

Halifax Field Naturalists
c/o Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History
1747 Summer Street
Halifax, NS
B3H 3A6

8 September, 2025

The Honourable Timothy Houston
Office of the Premier
PO Box 726
Halifax, NS
B3J 2T3

Re: Protecting the Ingram River Wilderness Area

Dear Premier Houston,

On behalf of the Halifax Field Naturalists, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the proposed expansion of high-production forestry within and adjacent to the Ingram River Wilderness Area (IRWA). We strongly support the position articulated by Mike Lancaster of the St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association, and we urge your government to halt all forestry approvals within this ecologically critical landscape.

The IRWA contains the oldest documented forest in the Maritimes, provides core habitat for the endangered mainland moose, and supports numerous at-risk species. It also encompasses documented old-growth stands, salmon habitat, and an ecological corridor that connects western and eastern Nova Scotia. These features make the area an ideal candidate for permanent protection under Nova Scotia's legal conservation commitments.

Expanding harvest areas in the IRWA directly undermines public trust and the province's obligations under the 2030 conservation goals. It prioritizes short-term resource extraction at the expense of biodiversity, climate resilience, tourism, and the health of local communities. This approach risks further eroding Nova Scotia's reputation as a leader in environmental stewardship. Public concern is evident: recent community meetings on this issue drew large, engaged audiences, demonstrating the widespread opposition to clearcutting in this sensitive watershed. Citizens, scientists, and non-profits are unified in calling for permanent protection of the IRWA, not further fragmentation.

We urge your government to:

1. Immediately suspend all forestry activity proposed within and adjacent to the IRWA;
2. Advance the designation of the Ingram River Wilderness Area as a legally protected wilderness area; and
3. Reaffirm Nova Scotia's commitment to meeting and exceeding its 2030 protected areas targets.

Protecting the IRWA is not just about one forest — it is about safeguarding the ecological integrity of our province for future generations. We respectfully ask your office to act decisively in protecting this irreplaceable landscape.

Sincerely,

President
Halifax Field Naturalists

cc.

Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables

Mike Lancaster
c/o The St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association