

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Date: September 7, 2011  
For immediate release**

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**MAYOR TOM LAUGHREN  
RESPECTFULLY INVITES ALL MEDIA TO ATTEND A PRESS CONFERENCE**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2011**

**11:30 AM**

**SHANIA TWAIN CENTRE**

**SUBJECT: NEOMA AND ABITIBI RIVER FOREST**

**- 30 -**

**For more information please contact:  
Mayor Tom Laughren**

# PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## NORTHERN MAYORS COME TOGETHER TO SAVE JOBS AND PREVENT MASS EXTINCTION OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

Timmins, Ontario – September 8, 2011: Under threat of mass mill closures and job losses in the forest industry as a result of a politically orientated policy once again being forced upon Northern Ontario, the Mayors of the Highway 11 Corridor in North Eastern Ontario are pushing back. If the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources recommendations are followed by the Province, the Abitibi River Forest Management Plan (FMP) will see an immediate 25% reduction in sustainable timber volume available to the industry with a whopping 65% reduction in less than 30 years. After addressing the issue with key Ministers in Cabinet, the Mayors were directed to indicate their concerns through the Ministry Of Natural Resources Consultation Protocol. *Each municipality's submission is available for reference upon request to the Mayors identified below.*

The Province's new Caribou Conservation Policy appears to be a politically motivated attempt to satisfy environmental extremists who live thousands of kilometres away from our region. Remarkably, it trades off the lives of every northerner and the very existence of most communities in Northern Ontario to accomplish a radical and imbalanced objective. More importantly, the Caribou Policy and resultant catastrophic impacts associated to it are not based on commonly accepted sound science or reasoning. Further, there have been no socio-economic impact assessments completed to ensure that everyone is making responsible and informed decisions before choosing to arbitrarily sacrifice our entire way of life. Though some may not realize, while others choose to forget, we northerners are natural conservationists who not only care for Caribou, but the entire ecosystem of which we are part. We have survived in harmony with the forest around us for over 100 years and become deeply concerned when our very existence is being threatened with extinction, to satisfy narrow and ill-conceived interests. With an incredible two thirds reduction in available timber volume within thirty years most mills between North Bay and Hearst will shut down, which in turn will shut down most communities who depend on these mills, which in turn will have a catastrophic ripple effect right across Northern Ontario due to the negatively affected wood chip supply. Not only will most communities on the Highway 11 corridor be lost in a few short decades, along with an entire way of life that has existed in harmony with the forest in Ontario for over one hundred years, tens of thousands of northerners will be out of work and not able to provide for their families, which in turn will harm hundreds of thousands of Ontarians.

It's clear that no community between North Bay and Kenora can accept this policy, and the resulting disastrous impacts associated to it, when applied anywhere else in Ontario. Our research shows many simple solutions could have been applied prior to this recommendation being made and the fact that they haven't, all considered, to instead support such a catastrophic threat to all of Northern Ontario, is alarming. If any community in the North accepts this direction, it also accepts its own demise in less than thirty years. It must be politely stated that if the Province accepts this recommendation from MNR to debilitate a world renowned managed forest like the Abitibi River Forest, we will have no choice but to react to this as a direct threat on our ability to survive going forward. We look forward to these concerns being constructively addressed by the Province and the Ministers involved taking the immediate actions necessary to stop such an irresponsible attack on the very value, legitimacy and existence of Northerners in the Province of Ontario.

Quotes:

**Tom Laughren, Mayor of Timmins and Chair of N.E.O.M.A.;** "The Review that MNR circulated to municipal officials and stakeholders the second week of August caught our attention. The fact that wood supply will be reduced by 25% immediately and by almost two-thirds within 20-30 years should concern Northerners. We understand that companies are concerned that if there are any delays to the Forest Management Plan for the Abitibi River Forest that their mills will be left without wood in the Spring of 2012 and as such, we are asking the government to take action that will guarantee the wood supply for 2012 and allow communities, stakeholders, the forest sector and government a chance to ensure forest management plans reflect the 3 pillars of sustainable development as described in the Crown Forest Sustainability Act ("to manage Crown Forests to meet social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations")."

**Peter Politis, Mayor of Cochrane;** "As Mayor I have repeatedly asked for a socio-economic impact assessment on behalf of the people of Cochrane to determine the impacts of the Caribou Conservation Policy, along with the impacts of provincially driven modeling factors, that will affect an already world renowned sustainable forest management regime, but to no avail. One of the irrational problems with the MNR's recommendation is that it requires those who accept it to also accept the complete demise of the forest industry; the sacrificing of hundreds of thousands of jobs and families depending on those jobs, and the mass extinction of entire communities that depend on the existing sustainable forest industry"

**Gilles Forget, Mayor of Iroquois Falls;** "We have no issue with providing for caribou and their habitat - the provision for all wildlife species has been a key part of forestry and forest management planning for decades. As northerners, we are as much part of the ecosystem as anything else. However, the government is asking us to manage for caribou in areas that are not appropriate - the 'caribou line' needs to be moved further north to an area that is supported by science. At the same time, by virtue of this mass debilitation of the northern economy, the MNR's recommendation here completely contradicts the Province's newly released Northern Ontario Growth Plan, which should be concerning for all of us".

**Contact:**

Mayor Tom Laughren - Timmins - [tom.laughren@timmins.ca](mailto:tom.laughren@timmins.ca);

Mayor Peter Politis - Cochrane - 705-471-9564; [peter.politis@town.cochrane.on.ca](mailto:peter.politis@town.cochrane.on.ca)

Mayor Gilles Forget - Iroquois Falls - [mayor@irpoguoisfalls.com](mailto:mayor@irpoguoisfalls.com)

Mayor Mike Milinkovich - Matheson - [mayor@blackriver-matheson.com](mailto:mayor@blackriver-matheson.com)

Mayor Al Spacek - Kapuskasing - [alspacek@gmail.com](mailto:alspacek@gmail.com)

Mayor Roger Sigouin - Hearst - [rsigouin@hearst.ca](mailto:rsigouin@hearst.ca)

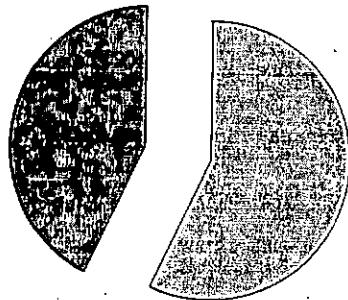
## Backgrounder/Fast Facts

- Ontario's land base consists of 107 million hectares, of which 71 million hectares is forested (MNR, 2010)
- The area where forest management planning occurs (commonly called the 'Planning Area') is 43.8 million hectares in size, of which 36 million hectares is forested (MNR, 2010)
- Within the 'Planning Area' 25 million hectares are excluded from forest operations – this includes areas set aside for other values and/or areas that are not accessible for forestry operations (e.g. parks and protected areas, forest management plan exclusions, private land, non-forested area, bypass forest) (MNR, 2010)
- Within the 'Planning Area' forest operations are limited to 18.8 million hectares (commonly referred to as the 'Net Operable Forest') (MNR 2010)
- The 'Net Operable Forest' makes up 17.5 % of the entire Ontario land base and 26.5% of all of Ontario's forests (MNR, 2010)
- Historically, Ontario's forest sector harvests on average 210,000 hectares annually – this represents:
  - Less than one-third on 1% of Ontario's total forested area per year
  - Less than one-half of 1% of the Planning Areas total forested area per year
- Ontario can sustainably produce 26 million cubic metres of fibre per year for industrial use (MNDMF, November 2009)
- The portion of the 'Planning Area' where forestry operations do not occur (25 million hectares) represents the potential for an additional annual harvest of 19 million cubic metres per year
  - 2 million m<sup>3</sup> equals one pulp/paper mill + one saw/OSB mill - this equates to >600 jobs in the mills alone, excludes direct harvest and wood hauling jobs that approach similar levels of employment
  - 100,000 m<sup>3</sup> equates to a poplar veneer mill that provides 300 mill jobs
- The Government of Ontario already sets aside the vast majority of the province's forested land for non-timber values – yet they are continuously being asked by special interests to set aside more through political agendas and efforts
- Sustainable forest management requires consideration of all three pillars – economic, social and environmental

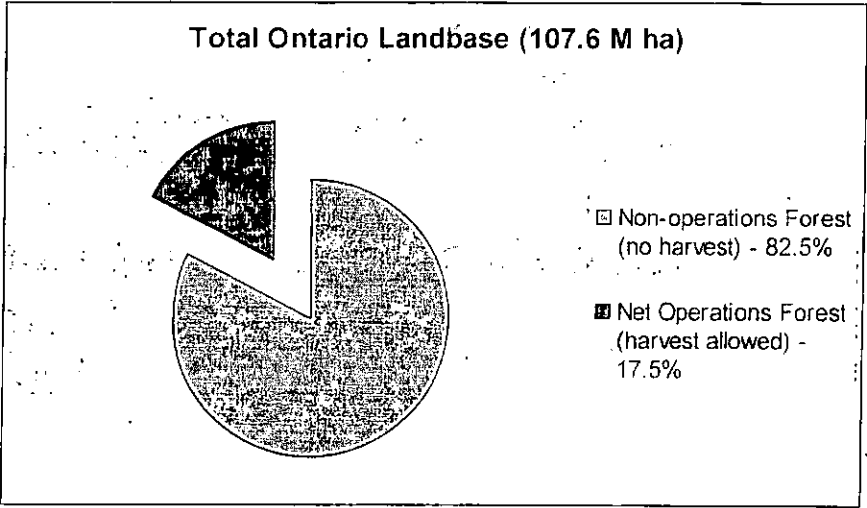
Planning Area 43.8 million ha  
- Net Operations Forest 18.8 million ha

Land Excluded from Forest Operations 25.0 million ha  
(e.g. set asides for other values)

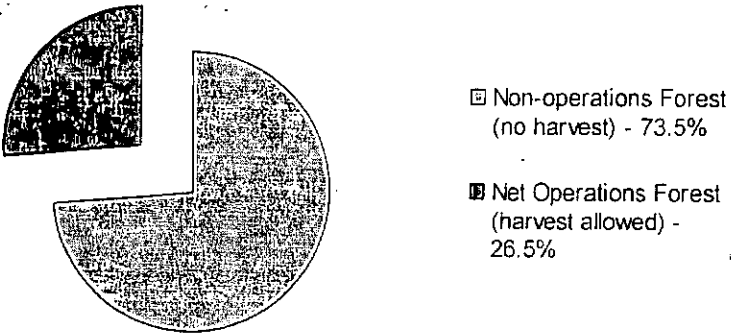
Planning Area Landbase (43.8 M ha)



■ Non-operations Forest (no harvest) - 57.1%  
■ Net Operations Forest (harvest allowed) - 42.9%



**Ontario's Forested (Total) Landbase (71 M ha)**





ONTARIO FOREST INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION  
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Growing a stronger, greener Ontario

August 31, 2011

Mr. Cory Wiseman  
Planning Forester  
Ministry of Natural Resources, Regional Operations Division  
Northeast Region, Cochrane District  
2 -4, 11 Highway South  
PO Box 730  
Cochrane Ontario  
P0L 1C0

**RE: Review of Abitibi River LTMD – Caribou Line needs to be moved North.**

Dear Mr. Wiseman,

Please consider this letter as the formal position of the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) with regards to the Ministry of Natural Resources' (MNR) posting on the Environmental Registry titled *Forest Management Plan for the Abitibi River Forest for the 10-year period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2022 – Review of Proposed Long-Term Management Direction (No. 011-1309)* and the associated Long Term Planning Direction (LTMD) for the Abitibi River Forest.

The OFIA is very concerned with the lack of balance contained within the LTMD and the projected reductions in wood supply. As noted in the text of the LTMD itself, *"Conifer wood supply is forecasted to decrease by 24.4% over 2010 contingency plan levels and 28.9% from the FMP's that were in place prior to the amalgamation and without any caribou habitat management direction."*

Further analysis of the LTMD reveals reductions of 65.9% and 67.9% from 2010 contingency plan levels and from the FMPs that were in place prior to the amalgamation respectively in 20 years. This represents a loss of over two-thirds of the units conifer fibre supply.

The LTMD further notes that these reductions *"will have an impact on communities who rely on employment opportunities generated from forest activities"* and that *"any decline in short and long-term volume will impact the possibility for increased mill capacity or new opportunities."*



As you are aware, a key objective of Ontario's world class Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) is "to manage Crown forests to meet social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations" (emphasis added). The OFIA does not believe that a LTMD which, as clearly stated by the document itself, results in the immediate loss of 25% of conifer supply (with the loss of two-thirds of conifer supply in 20 years), and which stagnates economic development and jeopardizes employment and community stability meets the intent of the CFSA.

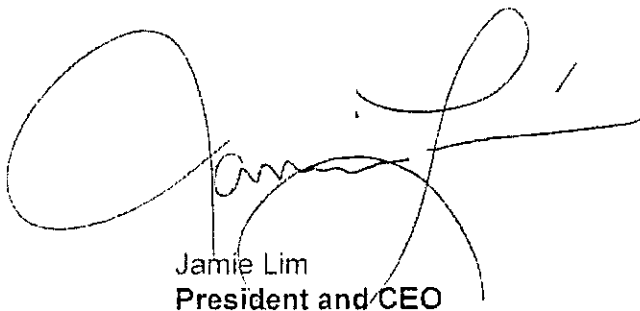
As such, the OFIA requests that MNR:

1. Commit to a contingency plan being in place for April 1, 2012 that will ensure that mills will have access to fibre while continuing to develop a LTMD that recognizes all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental, and;
2. Move the 'caribou line' further north (to where research shows caribou actually live) within the current LTMD and commit, in writing, to working with Abitibi River Management Inc to develop balanced solutions for future plans.

The OFIA is not opposed to managing for caribou. Ontario's forest sector has been managing sustainably for all wildlife and their habitat for decades. However, sustainable forest management, as well as all government policy, needs to recognize and strike a balance among all three pillars as noted under the CFSA – economic, social and environmental.

We would be pleased to discuss our concerns in greater detail – please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Regards,



Jamie Lim  
President and CEO  
Ontario Forest Industries Association  
Home of CLA Grading and Inspection

cc OFIA Board of Directors