**Wood ash and nematodes: dishing the dirt on silvicultural community change**

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Wood ash produced from the burning of forestry refuse is commonly returned to silvicultural plantations as an added-value product. It is thought that this material can promote tree growth by increasing soil pH to help release previously inaccessible nitrogen in the soil, increasing soil nutrients, and promoting beneficial microorganisms. Although wood ash application is popular in Europe, soil amendment with wood ash is very uncommon in Canada. Furthermore, the effects of amendment on soil organisms are varied and poorly understood. In particular, the effects of wood ash on free living nematode communities are hard to discern; no studies of this type have been conducted in Canada’s boreal forest. In conjunction with the Canadian Forest Service at Sault Ste. Marie, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and various forest interest groups, I will present my findings thus far, as well as discuss the implications of an altered nematode community. Our findings thus far indicate that approximately 1.5 years after disturbance, the communities of ash-amended plots have returned to control states in composition, diversity, and evenness.