



Ontario Takes Next Step in Making Forestry Open for Business

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MISSISSAUGA — The Ontario government is supporting the forest industry, and the northern and rural communities that depend on it, with the release of a draft Forest Sector Strategy. Ontario's strategy will aim to stimulate job creation, promote economic growth, and reduce unnecessary burden and costs for businesses, all while ensuring our forests continue to be managed sustainably.

"Our government has a plan to build Ontario together to help this industry, which is so critical to communities across this province, to grow and thrive," said John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. "We have worked hard over the past year to develop the proposed strategy released today. We listened to what was working and more importantly, what was not — and we are continuing the conversation with Indigenous partners, affected communities and industry as we work towards finalizing the strategy."

The plan to create a provincial strategy for the forest sector was announced in September 2018. Since that time, the ministry has heard from Indigenous partners, industry and municipal leaders through seven roundtables across the province. Input was also received from the public through survey and email submissions. Based on feedback, four main areas of focus were identified to shape the draft strategy:

- promoting stewardship and sustainability
- putting more wood to work
- improving our cost competitiveness
- fostering innovation, markets and talent.

"Ontario's forests are our greatest renewable resource, and we are working towards a forest sector strategy designed to support existing businesses, while helping to create more opportunities and a better quality of life for the people of Ontario — all without compromising our high standards of sustainable forest management," said Minister Yakabuski.

Consultation on the draft Forest Sector Strategy through the Environmental Registry will close February 5, 2020. Additional comments received will be considered as the government

completes further consultations with Indigenous partners and municipalities. The final strategy is expected to be released in the spring of 2020.

Developing a strategy that will provide the forest industry tools to succeed is part of the government's plan to **Build Ontario Together**. By helping to create a business environment that attracts investment, encourages innovation and job creation, and promotes sustainable forest management, Ontario's forest sector will have the opportunity to reach its full potential.

Quick Facts

- The forest sector generates over \$16 billion in revenue and supports approximately 155,000 direct and indirect jobs across Ontario.
- Wood produced from Ontario's Crown forests is sustainably sourced and renewable.
- Ontario companies are recognized as innovators and sustainable forest sector leaders in this global industry.
- Ontario's timber harvest is almost half of what it was in 2000.

Background Information

- [Draft Forest Sector Strategy Highlights](#)
- [Stakeholder Support for Draft Strategy](#)

Additional Resources

- [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#)
- [Better for People, Smarter for Business](#)
- [A Plan to Build Ontario Together](#)

Quotes

"A strong forest sector is essential to Ontario's economy and supports economic growth in communities across our north," said Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines and Minister of Indigenous Affairs. "A provincial forest sector strategy will create jobs, help industry innovate and attract new investment – securing a prosperous future for the communities and families who depend on this important industry."

"Our government is committed to investing in people and their potential," said Ross Romano, Minister of Colleges and Universities. "Our publicly funded colleges play an important role in training workers for successful careers in the forestry industry and ensuring the sector has the skilled workforce it needs to grow. With many programs including on-the-job exposure, students gain the skills they need for promising career paths in forestry."

"Responsible development of Ontario's natural resources is critical for our economic growth," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister responsible for Small Business and Red

Tape Reduction. "The Better for People, Smarter for Business Act proposes streamlining approvals for our forestry operations by ending unnecessary duplication in the process — helping grow an industry that generates over \$16 billion in revenue and supports approximately 155,000 direct and indirect jobs across Ontario."

"Today, the Ontario government has committed to unleashing the full potential of Ontario's forest sector. We look forward to working with Minister Yakabuski to implement a bold and ambitious Forest Sector Strategy, aimed at making Ontario a leading international jurisdiction," said Jamie Lim, President & CEO, Ontario Forest Industries Association. "Collaboration between government, rural communities and other rightsholders has facilitated productive dialogue to ensure that everyone dependent on the forest sector will benefit from this strategy. We look forward to continuing this conversation and building Ontario together."

Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/mnr/en/2019/12/ontario-takes-next-step-in-making-forestry-open-for-business.html>