

Email from Nick Moss Gillespie to consultation process, June 29, 2017

Dear Sir/Madam;

I am writing to express, in the most strenuous terms, my concern at the lack of support that the Faculty of Forestry appears to receive from the current administration at UofT. It is my understanding that the present search for a Dean is for a short-term appointment only, and that the continued existence of the Faculty as such is itself being called into question.

I was lucky enough to be part of the first generation of the Master of Forest Conservation program at UofT, commencing September 1996, and was the only international student in that first intake (freshly arrived from the UK specifically to undertake the MFC, and with excellent academic credentials at the time). The program allowed me to make the leap from social and political sciences (at the University of Liverpool) to the field of Forestry; this was a most unique opportunity at the time, and I suspect continues to be so. I have gone on to become a Canadian citizen, married to a Canadian, and to establish an independent global consulting business, based in Toronto, focused on sustainable forestry advisory services and forest certification. I have become a Registered Professional Forester in Ontario, largely on the strength of the MFC, plus subsequent professional experience in the field of Forestry, gained around the world.

The impact of the Faculty on my own life has been tremendous, however it is my fear that any reduction of the Faculty's standing would diminish the potential for UofT to play a huge role in providing direction both in the realm of academia but also to our civil society more broadly (including all branches of government) on the critical importance of forests in combating climate change, and contributing to the building, in Canada and further afield, of a sustainable future. This is at a juncture whereby Ontario has just instituted a cap and trade regime, as part of the Province' initiatives to move our society toward a development model which does not treat carbon as an externality, and which moves us closer to energy security, and a low-carbon economy, with the implementation of forest carbon projects (including for offsetting) an increasing focus of discussions at this very moment.

The Faculty of Forestry plays a key role in the context outlined above, given its prominent position in downtown Toronto, in proximity to both Queens Park and Bay Street, and also in the heart of Canada' most cosmopolitan and dynamic city, and the motor of our economy. The profile that the Faculty can provide to issues of carbon and climate change, biodiversity, and the social justice issues associated with Forestry, notably in terms of First Nations issues, can simply NOT be replicated by an amalgamation of other schools or entities within the university structure. We are talking about Canada' first institution dedicated to Forestry as such, in the country's preeminent university and city - downgrading the Faculty at this point in time, more than ever, would represent an incredibly short-sighted historical blunder.

yours sincerely,

Nick Moss Gillespie
MFC, RPF
Toronto, Ontario
Canada