



New Brunswick woodlot owners are angry the province has cut \$1 million in funding from the silviculture program. The reduction in funding affects jobs and forestry management such as tree thinning, a spokesperson says. PHOTO: BNI ARCHIVE

Woodlot owners angered over \$1-million cut to silviculture program

LAVERNE STEWART
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New Brunswick woodlot owners and several forest products marketing boards are speaking out over what they say are severe cuts to the province's silviculture program.

Erica O'Donnell, general manager of the York Sunbury Charlotte [YSC] Forest Products Marketing Board, said the provincial funding ensures private woodlots are healthy, maintained and sustained for the future.

The private silviculture provincial budget has been \$6 million since 2009. Last year the funding was cut by \$500,000 and with another \$500,000 reduction this year, she said.

The \$1-million reduction, she said, is having a negative impact on forests and forestry workers in the province through job losses.

"Every time we get a [funding] cut we lose contractors. We've had numerous contractors contacting us this year because of the reduction in funds two years in a row. They came to us this year and said they've had to lay their workers off early in the silviculture season," she said.

said. "And those trees still need tending in the following year or two."

"So not knowing until April or May that your funding is down half a million dollars causes significant challenges."

Banks said the federation has met with the minister, sent letters to the premier, and lobbied the Regional Development Corporation - the source of the silviculture funding - about the silviculture cuts.

Marcel Maillet, general manager of the South East New Brunswick Forest Product Marketing Board, based in Scoudouc, said Friday his organization has been lobbying against the cut since they found out about it in the spring.

"We don't like it," he said, in a telephone interview. "This definitely has an impact ... on people working."

Maillet said silviculture funding is extremely important because of the direct jobs it creates, and thinning and replanting increases how much wood is produced sustainably by a wood lot in a year.

Despite the wood marketing board's lobbying, the provincial government

