

Conserve. Restore. Grow.



Our work takes place on the original, treaty, and unceded territories, nations and homelands of Indigenous Peoples. As we work to conserve, restore, and grow Canada’s forests to sustain life and communities, we are committed to ensuring our efforts are informed by natural laws that recognize the inextricable kinship between Indigenous Peoples and the lands we call home. We are striving to find new ways of enhancing the agency and autonomy of Indigenous Peoples to meaningfully collaborate and uphold their responsibilities to the lands, forests and landscapes. Our intent reflects the need to build respectful relations and listen to the advice and needs of Indigenous communities.

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A Message from the Chair & CEO

From Forests Ontario to Forests Canada: Dedicated to Diverse, Resilient, Thriving Forests Across Canada

The past year was a momentous one for our organization. With a history stretching back 75 years with the founding of the Ontario Forestry Association in 1949, Forests Ontario is now Forests Canada.

We became Forests Canada to broaden the scope of our operations, while inspiring collaboration and investment to better conserve, restore and grow forests today and for future generations.

While our work outside of Ontario may be news to you, we have been supporting community engagement and forest restoration work in other provinces for over a decade. At the end of the 2023/2024 planting season, we had facilitated the planting of 46.5 million trees, contributing to 1.1 million hectares of connected forested landscapes through over 8,000 restoration projects across 10 provinces – so we felt the new name better reflected our national impact and the need we saw for the advocacy of healthy forests across Canada.

Our work improves biodiversity and the connectivity of forested landscapes, increases much-needed wildlife habitat, fights the effects of climate change, and fosters a connection to our forests – all while supporting local economies across Canada, which is something that isn’t talked about enough.

The work of Forests Canada and other charitable organizations is integral to more than just the health of people and planet, but also to the economic health of communities across Canada. Forests provide essential environmental and ecosystem services and are a key source of economic prosperity across Canada. Creating thriving forests and ensuring their long-term health creates jobs spanning various restoration roles from seed collection to nursery operations, land prep and planting, maintenance, monitoring and assessments.

As Forests Ontario and now as Forests Canada, we are proud of the impact we make both on the nation’s forested landscapes as well as in the communities we serve – and we are incredibly grateful to all the partners (see pages 17 and 31) we rely on from coast to coast to coast for helping us get to this moment.



Jess Kaknevicius
CEO
Forests Canada



Christine Leduc
Current Chair
Forests Canada

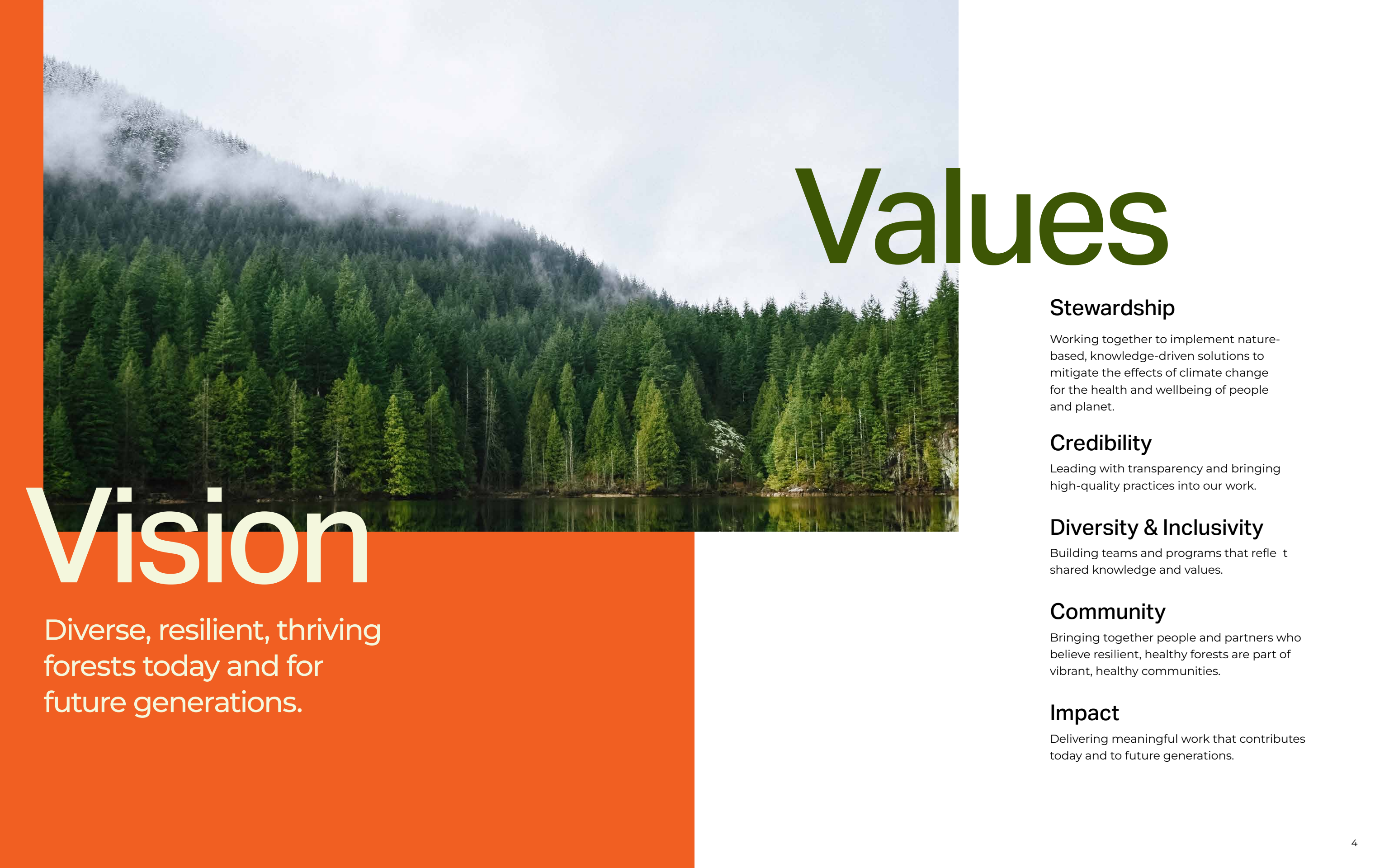


Malcolm Cockwell
Past Chair
Forests Canada

Mission



Together, we conserve, restore, and grow Canada’s forests to sustain life and communities.



Vision

Diverse, resilient, thriving forests today and for future generations.

Values

Stewardship

Working together to implement nature-based, knowledge-driven solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change for the health and wellbeing of people and planet.

Credibility

Leading with transparency and bringing high-quality practices into our work.

Diversity & Inclusivity

Building teams and programs that reflect shared knowledge and values.

Community

Bringing together people and partners who believe resilient, healthy forests are part of vibrant, healthy communities.

Impact

Delivering meaningful work that contributes today and to future generations.



Conserve

To maintain and safeguard forests to support their long-term health and contribution to life and wellbeing.

Working Together to Conserve Canada's Forests

Canada's forests are critical to our everyday lives and part of our national identity.

Healthy, resilient forests do more than just make life possible by giving us the clean air and water we need to thrive, they make life worthwhile by giving us beautiful places to explore and by providing a home to countless creatures great and small.

Every Canadian must come together and decide what kind of future we want for our forests. Just as the decisions of the past have led to biodiversity loss, extreme weather events, and contributed to wildfires, the decisions we make now need to ensure diverse, resilient, thriving forests today and for future generations.

Together, we can take collective action to improve the health of our forests and by extension, the health of our society, our economy, and our communities, from coast to coast to coast.

Thankfully, the work of restoring forest health is about more than just our collective health and wellbeing – our work is also **essential to the economy**. Through our restoration, community and education programs, we provide expertise, reliable investments, and funding support, delivering substantial local impact.

The work of Forests Canada is integral to more than just the health of people and planet, but also to the economic health of communities across the country.

Forests provide essential environmental and ecosystem services and are a key source of economic prosperity across Canada. Creating thriving forests and ensuring their long-term health creates jobs spanning various restoration roles from seed collection to nursery operations, land prep and planting, maintenance, monitoring and assessments.

What motivates people to plant trees with Forests Canada?

We all have different reasons to care about the creation of diverse, resilient, thriving forests. When we asked landowners what motivated them to plant trees with Forests Canada, these were the most popular responses:



The Importance of Stewardship and Maintaining Forest Health



We know long-term forest health and resiliency is on the minds of the many property owners and managers we work with each year through our planting programs. One of the initiatives we continue to promote and educate landowners about is Ontario's Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP). This voluntary program administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources offers a property tax reduction on well-managed forest land in Ontario. Similar programs are available in other Canadian provinces, including the Private Managed Forest Land Program in British Columbia, the Real Estate Tax Reimbursement Program for Certified Forest Producers in Quebec, and the Forest Enhancement Program in Prince Edward Island.

From the annual collection of viable tree seeds ensuring a reliable and consistent supply for future planting projects, to supporting local jobs and inspiring the next generation of forest stewards, Forests Canada understands that it takes a community to grow a forest. We work with a trusted network of partners, landowners, and supporters to ensure the long-term health and resiliency of our forests today, and for future generations.

Forests Canada and our planting partners don't just plant a tree and walk away. For nearly two decades, we've refined our planting model to be a long-term, sustainable program that starts with the collection of native seeds and continues for years until a healthy, young forest emerges.

Forests Canada has worked collaboratively with the Invasive Species Centre and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources to support the development and delivery of a Forest Health Review every year. We are also proud to have a leadership role in bringing together Community Forest Managers and Tree By-Law Officers at an Annual General Meeting each year. These important events gather together forest professionals and practitioners to share challenges and approaches in managing some of our greatest threats to forest health.

Our Forest Recovery System



"Forests are a critical habitat for various species, but are also critical for people. We don't always remember that healthy forests help clean our air and water and support pollination services, while also providing places for us to enjoy, sustain employment and materials for building homes, and so much more."

Jess Kaknevicius, CEO
Forests Canada





Restore

To improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems that have been degraded and damaged.



**Biodiversity
is the variety
of life.**

Biodiversity and Connected Landscapes

Biodiversity is the variety of life. It is important as it contributes to the resilience and integrity of ecosystems, supports ecosystem services such as soil formation, climate regulation, and air quality regulation, and helps ensure that ecosystems can adapt to changes and stresses.

Typically, biodiversity can be measured by the number of different animal and plant species as well as species richness and evenness. Since tree planting is the first step in the long journey to diverse and mature forests, measuring biodiversity takes longer to evaluate, so Forests Canada uses other data as a proxy for biodiversity on these newly planted sites.

To begin, we analyze the number of trees and tree species planted on thousands of planting sites each year. Next, we use Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to look at sites that are planted near a watercourse, riparian area or wetland, or that are near Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Planting near water can provide regulating and supporting ecosystem services, while planting near ANSIs can contribute to the health and longevity of those areas by extending forest cover and creating connectivity.

We also look at connectivity in woodlands, protected areas, grasslands, and large intact forested areas. Having larger connected areas maintains natural ecological processes and allows wildlife the room to access resources, breed, and find habitat. If habitats are fragmented and connectivity is lost, ecological systems and processes can break down.



Finally, we can use Global Biodiversity Information Facility data to identify observations of indicator species near our planting sites. Indicator species are animals (including the Cerulean Warbler, pictured above) or plants that are commonly associated with a particular tree species or ecosystem whose presence indicates strong ecological health and high forest quality.

As we move forward in our efforts to restore our forested landscapes, finding ways to improve landscape connectivity, planting near areas of significant or ecological value, and looking for ways to identify indicator species, will help our efforts to constantly improve and support biodiversity.

Restoring Canada's Forested Landscapes through the Delivery of On-the-Ground Projects

The 2.7 million trees planted in 2024 includes more than 700,000 in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia – which is a new record for Forests Canada. We were able to achieve this milestone thanks to the support of Natural Resources Canada's 2 Billion Trees (2BT) program, individual and corporate donors, and new planting partners across the country.

We don't just plant trees, we enhance **landscape connectivity**, biodiversity, climate change mitigation, and local economies. Every tree we plant serves as a building block for biodiversity and habitat. Over the past 20 years, our planting efforts have contributed to over 1.1 million hectares of connected forest habitat, positively impacted over 200km of riparian and water body edges, and contributed to biodiversity by supporting key indicator species.



Planting the right tree in the right place for the right reason helps to connect forested landscapes and provide benefits beyond just what a single tree on its own could provide.



Over the past 20 years in Ontario alone, our tree planting projects have led to:

	Hectares (ha)
 Riparian Areas 35m within a watercourse	2,772.5
 Natural Woodlands Within 0-1500m	814,587
 Local Connectivity All woodland 0-1500m	1,138,967.2

Thank You to Our Partners

The success of our organization is due to the power of collective action. Forests Ontario could not have grown into Forests Canada without the support and partnership of so many people and organizations. We owe a debt of gratitude to every planting partner, conservation organization, nursery, seed collector, field advisor, community partner, educator, student and volunteer we have worked with over the past 75 years, as well as every landowner, donor, corporate partner, member, Indigenous community, and government who has ever supported our work.

The partnerships that we have built with these people, communities, and organizations have helped us to reach milestones while also sharing knowledge, challenging us to be better, and enabling us to have critical impact on the ground. **Thank you** for being part of this journey. We look forward to the future and continuing to **grow together**.



Collaboration and partnerships are key to our success. Partners bring new knowledge, skills, and ideas to our projects, enabling us to evolve and achieve the best possible outcomes for forests nationwide. Each year, we collaborate with hundreds of partners and thousands of participants across our programs, expanding our reach and impact. Here are just two examples of important partnerships during 2023/2024:

Contributing to a thriving Greenbelt

Our collaboration with the Greenbelt Foundation started in 2022 with the goal of planting 500,000 trees in the Greenbelt over a two-year period. The success of our partnership led to another commitment to support the planting of 250,000 more trees in the Greenbelt in 2025, bringing our total through this collaboration to 750,000 new forests in Ontario's Greenbelt.

"Through this partnership, the Foundation's *1 Million Trees in the Greenbelt* program has already planted 500,000 trees on public and private Greenbelt lands," Edward McDonnell, CEO of the Greenbelt Foundation, says. "We are excited to get another 250,000 in the ground in 2025, bringing us one step closer to our goal. These trees will protect our freshwater systems, enhance biodiversity by preserving habitats for native species, mitigate climate impacts such as flooding, and provide valuable green space for communities."

Some of the goals of the project are to increase tree cover using native species and improve the health and resilience of the Greenbelt's natural heritage systems by engaging with regional and community planting partners, stewardship groups, forestry consultants, and First Nations, to get more trees in the ground and ensure they grow into healthy forests.

Forests Canada Partners with York Region to Provide Trees and Pollinator Wildflower Kits at a Reduced Cost to Residents

Forests Canada, in partnership with The Regional Municipality of York, launched Take Root York Region in 2024. This program provides York Region



residents with the opportunity to purchase native trees and pollinator wildflower kits for their homes and neighbourhoods at a reduced cost, making tree planting accessible and creating more inclusive opportunities to support biodiversity.

"York Region is committed to promoting the planting of native species to help ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. Enhancing the natural environment relies on partnerships with residents to strengthen the ecosystem across the Region," York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson says. "We are pleased to be partnering with Forests Canada on this initiative, which encourages residents to plant native trees, shrubs and plants, and also educates them on the benefits they bring to the environment and communities."



Grow

To connect communities,
support economies, build skills,
and inspire future generations.



The Importance of Seed & Stock

We focus on everything from **seed to survival to sustainability**. This means we are careful about what we plant and where it comes from. We ensure each restoration project is thoughtfully planned and executed according to our guidelines and with long-term success in mind. Additionally, we are committed to training and building the future capacity necessary to plant approximately three million trees each year, and growing them into diverse, resilient, thriving forests.

We are future-proofing restoration efforts and looking for ways to support adaptive practices to ensure we are growing climate resilient forests – and that starts with seed.

Forests Canada's promise of planting the right tree in the right place for the right reason starts with our group of seed collectors who do an extraordinary job forecasting, sourcing and collecting the seed we need to sustain our successful restoration programs. Forests Canada manages a seed bank of over 200 million viable seeds and each year, that bank is revitalized with approximately 12 million seeds acquired through seed and cone collection.

While the seeds of some species of trees and shrubs may be more difficult to acquire due to the natural cycle of seed crops, seed quality, environmental factors or wildlife pressures, we work with our network of trusted partners across the country to ensure alternatives are available.

Forests Canada will continue to work with important partners such as the Forest Gene Conservation Association and Canadian Tree Nursery Association, while we cultivate new relationships across Canada to ensure our partner nurseries have the seed they need to provide inventory for projects coast to coast to coast.



Tree Seed Diversity Program

Forests Canada is in its fourth year of the 10-year Tree Seed Diversity Program agreement with the City of Toronto. We are proud to partner with the City of Toronto to enhance the genetic diversity and resiliency of the city's forests, parks, ravines, river valleys, meadows and wetlands.

We continue to build capacity and support a consistent supply of source-identified planting stock for the city's restoration undertakings. Another allotment of stock was planted in fall 2024 by the City of Toronto's field crews and volunteers in restoration programs.

While the focus of this important collaboration is to secure and provide a reliable and consistent supply of source identified, adaptive native plant material for the city's Urban Forestry division, the program also includes native seed forecasting, seed collection, tracking, monitoring, and coordination to grow the stock.

In fact, Forests Canada has so far banked close to two million viable seeds for Toronto's Tree Seed Diversity Program, sourcing them from a variety of appropriate areas (ecodistricts) that will benefit the landscape of Canada's largest city for years to come.

Inspiring the Next Generation



People who know about forests, care about forests. Our education programs reach over 4,000 students annually, fostering a **lifelong connection and passion for Canada’s forests**. The youth inspired by our natural landscapes may one day pursue forest careers, which are crucial to the ongoing health of forest restoration projects.

2024 Ontario Envirothon champions headed to New York State

In the spring of 2024, 78 teams from high schools across Ontario competed in environmentally themed regional events that led 17 teams to meet at the University of Waterloo from May 26 to 29. From that series of training workshops, testing, and judged presentations, Grand River Region’s Waterloo Collegiate Institute came out on top as the 2024 Ontario Envirothon champions.

All teams showcased their knowledge of Ontario Envirothon’s four core topics – forestry, soils, wildlife, and aquatic ecosystems and soils – along with the special topic of “Biodiversity in a Changing Climate” for 2024.

From the 17 teams that advanced to the provincial competition, the three top-ranking teams were:

First Place:
Waterloo Collegiate Institute, Grand River Region, Team 17

Second Place:
University of Toronto Schools, Toronto Region, Team 10

Third Place:
University of Toronto Schools, Toronto Region, Team 2

Forests Ontario Celebrates 30 Years of Ontario Envirothon

For the past 30 years, Ontario Envirothon has helped create the next generation of environmental stewards by providing students with hands-on experiences in the areas of aquatic ecology, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current environmental issues, as well as team-based activities designed to develop critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, leadership, and communication skills.

Ontario Envirothon has reached over 10,000 students since 1994, and it wouldn’t be the success that it is without the efforts of the program’s educators, volunteers, judges, and sponsors, including lead sponsor Maple Leaves Forever, whose support means the world to Forests Canada and all the students that benefit from the program.

“As lead agency of the Ontario Envirothon, we are proud to help the next generation of environmental leaders learn about the environment and hone their STEM skills. We are grateful for the tireless efforts of the volunteers, teachers and sponsors who have made this unique program possible and excited to see how these youth will continue on in their environmental journey in the next stage of their lives.”

Jess Kaknevicius, CEO
Forests Canada



By the Numbers

2.7+ million

The total number of trees that Forests Canada supported the planting of during the 2023/2024 planting season

600

The number of unique landowners that took part in Forests Canada’s planting programs during the 2023/2024 planting season

59

The number of unique tree species planted during Forests Canada’s 2023/2024 planting season

2,977

The number of trees distributed to residents of Guelph and York region – to go along with 418 wildflower kits – at Take Root events in 2023/2024

1,400+

The number of donations to Forests Canada in 2023/2024 from individuals, corporate partners, non-profits, and government supporters

46+ million

The all-time number of trees that Forests Canada has supported the planting of to date

22,000+

The all-time number of forested hectares that Forests Canada has supported the planting of to date

390

The number of students that took part in the 2024 Ontario Envirothon, which included 78 teams, 10 different regional events, and the first in-person provincial finals since 2018

1,685

The number of students that took part in Forests Canada’s Forestry in the Classroom program in 2023/2024, bringing the all-time total to more than 14,000

30

The number of years that the Ontario Envirothon celebrated in 2024



Statement of Operations

Revenue	Sep-24	%
Government Funding	\$8,424,388	69%
Individuals & Corporate	\$654,805	5%
Not-for-Profits & Charities	\$2,620,366	22%
Investments & other revenue	\$424,828	4%
TOTAL	\$12,124,387	
Expenses		
Programs	\$10,028,155	86%
Communications & Development	\$699,578	6%
Office & General	\$747,270	6%
Professional & Consulting Fees	\$189,252	2%
TOTAL	\$11,664,255	
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$460,132	

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	Sep-24	%
Total Cash & Investments	\$6,597,312	89%
Accounts Receivable	\$264,282	4%
Inventory & Prepaid Expenses	\$448,751	6%
Fixed Assets	\$73,214	1%
TOTAL	\$7,383,559	
Liabilities		
Trade Payables & Program Commitments	\$1,864,004	39%
Deferred Program Revenue	\$2,950,545	61%
TOTAL	\$4,814,549	



Staff

- Aidan O'Brien

GIS/Database Analyst
- Allison Hands

Education Program Manager
- Amber Brant

Tree Planting Resource Manager - RCC
- Amy Howitt

Program Coordinator
- Brittany Haines

Development and Events Coordinator
- Brooke

Senior

McClelland

Coordinator, Donations & Membership
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Restoration Program Coordinator
- Elizabeth Jarrett

Chief Operating Officer
- Emily Hart

Public Engageent and Operations Manager
- Hilary Wright

Funder Stewardship Coordinator
- Jessica Kaknevicius

Chief Executive Officer
- Joana Carreira

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- Kim Sellers

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Giving Partnerships Manager
- Madeleine Bray

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- Meghan Clout

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Events Coordinator
- Nick Courtney

Restoration Programs Manager
- Sandra Iacobelli

Director of Marketing & Communications
- Sarah Barker

Project Manager, RCC
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Accounting Coordinator
- Sylvia Nelson

Office Manager
- Teri Hoang

Restoration and Stewardship Coordinator
- Tewodros (Ted) Alemayehu

GIS/Database Technician
- Tracy Culleton

Chief Development Officer
- Val Deziel

Director of Restoration Programs

- Field Advisors and Consultants
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Field Advisor
- Jim Hendry

Field Advisor
- Brent Attwell

Field Advisor
- Peter Gagnon

Field Advisor
- Chris McGee

Seed Advisor
- Peter Kuitenbrouwer

Editor, Our Forest
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Forestry Specialist
- Dean Assinewe

RCC Indigenous Support Lead
- Season Snyder

Grasslands Coordinator - Consultant
- Thomas Haney

Bilingual Communications Support
- Sarah Wylie

Legacy Accounting
- Sue Cumming

Legacy Accounting
- Waasekom Niin

Indigenous Knowledge Advisor

Board

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Director
- Gail Beggs

Past Director
- Bob Hyland

Past Director
- David Sisam

Past Director
- Riet Verheggen

Past Director



Thank you to everyone who supported our vision of diverse, resilient, thriving forests today and for future generations.

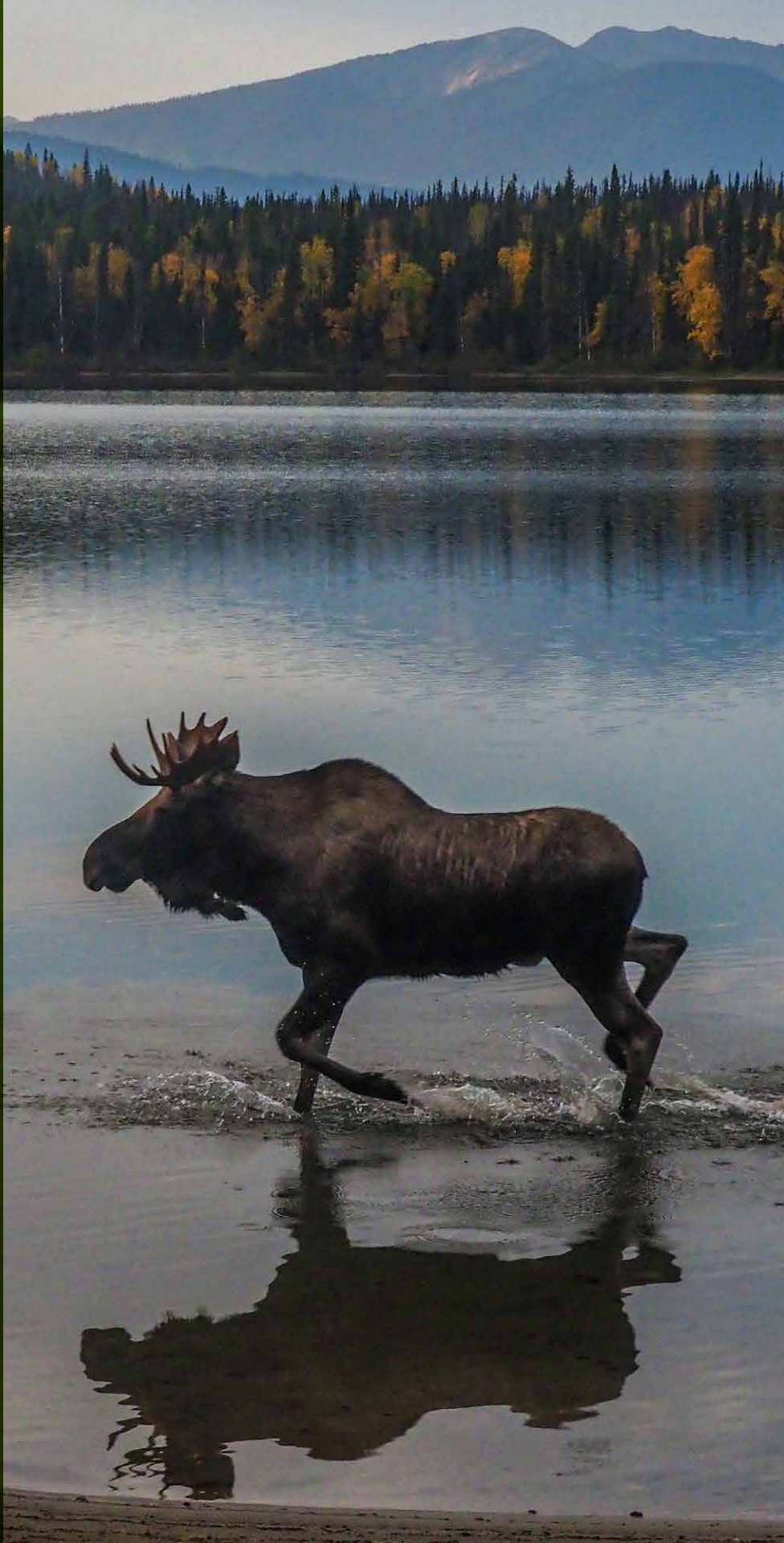


Ken Jewett



Algonquin Forestry Authority	Flavelle Family Foundation	PUR Projet
Anew	Flemming College	Resolute FP Canada
Avenza Systems	Forest Gene Conservation Association	Resorts of Ontario
Backcountry Hut Company	Forest History Ontario	Silvacom
Blachford	Forests Products Association of Canada	Somerville Nurseries Inc.
Brinkman Reforestation	Four Season Sunrooms	Sustainable Forest Industry
Busch Systems	Governors and Premiers of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence	TH Industrial Solutions
Canada Forest Trust	Haliburton Forest	Thompson Emergency Freight Systems
Canada Life Reinsurance	Invasive Species Centre	Toyota Motor Canada
Canadian Heritage	Kayanase Greenhouse	Upper Grand District School Board
Canadian Institute of Forestry	Lavern Heideman & Sons Ltd.	Westwind Forests Stewardship Inc.
Canadian Tree Nursery Association	Liberation Tours	Weyerhaeuser Canada
Centre for Research & Innovation in the Bio-Economy	Libro Credit Union	Wildlife Habitat Canada
Charities Aid Foundation	Limberlost Forest	
City of Temiskaming Shores	Maple Cross Fund	
Conservation Ontario	Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade	
County of Simcoe	Midmark Corp	
DCM	Nawiinginokiima Forest Management Corp	
Diversified Communications Canada	Nelson Arthur Hyland Foundation	
Domtar	Ontario Woodlot Association	
Dundee Recycling	Planet	
Durham College	PRT Growing Services Ltd.	
EcoCanada	Peterborough K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation	
Evergreen Thrift Store	Project Learning Tree	
Ferguson Tree Nursery		
Ferox by Fabian Reis		
First Resource Management Group		





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