

## PEIWOA – Our Input on Land Matters

### Background

The PEIWOA is in favour of the spirit and intent of the Lands Protection Act and the Planning Act. Our organization strives to be the voice of woodlot owners on matters pertaining to PEI woodlot owners. Woodlot owners on PEI are a diverse group of stakeholders, with many different goals, objectives, and viewpoints pertaining to forest and land management on PEI. We support and promote landowner rights over the management of their land, while also recognizing the role of strong legislation and regulations to both promote and legislate appropriate management of land. Our members' forest lands contribute to ecosystem and human health on PEI, the maintenance of biodiversity and wildlife habitat, scenic views, recreational areas, and economic development through PEI's forest sector. We believe that forest extension provided by both the Province and private sector forestry professionals, forest sector development, land conservation options, and strong regulations together are required to continue to promote healthy productive forests. Forests have the potential to contribute substantially to climate change mitigation; however, active management and maintenance of forest land is required to ensure forests can adapt to the projected impacts of climate change on forest growth and development.

### Point (1)

**Land Ownership Limits on arable land should be maintained, with current exemptions around non-arable land limits.**

*There must be increased monitoring of land development to monitor the practice of clearing forested or marginal land which aims to subvert limitations on arable land holdings. Such monitoring can be enabled through further implementation of remote sensing technology. It is of the opinion of the PEIWOA that Watershed/municipality-level forest-area targets, along with Provincial forest-area targets would be beneficial to ensure sustainability of the value that forests provide to islanders.*

### Point (2)

**LPA and PA must promote the value of forest land to all landowners and Island society more widely by providing incentives for maintaining forested land and disincentives to clearing.**

*The role forests (woodlots) play in PEI has been seriously undervalued for too long. Forests store carbon, protect our ground water, maintain habitat and improve public health in general. As policies on carbon credits and carbon markets evolve, forested areas may help offset landowner carbon footprints. A further incentive to maintaining forested land is by fostering a competitive forest sector that promotes new business startups that utilize both high- and low-value forest products in manufacturing wood products for local, regional, and global markets. A dis-incentive to clearing forest land may be a requirement to pay into a forest-improvement fund and/or carbon-deficit fund to assist in the application of sustainable forest management practices on alternative land parcels.*

### Point (3)

**Encourage the development of strategies/regulations in collaboration with Government and Private sector to promote the maintenance of all areas of our natural and built environment, through both active-land management (e.g. agriculture and forest management), protected areas, and sustainable development.**

*Forests have potential to add considerable economic returns to PEI. It is of the opinion of the PEIWOA that forest sector revitalization through the development of value-added timber and non-timber forest product markets will increase the value of forested land overall. Programs that foster a competitive forest sector will lead to increased value being placed on PEI forested land, and therefore decreased pressure on clearing land for alternative land-uses. If Islanders see the value in their forest land, they will continue to manage it as forest land. Alternative economic values can be placed on forestland; including the storage/sequestration of carbon dioxide, water filtration, and climate-regulation as a few examples. Placing economic value on ecosystem services allows woodlot owners with non-traditional management objectives to improve their land for the betterment of society.*