

2021 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Thanks to our members, donors, corporate sponsors, planting partners, nurseries, seed collectors, First Nations, and community organizations, we had an amazing year. While we are incredibly proud of our accomplishments as an organization, we know full well we couldn't have done it without the support of our partners as well as our staff, Board members and volunteers.

For our 50 Million Tree Program, Forests Ontario and our partners announced that we had planted 2.5 million native tree seedlings across the province this past planting season. Through all our restoration initiatives to date, we have planted more than 41 million trees – which is more than one for every single person in Canada.

Also this year, we signed a three-year Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada for the 2 Billion Trees Program, and along with several of our partners, joined the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson in Ottawa to announce this important partnership. Forests Ontario has developed the expertise and infrastructure to grow and track tree planting from seed to successful forest, and we are the only Canadian charity that addresses each stage of this process to ensure our collective tree planting efforts result in healthy, diverse forests. We are excited to be contributing to the federal government's 2 Billion Trees commitment and know these trees and forests will benefit communities across our country for generations to come.

There was also good news from our Grasslands Stewardship Initiative (GSI), which is administered through our Grasslands Ontario division. The GSI program provides awareness and support towards the creation, enhancement, and maintenance of grassland habitat. Now in its fourth year, the GSI supported 37 projects in the management of over 475 hectares of grasslands with 19 delivery partners over the past 12 months. Projects ranged in activities from delayed haying and hayfield enhancement to the creation of native grassland across Southern Ontario.

Throughout the year, our Education & Awareness team empowered the next generation of forestry leaders. Our Forestry in the Classroom program reached 1,889

students and educators, and the 6th annual York Region Tree Bee engaged with another 247. Forests Ontario also hosted virtual educator workshops to share knowledge and expertise about forest management, updated and redesigned Teacher Toolbox resources, and proudly supported the 2022 Ontario Envirothon winners from St. Elizabeth Catholic school as they travelled to Ohio to represent the province at the NCE-Envirothon.

While our in-school and extracurricular learning programs encourage green leadership across all grade levels and ages, broader public education is also an important part of our It Takes A Forest (ITAF) initiative, which provides fact-based information on Ontario's forests, the sustainable management of these forests, and the health and economic values they provide. ITAF successfully broadened its reach through the expansion of its growing billboard network, with new billboards erected in Northern Ontario in collaboration with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), and the Canadian Wood Council.

It was also a successful year of collaboration with our corporate partners. Forests Ontario staff members visited the Cabela's store in Barrie to celebrate National Forest Week and a generous \$100,000 grant from the Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund in support of Forests Ontario's 50 Million Tree Program. We also announced that we were expanding our Reconciliation Community Tree Plant program, and The Healing Place project, thanks to a generous contribution of \$450,000 over three years from TD Bank Group. Our year was also brightened by the generous support of other corporate partners, including Imperial, Maple Leaf Foods, Alectra Utilities, Honda Canada Foundation, and many more.

While all these achievements paint a rosy picture of a productive year, we would be remiss in not pointing out that we are living in the midst of a global climate and biodiversity crisis, the result of cumulative unsustainable decisions and actions. According to the UN's State of the Global Climate, the past eight years have been the hottest on record. Regardless of the exact cause of the

climate crisis and biodiversity loss in Ontario, we need to protect the natural infrastructure we have, and expand our forests, wetlands and grasslands to continue to build climate change resiliency. Creating healthy, new forests and grasslands is one of the most effective, nature-based solutions in combating climate change, and our communities need them now more than ever.

Another way we are hoping to fight climate change is by inspiring action to grow a healthy tomorrow at our 2023 Annual Conference in February. Rocket scientist Natalie Panek, will be joined by Ingo Ensminger, global change researcher; Christian Messier, Canada Research Chair in Forest Resilience to Global Changes; and Megan Baskerville, Environment and Climate Change Canada physical scientist, among many other leading experts. We know there is much more that can and must be done, but we hope our conference sets a positive tone for the coming year.

We believe that a healthy, natural environment is essential to supporting a healthy economy and healthy communities. We thank you for taking part in this journey with us and for helping to build a better future for generations to come.

All the best to you and yours in the coming year,



Malcolm Cockwell

President and Chair

Forests Ontario and Forest Recovery Canada



Rob Keen, RPF

CEO

Forests Ontario and Forest Recovery Canada



Malcolm Cockwell
President and Chair



Rob Keen
CEO

WHO WE ARE



From helping to clean the air we breathe and filter the water we drink, to improving the biodiversity of our ecosystems and nurturing pollinator habitats, our natural landscapes play an integral role in our health and well-being.

Forests Ontario is the province's leading charity dedicated to the creation, preservation, and maintenance of forest and grassland habitats. Our ambitious, large-scale tree planting initiatives, extensive educational programs, and decades of community outreach result in millions of trees being planted each year. Together with our national division, Forest Recovery Canada, we work with our many partners across the country to plant native trees and ensure our efforts today thrive and grow into tomorrow's diverse, healthy, and resilient forests.

As the voice for our forests, Forests Ontario has developed the expertise and infrastructure to grow and track tree planting from seed to successful forests, and we are the only Canadian charity with this capability.

In collaboration with our many planting partners, we have planted more than 41 million trees since 2004, and have created, enhanced, and maintained more than 1,000 hectares of grasslands.

This year marks a special milestone for Forests Ontario, as we celebrate a new partnership with the Government of Canada's 2 Billion Trees Program, helping to further our capacity to increase forest cover in communities across Ontario and nationally. We know our forests are needed now more than ever, and we are dedicated to ensuring a greener, cleaner, and healthier future for generations to come.

VISION

Ontario's forested landscapes sustain biodiversity, healthy people, and a healthy economy.

MISSION

Be the voice for our forests by supporting forest restoration, stewardship, education, and awareness.

RESTORATION

We don't just plant trees, we grow forests. Forests Ontario's restoration efforts continue to support the planting of nearly three million trees per year, increasing integral forest cover in communities across the province and nationally. With the addition of our Grasslands Ontario division in 2018, the Grassland Stewardship Initiative aims to protect and recover populations of species at risk by enhancing ecosystem resilience and adaptation in the face of new and mounting environmental challenges.

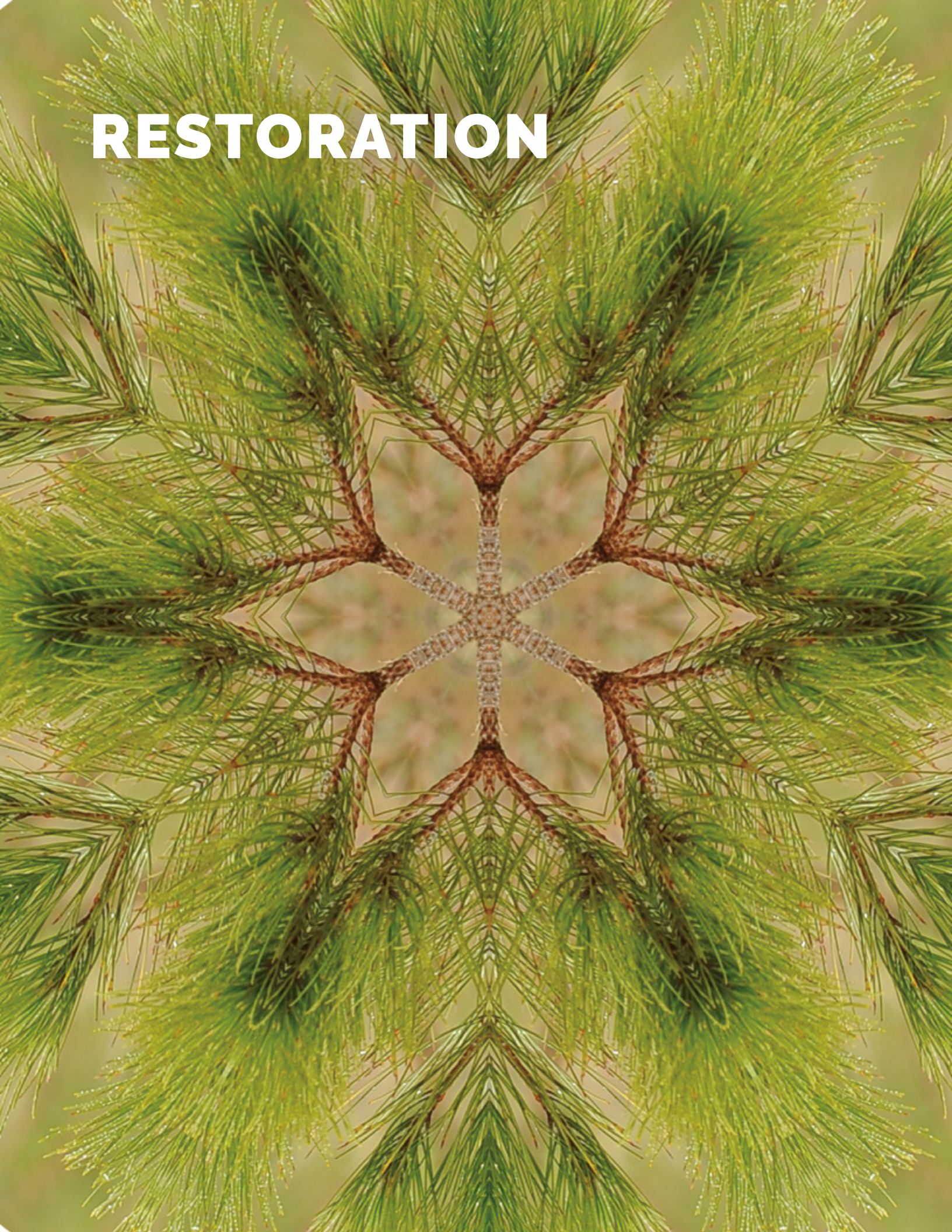
FOREST EDUCATION

Fostering future environmental stewards, Forests Ontario's education programs empower youth and educators to understand, appreciate and learn about our natural ecosystems through various interactive presentations, learning tools, resources, and materials.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

While it has been well-documented that new, thriving forests offer one of the most important, sustainable, nature-based solutions to mitigate the impacts of climate change, less is often written about the incredible health and wellness benefits our natural landscapes provide. Forests Ontario celebrates the greenspaces in which we live, work and play, and champions the universal importance and benefits of sustainable forest management in our communities, our economies, and our daily lives.

RESTORATION

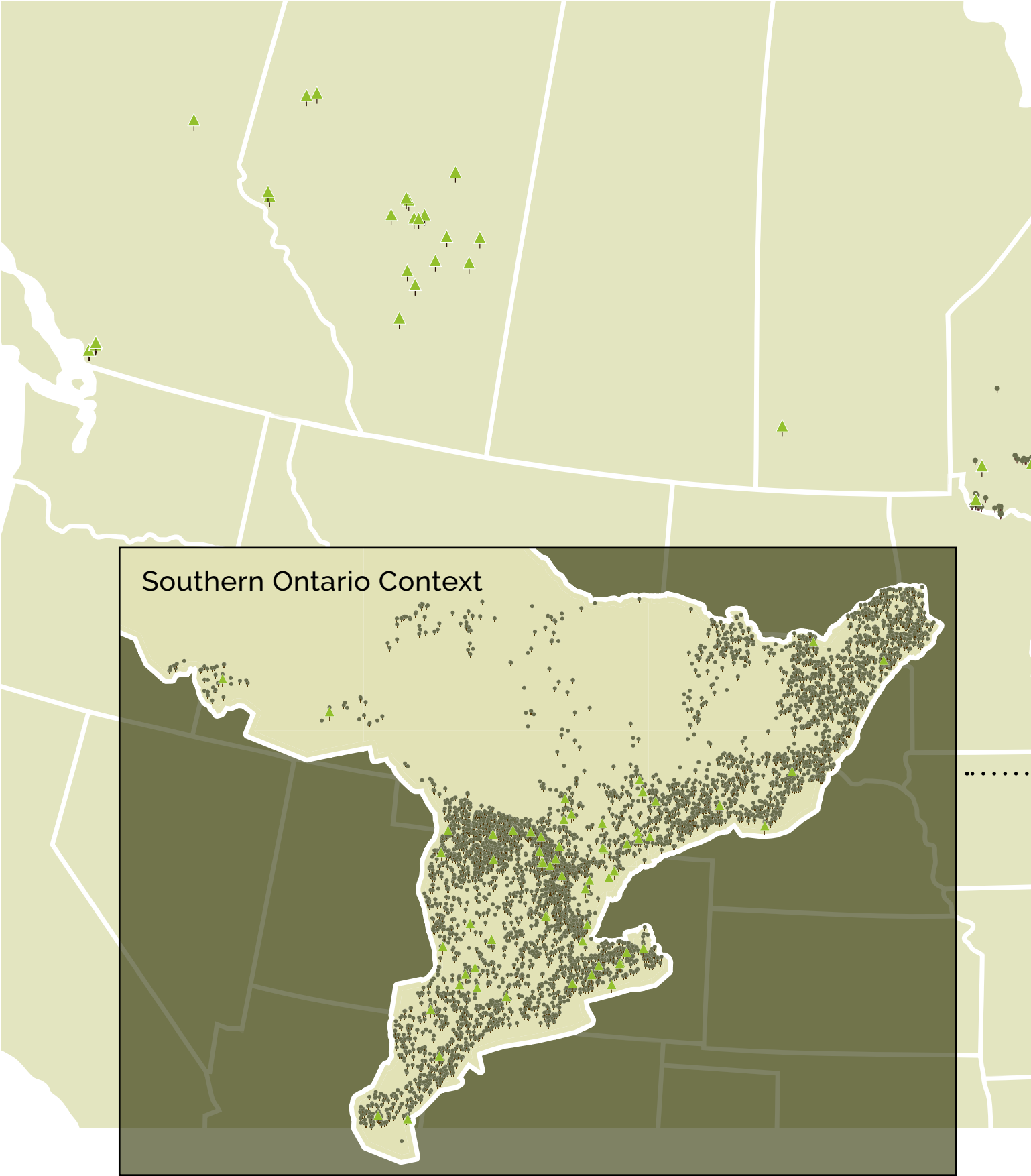


41+ million trees

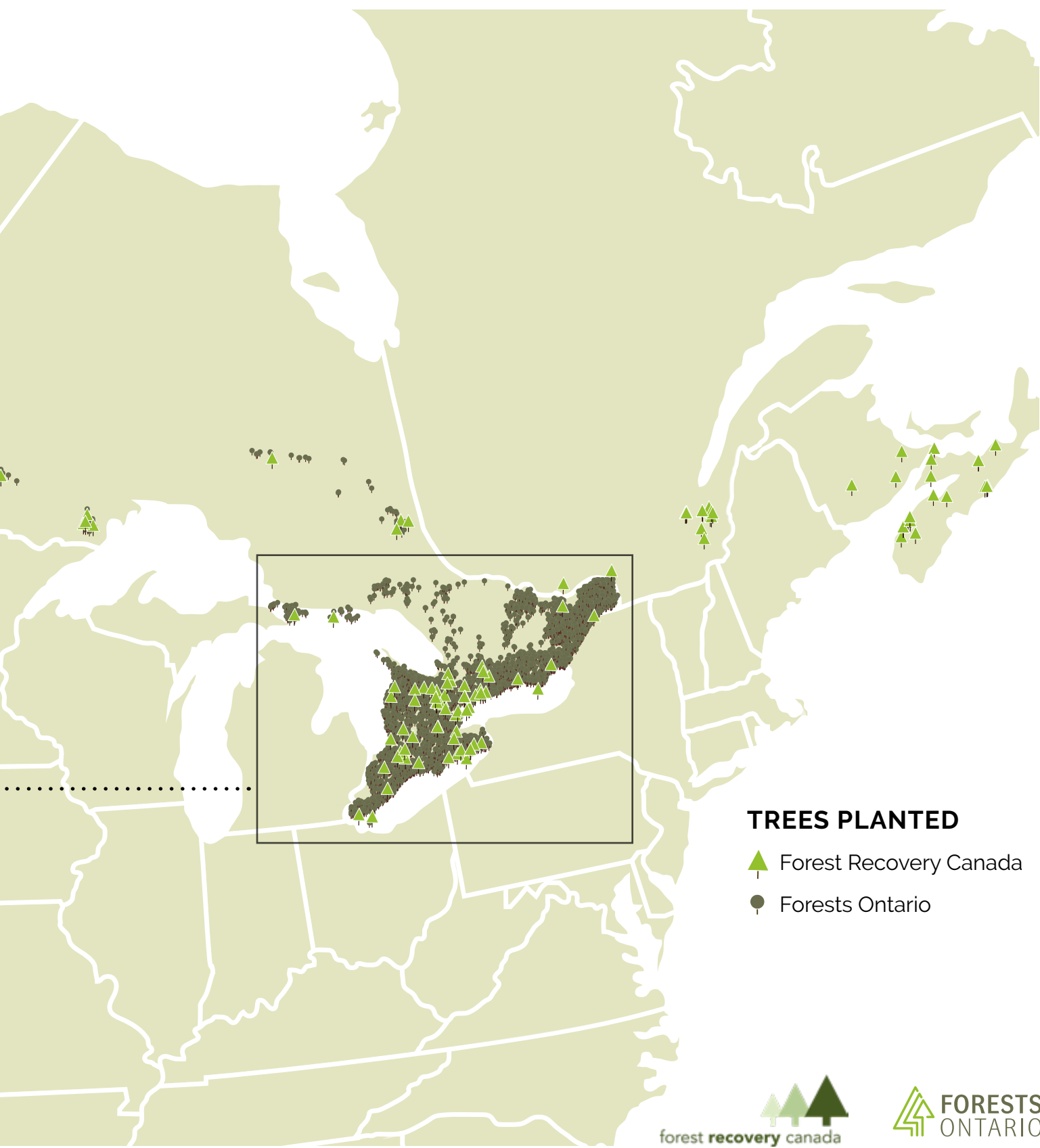
We have planted over 41 million trees - more than one for every person in Canada!



Together with our comprehensive network of partners, Forests Ontario and Forest



Recovery Canada has planted more than **41 million trees** and counting!





Pictured (left to right): The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources, and Rob Keen, Chief Executive Officer, Forests Ontario. Photo: Natural Resources Canada

2 BILLION TREES PROGRAM

On September 15, 2022, Forests Ontario received a signed Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada for the 2 Billion Trees Program (2 BTP). This three-year agreement (2022- 2025) will help support 50 Million Tree Program planting activities to meet a target of 7.2 million trees planted by Spring 2025.

Afforestation

Planting trees on land that is mostly open with no previous tree cover. This can include marginal or abandoned farmland that was logged historically.



Riparian

Planting sites that line the edges of waterbodies to improve water quality and habitat while stabilizing stream banks.



Forests Ontario is working together with our network of partners to build and enhance the uniquely comprehensive approach to tree planting that the 50 Million Tree Program offers, supporting the entire process from seed to survival.

50 MILLION TREE PROGRAM

Forests Ontario's 50 Million Tree Program (50 MTP) was introduced in 2007. By significantly reducing the costs of large-scale tree planting on private property, the 50 MTP has helped landowners on more than 6,800 sites improve the health of their local environment, boost wildlife habitat, enhance recreational opportunities, increase land value, support sustainable solutions to climate change, and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Forests Ontario and its partners planted 2.5 million native tree seedlings across the province during the 2022 planting season, bringing the program total to 36.7 million trees planted.

Spring 2023 will mark the last year of support from our current agreement (2020-2023) with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), and the second year of the 2 Billion Trees Program agreement. This will allow for the continuation of ongoing planting activities that are essential in maintaining program delivery and building capacity to meet future planting targets.

Windbreak

Planting rows of trees that reduce windspeeds and act as wildlife corridors.



Restoration

Planting to restore native forests and habitat following damage from fires, weather, or invasive species.





HIGHWAY OF HEROES TREE CAMPAIGN

Forests Ontario has been proud to partner with the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign to create a living tribute to Canadian veterans and their families. Our partnership started in 2019 and helped reduce tree planting costs for eligible landowners living within 30 kilometres of the Highway 401 corridor running between Windsor and Cornwall.

In 2022, the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign surpassed its goal to plant over two million trees to honour every Canadian who served in the country's Armed Forces. Launched in 2015, the campaign is the world's largest living tribute with nearly 2.5 million trees planted in total over 825 planting locations across Ontario.

Forests Ontario is privileged to have played such a significant role in helping the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign surpass its goal. Thanks to our many planting partners, and to the landowners who participated in this important program, Forests Ontario planted more than two million trees on 700 sites along Highway 401 over the past three years.

GREENBELT FOUNDATION

Utilizing the successful partnership model established with the Highway of Heroes Campaign, Forests Ontario planted more than 246,000 trees on 71 sites in partnership with the Greenbelt Foundation (GBF) - creating 135 hectares of new forest to enhance forest cover, boost wildlife habitat and biodiversity, and improve the health of the Greenbelt community. The funding and outreach support provided by the GBF has shown to increase engagement and uptake among 50 MTP participants.

Forests Ontario is looking forward to our continued partnership with the GBF, working together to ensure the project meets its overall target of 500,000 trees planted in the Greenbelt over two years.

COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGERS / TREE BY-LAW OFFICERS NETWORK

The Community Forest Managers and Tree By-Law Officers (CFM/TBO) network consists of community forest managers, tree-by-law officers, municipal representatives, forest technicians and others across Ontario who have a common interest in forestry and general information sharing. The group, supported by Forests Ontario, has exclusive access to relevant forestry information, resources, and news. Each year, this group holds an annual general meeting. The current goal of the CFM/TBO network is to increase membership and geographic representation.

TREE MARKER TRAINING PROGRAM

Forests Ontario works in partnership with the Canadian Institute of Forestry to deliver the Ontario Tree Marker Training Program on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Tree markers help care for forests and enhance biodiversity by carefully selecting trees for harvest or retention based upon several factors. Tree Marker Training courses teach forest ecology and Ontario forest management practices, and Level 1 certification is mandatory for all tree markers working on Crown land.



SEED COLLECTION AND FORECASTING

Forests Ontario has taken the initiative to become informed about best practices for seed acquisition now and into the future. It is imperative to be aware and make educated decisions about the impacts a changing climate will have on species selection and where to source seed in order to create healthy, thriving forests on the landscape well into the future.

Our current group of seed collectors do an extraordinary job sourcing and collecting what we need to sustain a successful afforestation tree program in the province of Ontario, and they must be compensated and given the tools to meet these challenges. Forests Ontario's promise of planting the right tree in the right place and for the right reason is a testament to the many partners who contribute to our unparalleled infrastructure of managing seed to successful forest.

Federal funding continues to support Forests Ontario's growing seed acquisition program, which saw the employment of more than 40 provincial seed and cone collectors, with approximately 12 million viable seeds acquired this year. In total, our seed bank is comprised of 205 million viable seeds.

Forests Ontario will continue to work with partners, such as the Forest Gene Conservation Association, to develop guidelines for seed forecasting and procurement.

SEED DIVERSITY PROGRAM

The importance of planting native source-identified trees in our growing urban communities has been well-documented. Forests Ontario has been at the forefront of planting source appropriate stock for many years. We are fortunate to be able to share our knowledge and work closely with partners across the country to support the health and biodiversity of our urban ecosystems.

Forests Ontario is a year into the Seed Diversity Program initiative with the City of Toronto, and our ultimate goal is to strengthen the biodiversity of natural spaces found across Canada's largest city. This 10-year partnership will secure a variety of native, high-quality, source appropriate stock that will support the City's various forest restoration planting programs. This year, stock was utilized by the City of Toronto that had been initiated specifically for this project.

With the approved expansion of acceptable ecodistricts as appropriate seed sources within the City of Toronto, Forests Ontario collaborated with its network of certified



seed collectors, throughout parts of Southern Ontario, to forecast and collect source-identified seeds. We continue to develop and expand the seed bank of storable native tree and shrubs species to allow for seed supply security well into the future. Further work is necessary to expand the viability duration for some species and methods to improve overall germination.

We foresee a great need for source identified planting material for many municipalities in Ontario and will continue to reach out and promote our successful Seed Diversity Program model over the coming years

FOREST RECOVERY CANADA

Forest Recovery Canada, Forests Ontario's national division, works with sponsors to deliver large-scale tree planting programs across Canada with an emphasis on increasing forest connectivity, and helping our sponsors and restoration partners in reaching their tree planting objectives.

In 2022, Forest Recovery Canada projects supported the planting of over 357,000 trees across six provinces. Forest Recovery Canada supporters include Honda Canada Foundation, Tree Canada, and a private family foundation.

GRASSLANDS ONTARIO

Grasslands Ontario, a division of Forests Ontario, provides support towards the creation, enhancement, and maintenance of grassland habitat across Ontario through the Grassland Stewardship Initiative (GSI). The GSI aims to protect and recover populations of species at risk - Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark - with added benefits including improved soil quality and carbon capture. Grasslands Ontario projects typically occur on farmlands, conservation areas, and nature reserves.

The Grassland Stewardship Initiative (GSI) is now in its fourth year. In 2022, GSI supported 37 projects in the management of over 475 hectares of grasslands with 19 delivery partners. Projects ranged in activities from delayed haying and hayfield enhancement, to the creation of native grassland across Southern Ontario. One such project included the McArthur Flats in partnership with Couchiching Conservancy - a 92.8 hectare delayed haying site with three farmers conserving key habitat in Ramara Township for the recovery of Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark observed breeding in this region.



Photo: G. A. Morris



Photo: G. A. Morris

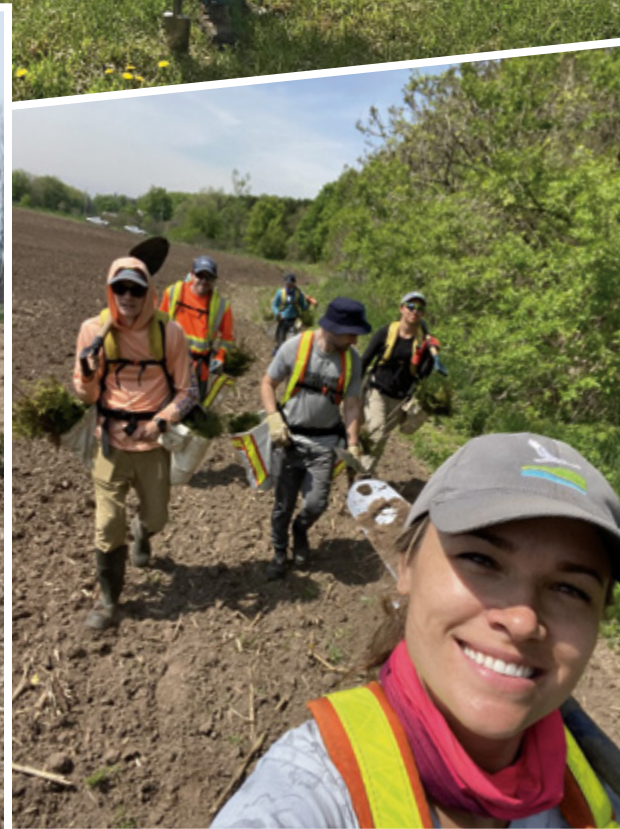


Photo: Chelsea Marcantonio

OUR DELIVERY PARTNERS

Thank you to the nurseries, seed and cone collectors, and planting partners whose expertise, hard work and collaboration enabled Forests Ontario to complete another successful planting season. Together, we are growing greener communities for generations to come.





We do more than plant trees, we grow forests.

We are the only Canadian charity that tracks projects from **seed** to **successful forest**.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



2021 DISTILLERY WINTER VILLAGE

Forests Ontario and its network sourced a beautiful 55-foot Silver Fir as the centerpiece tree for The Distillery Winter Village in Toronto. The tree was adorned with 60,000 lights, over 600 ornaments, and two kilometres of garland, and was installed with the help of Shady Lane Tree Care Experts. Forests Ontario CEO and RPF, Rob Keen, participated in a special tree lighting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the popular event and spoke onstage alongside representatives from The Distillery Historic District, Mayor of Toronto John Tory, MPP Chris Glover, and, of course, Santa Clause! The Distillery Historic District also announced their donation of \$5,000 towards Forests Ontario's future planting efforts.

Christmas trees and wreaths were sold online via Forests Ontario's website with all 390 products selling out in just three days! Staff gathered to deliver a contactless, drive-thru pick-up during one day of the Distillery Winter Village.



2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Forests Ontario's 2022 Annual Conference, *Strength in Biodiversity*, took place virtually from February 9-11, and attracted over 800 attendees. The online platform provided a central event space for sessions, speaker and attendee interactions, sponsorship and exhibitor engagement, a virtual photobooth, musical and video entertainment, and other interactive activities including a Treevia competition, Play to Win Challenges and the introduction of Kumospace for online networking.

Capitalizing on the necessity to host virtual events provided the opportunity to gather a wide range of speakers and attendees from across the country, delivering a truly national Annual Conference. Attendees logged in from Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, Vermont, and Montana. Speakers in attendance presented from Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Sweden, and Mexico. The virtual format continued to encourage support and participation by new companies and organizations.

The event addressed some of the misconceptions around forestry and climate change, as well as provided well-rounded perspectives on current biodiversity challenges and important actions to consider. With opening remarks provided by Larry McDermott, of Plenty Canada, and the keynote address by Steve Hounsell, Chair of the Ontario Biodiversity Council, the conference featured five main sessions and brought together panelists who shared their expertise, values, and perspectives, and explored topics on sustainable forest management, various scales of biodiversity, forest values, current wildfire challenges across the country, and the parallel of sustainable forestry in the fight against climate change.

The Conference Awards Ceremony wrapped up day two and celebrated the 10 Ontario Tree Marking Program founders (recipients of the Forests Ontario Award), as well as Eric & Barb Boysen (awarded the Robert de Pencier Award), among other winners. Presentations of the awards were provided by senior government staff including Monique Rolf von den Baumen-Clark, then Deputy Minister, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

Forests Ontario's second annual stand-alone Forest Health Showcase also took place as part of the 2022 Annual Conference. The session, presented in partnership with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), attracted nearly 400 attendees and featured six speaker presentations. Additionally, Forests Ontario's Student-Employer

Engagement Day (SEED), ran concurrently with main conference sessions. The 4th annual SEED event brought together more than 180 high school and post-secondary students, recent graduates, and prospective employers from five provinces. Presenters explored employment trends within the forest sector and provided advice and insight to the next generation of forest stewards.

THE HEALING PLACE / RECONCILIATION COMMUNITY TREE PLANT

Created as an opportunity to share lived experiences and knowledge, Forests Ontario partners with First Nations communities and other organizations across the province to deliver our Reconciliation Community Tree Plant (RCTP) program. Activities from this past year include six community-focused events bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants in the Truth and Reconciliation process through restoration projects.

Financial support for the program has also increased with TD Bank Group making a generous commitment to expand The Healing Place model, providing an even greater opportunity to create further locations across Ontario. The Healing Place was designed to reflect and represent practices recognized by both western science and Indigenous knowledge systems. Building upon the success of the first Healing Place that launched in 2020 on the traditional territories of the Algonquin and Mohawk Nations in eastern Ontario, new community spaces inspired by reflection and recovery among nature are planned for the coming years.

COMMUNITY TREE PLANT

Community Tree Plant events are designed to bring together families, community members, organizations, sponsors, and partners in local community-driven reforestation projects, and champions environmental stewardship among all ages and cultures. A number of community and corporate events were held including a return to Forests Ontario's signature annual spring Community Tree Plant that took place this year just outside of Ottawa. Corporate partner events were also held with Canopy Growth and Imperial Oil, encouraging and engaging their employees in local tree planting within their communities.



Pictured (left to right): Forests Ontario's Elizabeth Celanowicz with Carole Smith of Kayanase.



Pictured (left to right): Forests Ontario's Emily Hart with Kerdo Deer and Victoria Difede of Kayanase.



Pictured (left to right) Federal MP for Ottawa Centre, Yasir Naqvi, with Forests Ontario CEO and RPF, Rob Keen.



Forests Ontario's Kim Sellers with the Cabela's Barrie store team.

NATIONAL FOREST WEEK ACTIVATIONS

Among the many activities celebrating National Forest Week this year, Forests Ontario staff visited the Cabela's store in Barrie to announce their corporate support of the 50 Million Tree Program. The Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund is supported by the company's 200 million customers who round up their purchase in-store and online at checkout, helping to shape the future growth and health of our outdoors and all who love it. The grant to Forests Ontario supports the creation, conservation, and maintenance of new forests across the province.

“Our Outfitters are **dedicated to the conservation movement** and have been incredibly excited to rally our customers to support the Outdoor Fund. It was a great opportunity for them to meet the Forests Ontario team and learn more about the 50 Million Tree Program.”

- Holly Jones, General Manager, Cabela's Barrie

HERITAGE TREE

The Heritage Tree Program collects and tells the stories of Ontario's diverse and unique trees. Launched in 2009 in partnership between Forests Ontario and the Ontario Urban Forest Council, the program aims to increase awareness of the social, cultural, and ecological value

of trees in Ontario. To be accepted into this program, nominated trees must be culturally significant, be associated with a historic person or event, and/or be growing on land that is historically significant. To date, 110 trees have been recognized through the Heritage Tree Program.

This year saw seven new heritage trees approved into the program:

- American Sycamores (windrow of 5), Lindsay
- Red Oak, Masaryk Memorial Institute, Toronto
- Red Oak, Kew Gardens, Toronto
- Northern Catalpa, Etobicoke
- White Oak, Bronte Creek Provincial Park, Oakville
- Black Walnut, Cannington
- Ironwood, Ridgeway Battlefield Park, Stoney Creek



White Oak, Bronte Creek Provincial Park.

FORESTS ONTARIO MEMBERSHIP – A GROWING LEGACY

When you become a member of Forests Ontario, you are helping us grow greener, healthier communities. Membership support ensures we continue to take positive collective action to help fight the damaging effects of climate change, increase wildlife habitats and biodiversity, purify water systems, improve soil quality, and ensure a healthier future for ourselves, our families, and our planet.

Join supporters like Bill Farrington, who has been a member for over 10 years and planted 19,000 trees through Forests Ontario's 50 million Tree program, and Bill Edwards, a recent member and donor through his legacy giving.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS





IT TAKES A FOREST

Led by Forests Ontario, It Takes a Forest (ITAF) is a collaborative initiative with the goal of providing fact-based information on Ontario's forests, the sustainable management of these forests, and the health and economic values they provide. Great strides were made this year towards the continuation, expansion, and development of new program outreach and activations.

ITAF successfully broadened its reach through the expansion of our growing billboard network. New billboards were erected in northern Ontario, a project undertaken in collaboration with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), and the Canadian Wood Council, resulting in 24 billboards. This project resulted in 19 partnerships ranging from private, industry and municipal sectors.

To showcase the growing network of ITAF billboards, an online interactive map was launched wherein billboards can be viewed by location, as well as messaging, design, and reference to local supporters. Billboard tours will be taking place this fall to celebrate and meet local partners.

This year, ITAF has also effectively engaged with individuals and groups from all professional backgrounds to raise awareness of our forests, including presentations and activities with more than 200 post-secondary architect and engineering students to learn about the benefits of Sustainable Forest Management and building with wood.



Connecting with educators across a variety of curriculum subjects is an important component of Forests Ontario's education strategy. To reach a wider audience, Forests Ontario spearheaded a virtual educator workshop, *Teaching with Trees*, which saw participation from Canadian Institute of Forestry, Ontario Woodlot Owners Association and Project Learning Tree Canada. The workshop provided educators with insight into current forest management practices, as well as resources, tools, and programs to help them conveniently bring these concepts into their teaching practice. A total of 118 participants took part over the two sessions.

FORESTRY IN THE CLASSROOM

Our Forestry in the Classroom program connects the next generation of forest stewards with forestry and environmental professionals through free in-class presentations. Delivered in 2021/2022 using a virtual format, the program is designed for students in grades 4-12, and reached over 1,800 youth and educators in communities across Ontario.

Presentation topics include tree identification, sustainable forest management, and urban forests among others. Forests Ontario was also pleased to partner with the Invasive Species Centre to develop a new invasive species themed presentation and activity which was piloted during National Forest Week.

FOCUS ON FORESTS

Focus on Forests is a collection of more than 85 lesson plans, study guides, activities, fact sheets, and resources developed to help teachers bring forestry into the classroom and take learning outdoors.

Spanning from kindergarten to grade 12, and covering subject areas such as science, geography, math, and art, Forests Ontario's free to access database of resources is searchable by grade, subject area, or key term. Specific topics of focus include biodiversity, climate change, forestry careers, and the many benefits of Canada's forests - all of which help students broaden their understanding and appreciation of our environment.

This fiscal year saw the launch of an ambitious project, supported by Maple Leaves Forever, to review and update existing Focus on Forests materials. Resources are being reviewed and revised to ensure content is up to date, relevant to modern classrooms, and will incorporate current curriculum links.



ONTARIO ENVIROTHON

Forests Ontario is the lead agency for the Ontario Envirothon – a unique skills-based program that immerses high school students in environmental science and resource management. It offers future leaders the chance to receive mentorship, develop important communication and critical thinking skills and to explore career and education paths in the natural sciences.

“Although we didn’t place as high as we would have liked to, we were all just incredibly **grateful for the experience and had learned so much**. It was truly amazing just being able to meet and get to know people from all over Canada and the US, that itself made the entire trip worth all the work put into it. On behalf of our whole group, thank you again to everyone involved in sending us to Ohio, we wouldn’t have traded that experience for anything.”

- Olivia Fraschetti, 2022 Ontario Envirothon Champion

Every year, Ontario Envirothon teaches and tests students on four core topics: Forestry, aquatics, soils, and wildlife. There is also an annual *current issue*, which, for this program year, was Ecosystem Restoration.

The Ontario Envirothon program was once again delivered using a virtual format and featured an active iNaturalist project and online challenges designed to get students outdoors and engaged. Over the course of the program, more than 1,150 iNaturalist observations were recorded by Ontario Envirothon students, educators, and volunteers.

Over 100 students and educators, along with 24 volunteers, participated in this year’s program. St. Elizabeth Catholic School in York Region was named this year’s Ontario Envirothon Champions and went on to represent Ontario at the NCF-Envirothon hosted in Ohio. University of Toronto Schools took second and third place respectively.

CURRENT ISSUE

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Ontario Envirothon 2022

JAN 1, 2022 - JUL 31, 2022

Overview

1,184 OBSERVATIONS

338 SPECIES

353 IDENTIFIERS

61 OBSERVERS

Stats

Recent Observations

Fungi Including Lichens
Kingdom Fungi
4 months ago

Bald Eagle
Haliaeetus leucocapillus
3 4 months ago

Geometer Moths
Family Geometridae
4 months ago

Serviceberries
Genus Amelanchier
4 months ago



TREE BEE

Originating as a tree identification contest for elementary students in the 1950's, Tree Bee has evolved over the decades into a multifaceted interactive program which includes forest management education, online tools, inquiry activities and a friendly competition.

“There were many trees that we learned things about that none of us knew, [Tree Bee] was a **great learning experience** for us.”

- 2021 York Region Tree Bee Coach,
20th Aurora Guides Troop Leader

For the 6th year in a row, Forests Ontario was pleased to partner with the Regional Municipality of York to coordinate a Tree Bee event for youth in grades 4-6. Uptake for the program was extremely high with fifteen classrooms, home-school organizations and community groups registering over 240 potential participants. To improve learning outcomes, a series of free resources were provided, including inquiry activities, training videos and #TreelDTuesdays were developed and shared on relevant social media channels.

Participating students were challenged to identify 20 common tree species and answer 30 forest conservation questions. First place in the York Region Tree Bee competition was clinched by first-time participant Park Avenue Public School, followed by Elder's Mills Public School in second place, and Adrienne Clarkson Public School in third.

Tree Bee Inquiry Activity

LEAF IT TO THE ARTISTS



Goal: Students will learn about why leaves are shaped differently and explore some of those shapes for themselves.

Teacher Background
Leaves are by far the most easily identifiable part of any tree. From needles on pines to the lobed leaves of maples, there a lot of different leaf shapes that we can find even in our local forests.

Leaves have a key role in photosynthesis, the process that plants use to create their own food using sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water. While all leaves have the same role, they differ from one another in shape, texture, size, and arrangement - all features we look at when identifying a tree by its leaves.

Conifers, for example, keep their needle or scale-like leaves year-round so that they don't have to make new leaves each spring. These leaves are slim with a thick waxy coating or cuticle to protect them from the harshest sunbeams and the coldest temperatures, preventing both evaporation and freezing. This means that conifers are well adapted to living in harsh climates like the northern reaches of Ontario or on top of mountains.




These needles belong to an Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), and will stay on the tree for three or more years!

This broad Striped Maple leaf with shallow lobes is perfect for collecting sunlight in the understory, shaded by the taller trees above it in the forest.

Deciduous trees are different, as they drop their leaves every autumn and grow new ones each spring. These leaves may be temporary, but they are more effective at photosynthesis in the summer than a conifer's needles or scales, as they are larger (or have a greater surface area) and come into contact with more sunlight. These leaves can vary in size and shape depending on where the plant is growing. For example, Striped Maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*) has very large leaves compared to other maples, but it is commonly found in the understory, the layer of small trees and shrubs beneath the canopy in a forest. Having large leaves helps this maple collect sunlight while living in the shade of other, larger trees. Big leaves are less common on trees growing in direct sunlight, as these trees need to grow leaves that will not overheat when exposed to the full force of the sun.

“When we were competing, our class learned new things about trees while building out collaboration skills... **The overall experience was educational, a great bonding experience, and we had fun too!** Tree Bee is a great tool and identifying trees is a useful skill that we can use throughout our lives. Thank-you Forests Ontario.”

- 2021 York Region Tree Bee Winners,
Park Avenue Public School

BRIDGING THE GAP

Throughout the year, work on the Bridging the Gap project continued with a focus on investigating and suggesting mechanisms to address the labour force and skills shortage in the forest sector and increase youth recruitment. Research and interviews, conducted by Environics, are being synthesized into publicly accessible reports and will include summary results of the project, as well as key learnings from a youth perception survey, an employee survey, and education gap analysis. Reports will be made publicly assessable once finalized.

PARTNERSHIPS

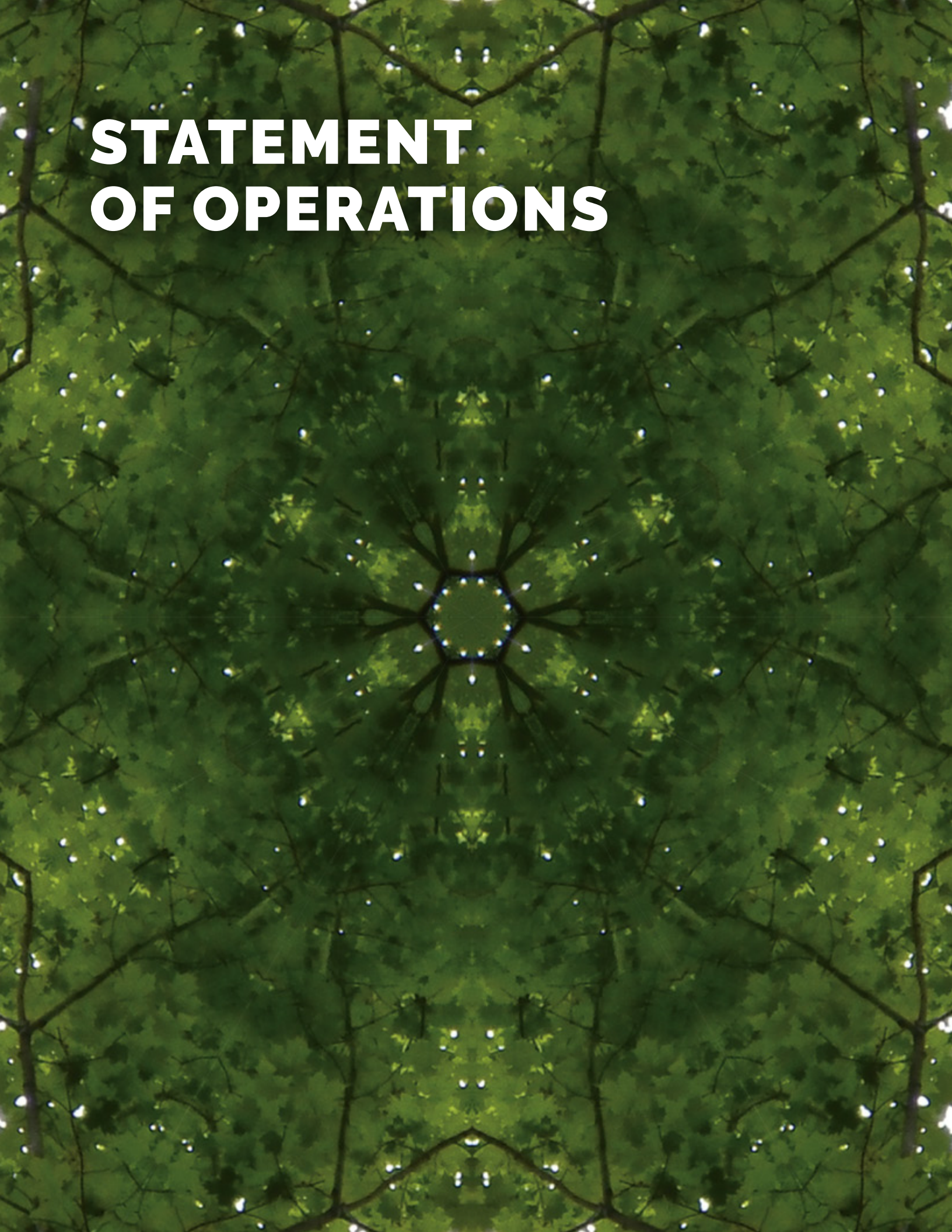


OUR SUPPORTERS



Albert College	Fleming College	Raw Materials Company
Algonquin Forestry Authority	Forest Gene Conservation Association	RCHIVE
AnswerConnect/Anywhereworks Inc.	Forest History Society of Ontario	Reese Madison & Company
Association of Power Producers of Ontario	Four Seasons Sunrooms	Regional Municipality of York
Attis	GoldFenix Communications	Sentaler
Backcountry Hut Company	Grain Farmers of Ontario	Silvacom Ltd.
Bancroft Area Forest Industry Association	GreenFirst Forest Products (QC) Inc.	Simcoe County
BDP	Haliburton Forests and Wildlife Reserve	Somerville Nurseries Inc.
BenchSci	Invasive Species Centre	South Grey News
Bond Brand Loyalty Inc.	Journey To Better Health	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
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Domtar Inc.	Natural Resource Solution	Vector Institute
Dundee Recycling	Nawiinginioka Forest Management Corporation	Vishwa Nirmala Dharma Educational Society
Eacom Timber Corporation	Nice Landscapes	Wavelength Media
Evergreen Thrift Store	Patagonia	Weston Forest Products
Everyday Farm Girl	Pineneedle Farms	Weyerhaeuser Canada
Facedrive Inc.	Project Learning Tree	
First Resource Management Group Inc.		

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

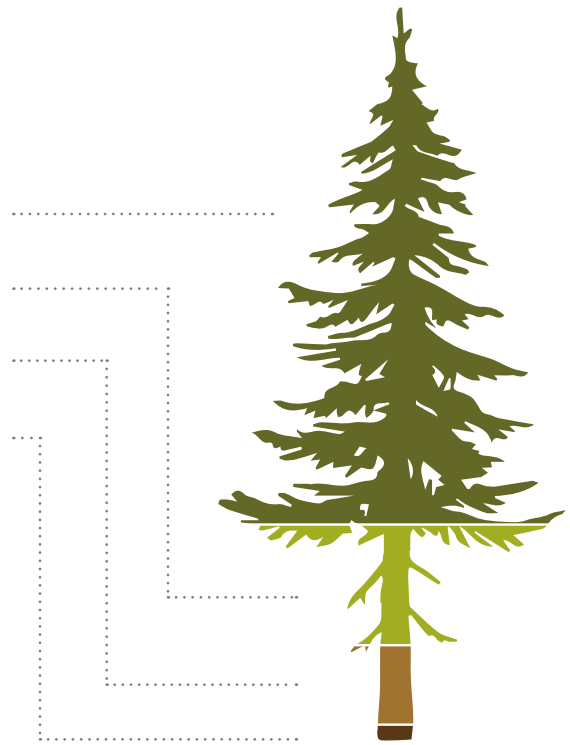
The background of the page is a photograph of a dense green forest canopy, viewed from below. The leaves are a vibrant green, and the branches are dark and intricate. In the center of the image, there is a circular kaleidoscopic pattern that radiates outwards, creating a symmetrical, star-like effect. This pattern is composed of many small, repeating elements that form a larger, more complex design. The overall effect is a harmonious blend of nature and geometric art.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 2022

Revenue

Government funding	\$ 5,215,241	70%
Individual & corporate contributions	\$ 1,209,091	16%
Not for profits & charities	\$ 844,164	11%
Investment & other income	\$ 139,340	2%
	\$ 7,407,836	



Expenditures

Programs	\$ 4,940,677	69%
Human resources	\$ 1,184,378	17%
Communications & program development	\$ 498,550	7%
Office & general	\$ 407,869	6%
Professional & consulting fees	\$ 121,909	2%
	\$ 7,153,383	



Excess of revenue over expenditures \$ 254,453

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

SEPTEMBER 2022

Assets

Total cash & investments	\$ 3,311,450	72%
Accounts receivable	\$ 816,656	18%
Inventory & prepaid expenses	\$ 432,748	9%
Fixed assets	\$ 53,695	1%
Total assets	\$ 4,614,549	



Liabilites

Trade payables & program commitments	\$ 1,504,643	51%
Deferred program revenue	\$ 1,433, 082	49%
	\$ 2,937,725	



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BOARD

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Sarah Wylie, Legacy Financial Accounting





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