



The Vermilion Forest Management Company Ltd.

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February 4th, 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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Canada

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

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

Mr. Maure,

As the General Manager of the Vermilion Forest Management Company Ltd. (VFM), I thank you for the opportunity to comment on *Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, Environmental Registry of Ontario number 019-0880. I am writing to you today to express support for this proposal.

VFM holds the Sustainable Forest License for the Sudbury Forest Management Unit in Ontario #542442, which directly employs 10 staff by assisting 11 Forest Resource License Holders meet their forest management obligations in the Sudbury area. We also work with over 15 contractors completing a range of silviculture, forest operations and monitoring activities on an annual basis.

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 markets is critically important. and these items continue to be top of mind to me and my business.

In order to allow sustainable forest license holders to manage forest health in Ontario, an immediate increase in the use of timber resources locally is essential. Building capacity in the industry in the form of skilled workers and finding ways to make jobs accessible and sustainable is also very important to the success of the industry as whole.

A pre-requisite 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 MNRF 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 MNRF 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, MNRF identifies the development of an implementation plan. This is an essential path forward, ensuring our best chance of success, and something I support.

The forest sector is an important part of Ontario's history and critical to the future of my business and community. I would like to thank the Ontario Government and the MNRF for their leadership on this file and look forward to reviewing the finalized strategy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MLA', written in a cursive style.

Mark Lockhart, MScF, RPF
General Manager
The Vermilion Forest Management Company Ltd.

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