***LETTER TEMPLATE & INSTRUCTIONS:***

1. Use the template as a starting point and rewrite in your own words as you see fit.
2. Save a copy of the letter as a PDF and send it as an attachment in the email
3. Come up with your own Subject Line. If everyone uses the same one there is a greater chance that your letter will end up marked as SPAM. Speaking of which...
4. Please BCC the soof@saveouroldforests.ca email so we can keep track of how many letters have been sent.

SUBJECT: (Make up your own)

TO: PREMIER@novascotia.ca

CC: MINNRR@novascotia.ca, Minister.Environment@novascotia.ca, info@ronnieleblanc.ca, susanleblancMLA@bellaliant.com, info@carmankerr.ca

BCC: soof@saveouroldforests.ca

Dear Premier,

I am outraged to see that numerous potential sites for clearcutting have been identified in areas citizens have already proposed for protection as wilderness areas.

I am thinking specifically of the Beals Brook and Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Areas in Annapolis County. The Citizen Scientists of Southwest Nova Scotia submitted a proposal to protect these areas to the Department of Environment and Climate Change in November 2022.

The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables has recently published maps showing 25% of the Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Area as suitable for clearcutting and spraying. NRR does not have the resources to come out and identify species at risk and old-growth forests – they leave that to members of the public – but they have the resources to identify sites where biodiversity can be destroyed.

“High Production Forestry” is the smallest leg of Lahey’s triad. It is supposed to be introduced gradually over 35 years. Meanwhile, identification of all the areas to be protected in the Conservation leg of the triad must be accomplished by 2030 if the province is to meet the commitment your government put into legislation.

Rather than allowing NRR to squander time and resources on “High Production Forestry”, please instruct it to cooperate with ECC in identifying potential sites for protection on Crown land. The Protected Areas Branch of ECC must take the lead – and be adequately resourced to do so. Given what NRR has been doing to date, reallocating some of their funds to Protected Areas and some to the divisions within NRR that do have the expertise to identify areas of high biodiversity value would be a good way to move things along.

Your “Collaborative Protected Areas Strategy: An Action Plan to Protect 20 Percent” means nothing if NRR is working at cross purposes with ECC. Both departments and the public need to work together. Addressing the biodiversity and climate crisis is urgent. Identifying the sites best suited for protection is essential. It’s only common sense that we need to see those maps first. Please will you mothball mapping sites for High Production Forestry until all the areas that should be protected have been identified and maps have been published showing these areas? I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Name and community