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# Viewpoint

*Newsletter*

## INTRODUCTION

### Welcome to the first issue of Viewpoint,

the national newsletter of the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) of Natural Resources Canada. This biannual publication is intended to stimulate and enhance discussion within the Canadian forest sector by examining compelling issues from the perspectives of various stakeholders, as well as the CFS. Viewpoint will also indicate where

Canada stands in terms of a healthy forest and a strong forest sector and suggest – when appropriate – the direction we should take.

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# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

WELCOME TO VIEWPOINT, THE NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT CANADA'S FORESTS



Photo: Couvrette/Ottawa

## The Honourable R. John Efford Minister of Natural Resources

This publication is intended to be a forum for today's important issues surrounding the health of our forests and the strength of our forest sector.

The focus of this first issue is the boreal forest. Canada has a special responsibility — as steward of 30 percent of the world's boreal forests — for maintaining the health of this vital ecosystem.

However, safeguarding this forest is an issue that requires a global response. Canada welcomes discussion at the international level — discussion that includes governments, communities and other partners from northern nations.

Canadians have clearly expressed that they want their forests and their communities to be healthy. The role of governments across Canada is to manage the forest so that we all can enjoy the economic, environmental and social benefits that are important to Canadians. The Government of Canada, as a member of the National Forest Strategy Coalition, helped develop an action plan for maintaining and enhancing the long-term health of Canada's forests.

In addition, Canada will continue to invest in research and knowledge development so we can provide all Canadians with the information and tools needed to make wise choices for our forests.

I hope that this publication and future issues of *Viewpoint* will advance the dialogue we need on sustainable forest management and the future of our forests.

Photo: J. David Andrews

# ADM'S EDITORIAL

A NEED TO ENGAGE CITIZENS, COMMUNITIES AND THE WORLD



Photo: Couvrette/Ottawa

## Brian Emmett Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Forest Service- Natural Resources Canada

The boreal forest is an area of concern for the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), but not for the reasons one might think.

The boreal forest is a circumpolar forest. It grows not only in Canada but across the northern hemisphere around the globe. And, while we can, and do, maintain fairly firm control over what happens in the forest within our boundaries, we obviously cannot control what happens in other parts of the world. That is a significant concern, and I'll come back to that.

But looking first at this country, the boreal stretches from Newfoundland through to northern Quebec, Ontario and the three prairie provinces, into northeastern British Columbia (B.C.) and up into the territories. In addition to the many Aboriginal peoples who live in the boreal region, there are hundreds of other communities scattered throughout that expanse. And in all those communities, tens of thousands of people are born, grow up, go to school and church, work, marry, have children, and otherwise live out their lives. But for some reason, the people in those cities, towns and villages, their opinions, and their well-being seem mostly left out of current discussions that focus on setting aside large areas of the boreal forest.

Certainly the people of the boreal have a direct interest in the outcome of the debate. Some of the communities, like Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, are small and dependent on one industry. Others, like Prince George, B.C., are cities that are home to about 75,000 people, and decisions made elsewhere can have a dramatic impact on their lives. The needs and aspirations of those who dwell in the boreal should form a large part of the foundation in decisions affecting them.

Therefore, the CFS's concern for the boreal goes well beyond the discussion as it is currently framed.

Right now, there are several agendas at play in terms of what might or should happen in our boreal forest. But none of them truly engage directly those communities that exist there.

Safeguarding the boreal forest is a global issue, not just a Canadian one. Canada is a world leader in sustainable forest management — kilometres ahead of some countries and several hundred metres, at the very least, ahead of most others. It was readily apparent at last year's World Forestry Congress in Quebec that other nations look upon Canada as a model of responsible, sustainable forest management.

We are fortunate to have a relatively enlightened industry. The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) demands third-party certification as a condition of membership in the organization. In the 2½ years since that decision was made, the number of hectares certified in Canada has tripled to about 58 million hectares. The association estimates about three-quarters of Canada's working forest



will be certified by the end of 2006 - an area equivalent to the landmass of Sweden, Finland and Norway combined.

In addition to the certification drive in this country, a combination of laws, legislative acts and a variety of other regulatory measures closely control the harvesting procedures. More importantly, all those measures are enforced in Canada.

As our Minister says elsewhere in this publication, safeguarding the boreal forest is an international issue that must be dealt with on an international level. And he is pressing toward that goal.

Yet some organizations find fault with Canada's forest practices and policies, primarily because Canada is a target of opportunity. Even though, or perhaps because this country's forest management planning processes are transparent and inclusive, they can be criticized.

That is not to say Canada does everything perfectly. There is still much to learn about the boreal, and the CFS, which — it should be noted — has already learned a fair amount about it while doing research there for almost a century, is continuing its work in the boreal and continuing to apply the results of that research to the development of sound, science-based policies and practices.

Actually, most current discussions on the subject recognize the need for more evidence-based information, i.e., more research that takes into account the social and economic consequences of actions, whether industrial or protectionist, in the boreal. This is an area where the CFS certainly has the ability to play a central role. But we have policy analysts in the CFS who are well acquainted, and perhaps a little frustrated, with the international forestry scene, who say that if everyone managed their forests the way Canada does, the world's forests would be in much better shape. That's a message we have to get out.



Photo: NRCan

## INTERNATIONAL BOREAL

### THE BOREAL FOREST: AN ENDOWMENT STRUNG AROUND THE GLOBE

"The boreal forest is a global endowment," says Jim Farrell, Director General of the Industry, Economics and Programs Branch of the Canadian Forest Service (CFS). "It's found in northern latitudes across the globe.

"Logically then, we have to look at the boreal from that perspective and then figure out the next steps we have to take to address the challenges relating to it on a global basis," he explains.

"There has been some discussion about what Canada is doing to maintain the integrity of the boreal," he adds. "The partnerships across the country that are working to protect and promote important values are as diverse as those that enjoy its benefits and have a large stake in its sustained health and productivity — governments, communities, forest industry, Aboriginal peoples and First Nations, conservation and environmental organizations, and volunteers. The list goes on. I would suggest that those measures are as good as, if not better than, any in place in the rest of the world — and they're enforced.

"Because of that, and for other reasons, major international issues such as illegal logging in forests, including the boreal — a concern in some other parts of the world — is simply not an issue in Canada," he says.

Picking up on the theme of protective measures, Geoff Munro, Director General of the CFS Science Branch, points out that even when a forestry company has cutting rights in a given area, this does not represent a *carte blanche*.

"Because of the variety of laws, acts and regulations, there are instances where companies have had as much as 40 percent of the forest land in a given operational area protected in some way or another, and thus, untouchable in terms of harvesting."

He is quick to add that environmentalists and others who voice concern about the boreal make some legitimate points when they suggest, for instance, leaving large undisturbed areas for certain types of wildlife such as the woodland caribou.

"But a number of jurisdictions in the country are moving toward an approach in their forest operations that emulates natural disturbance patterns to address this and other challenges," he points out.

Emulation mimics some of the patterns of forest fires or insect infestations. For instance, harvest blocks are left with ragged edges rather than straight lines; islands of trees in the midst of the harvest area are left standing untouched to remain as wildlife habitat; and so on.

Munro says that in Canada all stakeholders get a fair hearing in terms of forest management issues.

"Canada as a country, and Canadians as a people, have an accommodating nature," he says. "We will always try to find the middle of the road and look for a peaceful balance. We encourage those who have an interest in an issue to make their feelings known. We invite them to the table to be part of the decision-making process.

"At the same time, Canada is held to a standard of performance that is among the highest in the world — and legitimately so. As a global leader in sustainable forest management, we need to be seen as operating at a very advanced level. I believe that we can do both.

"But what we have to let the world know is that in terms of sustainable forest management, Canada is a super-power," he says. "There may be, world-wide, a boreal problem, but if so, then Canada is part of the solution."

 **Canada is home to about 30 percent of the world's boreal forest, which can be found in North America, Europe and Asia. The boreal forest makes up about one third of the planet's total forest area.**



# CANADA'S BOREAL

## CANADA'S BOREAL: A VAST, COMPLEX PUZZLE

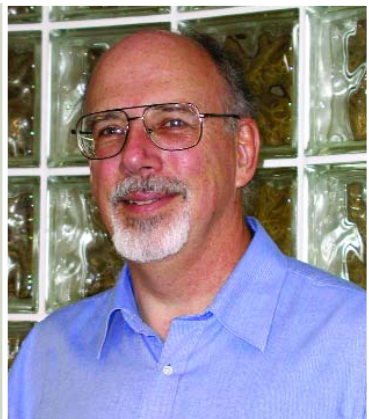


Photo: NRCan-CFS

**Dr. Gordon Miller is Director General at the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) Northern Forestry Centre in Edmonton. In addition to overseeing the operation of that laboratory, he is responsible, within the CFS, for the boreal forest file. In this interview, he outlines some of the issues that make this forest area, which dominates so much of Canada's landscape, such a daunting challenge for industry and governments.**

According to Dr. Miller, the word "complex" does not begin to describe the boreal situation. There is a whole range of issues that one would have to contemplate.

Miller points out that some of those issues, in no particular order, include the public's lack of understanding and support for our resource-based economy and the links between social and economic development. Various issues need to be addressed with Aboriginal peoples, including the potential social, environmental, and economic impacts of changing land use and resource development policies. There are biological differences between the boreal plains and the boreal shield in Canada. There are definitional issues. This means that, in the past, different jurisdictions — and in some instances divisions within a given jurisdiction — have

used different terminology to describe the same thing, making it difficult to have meaningful discussions. Add to that the usual challenges, such as fire, insects and disease, and then climate change. Although this is not an exhaustive list, one begins to get some idea of the complexity of the issues.

"But," he adds, "Complexity doesn't necessarily mean it's an unmanageable situation. We're lucky in Canada. We have a lot going for us. Most of the forestland is Crown land; [it is] publicly owned. That means the respective governments have the authority to set policies that are both economically sound and environmentally responsible. We have transparent and open decision-making [processes], and we invite public participation.

"In addition, Canadian forest management policies and practices have improved dramatically over the past two decades. Third party certification of forests has mushroomed, and we still have large tracts of boreal forest that are in a natural state and will in all probability remain so."

Miller notes that the CFS has been conducting research in the boreal forest for almost 100 years. Much has been learned but there is still much more to be learned. "The results of our research provide the foundation for sound policies and practices relating to sustainable forest management."

One of the most pressing concerns at the moment is climate change brought about by global warming. He notes that a major point in a CFS presentation to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry was that, as a result of climate change, "in the future, the forest isn't going to be where it is right now." If projections by the scientific and academic communities are true, the boreal forest is going to be one of the most affected ecosystems under global warming. "The boreal in Canada is predicted to move north quite noticeably. We are already seeing a decline in aspen and spruce in some parts of the Prairies due to drought, insects and other factors, and these may be the first signs of a shift in the boreal."

The CFS will pursue a dialogue with forest-based communities, along the lines of those that Agriculture Canada has with rural areas, to explore various options to meet the global warming challenge. "We want to work with these communities on things like diversifying the economic structure of affected communities and putting training programs in place to allow residents to shift reliance from the forest to other ways of making a living," he explains.

He adds that the senior levels of government across Canada are fully engaged in the boreal issue. The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) has established a boreal task force to address the issues impacting this resource. In addition, the forest industry is involved with a number of sector initiatives aimed at sustainable forest management and meeting the challenges faced by the country's boreal forest.

"While a great deal of research is still required to help us understand what's required to meet future challenges, it's encouraging that both the public and private sectors are working so hard to meet their responsibilities in terms of the sustainable management of Canada's forests," says Miller.



Photo: J. David Andrews



Photo: J. David Andrews



**Across Canada's boreal region, there are 199 communities that rely on the forest for at least 20 percent of their economy.**



# WWF

## “CONSERVATION FIRST” A KEY FOR THE WWF

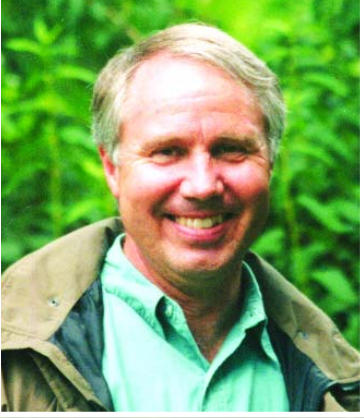


Photo: WWF

**Interview with Monte Hummel**  
 President Emeritus of the World Wildlife Fund  
 (Canada) and Officer of the Order of Canada

### What are the main issues in the boreal forest from your perspective?

**Monte Hummel:** There are two main issues. First we must ensure "conservation first" in the boreal by putting these objectives upfront and ahead of development and by giving communities the opportunity to identify and protect areas prior to development. For example, we've been working with communities in the Mackenzie Valley who have identified over 20 areas amounting to some 30 million hectares in the boreal that they would like to see protected ahead of the pipeline development. The second issue is proper management of the "working" boreal forest which, for us at WWF, means certification to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards or equivalent.

### What are you doing to address those issues?

**MH:** We are currently working on about 100 million hectares of boreal forest. We believe that our work with communities in the Mackenzie Valley will eventually result in about 40 million hectares of frontier boreal forest being protected. In the working forest, we are collaborating with Alpac, Tembec, Domtar, Abitibi Consolidated and the Forest Products Association of Canada on agreements for FSC certification and setting aside high conservation-value forests covering 50 million hectares. There are also 10 million hectares of boreal in the Northwest Territories, contiguous with the Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary that might become part of an existing WWF project.

### What are the main obstacles to resolving these issues?

**MH:** First, in the working forest, there is no doubt that the major issue is foregoing commercial volume in the interest of conservation, either through protected areas or revised management practices. Volume is the lifeblood of the industry, so that's the major obstacle.

Second is getting the sequencing or "conservation first" principle accepted and implemented in the untouched boreal. There's a tendency to put licenses — forest, oil and gas, mining — ahead of conservation objectives, then we're forced to catch up afterwards. I've been told by industry that

they are quite prepared to collaborate on implementing "conservation first," as long as it is first. Proposing protected areas over leases or permits presents a major problem. Consequently, our common challenge is getting governments to ensure proper land use planning so that there may be certainty for all.

### How would you rate Canada's management of the boreal in comparison to other boreal nations?

**MH:** I believe our intentions are very good, with more to do on practices. I don't think there's a hypocrisy there. I just think there's a disconnect between our stated intentions and what we're actually able to do on the ground. There are some companies in the forest industry that are showing exceptional leadership. I think Tembec, Domtar and Alpac are amongst them. Abitibi Consolidated is also taking important steps in the right direction.

### With many hundreds of communities and thousands of people living in Canada's boreal, depending on it for economic, environmental, recreational and spiritual values, what do you see as the best way to achieve balance?

**MH:** This is difficult to answer in limited space. What is needed in the boreal, I would say, is a combination of protection, management and restoration. We still have opportunities to protect large areas of untouched boreal. Similarly, we all have to champion better management. In many cases, the conservation community has been hooked on protection. If we expect industry to support protection measures, we have to be ready to equally support good management practices. I would say restoration is a priority, particularly in areas where we've lost it and we have to decide whether or not we want to try to restore some boreal habitat. I think we've entered an era where the only solutions are those that come out of the communities themselves.



Photo: NRCan



## FPAC

## INDUSTRY VIEW: RESPONSIBILITY GOES ALONG WITH RIGHTS



Photo: FPAC

**Interview with J.P. MARTEL,  
Senior Vice President, Sustainability,  
Forest Products Association of Canada  
(FPAC)**

### What are the main issues in the boreal forest from your perspective?

**J.P. Martel:** Given the fact that boreal forests account for approximately 75 percent of all forests in Canada, managing this vital resource in a collaborative and sustainable manner is of prime importance to the industry. We must keep in mind the fact that the industry's boreal activity provides employment for nearly 200,000 Canadians, directly and indirectly supports over 1,000 communities and about 7,000 independent businesses. For this reason, the industry recognizes that it has a duty to operate in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner.

However, it is very important to recognize that, despite its size, Canada represents only a fraction of the boreal forest globally. Canada is home to 30 percent of the world's boreal, while over 50 percent is located in Russia; the remainder is in Alaska and the Scandinavian countries. Looked at from this perspective, it is quite clear that one of the main challenges with respect to the boreal is to recognize the global nature of the challenge and find solutions and approaches that address the challenge globally.

### What are you doing to address those issues?

**JPM:** The industry recognizes its important obligation to ensure that the forests under management are cared for in a sustainable fashion. It is now well recognized that Canada has become a world leader in ecologically based forest management. Ninety three percent of our forests are publicly owned and subject to strict territorial, provincial and federal regulations. We're the only country in the world whose national association — the Forest Products Association of Canada — requires third-party forest audits and certifications as a condition of membership. And, we have the largest area of third-party independently certified forests in the world.

Additionally, the industry has undertaken boreal-related initiatives in partnership with groups like Ducks Unlimited to improve knowledge and practices around water and wetlands; the World Wildlife Fund of Canada regarding identification and management of high value forests; and the Canadian Boreal Initiative in support of improving boreal conservation. These are significant achievements. Nevertheless, the industry knows that it isn't enough. While we're certainly proud of our achievements, our industry is the first to acknowledge that more can and will be done.

### What are the main obstacles to resolving those issues?

**JPM:** A key to Canada's success in managing its forests has been the collaborative approach adopted by a number of stakeholders. We must continue to develop these partnerships. We believe that, collectively, more will be achieved in addressing global boreal issues by identifying gaps in knowledge, developing commonly accepted terminology and information about forests, as well as opportunities for further action to promote science-based forest management. Therefore, we will continue to reach out to collaborative groups, including those who have not traditionally been our partners.

### How would you rate Canada's management of the boreal in comparison to other boreal nations?

**JPM:** As I indicated earlier, Canada and the Canadian industry have come a long way and have emerged in recent years as among the world's leaders in sustainable forest management.

Photo: J. David Andrews

But we're not done yet. Our philosophy of continual improvement through innovation, partnerships and investment will ensure that Canada's boreal forest continues to be sustainable for generations to come.

Canada compares very well in its sustainable forest management approach. A recent independent study by prominent Yale University professor Benjamin Cashore found Canada's forest policy and regulatory framework to be among the most progressive and stringent in the world.

### Given that there are many communities and thousands of people who live in Canada's boreal and depend on it for economic, environmental, recreational and spiritual values, what do you see as the best way to balance all those needs?

**JPM:** This actually leads back to what we perceive to be one of the most important boreal challenges. The industry recognizes the importance of managing the boreal in a responsible and sustainable manner. The industry, and Canadians more broadly, all have this responsibility. To this end, the industry is very proud of the work undertaken with various stakeholders, such as Aboriginal peoples, environmental groups, local communities, labour groups, and other interested stakeholders, to find common ground and mutually agreeable solutions. Engagement, partnership and continual improvement will help us achieve sustainable balance for all of Canada's forests, including the boreal.



**An estimated 165,000 Canadians are employed directly in the boreal forest economy in activities such as forest management, pulp and paper production, lumber and other wood products production.**



# INVASIVES

## WORKING THE BUGS OUT OF THE LUMBER TRADE

International trade of green lumber is getting more and more attention given the potential damage to the world's forests caused by the establishment of invasive, or non-indigenous forest pests.

Jim Farrell, Director General of the Industry, Economics and Programs Branch of the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), explains; "Green lumber is lumber that isn't dried or treated. So if you have pests in the trees, you have potential for pests in the lumber, unless something is done to treat the wood and eliminate them."

"This issue of insect and fungal pathogens moving around the world through international trade pathways is not new," he points out. "For example, Chestnut Blight, which was imported from Europe, wiped out all the American chestnuts back in the early 1900s. The danger is that there's often no natural protection or control mechanisms — viruses or predators — against these foreign species."

Most experts agree that using untreated green lumber for solid-wood packaging material such as pallets must stop. To this end, the International Plant Protection Committee issued a new international standard for the treatment of all solid wood packaging material.

The wood used for packaging purposes is not of the same quality and often does not undergo the same scrutiny as lumber for export, though there is increasing discussion of potential problems with exports of untreated lumber.

"The future for international trade in untreated lumber has questions around it," says Geoff Munro, Director General of the CFS Science Branch. "The invasive species issue is a tricky one. We need to be vigilant in reducing the risk to our urban and commercial forests. One way to do this is to work with our trading partners to ensure that they are treating their exports appropriately."

Munro adds that there are two sides to this issue. "If we're going to expect other countries to export only treated wood products, then we must do the same. We've made a great deal of progress on this."

Farrell sees this as an opportunity for Canada to lead. "Canada continues to be a key voice on the need for international standards," states Farrell. "Our trading partners could prohibit entry of our untreated lumber, so it's in Canada's interest to be engaged and lead this process. As a trading nation, Canada has to be responsible, and in a competitive world, you don't want to give anyone an excuse to say, 'We don't want your lumber.' And that's what we've seen, particularly in the last 10 years — what we call sanitary/phytosanitary (SPS) measures designed to limit the movement of pests, but often used by other countries as artificial trade barriers."

The war against invasives is being fought on several fronts. Farrell notes that the CFS works closely with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in identifying dangerous pests.

"One bug might be extremely destructive but another may be no trouble at all," he says. "Our scientists are continuing to develop their expertise to be able to accurately and promptly identify foreign species and assess their potential to damage our forests. This is essential in the world of SPS measures."

Munro believes the net is tightening on alien invasives through a cooperative effort among federal and provincial governments responsible for the protection or preservation of plant and animal life in Canada.

"We're looking at a comprehensive invasive species strategy in partnership with Environment Canada, Agriculture Canada (to which the CFIA reports), the Canada Border Services Agency and Foreign Affairs and International Trade [Canada]."

Munro adds that a National Strategy, currently in draft form and entitled "Addressing the Threat of Invasive Alien Species," is part of Canada's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The forest industry is also recognizing that green lumber has to be pest-free before export.

"The whole business of having to treat your lumber — for example, heating the wood to a minimum core temperature — is generally considered by most to be adequate protection against the movement of species," says Farrell. "The downside is cost. We need to know the absolute minimum but effective treatment needed to satisfy SPS requirements. Working with Forintek (Canada's wood products research institute), we've made some excellent progress on this."

Sylvain Labbé, CEO of the Quebec Wood Export Bureau, says his members realize that Canada's forest industry could be affected by the use of untreated green lumber. "This is another example of the customer driving the show," explains Labbé. "If the customer asks for something, you have to do it."



**Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*)**  
Origin: Europe and Asia

Caterpillars of this insect attack oak and other broad-leaved trees by eating their leaves.



**Asian Longhorn Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*)**  
Origin: China

Larvae of this beetle kill a range of hardwoods by burrowing deep under the bark, weakening and killing the tree.



**Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)**  
Origin: Eastern Asia and Japan

The larvae of the Emerald Ash Borer chew their way into the trees and feed, creating tunnels directly beneath the bark in the tree's water- and food-conducting vessels. This disruption of water and food causes the tree to die.

Photos: Klaus Bolte



**In addition to the environmental, social and spiritual benefits, the boreal forest contributes around \$35 billion annually to Canada's economy.**



# THREATS TO THE BOREAL



Photo: Bob Duncan, NRCan-CFS

## Larch sawfly

(*Pristiphora erichsonii*):

An invasive insect that damages tamaracks (found across Canada, including the boreal forest) through egg laying and defoliation. Repeated damage over several years can cause tree death. The affected regions range from British Columbia to Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

## Larch Casebearer

(*Coleophora laricella*):

A European moth, now found in eastern Canada and southeastern British Columbia. It defoliates larch and tamarack (which grow across Canada, including the boreal forest), slowing their growth.

Photo: Bob Duncan, NRCan-CFS



# POTENTIAL THREATS TO THE BOREAL



Photo: Robert Blais, NRCan-CFS

## Scleroderris Canker European Strain

(*Gremmeniella abietina*):

Infecting Jack pine, eastern white pine and red pine in natural forests, plantations and nurseries in eastern Canada, this fungus attacks needles and kills buds on affected shoots. The infection then spreads along the shoot and can eventually invade the whole crown. A canker forms when the disease reaches the trunk. Affected trees die over a few years. At present, this is not a major issue in the boreal but the potential is there.

## Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle

(*Tetropium fuscum*):

This European insect was discovered in and around Point Pleasant Park in Halifax. It kills native red and white spruce by burrowing under the bark to lay its eggs. At this point, the outbreak appears to have been contained in Nova Scotia. But, because it attacks white spruce, it poses a potential threat to the boreal forest.

Photo: Klaus Bolte

