

woods as a vital raw material to a "sustainable forest management" policy which cares for the woods as an ecosystem with multiple uses.

The forest will not disappear, but if present trends continue, it will certainly change—with attendant changes in wildlife and resident use. The forest which regenerates is not the same forest which was logged. Black spruce does not regenerate well. Balsam fir stands are often replanted with white spruce or non-native species like Japanese larch, because the growing moose population eats the young fir. Stands of so-called overmature timber are being removed, and even-aged, younger, thinned stands, which support less wildlife, are replacing them. The northern forest is being changed irreversibly also by forest access roads, which permit resident access to the most remote areas, increasing hunting and fishing pressure, litter, and logging—legal and illegal—and thus altering the pristine spots that individual users have held dear.

Less often mentioned but perhaps more threatening to northerners than the destruction of the forest is the weakness of its woods industry. Newfoundland in general, and the north in specific, is at a disadvantage in the national and international timber markets. The trees are small and they grow slowly. Another insect epidemic such as struck in the late 1970s could again destroy several years' worth of the province's already hard-pressed timber supply. The forest is far from markets, which are volatile in price and demand. More than half the lumber in the province is imported from elsewhere in Canada. Big machinery, controversial as it is, could lower labor costs of extraction but may not be economical in some regions. All the sawmills are small and inefficient by North American standards. Newfoundland trees are rarely made into wood products with a high margin of return. Local species, for example, are not suitable for pressure treatment. A productive furniture factory in Stephenville recently went under. The school notebooks are manufactured in China. Newfoundlanders, including some northerners, are addressing these problems creatively, but they face many obstacles. The socionatural system of which they are a small part has marginalized them (cf. Adams 1974).

The root of the conflict between residents and foresters is differing visions of what the forest is for. In the socionatural system perspective, nature reflects human choices and desires (Bennett 1993). People define nature and then act upon that definition. The definition is itself a product of the actors' sociocultural system and reflects its themes. That is, "people treat nature as they treat each other" (Bennett 1976). The northern Newfoundland rural communities, only recently emerging from isolation and self-sufficiency through subsistence production and self-regulation in an open-access forest, envision a forest that serves multiple purposes as scenery, subsistence, recreation, and employment. The foresters, their presence on the Great Northern Peninsula a recent manifestation of provincial modernization, envision a managed forest for increased and improved timber supply, directed by a regulatory scientific bureaucracy with authority located far from the field and adapted to a distant market. Even more fundamentally, the controversy about the forest is a disagreement about the future of rural communities in Newfoundland— but it is a divergence of degrees, not of polar opposites. Both