

Speaker Biographies

Erica Anderson

Land Conservation Liaison, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources

Erica Anderson is the Land Conservation Liaison with the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, where she has worked for the past three years. She is a graduate of Holland College and has since gained experience in both forestry and species at risk conservation. Erica supports land stewardship initiatives through fieldwork and project coordination. Having grown up in Cape Breton and Iqaluit, she has always felt a strong connection to the landscapes she has lived and worked in. When Erica's not working, you can usually find her walking her dogs in the woods around Middle River.

Peter Burchill, RPF

Program Forester, Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA)

pete@nslffpa.org

Peter is a graduate of the UNB Forestry & Environmental Management Program (2001) and is a Registered Professional Forester in Nova Scotia. He worked in Alberta and Coastal BC for 8 years managing silviculture contracts before joining the Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA) in 2009. Peter manages NSLFFPA's Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program and private land direct service programming initiatives. He lives in Antigonish with his wife and four children.

Ken Cox

Wildfire Prevention Officer, NS Department of Natural Resources

ken.cox@novascotia.ca

Ken is a graduate of the Maritime Forest Ranger School, now called the Maritime College of Forest Technology. He worked with NSDNR in the inventory and silviculture division after graduating. In 1998, he had the opportunity to head west to Alberta where he had a 22-year career with the Alberta Government in Wildfire Management, which allowed him to work in both operational and prevention aspects of Wildfire. He returned home to Nova Scotia in 2020 and took his current position as Wildfire Prevention Officer in August 2024. In this role, he also has the designation of the FireSmart provincial Liaison, working with FireSmart Canada to promote and implement the program in Nova Scotia.

Ryan Dickie

Forest Operations Coordinator, Family Forest Network

Dickie.FFN@gmail.com

Ryan graduated from the Natural Resources Environmental Technology program at NSCC in 2009. Out of school, he worked for a contractor doing quality control on planting sites, layout and also running saws on both PCT and harvesting sites. In 2012 he went out on his own as a silviculture contractor doing PCT work for private landowners and local mills. During the "off" season for silviculture he also logged with chainsaw and skidder and wrote management plans. Ryan worked at this full time until 2016 and has continued to take on work part-time to this day.

In 2016 Ryan began work as a harvesting and silviculture supervisor for a large mill in Central NS. While his passion is and always will be working with small private landowners, the experience and knowledge he gained in this position was invaluable. He stayed in this role for 2 years and then returned to working with small private landowners again. In 2019, with a baby on the way and much uncertainty in the forest industry, he took a job as a construction foreman that lasted 3 years. While he still did some part-time work through his own business, he always knew he would go back to full time employment in the forest sector. He had a few opportunities over the years and is very happy to have waited until his current role came along. Ryan currently resides in Elmsdale with his partner Becca, their son Everett, Polo their dog and Houdini the hamster. Along with his 2 brothers and parents, he stewards approximately 100 hectares of woodland in East Stewiacke.

Kari Easthouse, MScF.

Forest Analyst, Kari Easthouse Resource Consulting

Kari Easthouse is a forester from Cape Breton with close to 30 years of experience in the forest industry. Throughout his career Kari has focused on supporting sustainable forest management through the application of innovative technology solutions. Over the course of his career Kari has worked with Stora Enso, NSLFFPA, the Cape Breton Privateland Partnership, and most recently was the Director of Client Services for Remsoft Ltd. Specializing in remote sensing, forest modelling and growth and yield, Kari is a co-founder of Loupra, and also works as an independent Forest Analyst, providing technology and management planning services to a wide range of clients throughout the Atlantic Provinces. Kari also raises grass fed beef and lamb on his family farm and woodlot in Roberta.

Cara Gillis, RPF

Program Coordinator for the Provincial 2 Billion Tree Program, NS Department of Natural Resources

cara.gillis@novascotia.ca

Cara Gillis is a Registered Professional Forester with the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, where she works as a Program Coordinator for the Provincial 2 Billion Tree Program. Born and raised in Cape Breton, Cara got a start in forestry at a young age, exploring the woods and helping her dad at the family woodlot and Christmas tree farm. A graduate of both the Maritime College of Forest Technology and the University of Northern British Columbia, she has experience working in many aspects of the forest sector in Nova Scotia, including private land management, silviculture, and forest conservation. Her background also includes two years teaching Natural Resources at NSCC. Early in her career, she spent several years working in western Canada, gaining operational experience working for a number of forestry consulting firms and licensees, and briefly working in wildfire prevention in Alberta.

Ben Hennigar, RPF

Association for Sustainable Forestry

ben@asforestry.com

Ben graduated from the Maritime College of Forest Technology (MCFT) in 2014 and then attended UNB to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Forestry graduating in 2018. While studying at UNB, Ben started working at Northern Pulp, where he worked until the mill's closure. Working further in the industry at Nova Scotia Power and Ledwidge Lumber, he was offered the opportunity at the Association for Sustainable Forestry in 2024.

Outside of work, Ben can be found spending time with his wife Emma, their daughter Lainey, and their two dogs.

Kevin Keys, PhD, RPF

Project Scientist, Family Forest Network
kevinkeys.ffa@gmail.com

Kevin is a registered professional forester and soil scientist with over 30 years of experience in applied and collaborative research, forest ecology and management, soil classification and interpretation, site assessment and sampling, technical and scientific writing, training and extension activities, and project management. He is a former research forester with Nova Scotia Natural Resources and Renewables and co-author of Nova Scotia's forest ecosystem classification (FEC) and ecological land classification (ELC) guides. Kevin is also an authority on regional wetland (hydric) soils and an experienced wetland delineator.

Brian Joseph MacEachern

2025 Eastern Woodland Owner of the Year

Brian Joseph MacEachern is an owner and Manager of approximately 120 acre Forest Resource - woodlot in St. Andrew's outside Antigonish. He is the 2025 Eastern Woodlot Owner of the Year Award for Nova Scotia. He has over 50 years experience working on a woodlot and is also a second generation owner of his woodlot. Brian has also 46 + years experience working in important leadership positions with Nova Scotia Power Incorporated and has worked outside most of his life. He has been a Lineman where management of sites and safety are paramount. He Managed the International Brotherhood of Electrical workers Local 1928. He has worked as a consultant for Nova Scotia Power and now does consulting work for Nova Scotia Power with his own company Smiling Cdns Incorporated. Brian has a large extended family and has a son, daughter and step-son. Brian and his wife Jane work together to manage their forest resource in St. Andrew's. Brian is a truly resilient woodlot owner who never lets things stop him from improving his woodlot. He has overcome a hockey accident and steel rod in his leg and ankle, two hip surgeries, a knee surgery, he is a Cancer survivor, has a rare Neurological disorder and has recently been diagnosed with diabetes but he still has a love and passion for managing and improving his forest resource when ever he can.

Jesse Moura, MScF.

Innovation and Technology Lead, ACFOR Inc.

Jesse Moura is the Innovation and Technology Lead at ACFOR Inc., with a background in forestry, analytics, and performance engineering. Originally trained as a Forest Engineer in Brazil, he holds a Master of Science in Forestry from the University of New Brunswick. Prior to joining ACFOR, Jesse spent nearly four years at Remsoft, advancing to Lead Analyst and Performance Engineer, where he supported forest management planning and system performance. He is also a co-founder of Loupra Technologies and is passionate about leveraging innovation and data-driven solutions to advance sustainable forest management and strengthen resilient woodlot operations.

Jamie Simpson

Lawyer, Forester, and Author

Jamie Simpson is a lawyer, forester, and writer with a passion for exploring our natural world (and sometimes eating it). He has written three books: Restoring the Acadian Forest: A Guide to Forest Stewardship for Woodlot Owners in Eastern Canada; Journeys through Eastern Old-growth Forests; and Eating Wild in Eastern Canada, all with Nimbus Publishing. When not in front of a computer Jamie loves to climb rocks and sail Nova Scotia's coasts. Jamie and his wife and son live in Musquodoboit Harbour.

Jamie runs Juniper Law, a small environmental law and consulting business, with clients including governments, non-profit organizations, land trusts, First Nation organizations, commercial fishing organizations, and individuals. Jamie also teaches an introductory environmental law class in the Environmental Science program at Dalhousie University, and has received several awards for his conservation work, including the Elizabeth May Award for Environmental Service, the Environmental Law Prize from Dalhousie University, and the Honour in the Woods Award from the Nova Scotia Environmental Network.

Lynsay Spafford, PhD

Postdoctoral Researcher, Forestry and Environmental Management, UNB
lynsay.spafford@unb.ca

Lynsay completed her Ph.D. in Environmental Science at the Memorial University of Newfoundland (2023), and B.Sc.Hons. in Environmental Sciences at St. Francis Xavier University (2017). She has worked as a Research Consultant for the Swiss Federal Institute of Forest, Snow, and Landscape Research, and also as a technician for the e-phenology lab in Universidade Estadual Paulista in Brazil. During her PhD, Lynsay collaborated to establish and expand the Acadian Phenocam Network across the Maritimes, tracking dynamic climate change impacts to forest ecology. As a postdoc researcher managing the Acadian Phenocam Network, Lynsay has expanded this network and enhanced its monitoring capacity to include radial growth. Lynsay has also developed a new cost-effective tool for tracking vertical growth. Her work aims to track and anticipate the impacts of climate change on forest health and climate change mitigation potential. In her free time, Lynsay enjoys playing fiddle, spending time outdoors, baking, and travelling.