

Media Release

Premier Ford Joins Leaders of Ontario’s Renewable Forest Sector to Discuss the Province’s Forestry Strategy and Continued Responsible Stewardship

June 6, 2019. Premier Doug Ford and Honourable John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, attended the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) Board of Directors meeting in Toronto for a roundtable discussion on creating responsible growth, prosperity and business certainty for Ontario’s forest sector through the Government’s Provincial Forestry Strategy.

Premier Ford stated, “I strongly believe that the forest industry is the best steward of our environment. This sector is comprised of the front-line people that live, work and play in our forests and our government wants to create an environment for the sector, and the communities that depend on it, to prosper and thrive. Today, we have the opportunity to make a change for the better, to unleash the full potential of Ontario’s forest sector and give our future generations something to be proud of. That is why our government is committed to developing a Provincial Forestry Strategy that will help make Ontario’s forest sector open for business.”

Honourable John Yakabuski commented, “Last week we held the last Forestry Strategy roundtable session in Hearst. Through these roundtables, we have heard from industry, stakeholders and rightsholders about how we can develop a strategy that encourages economic growth, reduces forestry sector red tape and guarantees continued first-class stewardship of Ontario’s renewable resource. Over the next several months, we will continue to work together to create a new strategy with a goal to increase harvestable wood supply. We are committed to creating the conditions for the industry to innovate, attract investment, and create jobs and prosperity for the North and for all communities that depend on this sector.”

“We would like to thank the Premier and Minister Yakabuski for joining us today to discuss the future of Ontario’s forest sector. OFIA’s member companies are committed to sustainable forest management and this is evident when you look at member companies such as Shaw Lumber and McRae Mills – these are fifth and sixth generation families that have been managing the land for over 170 years” remarked OFIA’s Chair, Erik Holmstrom. “As sector leaders, we understand the responsible use of a renewable natural resource. Operating under a world-class Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA), we manage Crown forests to meet social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations. Regeneration is the pillar of our forest sector and it’s something that OFIA’s members take very seriously. Our sector plants 72 million seedlings on Provincial land annually and we look forward to increasing the sustainable use of our Crown forests through a Provincial Forestry Strategy.”

President and CEO of OFIA, Jamie Lim, concluded, “We are very encouraged by the government’s commitment to the development of a Provincial Forestry Strategy. Ontario’s forest sector plays a vital role in every region of Ontario, connecting and supporting over 150,000 hard-working men and women. The continued sustainable use of a secure and affordable supply of renewable wood fibre, coupled with workable public policy, results in well-paying jobs and a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits. It is the Ontario forest sector’s ability to adapt and innovate that has allowed us to remain a foundational pillar in Ontario’s economy for more than 150 years. We are proud of the work our members put into managing our Crown forests and we look forward to growing a greener Ontario.”

About OFIA

Ontario’s renewable forest products sector supports over 150,000 direct and indirect jobs in 260 Ontario communities. Since 1943, the Ontario Forest Industries Association has represented forestry companies ranging from multinational corporations to family operated businesses producing advanced manufactured products and technologies. OFIA believes that by working with government to address key competitive issues, secure long-term access to affordable and accessible fibre and promote the province’s 21st century forest products sector, Ontario will be the number one jurisdiction in Canada for today’s green and growing renewable sector.

To learn more about OFIA and its innovative forestry members, follow us on Twitter @OFIA_info, or visit www.ofia.com

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