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February 5, 2020

Joe Maure
Forest Sector Strategy - Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
70 Foster Drive, Suite 610
Sault Ste Marie , ON
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Dear Mr. Maure

As the Chief Forester of Resolute Forest Products I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and express support for Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy, Environmental Registry of Ontario number 019-0880.

At Resolute we pride ourselves in sustainably managing over 5.5 million hectares in Northwestern Ontario, our approach to sustainability is driven by the three pillars of sustainable development: environmental, social and economic. With a regional economic impact of nearly half a billion dollars, annually, Resolute is not only a major contributor to the socio-economic well-being of Northwestern Ontario, but also a large employer and driver of economic growth and prosperity in the Province. Our close to 900 employees have an annual payroll of \$85 million, and 3,000 indirect jobs are associated with our operations.

The draft strategy addresses several of Resolute's concerns about ensuring a predictable level of wood supply cost competitiveness, reducing red tape, investment in talent and promoting sustainability. There will be many moving parts to achieving the goals of the strategy, the MNRF needs to commit both the people and financial resources to achieving the goals.

A key part of the strategy is to grow the forest sector thereby fostering investment and create jobs. In order to do this, the critical Forest Access Roads program must be maintained and the funding levels restored to the \$75 million dollar level in the 2020 budget.

Finally the establishment of a Forest Sector Strategy Advisor Committee to advise, guide and report on the many committees working on aspects of the strategy is strongly supported. This Committee should be populated with the subject experts to ensure achievable goals are obtained.

I would be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss the best path forward for ensuring positive outcomes and keeping people in this province working.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Ratz', is written over a faint, larger version of the signature.

Tom Ratz R.P.F.
Forestry Manager & Chief Forester Ontario
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CC Minister John Yakabuski, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Minister Jeff Yurek, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks