

# CRESCENT POND SITKA SPRUCE

During the 1960's and 1970's, the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) planted various exotic tree species in growth experiments. One of these species was sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), a trial with nine sites across the island. As it did not perform well at early life stages, interest was lost in the species in the 1980's. However, certain trial locations of sitka spruce have been performing very well at mid-rotation.



One of these sites is Crescent Pond, a plantation approximately 4.0 hectares (ha) in size. It is located in Western Newfoundland, approximately 30 km southwest of Corner Brook in Forest Management District (FMD) 15. The forest surrounding this area is primarily composed of white birch and balsam fir, and is in the Western Newfoundland Forest Ecoregion. The site is classed as good, with fertile soil. Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd. (CBPPL) operates in this area.



The site has been monitored by CFS throughout its growth. Most recently in 2017 CFS produced a report on the stand based on measurements taken in 2015, when the trees were 46 years old. The conclusion by CFS after the 2015 survey is that the plantation is doing well, with average merchantable volume over 400 m<sup>3</sup> per hectare and mean dominant height over 18 m. Stem width greater than 18 cm diameter at breast height (dbh) indicates significant sawlog potential in the stand. Site selection seems to be key to the success of sitka spruce, they require ample moisture and perform well in coastal environments prone to fog.



The College of the North Atlantic (CNA) Forest Resources Technician program uses the sitka spruce stand for teaching purposes. Each fall, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student's attend the "Fall Roads Camp" in the vicinity. There students spend a week practicing road layout, forest inventory, and site classification. The students stay in a gravel pit at the mouth of the road in pro-pector tents, learning how to set up and maintain bush camps.

Harvesting is planned in the general vicinity of the Crescent Pond Sitka Spruce Stand as part of CBPPL's 5-Year Plan for FMD 15. Road upgrades and building are required alongside the stand, and as such CBPPL has agreed to lay out roads to avoid the stand in order to maintain it as an outdoor classroom for CNA. CBPPL recognizes the importance of the stand to the college and to forest research and therefore will avoid harvesting the area.



Photo Credits: Andrea Coombs (Terra Environmental Consulting). Map provided by CNA.