***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: MINNRR@novascotia.ca

CC: info@ronnieleblanc.ca, susanleblancMLA@bellaliant.com, info@carmankerr.ca, claudiachendermla@gmail.com

BCC: soof@saveouroldforests.ca

Dear Minister Rushton,

It’s a year now since the Citizen Scientists of Southwest Nova Scotia learned that your department had placed a hold on all the harvest plans near Goldsmith Lake where they had identified species at risk.

Thank you for going beyond the application of mandatory buffers on individual lichens, and instead working to protect the habitat in which these species at risk lichens occur. This is a crucial step as we all work to protect biodiversity in our province.

Maintaining the hold on these harvest plans is an important acknowledgement of the ongoing work citizen scientists have been doing to supplement DNRR’s data. In the last year they have documented unsuspected old growth forests and yet more species at risk lichens in the area around Goldsmith Lake. To date they have reported 34 SAR occurrences to DNRR. They have also conducted an innovative and scientifically valid calicioid lichen survey demonstrating the high level of ecological continuity present in forest previously approved for harvesting. A scientific paper about this survey has been reviewed and recommended for publication by Troy McMullin, research scientist in lichenology at the Canadian Museum of Nature.

The hold you have maintained on harvesting in all the areas touched by species at risk occurrences is an essential interim step to permanently preserving the high conservation value of the area. I hope now you will take the next step and support the Citizen Scientists’ proposal to formally protect the area as the Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Area. The proposal was submitted to Minister Halman in November 2022. Will you support this proposal and, in the meantime, maintain the holds placed on harvest plans that were approved before the full ecological value of this area was understood?

I look forward to hearing your response,

Sincerely,

Name, Community