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Help Shape the Future of Our Forests

Get Involved
in Ontario's
Forest
Management
Planning
Process



2012, Queen's Printer for Ontario
Printed in Ontario, Canada

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Our Forests, Our Future, Your Opportunity to Get Involved



To have healthy forests tomorrow, we need to look after them today. Get involved in Ontario's forest management planning process and have a say in the future of our forests.

Ontario's **Crown forests** are managed for a broad range of uses and to meet social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations. To achieve **sustainability**, forest **ecosystems** must be maintained in a healthy state, and the value of the forest to all users must be respected.

Although the management of Ontario's Crown forests is the responsibility of the provincial government through the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), this responsibility is shared with forest products companies or groups of companies and communities. Through Ontario's forest management planning process, forest managers ensure that Ontario's Crown forests will remain healthy in the future, and sustainable benefits are provided for the province, such as timber and other commercial products, recreation opportunities and wildlife habitat.

There is a significant role for the citizens of Ontario, including stakeholders, Aboriginal communities and environmental groups, in the planning process. With your involvement, a balance of the social, economic and environmental objectives for the management of Crown forests can be achieved.

The forest management planning process provides every citizen of Ontario the opportunity to give meaningful input to the management of Ontario's Crown forests.

Crown forests: A forest ecosystem or part of a forest ecosystem that is on land owned by the province of Ontario and under the management of the Minister of Natural Resources.

Sustainability: Long-term Crown forest health.

interactions within a particular habitat.

Ecosystems: The sum of the plants, animals, environmental influences, and their

Adaptive management: Management based on continuous learning.



The Forest Management Planning System

Ontario's forest management planning system for Crown forests is based on a legal and policy framework that has sustainability, public involvement, Aboriginal involvement and *adaptive management* as key elements.

The *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Act* provide the legislative framework for forest management on Crown lands in Ontario. The forest management planning requirements and the provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act approvals are incorporated into the *Forest Management Planning Manual*, which provides the direction for the preparation of Forest Management Plans. The Crown Forest Sustainability Act requires that each *Forest Management Plan* have regard for plant life, animal life, water, soil, air and social and economic values, including recreational and heritage values. To achieve this requirement, each plan contains a long-term management direction that balances objectives related to forest diversity, *socio-economics*, forest cover and *silviculture*.

Ontario's Crown forests are the principal source of wood for Ontario's forest products industry, and for management purposes, those Crown forests are divided into management units. Most of these management units are managed by forest companies under a *Sustainable Forest Licence*. The licence holder is responsible for carrying out the activities of forest management planning, access road construction, harvest, renewal and maintenance, monitoring and reporting, subject to OMNR regulations and approvals. Before any forest management activities can take place in a management unit, an approved Forest Management Plan must be in place.

Crown Forest Sustainability Act: An Act of the Ontario legislature to provide for the sustainability of Crown forests and, in accordance with that objective, to manage Crown forests to meet social, economic

and environmental needs of present and future generations.

Environmental Assessment Act: An Act of the Ontario Forest legislature. The

A Forest Management Plan is approved when the OMNR Regional Director is satisfied that the plan provides for the sustainability of the forest, and that all identified concerns have been addressed. An approved plan permits the forest management activities of access road construction, harvest, renewal and maintenance to take place on the management unit.

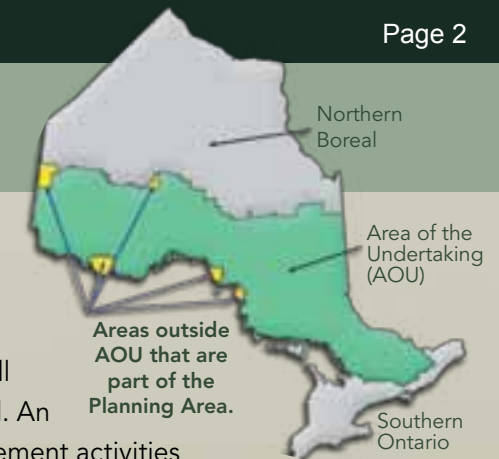
A Forest Management Plan is prepared for a 10-year period for each management unit in the province. A plan is prepared in an open and consultative fashion by a Registered Professional Forester, with the assistance of an interdisciplinary planning team and Local Citizens Committee, and input from Aboriginal communities and interested members of the public.

The Local Citizens Committee represents a range and balance of local interests, and ensures that these interests are communicated to the planning team. The Local Citizens Committee may nominate a member to participate on the planning team.

Each Forest Management Plan contains text, tables and maps organized into the following main sections:

- Management Unit Description
- Planned Operations
- Supplementary Documentation.
- Long-term Management Direction
- Determination of Sustainability

A Forest Management Plan summary accompanies each draft and approved Forest Management Plan. This summary is prepared to assist the public with their review of a Forest Management Plan.



purpose of this Act is the betterment of the people of the whole or any part of Ontario by providing for the protection, conservation and wise management in Ontario of the environment.

Forest Management Planning Manual: A Manual prepared under section 68 of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and approved by the regulations, including amendments to the Manual approved by the regulations.

Should you get involved?

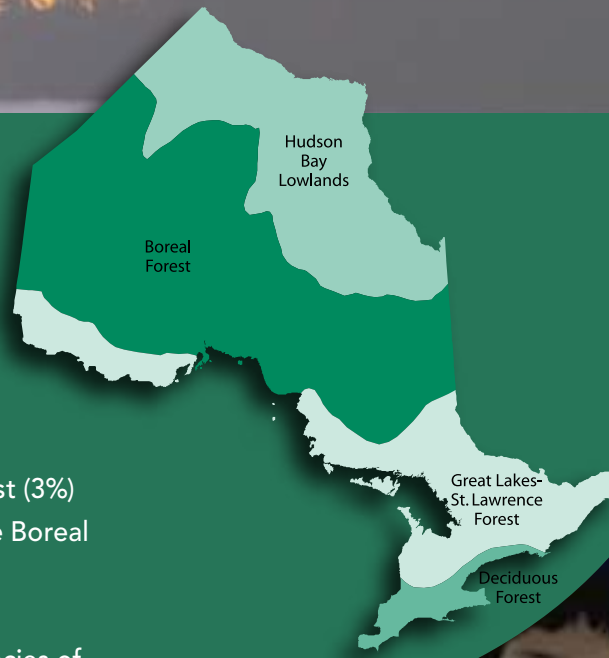
Ontario's forest management planning system is an open and consultative process. As a world leader in sustainable forestry, the province of Ontario is committed to balancing environmental protection with sustainable forest management. Your input can help to ensure that Ontario's Crown forests are managed for a broad range of uses, while conserving and enhancing economic, social, environmental and cultural values.

You should consider getting involved in the planning process if your interest in the forest includes:

- hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering or other traditional activities
- hiking, canoeing, camping or other recreational activities
- cottaging
- tourist operations, forestry operations or other business interests on Crown land
- Crown land use
- cultural heritage
- the environment

ONTARIO'S FOREST FACTS

- 66% of Ontario is forested
- 71.1 million hectares or almost 176 million acres is forested
- 90% of Ontario's forests are Crown forests, owned by the province
- 7.2 million hectares of forest is owned privately
- Ontario's forested area is equal to the land masses of Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands combined
- Ontario has four types of forests: Hudson Bay Lowlands (26%), Boreal Forest (51%), Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest (20%), Deciduous Forest (3%)
- Forest management on Crown lands in Ontario occurs primarily in the Boreal and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forests
- Ontario's ecological biodiversity is dependent on our forests
- Ontario is home to 3,200 species of plants, 160 species of fish, 80 species of amphibians and reptiles, 400 species of birds and 85 species of mammals



ABORIGINAL INVOLVEMENT

Each Aboriginal community in or adjacent to a management unit is provided specific opportunities to participate in the planning process. Each community may choose to have a representative on the planning team, and has the opportunity to develop a customized approach to consultation, identify Aboriginal values for protection, and participate in the development and review of related reports.

Forest Management Plan: A document containing pertinent information and prescriptions by means of which forest policy, aims, and objectives are translated into a continuity of specific treatments on a management unit for a specified period of years.

Socio-economics: The study of the social and economic impact of any product or service or other activity on an economy as a whole and on the companies, organizations and individuals who are its main economic participants. These effects can usually be measured in economic

and statistical terms, such as growth in the size of the economy, the number of jobs created (or destroyed), income, levels of home ownership; and in measurable social terms such as life expectancy, diversity, migration, or levels of education.



How the Forest Management Plan is Developed

The planning process for the development of a Forest Management Plan involves two phases. Phase I includes requirements for the development of the long-term management direction for a 10-year period, and the detailed planning of operations for the first 5-year term of the plan. Phase II includes requirements for the detailed planning of operations for the second 5-year term (i.e., years 6 to 10), and occurs during the last 20 months of the first 5-year term.

PHASE I

The Phase I process begins by updating the inventory of the forest, assembling background information such as *resource values* and fish and wildlife inventories, and reviewing the success of forest regeneration activities.

Stage 1 of Consultation: You can identify your interests, and provide or confirm resource values information at the local OMNR office. This information may include locations of tourism establishments, canoe routes, mining claims, archaeological sites, traplines, cabins, trails and wildlife habitat areas. The earlier you provide this information to OMNR the better, as it provides more time to ensure your values are considered.

The planning team, in consultation with the Local Citizens Committee, identifies desired benefits from the forest, and sets objectives to achieve them. With the aid of computer modelling, strategic analysis is conducted. Strategic analysis is an iterative process used to determine the types and levels of access, harvest, renewal, and tending activities required to balance the achievement of management objectives.

Silviculture: the science and art of cultivating forest crops, based on a knowledge of silvics.

Sustainable Forest Licence: a renewable licence to harvest forest resources in a

management unit that requires the licensee to carry out renewal and maintenance activities necessary to provide for the sustainability of the Crown forest in the area covered by the licence. This type of licence may be granted for a term of up to 20 years.

The result of strategic analysis is the establishment of the sustainable long-term management direction for the management unit.

The sustainable harvest level, termed the Available Harvest Area, is determined locally by the planning team as part of the development of a long-term management direction. When determining the Available Harvest Area, objectives for both timber and non-timber values (e.g. wildlife habitat, biodiversity, landscape pattern) are considered. The Available Harvest Area represents the maximum area that can be harvested during the 10-year period of the Forest Management Plan.

Stage 2 of Consultation: There is a formal stage of consultation at this point, where you can review and comment on the proposed long-term management direction before the planning team moves forward with the planning of operations.

After the sustainable harvest level is determined, specific locations for forest operations are identified for the 10-year period, and detailed operational planning occurs for the areas of operations for the first 5-year term. Locations are determined for access roads and aggregate extraction areas, and *prescriptions* or conditions on regular operations are developed for harvest, renewal and *tending* operations. Where harvest, renewal or tending operations may affect resource values, areas of concern are identified. Prescriptions are developed for these areas of concern in order to prevent, minimize or mitigate any negative effects. Where access roads, landings or forestry aggregate pits may affect resource values, conditions on operations are developed in order to prevent, minimize or mitigate any negative effects.

During operational planning, use management strategies for roads are developed. A use management strategy identifies who can use a road

Resource values: A benefit or condition of a forest that could be of interest from various points of view, and that may need protection as a result of forest operations. i.e. moose aquatic feeding areas, fish habitat, Aboriginal burial grounds

Prescriptions: A specific set of integrated harvest, renewal and maintenance activities for a particular forest site. A prescription is developed before any operations can commence.

How the Forest Management Plan is Developed

and when, maintenance and monitoring activities, if the sustainable forest licensee intends to transfer responsibility of a road, and road **decommissioning** provisions.

Stage 3 of Consultation: There is a formal stage of consultation at this point, which includes an information centre, where you can check that the values of interest to you are identified on values maps, and that appropriate protection is provided for those values.

After operational planning is completed, the draft Forest Management Plan is prepared and submitted for review by OMNR staff.

Stage 4 of Consultation: There is a formal stage of consultation at this point, which includes an information centre, where you can check that your interests and concerns have been addressed in the draft Forest Management Plan and OMNR's review. A summary of the draft Forest Management Plan is available to assist you in your review. The draft Forest Management Plan is available on the MNR website (www.ontarios.ca/forestplans) during this public review period.

After public review of the draft Forest Management Plan, the plan is revised and submitted for approval by the OMNR Regional Director, and the summary of the draft Forest Management Plan is updated.

Stage 5 of Consultation: The approved Forest Management Plan is available for you to view on the MNR website (www.ontarios.ca/forestplans) and at the local OMNR and forest company offices at any time during the 10-year period of its implementation.

Tending: Generally any operation carried out for the benefit of a forest at any stage of its life (e.g., cleaning, fertilization, spacing, pruning).

Decommissioning: To withdraw from active service.

PHASE II

The Phase II process begins by updating the background information such as resource values and fish and wildlife inventories, and reviewing the success of forest regeneration activities. After the background information is updated, detailed operational planning occurs for the areas of operations for the second 5-year term of the Forest Management Plan, in the same manner as described for Phase I.

Stage 1 of Consultation: There is a formal stage of consultation at this point, which includes an information centre, where you can check that the values of interest to you are identified on values maps, and that appropriate protection is provided for those values.

After operational planning is completed, the draft planned operations for the second 5-year term are prepared and submitted for review by OMNR staff.

Stage 2 of Consultation: There is a formal stage of consultation at this point, where you can check that your interests and concerns have been addressed in the draft planned operations and OMNR's review. A summary of the draft planned operations is prepared to assist you in your review. The draft planned operations are available on the MNR website (www.ontarios.ca/forestplans) during this public review period.

After public review of the draft planned operations, the planned operations are revised and submitted for approval by the OMNR Regional Director, and the summary of the draft planned operations is updated.

Stage 3 of Consultation: The approved planned operations are available for you to view on the MNR website (www.ontarios.ca/forestplans) and at the local OMNR and forest company offices at any time during the second 5-year term of the Forest Management Plan.

Get Involved in Ontario's Forest Management Planning Process

DIRECTION FROM THE FOREST MANAGEMENT GUIDES

The OMNR relies on a set of forest management guides to provide direction on acceptable forest management practices at the site, stand and landscape levels. These guides provide direction for the protection of wildlife and fish habitat, the construction of roads and water crossings, reforestation practices, and the emulation of natural disturbances such as fire. This direction is used in the preparation and implementation of Forest Management Plans, and takes the form of standards, guidelines and best management practices. The guides provide provincial direction that must be interpreted by professionals, based on their knowledge and expertise, past experience and local circumstances, in order for it to be correctly implemented locally.



There are many uses and users of Ontario's Crown forests. Public participation is a key component of forest management in Ontario and is required by law.

The extensive public consultation that takes place as part of the forest management planning process means that all stakeholders have a say in how the forest is managed. Individual members of the public are invited to contribute information, discuss the Forest Management Plan with the planning team, and examine the plan at various stages of its development.

The consultation process includes:

- an opportunity for representatives of local stakeholder and interest groups, the general public and Aboriginal communities to participate on a Local Citizens Committee, to assist the planning team in the preparation of a Forest Management Plan
- a formal public consultation process, including public notices, public information centres, and opportunities to review and comment on planning documentation
- provisions for special consultation efforts with Aboriginal communities
- an open and transparent process that encourages direct involvement with stakeholders and interested and affected persons and organizations in the planning of forest operations
- a formal process for the resolution of issues
- an opportunity to request the Director, Environmental Approvals Branch, of the Ministry of the Environment to order an individual environmental assessment of specific forest management activities proposed in a Forest Management Plan.



Get Involved in Ontario's Forest Management Planning Process



With the wide and varied use of Ontario's Crown forests, it is easy to understand how the different perspectives of users of the forest can result in differences of opinion about where and how forest management activities should take place.

The plan author, with the assistance of the planning team, will address any concerns informally through meetings and discussions. This approach often results in changes that alleviate the concerns.

Sometimes, however, concerns cannot be resolved in this informal manner, and the formal issue resolution process is initiated. The plan author will request that the concerned person make a written submission requesting issue resolution, and include a description of the issue and, preferably, a proposed solution. The issue resolution process consists of a series of progressive steps starting with the plan author and ending with the OMNR Regional Director, if required. The issue resolution process is designed to ensure that an issue is dealt with fairly, fully and promptly.

If an issue is still not resolved after the formal issue resolution process, the concerned party can appeal the decision of the OMNR Regional Director by making a request to the Director, Environmental Approvals Branch, Ministry of the Environment for an individual environmental assessment of specific forest management activities proposed in a Forest Management Plan.



The planning team encourages public involvement at any time during the development of a Forest Management Plan. You can make an appointment with the plan author, OMNR Area Forester or Local Citizens Committee representative at any time during the planning process to discuss your interests and concerns.



The Annual Work Schedule

Each year, an Annual Work Schedule is prepared for the management unit. The Annual Work Schedule identifies forest operations from the approved Forest Management Plan such as road construction, harvest, tree planting and aerial spraying that will occur during a particular year.

You can view the Annual Work Schedule on the MNR website (www.ontario.ca/forestplans) or at the local OMNR and forest company offices to see where operations are scheduled to occur.

Amendments to the Forest Management Plan

Changes to a Forest Management Plan are made through an amendment. An amendment may represent a small change to the plan, or it may represent a significant change which requires comprehensive planning and public consultation.

Watch for newspaper notices for consultation opportunities for plan amendments.

You can view the amendments to Forest Management Plans on the MNR website (www.ontario.ca/forestplans) or at the local OMNR and forest company offices.



Monitoring, Reporting and Assessment

Monitoring, reporting and assessment are important components of OMNR's forest management planning system. As the Forest Management Plan is implemented, OMNR and the forest company routinely monitor and report on the implementation of forest operations, and assess the effectiveness of forest operations. These requirements ensure that the Forest Management Plan is being followed, that reports on the results of management activities are produced, and that the effectiveness of management actions in achieving stated objectives and forest sustainability is assessed.

Each year, an Annual Report is prepared for the management unit to summarize activities completed during the year. The Annual Report includes information on:

- the amount of area and volume harvested
- the amount of area site prepared and planted
- natural disturbances, such as forest fires
- road construction and maintenance activities
- the results of the monitoring.

The results of monitoring, reporting and assessment are used to make any necessary adjustments to the long-term management direction and the planning of operations in the next Forest Management Plan.

You can view Annual Reports at the MNR website (www.ontario.ca/forestplans) or at the local OMNR and forest company offices.

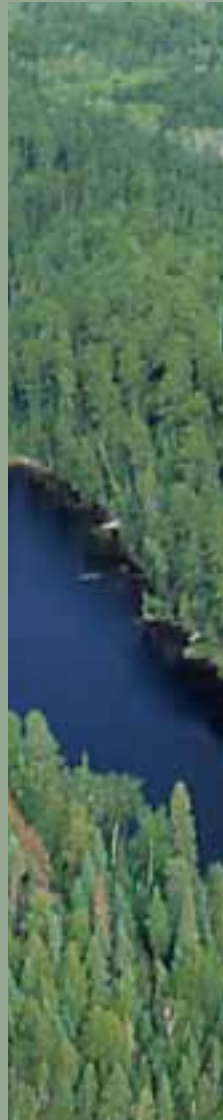
What You Can Do!

The planning team wants to hear from you. There are many opportunities to get involved:

- visit the OMNR Ontario Forests website to find out which Forest Management Plans are being prepared (www.ontarios.ca/forestplans)
- contact the local OMNR office and ensure that you are included on the mailing list for the Forest Management Plan
- make a phone call or arrange a meeting with the OMNR Area Forester, the plan author or a representative of the Local Citizens Committee
- visit the local OMNR or forest company offices
- look for notices in local newspapers for each stage of consultation, particularly supplemental notices for information centres
- view Environmental Bill of Rights registry notices which are posted for each stage of consultation (www.ontario.ca/ebr and enter the keyword "forests")
- attend information centres and speak with planning team or Local Citizens Committee members
- submit completed comment forms at each stage of consultation
- write a letter
- request issue resolution if your concerns cannot be addressed through informal discussions with the plan author and planning team

You can provide:

- benefits you want from the forest
- your interests and concerns with the management of the forest
- resource values information to be considered in the development of the Forest Management Plan
- geographic locations of interest to you
- comments on the information presented at each stage of consultation



CONTACT US

Contact the local OMNR office and ask to speak to the OMNR area forester.

Use the toll free number if required at
1-800-667-1940

www.ontario.ca/forests

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