



2008 Atlantic Teachers' Tour Report of Teachers' Evaluation Forms August 2008

Question One: What did you enjoy most about this program?

"The quality of the presentations, attention to timing, management, etc. Organizers (and sponsors) as well as presenters, show they value our attendance by making us comfortable and making best use of time (packing as much in as they can – showing many aspects – it's like a theme unit in 4 days!) Might be difficult but more beneficial to have climate change discussion, etc. before some of the woodlands tours – left with questions for the industry foresters."

"New Page tours – mill and forest; sharing ideas with other teachers; learning about available resources – class trips and guest speakers."

"Thought provoking – everyone on this conference seemed really realistic and knowledgeable; speaking in language we as "outsiders" could understand and speaking honestly about the current concerns in the industry."

"I enjoyed the New Page tour in that it was nice to see a company who is putting in the effort to sustain current natural forests in practicing pre-commercial thinning, string of pearls, etc. methods. It appears tht they are not worried more about money at the present but the sustainability of forests for the future – well done."

"I enjoyed seeing the two main streams that trees go through; from tree to lumber and from tree to paper."

"The opportunity to learn from people who are earning their living from the forest industry."

"The entire tour is simply fantastic! The tours were great, the speakers were so knowledgeable, the accommodations were second to none, and the organization team is at its best. I really thought the New Page portion (in the woods) was outstanding."

"I enjoyed getting out in the woods and seeing the foresters at work. The mill tours were also great!!"

"The chance to see first hand what is going on in the woods and how the products make it from the woods to the stores."

"Actually going to sites; information (see other notes)"

"It was great to see the demonstrations; made things more real."

"I enjoyed seeing how the machinery worked in the woodlands. I also thought the tour inside the mill in Port Hawkesbury was fascinating."

"My favorite part of the program was going into the woods and seeing how trees are harvested. I liked learning about the process the various techniques and the machinery used."

"Talking to the people working in the industry, especially the front line workers; seeing the mill up close."

"Meeting the people who work in the forestry business plus meeting other teachers. I enjoyed being out in the woods. And I appreciated the VIP treatment I received."

"I enjoyed the time spent in the woods with New Page. They were very organized with short, interesting presentations. The selective cutting and more environmentally conscience forestry methods were very interesting."

"Being outside in the woods, using the GPS... the hands on activities (location!). Really enjoyed Thursday morning presentations!!"

"The walking, hands-on tours; the accommodation – a private room is important for downtime; the food."

"The PEOPLE – in all aspects of the tour who care deeply, share their knowledge, who love the forest, the environment. The TOUR ORGANIZATION is a very well oiled machine. Teamwork is key."

"The tours of various woodlots and plants was great. The social times (meals and car pools) also created good discussion."

"I enjoyed seeing how some companies are concerned enough about the environment to implement other methods than clear-cutting to extract their lumber. It was nice to see environment put before profit for once."

“The interaction with other teachers who enjoy and have a natural passion for the outdoors and environment. Great location for the conference; great tours; good food and conversation. Really enjoyed it. Thanks Yolanda for including me.”

“Meeting people in the forest industry sector. Most of “us” went through our early lives thinking that the industry were the “bad guys” destroying everything in their path but they’re just like anyone else. In fact they are really on the “front lines” in helping preserve our environment.”

“The tours – the lumber mill, paper mill and the thinning demonstrations in the woodlots.”

“Seeing entire process; from seedling production to final products (paper and lumber).”

“Woodlands tours: very informative and all participants eager to share their knowledge. Tours gave a great perspective of the total process.”

“The real life classroom – in the yards, in the mills, in the woodlots and the highly knowledgeable presenters.”

“Lots of information; tours; not rushed from spot to spot; very complete in the different stages of forestry.”

“Well organized; the effort of the companies to show what they do.”

“The casual atmosphere, size of group but also that we worked in various smaller groups at times. Location central to field trip locations and beautiful relaxing setting. Great service and food; enjoyed sequence of field trip steps (order of schedule) and range of topics covered.”

“Field tours; meals; making new contacts.”

Question Two: What new perceptions do you have about forests, forestry, foresters, and the forest products industry?

“More recognition of improvements in environmental stewardship, effluent treatment, etc. Recognition of challenges industry has been facing and will continue to face in the changing market. Water treatment tour left a more positive impression in 2006 (shows the effect the attitude and enthusiasm of the presenter).”

“Less waste; a lot of effort to reduce energy costs, switch to renewable; a lot of effort to preserve waterways and natural environments.”

“Technology and education; the perception that foresters are “usually” men, perhaps women who just cut trees is a sad misconception. These men are skilled and need to help keep our forest healthy; they have a lot of pressure to follow environmental policies and sustain our forest.”

“I always believed it was a difficult job – in all aspects of the industry, especially in finding that balance that is between money/industry and environmental issues. I was more skeptical of the forest industry than I am now even though I still disagree with the capitalization of the various corporations involved, leaving out the small family-run operations and woodlot owners.”

“Very interesting how the different companies are (strengthening or sustaining) the forest.”

“The sheer magnitude and size of the forest industry; major issues facing forestry; the importance of diversification; methods of sustainable forest management.”

“I found the delicate balance between and economically feasible forest industry and an environmentally sustainable forest industry particularly interesting. So much more than just cutting down trees.”

“Insights into the careers available in this industry; the changes being made in the industry to meet the environmental concerns of the public; the changing international markets and the business side of forestry.”

“Clear cutting is necessary in some areas; the industry is going through a time of dramatic change.”

“Organization/planning of forests.”

“There is much more emphasis on the environment than what I had once thought.”

“The forestry industry is much more environmentally cautious than I thought. I was also amazed with the advanced technology involved.”

“I feel that I have a more unbiased view of what happens in our forests. As someone with no forestry experience or connections, my previous notions were all based on information from the media.”

“Lots – challenges and education for workers; improvements and changing environmental concerns by companies; new logging practices and equipment.”

“I think I have a better understanding of how forestry companies are running their businesses. I am happy to learn that environmental practices are now in place – hopefully this practice will continue to move forward and evolve.”

“I did not have a lot of knowledge about the industry before the tour so I feel I gained a lot of accurate information rather than changing any real perceptions I had. It is nice to learn about any industry from the experts themselves.”

“The behind the scenes look at industry was great. I would like to have heard some environmental perspectives a bit more. I didn’t realize the no waste approach to the industry (how every bit is used right down to waste ash for farmers) and enjoyed the presentation on Thursday morning about the need for diversification of the economy and industry.”

“Everything is not men in the woods chopping down trees. I learned from the seeds to the harvest to the mills! I learned how dependent the industry is on technology.”

“1) how much technology has changed! 2) how much the industry does care about the environment; 3) how much upfront time/money/preparation is being spent to ensure a sustainable economic sector/lifestyle in our province.”

“The integration of technology in every area was great to see. Forestry is a professional operation where everyone has knowledge in various fields and all aspects of the forest are considered throughout the processing of trees. Impressive!”

“I now realize that the industry is starting to take the environment as a real consideration in their business plans. Also, I now realize how dependent small communities and the large number of Atlantic Canadians that are dependent on this industry.”

“There is really good work going on out there. Production is still the #1 goal but some are going above the standards to protect the environment. That’s good news.”

“It’s very fragile, extremely complicated. The level of education in all sectors was so impressive!”

“The hard work in the field (woodlot) impressed me. It was good to see the concern for the broader picture (wildlife) and measures to return our forests to the Acadian forest.”

“How each segment of forest people depend upon each other’s area.”

“Understanding the entire process and an appreciation for it. Environmental concerns/standards.”

“The industry needs highly skilled workers with significant skills in science and technology to be competitive in fast paced global market.”

“People going into the industry have high levels of education; very expensive to operate plants/mills (energy costs); very complex and changing.”

“When they are working together with government they can.”

“New perspective on the vast amount of aspects each member of the industry needs to consider with each decision and needs to continue to update. Fascinating to learn of the planning prior to harvesting and the well-roundedness of the managers, operators, etc. Amount of preparation and monitoring was eye-opening. It is a year-round industry!! Very professional people.”

“Industry education requirements are much higher than expected; methods have improved at all levels of the process of harvesting and finishing wood products.”

Question Three: How will you use the new knowledge you have acquired?

“Share with colleagues (add resources to our communal pot and add contacts to the school resource list); theme unit on forests/forestry incorporating all subjects under theme as well as supplementing my Jr. High Social Studies curriculum. Although I felt somewhat overwhelmed by the number of business cards given out in 2006, I have been grateful to have them as I plan my theme studies. This year, contact information not as readily available; perhaps we will be given a contact list for all of the presenters?”

“The Atlantic Studies 9 text book gives forestry ½ a page, Canadian Geography 11 only gives a little more. I’ll be able to expand on this to include job opportunities, education needed, different harvesting techniques and the reasons behind them. I’ve also made contact with potential guest speakers.”

“I will use a lot of this information in my classroom because it covered many specific topics such as history, biology and economics.”

“I haven’t yet gone through much of the information and resources that we have received but I plan on putting together a forestry or forest unit for all my classes including Tree ID, Industry Practice, Forestry 101 and my favorite Forest Products (all of which I’ve gained valuable information here at this tour – thank you!)”

“I will be able to better educate my students about what happens in the forest and the mills. How trees are grown; how they are managed and how they are harvested.”

“Expand the unit of forestry in my Agriscience class because of my comfort ability/knowledge. More field trips/speakers from my knowledge of contacts/opportunities.”

“I will use what I’ve learned to mitigate the stereotypes and negative pre-conceived notions many students have about the forest industry. I’ll also use this material to integrate more forestry science into my existing classroom plan. It’s really something all students can connect to.”

“I will be applying this information to lessons in Grade 10 Science and Grade 11 Biology.”

“I will take this new information back to my biology classes and Envirothon team. I especially enjoyed the water treatment and woodlot management techniques.”

“To make connections to the curriculum in an organized fashion to integrate...”

“I have the option of integrating forestry into my Env. Sci. 122 course. I am planning on incorporating a general forestry overview including some tree identification.”

“I will use a lot of the knowledge I have learned in my grade 6 science unit on the Diversity of Life; also great for environmental studies.”

“I will hope to use this information in my classroom to help my students understand the complexity of the forestry industry and to not have their sole information be that of the media.”

“Education of students; re: employment and employability skills; add to my science unit and social studies program; promote and pass on information to other program (NS Dept. of education).”

“Hopefully, I will be a better, more knowledgeable coach for the Envirothon at NRHS and as a staff advisor for the environmental club at the school.”

“I will use a lot of this information in Sci 10, & Bio 11. Sci 10 in the sustainability unit and the general biological information in Bio 11. The water treatment information I will take into my Oceans !! class.”

“Probably teaching science and also industry, also on a personal level in managing our own property and planting native species.”

“Real life examples of forestry jobs and technology used; the build a tree game from Yolanda – cool!”

“I will ponder this for a bit! I will focus on the economic sector. What is happening in Atlantic Canada, in Nova Scotia and locally and know it affects/creates various jobs and lifestyles. ??? is a concern of young people. Also, current event issues that deal with forestry.”

“I will share the information with my students and other teachers. Career options will also be included in curriculum. Forestry creates many questions for the students to think critically and attempt problem solving. Personally the information will be shared at home where a new understanding of mill closure is now available.”

“It will help me to connect my students’ views and knowledge of plant growth and habitats with the local forest industry. I now can link these and other outcomes with local industry and how we are influencing both of these concepts in Nova Scotia.”

“I will continue to work with local area teachers to promote the outdoor education programs in ... at our local area paths and watershed areas.”

“Hopefully I will be starting a Westisle Envirothon Team! Use the people in the industry, hopefully introduce kids to a direction of study they may not have considered before.”

“I hope to develop a unit for Grade 10 Science on Nova Scotia Forests.”

“Hopefully encourage students to consider the wide range of forestry jobs.”

“Create a module for our Broad Base Technology course; talk to students regarding career opportunities.”

“Expand enrichment outreach offerings to include more modules and offerings about the forest industry.”

“Science 10 has an ecology section, instead of using oceans, energy or agriculture, I can use forestry sustainability; physics – careers in the forestry industry; biology – using forests as case studies.”

“In grade six the importance of sorting skills in Math has always been hard to explain. How the mills and the workers have to think this through.”

“Hopefully in several ways! Personal interest – further investigation; educational – as a context for situation based learning for teaching succession ecology, chemistry, sustainability, society in Science 10; context for pond microorganism identification with biology 11.”

“I intend to build a unit into at least one of my courses.”

Question Four: Would you recommend this program to others?

“Yes – absolutely! I am very grateful for the opportunity to attend for the second time. I think more teachers should take advantage of the opportunity – need more urban teachers who have misconceptions (so they can go back and share the word) and more rural teachers who may interest students in joining the forestry sector.”

“Yes. I learned lots of things that can be integrated into my courses. The texts in schools give very little information about the industry so this course will be a huge benefit.”

“Yes, this was one of the most interesting conferences I have attended.”

“Yes.”

“Yes, it is very important to see all sides of an industry.”

“Yes, one of the issues facing the forest industry is public misunderstanding of the industry. This program is a great way to counteract this trend.”

“Yes, in a way I think this program should be required for all science teachers; however, its small numbers give the tour a unique feel that is so important. All science teachers NEED to know this!”

“Yes, this tour was remarkably organized. Everything ran smoothly. You all did a great job!! The food was awesome. The speakers and tour guides were excellent!”

“Yes, I think every environmental science teacher in the Atlantic Provinces should be exposed to this program. I loved Bill Glen’s presentation.”

“Yes, Teachers need to have information for life-long learning, for students, for curriculum connections...”

“Yes, It was a great overview and a highly education tour.”

“Yes, I heard about the program through my sponsor. Many teachers are unaware of what it is and information from principals doesn’t always get passed on.”

“Yes, this was so informative!! I have learned so much. Any teacher could benefit from this tour.”

“Yes (very emphatic), will recommend to teachers grade 9, guidance counselors, science, etc.”

“Yes, wonderful way to introduce forestry to educators.”

“Yes, there is so much excellent information shared during the week and wonderful connections made that all teachers could greatly benefit from programs like this.”

“Yes.”

“Yes, it is best for high school teachers but I was still interested as an elementary teacher – good for us to begin the knowledge process.”

“Yes, the more exposure we have the more information knowledge – the more we create opportunities for our students. (The accommodations and food were awesome).

“Yes, this has been a great four days where many connections were made from the industry and teaching profession.”

“Yes, I learned a lot about the forest industry and it was a great way to network with teachers from around Atlantic Canada.”

“Yes, for sure! All teachers should have the opportunity to have hands on outdoor experiences.”

“Yes, (emphatic) this is such a well run program. The Dept. of Education could learn a lot from how you provide professional development. It’s just so impressive; we were well looked after.”

“Yes, every science teacher should be exposed to the workings of our Primary Industries (renewable industries).”

“Yes, wonderful information; had very little experience with this ??? previously.”

“Yes.”

“Yes, specifically, we have a new coordinator of outdoor education. I’ll be recommending that she attend next year.”

“Yes.”

“Yes, this was as well organized as I’ve seen.”

“Yes, very well organized. Ideal length, nice to combine a vacation setting with a learning opportunity! Felt like both. Also, we were treated very well and professionally.”

“Yes, I had a great time. It was very informative and I will put the information to work in my woodlot and in my class.”

Question Five: How could we improve this program?

“More small group time with 1 or more “experts” in the woods so you can practice your id, etc.; start off session with activity/presentation about the impact forest products have in our lives – e.g. an examination of a day without trees (along the lines of “the man who couldn’t stop sneezing). It feels like the some of the more cynical among us don’t fully recognize the necessity of actually cutting the trees. Students are also always enlightened by these kind of examinations (e.g. petroleum industry in our lives, etc.). Would like to have more id time – look at lumber, juvenile and adult trees in forest setting, etc.”

“Remove presentations in which the presenter puts up a Power Point and just reads it to us; smaller groups when touring sawmills so that it is possible to hear the presenter; visit nurseries or research facilities; more information on herbicides.”

“More communication between organizers and participants in regards to plans, times, etc.; more free time before/after meals (in daylight) even though I realize this cannot be allotted into the time frame of the tour. Perhaps a fewer number of Power Points, more field stuff!”

“The course is fantastic. One possible addition would be to go to a small sawmill to see how a small operator works.”

“Lengthened M – Friday; teaching resources (slideshows, props, videos).”

“This program is so fantastic, it’s hard to find much room for improvement.”

“I have a list – do you have time to talk!”

“It would be nice to hear a bit more on forestry other than mainstream industry, e.g. small woodlot owners, recreation, etc. However I know this would be difficult since the time is limited. National and Provincial Parks.”

“Perhaps even two hours of independent time to enjoy the surroundings would be nice.”

“The program is pretty great as is. If it was possible, it would be nice to be able to have more time to speak with the foresters/biologists, etc. that we met in the field. Due to time constraints it always seemed there were more questions than time.”

“Factual information on the plants (i.e., New Page) to review in car before tour – tonnes of production (that four employee), etc. Not a lot, just a few facts.”

“Have less “classroom” presentations when at the mills, or make them shorter. Also, it would be nice to have headsets similar to the New Page ones at other mills to hear the presentations.”

“I think there needs to be a bit more “in the woods”. I would like to have done a bit more tree identification, nursery visits, etc. and how to be a woodlot manager. I guess a more biology/ecology aspect would be nice. Visiting people with knowledge on how to use the “other” products in a forest like Lloyd Maplebeck presented.”

“The speeches need to be cut by a third – the indoor and outdoor ones – each one of them. I could hear how excited the people, speakers, were in their job, but too much means the audience won’t remember anything or little. Pick out your key points and talk about that. If you can’t tell them that, cut out the New page speaker – the one in the little boardroom, keep the tour. And cut the speaker at the water treatment plant, keep the tour.”

“This is tough as this tour is rather well done. I like the full days – it keeps people on the go and focused. A bit earlier back to resort time would be a suggestion to create a short but not rushed down time before evening dinner and FUN!”

“The program was great! Adding in a block of fitness/activity time would be great, if at all possible. The days were busy!”

“A little more time to enjoy and explore the lodge area in the evening would have been enjoyable.”

“Do more talks at the time of the conference on how specific sections of the tour can be directly related to the science curriculum. They need materials to go away with that can be used in the classroom.”

“Not really sure. The whole package is so good. We did not get to meet the “little guy” in this sector. That would have given a better picture of what’s going on for the smaller operators. I know time is a factor here.”

“An almost perfect formula has been developed. Contact and/or conversation with private woodlot owners and operators.”

“It’s perfect!”

“Not so much Power Point presentations, and more experiential learning activities, much as you would for children. We learn only 10% of what we hear, but (thankfully) 90% of what we do.”

“Have list of contacts, websites, projects, non-profit organizations, etc. so that teachers can have it to use (and do not forgot). Reception before dinner? Is it needed?”

“Add a morning on the first day for warm-up and settling in... Maybe not necessarily activities, but earlier registration and check-in to get us here. Allow spouses and families to stay with us – rooms are already paid for, and it would make more for the lodge. We could share what we learned with our loved ones immediately. Vegetarian supper option.”

“Well done!”

Question Six: Other Comments and Suggestions?

“The programme is so amazing that I hate to critique anything negatively... Food is always plentiful and delicious – would like to encourage Pictou Lodge to use more local produce, etc. We should be supporting local agriculture (this could be reflected in snacks for the road, etc. too); No vegetarian option for lunch on Tuesday makes a long day even longer! Mid-morning/mid afternoon snacks (not candy) would be much appreciated. I particularly appreciated the discussion around demonstration hardwood species (often neglected in discussion of NS forestry); would like to see more effort to recognize importance of (and realistic competition with) farmland. Forestry and agriculture face many of the same challenges and recognition, lack of new “graduates” to sector, rural vs. urban understanding, etc.

“Lesson plans look great!”

“I feel industry workers believe that teachers just don’t want to go out and visit their business, however, I want or would like industry officials to realize as a teacher I would love to go off-site, however, I am prevented or rather restricted by time, insurance, transportation, etc. Therefore this gives me ideas on how to bring their industry into my class. I do not have children or a family, however, I did notice on the website it says “children and spouses are not required” and I think that is a deterrence and should not be included. I enjoyed having my own room but could have shared if someone wanted to bring their family. The guests would be responsible for their own food and keeping themselves busy, however, the room is paid for so why can’t they bring their children?”

“Great food, great people, great information! Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

“Great job.”

“The team approach (van loads) worked well and could be expanded (i.e., trivia). I would have liked to see more tree/plant identification in small groups.”

“I’m not sure of the exact dollar value spent on this tour for each teacher but the experience really is priceless! The accommodations and VIP treatment alone were enough to amaze me, but the knowledge I’ve taken in this week can’t be assigned a price. The opportunity to network in such an amazing setting, while seeing so many unique operations was simply incredible. Thanks!”

“On coffee breaks provide water for the non coffee people; Wednesday morning was a long haul with nothing to drink.”

“Thanks Peter, Jeff, Val, Yolanda and others who put this together. Great Program!!!”

“Overall I found this to be an excellent tour – extremely informative. The informal atmosphere added to the information presented since presenters/industry people were so willing to entertain questions.”

“Great job! Well organized. Great food and location and information. I was pleasantly surprised by what I learned and experienced.”

“Visit logging sites 2-4 years after cutting to look for erosion, regrowth, etc.”

“The wrap-up presentations were useful.”

“I had a wonderful week. I feel as though I now have a great resource base in an industry where I did not have any resources before I came here. It was a wonderful way to spend four days. Also, just a general note on the accommodations and organization of the tour; it could not have been planned better, or made us feel any more important. Fantastic job!!!”

“Fabulous location and learned a lot of things that I had very limited knowledge about related to industry.”

“Thank you.”

“More hands-on “stuff” for the teachers which means a bit less “conference room time”. The information sessions at the lodge were very well done. The woodlands/mill tours are very much appreciated. I you were to hold the tour on the south shore of Nova Scotia I will volunteer my time to help in any way you see fit. Giving bak to people and our environment is key to success! M. Mappleback’s information session very informative! Thanks very much!”

“A comment made from others is that of tree identification and small group trips into the forest where questions can be asked and information shared. Thank you for this experience. The forest and operating a business from the forest has always been a part of my life. The changes have been vast but they are worthwhile.”

“I plan to take this idea of a teacher’s tour one step further and plan to hold a local field day for teachers in Moncton that would incorporate forestry, environment, park programs, water quality, habitats, etc. Possibly have 5-6 stations the teachers would go

through in a day that is hands-on. Infuse it with biologists, foresters, teachers, staff so when the teachers leave they have programs they can take to the classroom and use in the field as well. Thank you again for the opportunity to participate.”

“Thanks so much for this tour. It is such an eye-opener for us. Picnic lunches might be fun (location would be a factor); vans were great; logistics here were excellent (except for the barge!); really enjoyed my time to “Scotland”; thanks Ken!!”

“For safety purposes, cars/vans in convoy should not speed on the highways, especially when the conditions (example – rainy) are not good. Each vehicle contains 4-6 people.”

“I am very glad to have attended; very interesting and informative; great to network with other teachers.”

“Very informative. All presenters were eager to share their knowledge and proud of what they do. Nice to hear them compliment each other. Appreciate the opportunity to network with other teachers.”

“Keep up the great work of offering the tour. At every turn you treated us like VIPs, recognizing our potential impact. The setting was beautiful, the food was delicious and the accommodations were comfortable. Even having private rooms was a much appreciated because I could have some necessary down time, time to assimilate and solidify what I was learning. We had plenty of facts and figures to bombard us, but the linking opportunities were plentiful too. Thank you for a well-planned and comprehensive learning tour.”

“Great speakers; very informative; very specific and local; good examples. I did not feel rushed but still gained lots of information.”

“Thank you all!! It was a super experience! Very professionally run, mutually respectful. Great networking and educational opportunity. Loved being able to speak directly with people in all areas of the industry. I feel enlightened and inspired to stay informed and encourage my students to learn about forestry. Great resources. Good job at mixing up our groups so we get to talk/socialize with almost everyone at some point. Keep the 1 – 1 ½ hr free time.”

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