Coastal Crown lands - C3	(2)	(2)
Consider use on other lands when planning Crown land use	(2)	
C3 needs to be subdivided to allow for well regulated management	(2)	
Concern about C2 – more restrictive classification	(1)	

Breakout C2/C3 stats within C1 areas	(1)
Too much C3	(1)
Include aesthetic values in IRM planning	(1)
Did not consider historic improper use	(1)
Over exploitation	(1)
Natural Resources cannot handle implementing IRM plan	(1)
C3 needs more statutory protection	(1)
Management units should be watersheds, not landscapes	(1)
Add land classification “scientific study”	(1)
Does IRM have a budget, financial target	(1)

Presentation Total Comments Received: 34

Good presentation	(7)
Integrated Resource Management/Land Use Cmte should have been present	(4)
Maps not enough detail/difficult to interpret	(4)
Do not include wilderness areas in C3, very misleading	(4)
Misleading graphics/wording	(3)
Bad question/answer format	(3)
Follow-up information sessions with summary on website	(2)
Too much bickering by same people who attended a number of meetings	(2)
Abandon railways not addressed on IRM maps	(1)
Allow questions after presentation (Bible Hill)	(1)
Allow all attendees to ask at least one question	(1)
Overheads hard to see on dark background	(1)
Disappointed in turnout at meeting	(1)

Policy Total Comments Received: 135

Moratorium until a more comprehensive plan is developed	(75)
Return park reserves to C3 class	(13)
Need more protected areas	(7)
No new protected areas needed	(7)
Make public comments available	(6)
Make IRM maps/information available to public	(4)
Leave all Crown land open to mineral exploration	(4)
All watershed should be C3	(4)
ATV use should be better regulated on Crown land	(4)
Supply list of Integrated Resource Management/Land Use Cmte members	(3)
Wilderness areas regulations too stringent/limit uses	(2)
Provide access to framework document	(1)
Define sustainability	(1)
Need to meet 1992 commitment re: representative landscapes	(1)
Crown should acquire more shoreline	(1)
Concern over right of access on C3	(1)
Watershed management critical to all planning	(1)

Recreation Total Comments Received: 6

Canoe routes, canoe carries – protect	(3)
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Set aside Crown land for recreation	(2)
Recreation not given “due weight”	(1)

Proposed Wilderness Areas	Total Comments Received:	17
Proposed additions to Toboatic Wilderness Area		(5)
Tusket River Wilderness Area		(4)
Shelburne Barrens Nature Reserve		(4)
Davis River/Lake		(2)
Kemptville Management Area		(1)
Great Pubnico Lake		(1)

Specific Area Protection	Total Comments Received:	167
Western Region		
Coastal Islands		(16)
Ponhook/Molega		(9)
Sperry’s Salt Marsh		(6)
Pine Hill/Napier		(5)
Indian Look-off		(4)
Fourth Lake		(4)
Conquerall Mills		(3)
Holden Lake		(3)
Irving Lake		(2)
Sixth Lake		(2)
Rocky Lake		(2)
McGowan Lake		(2)
Sand Lake		(2)
Wilkins Lake		(2)
Payzat Brook		(2)
First Lake		(2)
Sols Meadows		(2)
Cow Moose Lake		(2)
Moose Horn Lake		(2)
Grafton Lake		(2)
Turtle/Canon Lake		(2)
Owlshead		(2)
Shingle Lake, Seven Mile Lake		(2)
Gully Lake		(2)
Roseway		(2)
Moose Lake		(1)
Toad Lake		(1)
Roseway Lake		(1)
Flintstone Rock		(1)
Gaff Point		(1)
Green Bay		(1)
Back Lake		(1)
Keji River Management Unit		(1)
Carrigan Hill		(1)
Bull Moose Lake		(1)
Ninevah		(1)
Smith Lake		(1)
Hirtle Lake/Rocky Lake/Cranberry Lake		(1)
Pleasant River		(1)

Sherbrooke Lake	(1)
Big Molly Upsim Lake	(1)
Fifth Lake Bay	(1)
Hagen Meadow	(1)
Middlefield	(1)
Eighteen Mile Brook	(1)
Greenfield	(1)
Danesville	(1)
Port L'Hebert	(1)
Rocky Lake	(1)
Mineameak & Millipsigate Lake	(1)
Still Brook	(1)
North Brookfield	(1)
Harmony Lake	(1)
Charlotte Lake	(1)
Cameron Lake South	(1)
Stillwater Meadows	(1)
Squash Lake Brook	(1)
Gillfillan Lake	(1)
Gridiron Lake	(1)
Spar Ridge	(1)

Central Region

Ship Harbour Long Lake	(6)	
Gully Lake	(4)	
Liscomb Game Sanctuary		(4)
Birch Cove Lakes - Blue Mountain	(3)	
Woodens River Watershed	(2)	
Sackville/Beaverbank	(2)	
Lewis Lake	(1)	
Shubie Grand Lake	(1)	
Sackville Drumlins	(1)	
Porters Lake Myra Road	(1)	
Herring Cove	(1)	
Minas Basin Ramsar – C3	(1)	
Between/adjacent to Waverley & Clattenburg	(1)	
Protect all areas proposed by EAC	(1)	
Fish River/Ship Harbour/Long Lake/Lake Charlotte/Scraggy Lake	(1)	

Eastern Region

Fogarty's Cove	(10)
Eigg Mountain	(4)
Mabou Highlands	(3)
Kelly's Mountain	(1)

The Next Step

The proposed IRM Regional Strategic Plans will remain in draft form until approval is received

to proceed to the next phase which is the preparation of the Long Range Management Plans. The Strategic IRM Plan will serve as the basis for future detailed planning for resource use on Crown lands in the form of the LRMPs that will outline how Crown land natural resources, on a defined area, are best managed. Each Regional Strategic Plan will facilitate future land use decisions, ensure that resource uses are balanced, and encourage constructive dialogue between the various resource sectors.

The formulation of LRMPs involves a more detailed look at Crown land on an *eco-district* basis which will outline how Crown land natural resources are to be managed. These plans will give full consideration to biodiversity and resource development issues as they relate to the geological, forestry, parks and recreation, and wildlife sectors. An *eco-district* is an area of land with similar physical features such as soils, rocks and water that supports a similar climate cover of plants and animals”. There are 39 *eco-districts* in Nova Scotia. It will take a further five years to complete LRMPs for all *eco-districts*.

eco-district – an area of land with similar physical features such as soils, rocks, and water that supports a similar climate cover of plants and animals.

Appendix 1

Category 1 Lands (C1): General Resource Use

Local level planning within Category 1 lands will involve the application of provincial policies and guidelines (e.g. DNR policies on Forests, Minerals, Parks and Wildlife; the proposed Forest Practices Code for Nova Scotia, the Forest/Wildlife Guidelines; Nova Scotia's Protected Areas Strategy; the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy). The IRM Process will be a tool for continued involvement of program managers in the development of local area plans.

Crown lands assigned to this category will be available for the full range of resource uses, and include lands for which a low level of conflict among competing uses is anticipated. Lands will be managed in accordance with provincial acts, policies, and commitments ensuring that provincial environmental standards are met, that biodiversity is maintained, and resource development is carried out according to the principles of sustainability.

Land within which identified values may lead to a requirement for treatment for special values but which is too small to be mapped separately, may be included in larger C1 blocks and these would be subject to special management considerations at the local planning level.

Examples:

- Recreational trails
- Old forest areas as per DNR's Old Forest Policy (less than 50 ha.)
- Wildlife habitat (outside of significant habitat database)
- Sensitive river habitats.

Category 2 Lands (C2): Multiple and Adaptive Resource Use Areas

Lands with conflicting values for land and resource use would normally be assigned to Category 2 areas. The purpose of this category is to ensure that all values are taken into account in the planning process in areas where land use conflicts have been identified. Balancing the interests of all resource sectors may require that management practices for one resource use be modified in order to enhance compatibility with others. In some instances, critical values may be identified for overriding consideration in establishing management practices, whereas compromise may be the most appropriate approach in others.

Resource values and land uses may make it more difficult to manage resources so as to optimize the benefits of multiple use and minimize land use conflicts. Within this category of lands, the full range of land/resource uses may be permitted, but they must be planned in such a way as to protect the integrity of predominant values which may be impacted by other uses. Some sites may be moved to Category 3 after scientific evaluation.

The Local Level planning process for these lands will be fully integrated, and internal zoning of lands within blocks of C2 lands will be a required product of that process.

Examples:

- Community water supply areas
- Wildlife Management Areas

- Lands on which resource use activities could negatively impact parks or protected areas if not managed appropriately
- Sites of outstanding scenic, recreational, cultural, or natural value, not in C3
- Some Land Administration Leases, licenses or easements
- Classic old growth forest as per DNR's Old Growth Policy of any size that will require some degree of protection,
- Listings on the significant wildlife habitats database, including, where applicable, the habitats for species listed under the *Endangered Species Act*, and species listed as "red" or "yellow" provincially.
- Forestry providence and research trial sites
- Significant wetlands

Category 3 Lands (C3): Protected and Limited Use Areas

Responsibility for management decisions on these lands will normally reside with the responsible program, but allowed uses should be identified and included in the regional strategy. Management activities that will enhance or maintain the values for which the land is classified Category 3 would be encouraged. Planning at the local level may identify some other program interests that may be accommodated and, in such circumstances, input and assistance from other program areas must be sought.

This category includes lands that are specifically allocated to special uses and where other resource activities may be very limited, modified, or denied. In most cases these lands are designated under legislation or are planned for designation. Additional designations could occur only after the impact of such a designation on the other resource sectors has been studied.

Examples:

- Provincial Parks, Operating Parks and designated Park Reserves
- Wilderness Areas
- Nature Reserves
- Protected Beaches
- Core habitat for endangered or threatened species listed under the *Endangered Species Act*
- Consensus from all sectors that this is truly a unique feature and impact on other sectors is acceptable.

Appendix 2

NOVA SCOTIA'S PUBLIC LANDS ARE WORTH SAVING!

Please send this message to the Hon. John Hamm, Premier of Nova Scotia:

Dear Dr. Hamm:

I am disappointed with the Department of Natural Resources' proposed Integrated Resource Management (IRM) land use plan, which will leave 80% of Nova Scotia's Crown lands available for resource extraction. Our limited public land base is too valuable - for wildlife, forests, rivers, recreation, tourism, and future generations - to leave it unprotected. I am counting on your government to rescue Nova Scotia's wilderness heritage. I urge the Province to:

OVERHAUL the proposed IRM plan to recognize conservation as the primary role of public lands;

HONOUR its protected area commitments;

PROTECT all remaining public wildlands (i.e. roadless areas of Crown land over 200 hectares), significant natural areas identified by the Department of the Environment during the IRM process, and public lands proposed for protection (profiles are posted at www.publicland.ca);

BUY TIME for publicly-owned wilderness by placing remaining public wildlands, significant natural areas, and public lands proposed for protection under an interim development moratorium.

Please add this message to the official record of comments for the IRM planning process. I would appreciate a response to the mailing address below.

Premier of Nova Scotia
Honourable John Hamm, M.D., M.L.A.
P.O. Box 726
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2T3

