

**Natural Resources Committee
Annual Update
2008-2009**

Chair: Rob Galloway

Mandate

The Natural Resources Committee identifies, monitors, promotes awareness and addresses issues relating to the development, management and regulation of natural resources in our region. The committee initiates informational and advocacy activities to encourage the sustainable development of resources in our region, with a focus on advocating for a competitive and economically viable climate for Timmins' resource-based businesses.

Members

Brian Atkinson, *Ministry of Natural Resources*
Joel Bergeron, *BMT Insurance & Financial Services*
Robert Calhoun, *Timmins Economic Development Corporation*
Mario Colantonio, *Porcupine Engineering Services*
Dan Cook, *Sutcliffe Rody Quesnel Inc.*
Heather Duhn, *De Beers Victor Mine*
Jim Duncan, *Ministry of Natural Resources*
Rob Galloway, *Galloway and Galloway Executive Services*
Michael O'Blenis, *Domtar*
Tom Ormsby, *De Beers Victor Mine*
Ken Petersen, *Petersen Consulting*
Rob Tomchick, *AbitibiBowater*
Marilyn Wood, *Mikro-Tek*

2008-2009 Year in Review

- Discussed energy/hydro development as an economic development opportunity. A competitive long term energy strategy is required to make future and existing operations profitably do business in Ontario (November 2008);
- Forestry regulation - Discussed management of forestry regulation, cutting rights turnover, reforestation programs and hydroelectric facilities (ongoing);
- Developed the policy "Improving the competitiveness of Ontario industries through fuel tax rebates for off-highway road transport". Supported unanimously by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. Copy of policy mailed to all MPs (October 2008-March 2009);
- Submissions made re: Mining Act after consultation with TEDC and City of Timmins.
- Requested update regarding MNDM's Mining Act Modernization; received update from Minister Michael Gravelle three days prior to the release of Bill 173 (March-May 2009);
- Received update from De Beers Victor Mine regarding diamond royalties and the implementation of new diamond tax regime by the provincial government (December 2008);
- Discussed member need for clearly defined guideline for First Nations resource / revenue sharing (November 2008);
- Hosted guest speaker Dianne Corbett of the Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the Far North Planning Initiative: background of the initiative, its relation & overlap to other government-led initiatives and how the initiative will be carried out (December 2008);
- Monitored various proposals and request for expressions of interest regarding biomass;
- Monitored progress on Co-op SFL/SFL negotiations (April 2009);
- Monitored progress on tenure review (ongoing);
- Hosted presentation from Blair Sullivan regarding MNR Staged Crown Competition for Wood Supply in Ontario. Request for expression of interest (RFEI) for previously unused wood/biomass fibre (May 2009);

- Discussed Northern Ontario Growth Plan and monitored updates;
- Drafted letter to Minister Brad Duguid (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs) outlining concerns over lack of clarity regarding obligation to consult with First Nations communities (February 2009);
 - Received response from Minister Duguid, offering to address the Timmins Chamber of Commerce directly regarding Aboriginal consultation (May 2009);
- Reviewed FONOM paper: “The Loss of a Major New Economic Base for Northern Ontario is Pending,” which supports locally-produced energy;
- Monitored changes to energy rates (March 2009);
- Received presentation and input session hosted by Christy Marinig, TEDC, & Joe Torlone, CAO regarding the Municipal Sustainability Plan, focusing on strategies to sustain & grow community (May 2009);

Key Issues

- Energy (hydro, biofibre) development as an economic development opportunity
- Improving energy pricing and competitiveness for northern Ontario
- New uses for biomass
- Forestry – tenure, access to fibre
- Government initiatives, including the Mining Act Modernization, Northern Ontario Growth Plan and the Far North Planning Initiative
- Diamond mine taxation
- Energy pricing, supply and changes
- Co-op Sustainable Forest Licenses
- Resource revenue sharing
- Clarification on rules and approaches to consultation with First Nations