

Macphail Woods Ecological Forestry Project

c/o Gary Schneider
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To Forest Lovers Everywhere:

I'm hoping that the Macphail Woods Ecological Forestry Project has touched your life in a positive way. Perhaps you have come out to one of the hundreds of walks and workshops we have hosted since we began in 1991. Or your children have come out to our summer camps, participated in our school plantings or visited with their classmates. Do you have some of our beautiful native plants from our nursery growing around your home? Many Islanders are seeing and treating their forests differently because of the work we have done at Macphail Woods. Now we are looking for some financial assistance that will help us expand our work in restoring the health of Island forests.

Every donation, no matter what size, makes a big difference. Your donation to the Macphail Woods project will help us continue to grow rare native trees, shrubs and wildflowers; teach Islanders about the values of healthy forests and taking positive environmental action; carry out a variety of silvicultural demonstrations; and improve our teaching facilities at the Macphail Homestead, including the Nature Centre and the arboretum.

In addition to our existing ecological forestry project, the Environmental Coalition of Prince Edward Island (which sponsors the Macphail Woods project) has an agreement with the province to manage 2,000 acres of Public Forest Land. The lands will be used to demonstrate sustainable forest management and restoration of our native Acadian woodlands. Under the lease agreement, the Environmental Coalition assumes management responsibility for 26 forested properties in southeastern Kings and Queens Counties. In recognition of the long-term nature of forest restoration and management, it is open to renewal after the initial 10-year term if conditions have been met.

We are committed to improving the health of these forests while at the same time showing the true values of the resource. Thinking of the forest as a bank account, we will be removing less than the "interest" that grows each year. Native plants will be used to restore and enhance these forests and no clearcuts, monocultures, brush burning or herbicides will be allowed. We will also annually plant at least 200 rare species of native plants and improve the quality and value of the woodlands through proper pruning. Before we start any physical work, we are developing ecological management plans and are looking at getting our woodland operations certified under the Forest Stewardship Council. These plans, and more information on the project, will be posted on our web site (www.macphailwoods.org) for public comment.

Part of the Public Forest Land project will be continuing to encourage Islanders to see all the other services that make woodland invaluable - storing carbon, cleaning air and water, providing excellent wildlife habitat and offering places for recreation. Another key component is

to create a niche market for certified wood products and high-end crafts directly related to our forests. We recently purchased a bandsaw mill and our long-term vision includes having a woodworking shop where talented Island craftspeople can create high-quality wooden products from sustainably-harvested wood. In effect, these craftspeople would become part of our team of forest educators.

Over the years, large areas of these public forest lands have been damaged by human hands. Some were cleared for agriculture and then regenerated in white spruce. Other areas were clearcut for lumber or fuelwood, or turned into softwood plantations. Fortunately - as with the Macphail property - there are still some areas that contain healthy forests. We will be improving both the species mix and quality of trees in the degraded systems and trying to add diversity in the healthier forests. Although all donations are welcome, here are some suggestions as to how you can help:

- 1. A donation of \$500** will allow us to begin improving the health of an acre of Public Forest Land that has been clearcut over the past ten years. On these very young stands, we'll plant a full range of appropriate native trees, including red oak and white ash, and a variety of both rare and common shrubs and wildflowers missing from the site. With each donation in this category, we will be providing you with a photo of the area, site description, our workplan and directions so that you can visit the acre.
- 2. A donation of \$300** will allow us to begin restoring the biodiversity on an acre of unploughed forest land that already has a good range of older trees. On these sites, we will be adding long-lived trees such as hemlock and yellow birch, as well as rare shrubs such as witch hazel and round-leafed dogwood. With each donation in this category, we will be providing you with a photo of the area, site description, our workplan and directions so that you can visit the acre.
- 3. A donation of \$200** will be used for the planting of a six foot red oak tree, grown in our native plant nursery, in an appropriate area of the Sir Andrew Macphail Homestead.
- 4. A donation of \$100** will allow us to add trees and shrubs to the Arboretum. This lovely area near the nursery is specifically planted for educational purposes and to showcase the wide variety of native plants that grow in the province.
- 5. A donation of \$50** will help fund school visits to Macphail Woods. This is a key part of our educational work and we always have many more visit requests than we have the staff to carry out the teaching. Your donation will allow us to increase the number of students we reach. Donations can be made out to the Environmental Coalition of Prince Edward Island and sent to ECOPEI, 126 Richmond St., Charlottetown, PEI C1A 1H9. A charitable donation tax receipt will be issued and donors will be recognized on our web site: www.macphailwoods.org

Thank you for your interest in restoring our native Acadian forest.

Gary Schneider, Project Manager

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For more information, email garyschneider@pei.sympatico.ca or call 651-2575.