

THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick  
706 Queen Street, P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1C5

Telephone: (506) 453-2506  
Facsimile: (506) 453-7154



GREFFIER DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Assemblée législative du Nouveau-Brunswick  
706, rue Queen, C. P. 6000  
Fredericton (Nouveau-Brunswick) E3B 1C5

Téléphone : (506) 453-2506  
Télécopieur : (506) 453-7154

January 9, 2018

Mr. David Coon, MLA  
Leader of the Third Party  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Departmental Building  
Legislative Assembly Complex  
96 St. John Street  
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Dear Mr. Coon:

Enclosed is a copy of the response to your Petition 6, which was tabled in the Legislature on November 2, 2017.

Yours truly,

 Donald J. Forestell  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Enclosure

DJF/ard

c: Léopold Mallet  
Amy Whittaker  
✓ Josh O'Donnell

RECEIVED

JAN 03 2018

Clark's Office  
Legislative Assembly

**RESPONSE TO PETITION #6  
RE: HERBICIDE SPRAYING  
TABLED BY DAVID COON  
November 3, 2017**

I would like to thank Fredericton South MLA David Coon for tabling the petition related to the use of herbicides in the Legislative Assembly on November 3, 2017.

In responding to the petition, I would like to make the following points:

- Our forestry sector is important to the New Brunswick economy. More than 20,000 New Brunswickers put food on the table each day because of jobs in forestry.
- A very small portion (<0.5%) of Crown forest gets treated with herbicides annually. The use of herbicide is very selective and generally done only once or twice during a forest's lifecycle.
- Making sure our forests are productive is vital to having a competitive and viable forest industry. As a result of our management practices, New Brunswick continues to have vibrant and healthy forests and forest ecosystems. The vast majority (>75%) of our forest regenerate naturally as a mix of native softwood and hardwood species. Less than 25% of the areas harvested are regenerated through planting a variety of tree seedlings.
- We are using a lot of new technologies and modern techniques to better manage our forests. Our seedlings are third generation plus trees with improved growing characteristics. Herbicide is only one tool used to help these planted trees survive the early competing vegetation that would otherwise prevent them from growing freely.
- These treatments are no different from suppressing weeds in a garden in order to help those crops grow. We need to suppress the growth of competing vegetation for a period of time to give our trees a head start. That's why we use herbicides that are proven to be safe and effective, and herbicides that are registered for use in over 100 countries worldwide in both forestry and agriculture.
- The Department of Energy and Resource Development is committed to sharing information about herbicides in forestry to address New Brunswickers' concerns. We are working with our partners and some of the country's leading scientists to do this. In fact, a lot of great information on this topic can be found at [www.ForestInfo.ca](http://www.ForestInfo.ca).
- All herbicides used in New Brunswick must be registered by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency. Products are only registered after a comprehensive evaluation of their safety and value.

- Glyphosate is the active ingredient in a number of common herbicides used worldwide, and it is approved for use by Health Canada. It has been widely used for close to 40 years on food crops, in forestry and home and garden applications, and has been extensively studied.
- In April 2015, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), a branch of Health Canada, released their latest review of glyphosate and declared that the weight of evidence indicates that glyphosate does not present unacceptable risk to human health.
- On May 16, 2016, the World Health Organization, in conjunction with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization reiterated its findings that glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic or genotoxic risk to humans from exposure through diet. Other world organizations have made multiple, similar statements.
- Glyphosate herbicides continue to be safely used in forestry and agriculture around the world as stated in a recent review by the New Brunswick Acting Chief Medical Officer and the Nova Scotia Chief Medical Officer, and supported by Ontario's Chief Science Officer and Senior Scientist.
- On November 2, 2017, an amended motion passed in the Legislature urges the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health to table the report entitled 'Results of the OCMOH Action Plan on Glyphosate' and to provide an update to the report within one year.
- The motion also directed government to continue to monitor any additional information provided by Health Canada and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of New Brunswick in relation to the use of glyphosate, as it becomes available - and should the Chief Medical Officer or Health Canada subsequently advise that glyphosate represents an increased risk to human health, that the Province immediately suspend the spraying of glyphosate on Crown lands.
- I can assure you that Government and the forest industry are always evaluating ways to minimize the amount of herbicide needed to effectively control competing vegetation.
- The principle of integrated vegetation management along with better education and awareness programs will help alleviate concerns over responsible forest management.

I thank you and all those persons who signed the petition for their interest in this important matter. If you have any questions or comments regarding my response, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Rick Doucet  
Minister