

No wood cutting in Doctor's Brook area

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Loggers in District 17 have been told they won't be permitted to cut wood in the Doctor's Brook area.

The provincial government says the timber stand, which consists of bug-killed wood, is home to many rare plants and is a protected area.

Newman Sinnicks, president of the District 17 Loggers' Association, says he can't accept the province's reasoning for refusing loggers access to the wood.

"We have been hit hard by insects in District 17 and 18. Instead of building forest access roads to salvage bug-killed wood, the roads are being built to access green timber," he explains.

"When we have wood in the second and fourth stage of insect damage, why are we cutting healthy timber or timber in the first stage of the insect before we try to salvage the timber in the third and fourth stage?"

In a letter to Premier Roger Grimes, Mr. Sinnicks said there were 140,000 cubic metres of wood in Doctor's Brook area that should be harvested.

The premier responded by saying that the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods has confirmed that, although this area contains insect-infested wood, it cannot be harvested because the area is protected.

"The Doctor's Brook area is habitat to a number of rare plants, such as the

fairyslipper, Laurentian fragile fern, meadow horsetail, tall millet-grass, and Macoun's buttercup," he stated. "The most significant rare plant is the Fernald's milkvetch which has been listed nationally by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada as a vulnerable species."

The area is being evaluated by the Parks and Natural Areas Division of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation for protection and had been provided interim protection while the evaluation is being done.

Since the area is protected, forest harvesting is not permitted. However, other traditional activities such as hunting or fishing can occur.

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