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Municipality of Neebing

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January 20, 2020

Joe Maure
Forest Sector Strategy - Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
70 Foster Drive, Suite 610
Sault Ste Marie, ON P6A 6V5

Submitted Online Via the [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#)

Re: Support for Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy, ERO# 019-0880

Mr. Maure,

As the Council of the Municipality of Neebing, thank you for the opportunity to comment on *Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, Environmental Registry of Ontario number 019-0880. We are writing to you today to express support for this proposal.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's (MNRF) vision of establishing Ontario's forest sector as a world leader in producing and selling forest products from renewable, sustainable and responsibly managed forests is an ambitious one. The draft includes five key principles and four pillars of action related to putting more wood to work, improving cost competitiveness, fostering innovation, and promoting stewardship and sustainability. The MNRF should take pride in the document they have created.

Through the development and implementation of a Forest Sector Strategy, Ontario has committed to positioning itself as a leading forestry jurisdiction within Canada. A healthy and sustainable forest industry will strengthen northern and rural communities across Ontario. Increasing available wood supply, making strategic investments in the forest access roads funding program, and ensuring free and open access to *American and International* markets is critically important.

Neebing is a rural community within the Lakehead Forest south of Thunder Bay. With a population of 2,055 spread out over 877 square kilometers, the forest industry is very important and is our major employer. We are actively seeking to strengthen our existing businesses and encouraging new value added forest products businesses to establish in Neebing.

For establishment of new small to medium sized value added forest products businesses it is critical to “Reduce the Regulatory Burdens to Access Wood” (Pillar #2). This must be done in a fair and affordable process. Too often new entrepreneurs have “gone away” due to the uncertainty of wood supply and its delivered cost.

A prerequisite for a successful Forest Sector Strategy is a permanent solution to the duplication between the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). I am pleased to see that MNR is actively addressing this item, and I am very supportive of ERO# 019-1020, *Proposed Changes to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act*.

Ontario and the MNR embarked on similar strategies, red tape reduction initiatives, and process streamlining in the past. Some excellent documents and recommendations were developed as a result; however, not enough focus was placed on the implementation or roll-out of these strategies. As a result, systematic and cultural change within the Ministry was never achieved. On page 32 of the draft strategy, MNR identifies the development of an implementation plan. This is an essential path forward, ensuring our best chance of success, and something we support.

The forest sector is an important part of Ontario’s history and critical to the future of *our municipality*. We would like to thank the Ontario Government and the MNR for their leadership on this file and look forward to reviewing the finalized strategy.

Sincerely,



Erika Kromm
Clerk-Treasurer
On Behalf of Council for the Municipality of Neebing
Resolution Number: 2020-01-008

CC Minister John Yakubuski, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Minister Jeff Yurek, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Jamie Lim, President & CEO, Ontario Forest Industries Association