

2002 Resolutions

2002-01 - THINNING PRACTICES ON CROWN LAND

WHEREAS the primary purpose of thinning young forests is to reduce the number of stems on an area, so as to select certain species and form, and to maximize growth on the remaining stems;

AND WHEREAS the practice of thinning, and the resulting tree stands, are solely the result of fibre/timber goals which are often contrary to wildlife needs;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that DNR & E re-evaluate thinning practices on Crown lands so that when opportunities to promote or enhance wildlife habitat are encountered that those areas be treated separately for the benefit of wildlife.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Over the next two years DNR plans to evaluate the habitat value of present and expected future stands produced by thinning. Where conflicts with existing habitat objectives are identified, objectives and strategies will be developed to address them.

2002-02 - RESOURCES FOR DEER HERD

WHEREAS the whitetail deer herd in New Brunswick is at (or near) record low numbers;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that DNR& E direct more attention and resources towards the conservation of the province's deer herd.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The white-tailed deer is one of NB's most treasured wildlife resources. In fact, it is the species that receives the most management attention throughout several government departments including DNR. It is also the wildlife species that has the greatest amount of financial and manpower resources committed to it.

In the past year, DNR has expanded the following efforts in the management of NB's white-tailed deer.

- \$60,000 + 0.5 person years in doe population aerial inventory
- \$60,000 + 2.0 person years in deer wintering area identification
- 2.5 person years on deer wintering area management 900 + Crown land deer yards
- 0.5 person years on northern deer strategy development
- \$110,000 + 1.0 person years in deer population management
- \$2 M + 80 person years in wildlife law enforcement specific to deer

Similarly, departments such as Transportation and Agriculture, Fisheries & Aquaculture have incorporated deer conservation concerns into associated development projects. I believe these efforts reflect the Province's commitment to this natural resource valued by so many New Brunswick's citizens.

2002-03 - NO INCREASE IN PLANTATIONS ON CROWN LAND

WHEREAS all of the Crown licence holders have expressed an interest to double the allowable cut from Crown lands in the future;

AND WHEREAS realization of this objective will likely require significant forest areas to be converted to tree plantations which have limited value for deer and other wildlife;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the NBWF petition the Department of Natural Resources & Energy not to allow increased plantation area on Crown lands to accommodate the proposed doubling of the annual allowable cut.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

At the present the government has made no decision with regarding to increasing the planting levels on Crown land. Prior to any significant increase in planting levels, the impacts to other resource objectives, including wildlife, will be evaluated.

2002-04 - BEAVER TRAPPING ON GRAND MANAN

WHEREAS the island of Grand Manan is an island of 55 square miles in the Bay of Fundy that depends on annual rain fall as it's only source of fresh water. They have no rivers but have small streams that continually drain into the Bay of Fundy.

AND WHEREAS in recent years water has been getting shorter in supply to the point that well drillers are being asked to extend the depth of drilled wells deeper and deeper.

AND WHEREAS Grand Manan used to have a system of logging and beaver dams to hold back our precious rainfall resources but the man-made dams have mostly fallen away and the beaver has been trapped almost to the point of extinction on the little island.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the DNR & E place a ban on the trapping of beaver on Grand Manan for a period of not less than 5 years. This will allow them to make a come back and let them restore the water table to a healthy and productive level.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

During 1991 and 1992, DNR & E conducted aerial surveys of beaver colonies on the island. Approximately 46 % of the total estimated stream length was surveyed. A population of 100 + beavers was generated in each respective year. Low trapping pressure is a compensatory mortality factor; which means harvesting removes a portion of animals that would die from natural factors in a given year. Pelt export records indicate that trapping pressure for beaver is minimal on Grand Manan, with less than 15 beaver pelts being exported annually. In addition, there are only a few trappers still active on the island and most target snowshoe hare or muskrats. Such a low harvest rate is not detrimental to the status of the beaver population and should allow population growth unless limited by habitat factors. Lack of food for beaver on the island is a limiting factor. DNR & E does not support the resolution to ban beaver trapping on Grand Manan (WMZ 27) in the near future.

2002-05 - LEGAL HUNTING AGE

WHEREAS the number of young hunters is going down every year.

AND WHEREAS in today's world there is much more to catch a young persons' interest;

AND WHEREAS one cannot legally get started hunting until well in their teens;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the DNR & E lower the minor's hunting permit legal age from 14 to the age of 12, so that we may ensure the heritage of hunting in the Province of New Brunswick.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

DNR & E does not support the resolution, but agreed to work with the NBWF over the next year to have this implemented. The NBWF is tasked with presenting to the DNR & E a viable system that could work and be acceptable to the majority of residents; it was noted that the public may not be pleased with a 12 year old carrying a firearm and it will be up to the NBWF to promote this with the general public.

2002-06 - BOW HUNTING ZONE

WHEREAS there are a very small number of Bow Hunters in the Province, and their harvest rates for all game animals is very low;

AND WHEREAS many Bow Hunters have very limited access to game in their local areas due to low populations and the increasing amounts of land being posted "no hunting", and many of the new and first time Bow Hunters are being discouraged out of the sport;

AND WHEREAS Bow Hunters cannot currently make use of camouflage as one of their hunting tools;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Province set aside a certain area of woodland which is currently not available to hunting, to be designated as a "Bow Hunting Only Zone" in which Bow Hunters would be allowed to hunt with bows and wear full camouflage.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Minister replied that there is no intention by his department to create any additional wildlife management zones.

2002-07 - OPENING DAY FOR SPORT FISHING

WHEREAS sport fishing is a great heritage activity in the Province of New Brunswick;

AND WHEREAS the opening day is traditionally April 15th and often falls in the middle of the week;

AND WHEREAS opening day cannot be enjoyed by the whole family due to parents working and our children needing to attend school;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the DNR & E open the trout season on Grand Manan the third Saturday of April each year so that this fine sporting tradition of opening day may be enjoyed by the whole family so that we can ensure our children will pick up this sport and have a good chance to be successful.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Minister refused this request stating that closures and openings of seasons must be conservation and/or science based.