



Speaker Biographies

Peter Bush, PhD

Old-Growth Forest Coordinator, NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (NRR)

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Peter Bush is the Provincial Landscape Ecologist and Old-Growth Forest Coordinator in the Forestry Division for the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables. Peter holds a Doctorate in Geography from the University of Western Ontario, a Masters in Science in Forestry from Lakehead University and Environmental Geography degree from Laurentian University. Peter is an adjunct professor at Dalhousie and Saint Mary's Universities, and an Honorary Research Associate at the University of New Brunswick, Faculty of Forestry.

Peter N. Duinker, PhD

Professor Emeritus, School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University

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Peter retired from active duty at Dalhousie University in 2019 and was appointed as Professor Emeritus at that time. He continues working with graduate students who are studying sustainable urban and rural forests in Nova Scotia. He also consults with various clients, including the NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (NRR). He worked with an NRR team to revise and renew the province's policy on old-growth forests.

Daniel Hart, Forest Technician

Extension Forest Professional, Family Forest Network

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Daniel attended the Forestry Technician Program through Sir Sandford Fleming College in Lindsay, Ont., graduating in 2013. Moving west, he found a job in MacKenzie, B.C. operating as a Junior Forest Tech. Here he performed Timber Sweeps, road and block layout, TSP and PSP, and beetle sweeps - tracking the progress of Mtn Pine Beetle in the area. From there he ended up in Fort McMurray, AB., working for a lumber mill named Northland Forest Products Ltd. as a Planning and Operation Forest Tech where he helped design and lay out cutblocks, build operational plans, safety plans, Forest Harvest, Annual Operating and Silviculture plans. Daniel supervised multiple contractors in administering the operations laid out in those plans, including the supervision of layout, road construction, harvest operations, transportation of logs, and silviculture treatments. He liaised between First Nation communities, governmental bodies, and members of the community about harvest plans and operations.

After being displaced by the wildfire in 2016, Daniel made his way back to Fort McMurray, taking on a job as a Tree Clearing Supervisor for a mine expansion operation under Syncrude Canada. Under this title, he worked closely with contracted bodies and environmental monitors to ensure that tree clearing operations adhered to legislative bodies and management plans put in place. He advised and directed contractors to make sure operations were conducted to meet safe work operation plans and environmental constraints while adhering to timelines and goals set forth by the plan. While he enjoyed this career, priority being what is best for his family found him looking elsewhere closer to home, or in this case his wife's home - NS. He was given the opportunity to join the Family Forest Network team, and jumped on board in August, 2022. The team and he have been working hard to build an organization that can research and educate on Ecological Forest Practices, and provide assistance to small private woodlot owners.

Jennika Hunsinger, RPF

Land Trust and Outreach Manager, Medway Community Forest Co-op

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Jennika started with the Medway Community Forest Co-op in the summer of 2019 to kickstart a baseline biodiversity study, while completing a Master of Forest Conservation degree at the University of Toronto. Originally hailing from Ontario with family roots in Yarmouth, Jennika relocated to NS to attend Dalhousie for her undergraduate studies. She is a Registered Professional Forester and an avid camper, gardener, and traveler. In her current role, she manages outreach and research programs with MCFC and is leading the launch of NSWWT.

Elizabeth Jessome

Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative Lead, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources

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Elizabeth hangs her professional hat at the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources as the Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative Lead where she is learning about traditional ways of conservation and connections with the land. In her current role she strives to promote and enable Mi'kmaq rights in the forestry sector and works with partners in the industry and in government to build relationships that support communities, the environment, and the sector. Elizabeth holds a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and biology from Cape Breton University and is currently a graduate student at Dalhousie's School for Resource and Environmental Studies, working in the space where forest carbon dynamics, forestry, and sustainable community energy intersect. Building a deep understanding of the relationships between forest ecosystems and the human place within has guided her career path and the various projects she volunteers on. Elizabeth spent years conducting field research in source watershed forests and streams with ACAP Cape Breton and CBRM Water Utility and was one of the founding members of the Bras d'Or Lakes Biosphere Reserve Association's Forest Watch pilot which connected local school children with forest ecosystems and concepts of interconnectivity and stewardship of the watershed.

Steve McLelan, Forest Technician
Wood Procurement, J.D. Irving Ltd.
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Steve is the fourth generation in his family to work in forestry in Cumberland County. Growing up, he went to school in Oxford and then continued on to Thunder Bay, ON, graduating from the Forest Technology program at Lakehead University in 1984. Steve worked in forestry for family for 9 years before joining J.D. Irving Ltd. Over the past 30 years, Steve has worked all phases of operations and silviculture at J.D. Irving. His main focus there now is Purchase Wood and Stumpage.

Lacey Robbins, Forest Technician
Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative Forest Technician, The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
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Lacey is a Forestry Technician with The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq in the Department of Environment & Natural Resources; her primary role is with the Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative.

Lacey is a graduate of the Maritime College of Forest Technology. Upon graduation, her first role as a technician in the forestry sector was with Canadian Forest Service (CFS) in Fredericton NB where she completed research projects focusing on Brown Spruce long horned beetle, effects of silviculture treatments on tree growth, and calibrating Lidar technology. Lacey decided to return home to NS where she accepted a job with J.D Irving Limited as a scaler, and later switching to harvest block layout. Lacey has been working at The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) since 2021. She is excited to be working in a role where she can use her forestry background in a way that is more aligned with her own values and is pleased to have the opportunity to practice forestry through a Mi'kmaw lens.

Cindy Staicer, PhD
Adjunct Professor, Biology Department, Dalhousie University
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Dr. Cindy Staicer has been conducting research on forest birds in Nova Scotia for over 25 years. She retired from the Biology Department at Dalhousie University in 2019 and is now an adjunct professor. Before retiring, she spent most of her time at Dal developing and leading its SEASIDE summer field course program, as well as leading its first-year Integrated Science Program, and also developing and teaching numerous courses in Ecology and Biodiversity, including Dal's new Species at Risk field course. Over the years, Cindy has trained many students, interns, and volunteers, and has led several research, monitoring, and stewardship projects. Work by Cindy and her students laid the foundation for the current forest bird monitoring program at Kejimikujik. Other projects focused on habitat associations for bird species, comparing birds in harvested and protected landscapes, and examining the effects of riparian buffer width on forest bird species. More recently, she and her students have been focussing on Species at Risk forest birds, characterizing their habitat needs, and now stewarding these habitats. Today, she will be sharing her work on her latest project - to develop and test Beneficial Management Practices for SAR forest birds in working forests in collaboration with crown land forest managers.

James Steenberg, PhD
Senior Research and Planning Forester, NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (NRR)
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James Steenberg is a Senior Research and Planning Forester with NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables, where he is responsible for the Department's research on silviculture, climate change, and forest carbon. He has a PhD in environmental science and is an adjunct professor at Dalhousie University's School for Resource and Environmental Studies, where he teaches and recently completed a Killam Postdoctoral Fellowship. He was also a Fulbright scholar at the United States Forest Service. James has 15 years of forestry research experience as a governmental scientist, consultant, and academic researcher focusing on forests.

David Sutherland, RPF
Coordinator, Association for Sustainable Forestry (ASF)
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David graduated from Dalhousie University with a degree in Biology before heading to UNB for a Forestry degree. From there, he was hired by North Colchester Forest Co-op where he worked for 16 years managing small private woodlands for over 200 landowners. In 2000, he was hired as Coordinator for the Association for Sustainable Forestry, a province-wide silviculture initiative that provides technical and funding assistance to private woodland owners in Nova Scotia. In 2003 David was hired as General Manager of Nova Forest Alliance (Nova Scotia's Model Forest), but returned to the ASF in 2010, where he still works today as Coordinator. He is a Registered Professional Forester and lives in River John with his wife Mary Beth. They have three children and four grandchildren.

Craig Tupper, RPF
Forest Program Manager, Community Forests International
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Craig holds a BSc in Forestry from the University of New Brunswick, is a Registered Professional Forester in Nova Scotia and has worked in several roles across government, industry, and private woodlot stewardship for close to two decades, including most recently in forest operations, planning, and landowner engagement. He has been deeply involved in many advocacy, landowner, and professional organizations throughout the forestry sector. Craig, a connoisseur of maple syrup, avid gardener, woodworker, outdoors person, and hunter of edible fungi joined the Forests Program team at Community Forests International just over a year ago to help foster and adapt forestry practices to a changing climate and stewardship paradigm. Craig and his family reside in Southeast New Brunswick and are caretakers of 120 acres of mixed Wabanaki forest in Northern Nova Scotia.