

Resolution 18A

CHRISTMAS TREE COUNCIL OF NOVA SCOTIA (PASSED)

⇒ District of Guysborough

WHEREAS on June 22, 2011 the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources formally terminated the two Christmas Tree Specialist positions without notice; and

WHEREAS full and direct communication was promised between the industry and the government at the meeting in the Fall of 2010; and

WHEREAS the Christmas Tree industry was involved in the development of a service plan that would have met budgetary reduction demands placed upon the Department, met industry service requirements; and enhanced economic improvement for this vital rural based business; and

WHEREAS the Christmas tree industry has embarked upon a significant development program to improve trees and international market position so as to increase future value to the Province and our producers; and

WHEREAS technology and training delivery needs will, in fact, increase as new science and marketing initiatives are brought to the production and sale of Nova Scotia Christmas trees and greenery;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM petition the Government of Nova Scotia to work with the Christmas tree industry to restore and revitalize tree extension support so as to assure this significant rural commodity has the support required to implement an aggressive growth plan associated with the SMART Tree Research initiative and the first ever Christmas Tree Research Centre developed in collaboration with Government, University and industry.

Forwarded to:
Minister of the Department of Natural Resources

RESPONSE:

I am responding to your letter of November 21, 2011, regarding resolutions passed at the Annual Conference of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities.

The department is committed to continuing its support to the Nova Scotia Christmas Tree industry and the rural economic benefits it generates. However, changes have been made to how the support is provided resulting in the elimination of the tree extension support we had previously provided. The department acknowledges that the research efforts being carried out at the new Christmas Tree Research Centre at AgriTech Park are critical to the future

of the Nova Scotia Christmas tree industry. The department has long been a supporter of this facility and has provided substantial funding and advocacy to enable the establishment of this centre. Consequently, the department is now providing, through redirection of some of our funding to the Nova Scotia Christmas Tree Council, funding to assist the industry with their support requirements. We continue to provide services for pest monitoring, forest health and field technical advice through staff designated as Christmas tree contacts in each of our field offices as well as education and outreach support.

The Honourable Charlie Parker

Minister

January 10, 2012