

**News**

# Widespread woodlot clearing stirs up local opposition

Those opposed to clear-cutting of bush land in eastern Ontario are making their voices heard

**BY IAN CUMMING**  
*Ontario Farmer*

The fight against the large-scale clear cutting of bush land for agriculture in Glengarry/Prescott/Russell is ramping up.

Over the past several months opponents have engaged in a letter writing campaign, roadside demonstrations and steady lobbying of local councils.

Stephanie Gagnon from Alexandria has recently launched a petition to local Liberal MPP Grant Crack, looking to halt the practice.

"The trees are shipped to be pelletized for green energy-fired power plants, then the cleared land is cropped for ethanol production, while each level of government maintains that it is the next level's responsibility," Gagnon writes on the petition.

While so many area residents drive by this clear cutting and say, "oh too bad, that was a nice forest, now is the time to pause and take stock before it's too late," wrote Gagnon.

"A halt to logging is needed before the last trees are felled and the effort is futile."

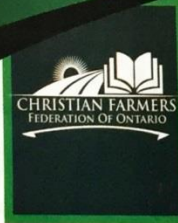
While municipal officials won't commit to what percentage of the land area has been clearcut over the past several years, North Glengarry mayor Chris McDonell, a former farmer and OPP officer, who is facing the wrath of protestors, has some old-fashioned sage advice for the local agriculture community.

"You know when those Scotchmen settled this community over 200 years ago they knew where the best land was to clear," he told Ontario Farmer.

"They left the rest in bush because the ground wasn't good and probably too stony. Should we be clearing all of that?"



Even some farmers are concerned that the bushland being cleared may not be suitable for intensive agriculture



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