



ONTARIO FOREST INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

Home of CLA Grading and Inspection



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Growing a stronger, greener Ontario

## MEDIA RELEASE

October 18, 2010

### **Election Countdown: Time for Premier McGuinty to Save Northerners' Jobs**

**Forest sector counting on government to ignore the rhetoric and 'campaign science' of special interest fundraisers that would threaten thousands of jobs**

In response to recent attempts by Greenpeace, a special interest fundraising group, to spread misinformation and fear regarding caribou, the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) is speaking out to remind Premier McGuinty and his colleagues of two vitally important facts – one, forest dwelling woodland caribou are currently protected under the platinum standard, world class Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA), and two, if the government of Ontario allows itself to be swayed by the 'campaign science' of these special interests, they will decimate northern Ontario.

Central to the concerns of the OFIA is the special interest campaign request to remove large tracts of land from all industrial development, including forestry.

"This is pretty standard rhetoric for these kinds of professional panic merchants" says Jamie Lim, President and CEO of the OFIA, "unfortunately it is not grounded in fact."

Since 1994, Ontario's forest sector has been providing for forest dwelling woodland caribou and their habitat and there is evidence it is working. Government studies and data have shown that caribou return to previously harvested areas and that caribou are being located further south than previously thought. In addition, recent government information from areas in northwestern Ontario shows that caribou populations are stable.

"The forest sector provides for the habitat of all wildlife, including caribou" says Scott Jackson, Manager of Forest Policy at the OFIA, citing that it is Ontario's strong regulatory framework that prompted a commitment from David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources, in 2009 to formally recognize that the CFSA already meets the requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) - a promise that has still not been fulfilled.

In March 2010 the OFIA released the results of a socio-economic impact study that assessed the potential social and economic repercussions of an anticipated

government Caribou Habitat Regulation being developed under the province's controversial Endangered Species Act. The study, which is based on government assumptions and positions and which used government data, indicates that anywhere from 2 million to almost 9 million cubic metres of industrial wood could be lost out of a provincial total of 26 million cubic metres.

"If the government continues to listen to the rhetoric and 'campaign science' of these professional panic merchants, up to 33% of the provincial fibre supply could be lost, forever" says Lim, adding "The anticipated reductions in wood supply would mean the loss of somewhere between 600 and 3,200 direct jobs in northern Ontario, jobs that will never come back".

"The numbers are staggering" says Jackson, adding that "our analysis is for only one species. When you consider that the government needs to develop habitat regulations for over 140 species, you can't help but worry about the future of northern and rural Ontario and the province as a whole".

The OFIA is calling on Premier McGuinty and his colleagues to recognize the antics of special interest groups such as Greenpeace for what they are – a fundraising campaign – and to fulfill his government's promise to the forest sector and northern Ontario.

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