

O U R S U S T A I N A B L E F U T U R E



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

FEBRUARY, 2005



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Ontario has been blessed with an abundance of natural resources. In addition to providing the natural wealth that powers our economy, our natural resources also contribute to a healthy environment and offer numerous tourism and recreational opportunities.

Our vision for Ontario's natural resources entails safeguarding the many vital contributions that they make to our lives. As a ministry, we are working to promote healthy, sustainable ecosystems and the resource economies and communities that depend on them. We will work to conserve biodiversity, protect greenspace, protect source water, ensure sustainable forestry, support renewable energy and enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation.

As we meet these priorities, the Ministry of Natural Resources is able to contribute to a healthier Ontario, stronger communities, a higher quality of life, and an innovative economy. These all help the government deliver real, positive change to make Ontario stronger, healthier and more prosperous.

The government has introduced a results-based planning process that will help us deliver on our priorities while living within our means. The Ontario Public Service has already undergone significant change to become more customer-oriented, integrated and streamlined. We are now taking the next major step in this transformation to make the OPS a more results-driven organization.

This new strategic directions document will help guide the Ministry of Natural Resources into the future and ensure sustainable development of natural resources and economic prosperity, especially in Northern Ontario. It will also strengthen our commitment to conserving biodiversity and greenspace with special emphasis on southern Ontario.

I invite you to read *Our Sustainable Future*. It demonstrates our commitment to managing Ontario's natural resources wisely and continuing to provide the people of Ontario with jobs, recreational opportunities and a healthy environment for generations to come.

The Honourable David Ramsay
Minister of Natural Resources



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER

The Ministry of Natural Resources has a vital role to play in protecting the province's abundant natural resources and ensuring their sustainable use. To provide overall guidance in achieving this goal, we are pleased to introduce Our Sustainable Future.

In addition to confirming our vision of sustainable development and the mission of ecological sustainability for the Ministry of Natural Resources, this document also adds a new focus to our work through a Commitment to the Conservation of Biodiversity. It sets the stage for our ministry to continue to support sustainable resource development, while maintaining our strong emphasis on protecting our natural environment. This focus will be supported through stronger policy development and enhanced science, information, assessment and reporting.

Our Sustainable Future replaces Beyond 2000, becoming the fourth in a series of strategic directions documents. It builds on many of the principles outlined in earlier strategic plans. For the first time, it includes specific strategies and proposed actions to help us plan activities and deliver results that are aligned with our strategic directions. These strategies and actions recognize the opportunity to strengthen our cooperation with all levels of government. Our strategic directions framework also emphasizes the importance of assessing and reporting on the state of our natural resources to ensure the effectiveness of our actions and provide transparency and accountability for the results.

Given the long-standing dedication, knowledge, experience and ability of MNR staff, I am confident that we will deliver on government priorities while continuing to provide public services with excellence. Our Sustainable Future will guide our activities in the years ahead and help us work with our partners to anticipate and meet challenges head-on.

Gail Beggs
Gail Beggs
Deputy Minister

FOREWORD

Ontario's rich natural bounty contributes to our identity and the quality of life that we enjoy, and provides the province with an important competitive advantage.

Our natural resources are important contributors to the province's economic well-being. Resource industries continue to invest in new technologies, improve the quality and diversity of their products and services, and capture new markets. Outdoor recreation is an important part of the lives of many Ontarians, as it is to the many visitors to our province. More than 7 million people take part in fishing, hunting and other wildlife-related activities each year. As well, Ontario's provincial parks receive over 10 million visits annually.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is the steward of Ontario's provincial parks, forests, fisheries, wildlife, mineral aggregates, and the Crown lands and waters that make up 87 per cent of the province. This is a major responsibility which MNR manages through a diverse legislative mandate and an array of programs aimed at meeting the needs of a broad client base.

Our Sustainable Future is an expression of long-term strategic directions and current priorities. The ministry will use the plan to guide the ministry's activities and organizational transformation to ensure that it is well positioned to deliver on its goals, strategies and actions. Our Sustainable Future will be updated when necessary to ensure that it supports government priorities, the evolving needs of Ontario citizens, and directions that promote the sustainable use of our natural resources.



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O U R S U S T A I N A B L E F U T U R E



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we move toward the second decade of the new millennium, the ministry faces many complex challenges in managing Ontario's natural resources. Our ability to overcome these challenges will depend on how we position ourselves and the strategies and actions that we develop and implement to respond to them.

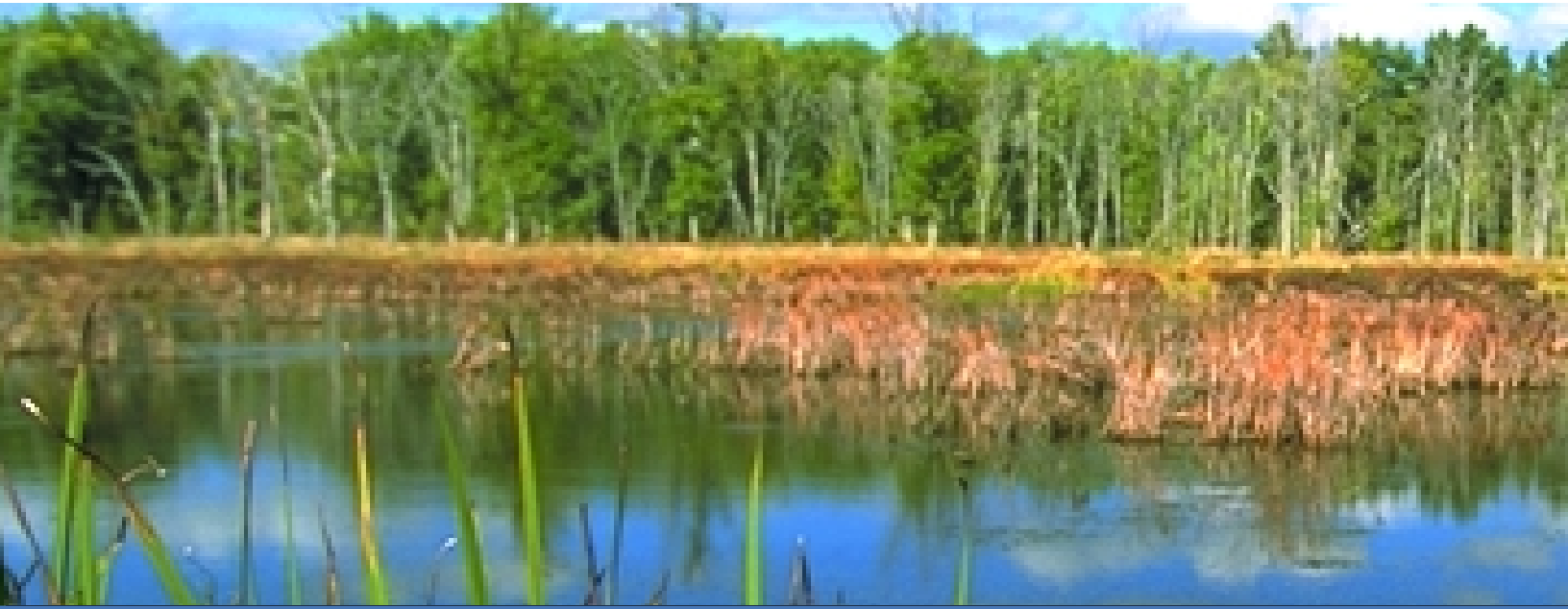
Some of the key challenges facing MNR relate to broad trends in the resource sector. For example, increasing competition for limited resources will necessitate allocation decisions that ensure the sustainability of our natural resource base. At the same time, traditional resource industries are consolidating, resulting in fewer players with greater prominence. As well, new non-traditional industries and activities are emerging, such as biotechnology, biofuels and the use of native plants for medicinal properties. MNR will need to be strategic in advancing economic opportunities while ensuring the sustainability of our resources.

At the national and international levels, MNR must try to address trends in climate change that are expected to cause more weather extremes and weather-related emergencies, such as drought, flood and forest fires. Tightening border and trade controls are expected to affect wood flow, fisheries regulation, water allocation and other matters such as tourism travel. The risks posed by invasive species, such as Asian long-horned beetle and invasive carp, and wildlife diseases, such as chronic wasting disease and rabies, are a concern to both human and ecosystem health.

Urbanization and development pressure will continue to stress nearby natural resources, and there will likely be increasing demands made on MNR in the south. Expectations of MNR are also evolving in the North as demographics across Northern Ontario continue to change.

Citizens are demanding more credible information, transparency and accountability in natural resource policy decisions. Also, the expectations of citizens engaged in outdoor pursuits, such as hiking, wildlife viewing, fishing and hunting and other activities, continue to grow.

The ministry has considerable strengths to build on that will enable us to address the challenges and opportunities we face. These include a dedicated and skilled workforce and a strong legacy of research, science and policy development. The ministry is also a recognized leader in information management and technology. We are a field-based organization with representation in many communities, and have demonstrated experience in supporting government-wide initiatives. The ministry also has strong ties with stakeholders and partners, and is a recognized leader in resource management and balancing stakeholder interests.



MNR'S MANDATED ACTIVITIES

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Provide leadership and oversight in the management of Ontario's forests; Crown forest management planning and resource allocation; compliance monitoring, auditing and public reporting on Ontario's forests. Champions for Ontario's forests, forest products sector and forest-dependent communities.

FISH & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Provide leadership and oversight in the management of Ontario's fish and wildlife resources, including species at risk; Great Lakes management; fish culture and stocking; resource monitoring, assessment and allocation; research, food safety and disease control; enhancing fishing and hunting opportunities.

LANDS & WATERS MANAGEMENT

Lead the management of Crown lands, water resources, mineral aggregates, and oil, gas, and salt resources. Includes land use planning, resource allocation, flood management, and low water/drought management.

ONTARIO PARKS

Deliver Ontario's Parks and Protected Areas program, including: protection and management of provincially significant natural, cultural, and recreational environments; provincial parks operations; provision of tourism opportunities, natural heritage education; planning and management of parks and protected areas; policy leadership on conservation reserves; monitoring, auditing, and public reporting on Ontario's parks and protected areas.

AVIATION & FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT

Provide leadership and program delivery for the protection of people, property and communities affected by forest fires, floods, and other natural resource emergencies. Includes planning and delivery of MNR's emergency management program and aviation services for the Ontario government.



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Provide leadership and program delivery in the development and application of geographic information for natural resource management and decision-making, and contribute to the government's I&IT initiative by providing land information and an infrastructure to make Ontario's land information available, affordable and easy to integrate.

FIELD SERVICES SUPPORT

Lead the provision of service delivery and operational implementation of natural resource management programs; provide direct client services to the public and resource-based industry sectors across Ontario; lead professional law enforcement of resource statutes; lead MNR's efforts for aboriginal involvement in resource management and decision-making.

MINISTRY ADMINISTRATION

Provide strategic management leadership and advice, legal counsel, policy development, communications and administrative services in support of business areas.



MNR'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FRAMEWORK

Our Sustainable Future builds on the path established by MNR's previous strategic directions documents – Directions 90, Moving Ahead '95, and Beyond 2000 – while providing new direction for the ministry to increase its emphasis and activities in several key areas. The following elements form the framework of Our Sustainable Future and are focused on in the sections that follow:

The **Vision - Sustainable Development** - sets out the overall long-term goal of the ministry and the desired end state for the use and management of our natural resources.

The **Mission - Ecological Sustainability** - describes the role of the ministry in achieving the vision.

A new **Commitment to the Conservation of Biodiversity** highlights this as a key area of focus for MNR.

The **Operating Philosophy of Resource Stewardship** sets out the system of beliefs, values and principles to guide MNR decision-making and the actions to be taken to achieve the primary goals.

Five Organizational Goals, which support the priorities identified in the government's Results-Based Planning approach, articulate specific ministry goals to be achieved in managing our natural resources in a manner consistent with the ministry's vision and mission.

Key Strategies and Proposed Actions, supporting the five organizational goals, are also part of the framework. These describe more precisely how the ministry aims to focus its efforts in the near term to achieve each of the five goals, including the key government priorities for the ministry. These components will be considered as the ministry undertakes its results-based planning process.

Implementation Considerations are also described, including how MNR will evaluate progress in implementing the strategies and actions. Monitoring and measuring implementation will ensure a focus on achieving tangible results.

Finally, the framework includes a new focus on **State of the Resources Assessment and Reporting** which will enable the ministry to share status reports on the health of our resources and measure our effectiveness. This process will ensure that we are transparent and accountable for results. It also provides a basis for the public to get involved in decision-making.

Our Sustainable Future, composed of all the above elements, provides the basis for the Ministry of Natural Resources' **Results-Based Plan** that sets out a more detailed program of activities that the ministry proposes to carry out to meet its mandate and address government priorities.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

VISION

Healthy environment through sustainable development



MISSION

Ecological sustainability



STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Conserve biodiversity and use natural resources in a sustainable manner



philosophy

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

1. Healthy natural environment for Ontarians
2. Economic growth for Ontario communities
3. Public health and environmental safety to protect our citizens
4. Stewardship, partnerships and community involvement
5. Organizational excellence for improved public service

SHORT-TERM
STRATEGIES &
PROPOSED ACTIONS

STATE OF
THE RESOURCES
ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION I

SECTION I: LONG TERM STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

VISION: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The ministry envisions **a healthy environment that is naturally diverse and supports a high quality of life for the people of Ontario through sustainable development.**

Under the concept of sustainable development, Ontario's natural resources constitute natural "capital". Resources over and above those essential for long-term sustainability requirements become available over time as "interest" for use, enjoyment and development. Development which maintains the natural capital and allows for the accumulation of this natural interest is sustainable.

MISSION: ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

The ministry's mission is to **manage our natural resources in an ecologically sustainable way to ensure that they are available for the enjoyment and use of future generations.**

Ecological sustainability focuses on safeguarding the province's natural capital and nature's capacity to renew itself. It is directed toward resource management practices that protect and maintain nature's capacity to renew itself and generate sufficient natural "interest" to meet Ontarians' present and future needs.

COMMITMENT TO THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

The ministry is committed to the **conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources in a sustainable manner.**

Maintaining the diversity of life on Earth is a foundational premise for sustainable development. Biodiversity conservation is a commitment to ensure healthy ecosystems, protect our native species and sustain genetic diversity. A diverse "investment portfolio" supports our natural capital and interest for sustainable uses, and also ensures a wealthy inheritance for future generations.



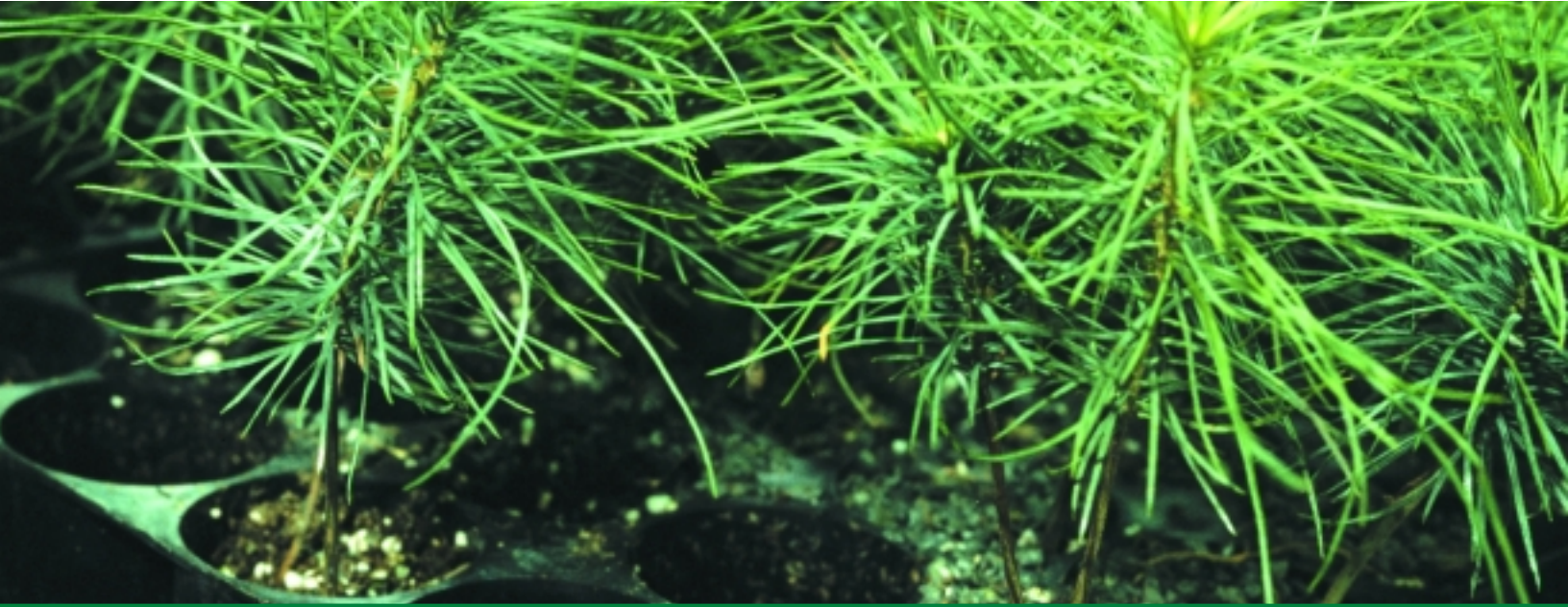
OPERATING PHILOSOPHY: RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Through resource stewardship, MNR safeguards the public interest in Ontario's resources and acts as the steward of our natural legacy.

RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES

As the steward of Ontario's natural legacy, the Ministry of Natural Resources will consider these principles in the management of natural resources:

- A **sound understanding** of natural and ecological systems and how our actions affect them is key to achieving sustainability.
- As our understanding of the way the natural world works and how our actions affect it is often incomplete, MNR staff should exercise **caution** and special concern for natural values in the face of such uncertainty.
- The **finite capacity** of our natural systems should be recognized in planning and allocation decisions.
- Natural resources should be properly **valued** to provide a fair return to Ontarians and to reflect their ecological, social and economic contributions.
- **Participation** in resource management by all those who share an interest is a necessary ingredient, particularly in support of communities who must balance economic diversity with other needs. Those affected by proposed changes must have access to information and opportunities to provide input to decisions that affect their lives.
- Applied research and sharing of **scientific and technological knowledge** and innovative technologies must be fostered to support the sustainable development of natural resources.
- An **ecosystem approach** to managing our natural resources enables a holistic perspective of social, economic and ecological aspects, and provides the context for integrated resource management.
- The planning for and management of natural resources should strive for **continuous improvement** and effectiveness through adaptive management of natural resources.
- In order to achieve sustainable development, **environmental protection** must be an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation.
- From both a sound business and environmental perspective, it is less costly and more effective to **anticipate and prevent** negative environmental impacts before undertaking new activities than it is to correct environmental problems after the fact.
- **Rehabilitating degraded environments** is an important aspect of resource stewardship.



ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

The ministry's management efforts are directed at five key organizational goals that will continue to lead us toward our long-term vision and mission.

1. Healthy Natural Environment for Ontarians

Ensuring healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that safeguard human health and quality of life for Ontarians.

2. Economic Growth for Ontario Communities

MNR will contribute to strong, healthy communities in Ontario by supporting existing and pursuing new opportunities for environmentally sustainable economic growth within the resource sector.

3. Public Health and Environmental Safety to Protect People

The quality of life and health of Ontario's citizens are based on being protected from natural and human-made hazards. The ministry will provide leadership in protecting life, public health, property and natural resources from such hazards as forest fires, flooding, drought and erosion.

4. Stewardship, Partnerships and Community Involvement in Natural Resources Management

MNR will involve interested parties and Ontarians in its initiatives through the provision of opportunities to participate in resource management decisions, and by providing information on the state of our resources to ensure transparency and accountability.

5. Organizational Excellence for Improved Public Service

MNR is a progressive organization with a mandate that has evolved over the decades to focus on sustainable development and ecological sustainability. MNR is Ontario's lead conservation agency. To be effective in this role, MNR seeks to achieve organizational excellence in all areas, and commits to the provision of quality public services for Ontario citizens.

SECTION II



SECTION II: SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

The strategies and proposed actions listed below describe more precisely how the ministry aims to focus its efforts in the near term to achieve each of the five goals.

GOAL 1: HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ONTARIANS

Strategy 1.1 Conserve Ontario's Biodiversity

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Biodiversity strategy:** Develop an umbrella biodiversity strategy for Ontario. The strategy will consider social, cultural, economic and ecological challenges, issues and opportunities.
- b. **Protect species at risk:** Review the Endangered Species Act and prepare and implement recovery plans for endangered and threatened species. Establish and implement a provincial wolf management strategy and policy, including consideration of Algonquin Park wolves and related science, management and protection needs.
- c. **Manage invasive species:** In cooperation with federal, provincial and territorial governments and other Ontario ministries, support the development and implementation of national invasive species response plans, and a provincial-federal accord for the management of invasive species. Liaise with the federal government to remain abreast of emerging situations, and seek proactive responses.
- d. **State of the resources:** Further develop state of the resources reporting to enhance transparency, accountability, public involvement and improved effectiveness.
- e. **Great Lakes management:** Enhance the management of this significant resource through improved policy leadership and cooperation with other management agencies. Explore opportunities for new partnerships.
- f. **Climate change:** Enhance MNR efforts to understand, mitigate impacts on biodiversity, and adapt to climate change.
- g. **Protect natural heritage areas:** Expand the system of parks and protected areas in Ontario, including the Far North in conjunction with the Northern Boreal Initiative. Review the Provincial Parks Act and related protected areas legislation. Manage protected areas effectively through planning and implementation of the new Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves. Protect significant natural heritage areas, such as wetlands and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), through appropriate mechanisms such as designations or conservation easements.
- h. **Acquisitions and incentives:** In cooperation with partners, continue to acquire priority natural areas; provide incentives to encourage citizens to conserve their natural resources through the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program and the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.



GOAL 1: HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ONTARIANS

Strategy 1.2 Ensure Sustainable Forestry

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Environmental assessment:** Implement the new forest management class environmental assessment.
- b. **Policies, guidelines and tools:** Review forest management policies, including guidelines concerning the size for clear-cuts (i.e. natural disturbance pattern emulation guidelines). Build a new delivery model for wood supply analysis.
- c. **Settled landscapes:** Improve the knowledge, understanding and information needs regarding the role of forests in settled landscapes through a range of refocused and new initiatives.

Strategy 1.3 Protect Water Sources

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Water protection:** In cooperation with Ontario's conservation authorities and the Ministry of the Environment, develop mechanisms and approaches for the protection and management of water sources in Ontario. Support watershed-based source protection planning, including surface water monitoring.
- b. **Water Resources Information:** Build and make available quality information to support the protection and management of water resources by providing leadership to provincial ministries and through close cooperation with stakeholders managing water resources in the province.



GOAL 1: HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ONTARIANS

Strategy 1.4 Enhance Resource Management in Southern Ontario

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Greenspace:** Develop and implement a greenspace initiative to ensure the protection of natural heritage, particularly in near-urban areas. This includes the use of tools such as acquisitions and incentives to achieve greenspace goals. In addition, support the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing with technical advice on natural heritage systems planning, research, and geographic information management services relating to the Green Belt and Growth Management initiatives. Continue to actively participate in the development and management of the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment.
- b. **Municipal planning:** Provide technical advice and support (e.g. science, data and information) to other ministries and municipalities on natural resources related matters associated with the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement, and their review.

Strategy 1.5 Enhance Quality of Life for Ontarians Through the Use and Enjoyment of Natural Resources

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Enhance fishing and hunting opportunities:** Support recreational fishing and hunting, in conjunction with hunting, angling, tourism and environmental stakeholders, through initiatives such as: expansion of camping in near-urban areas, the family/urban fishing pilot program, expanded wild turkey and deer hunting, establishment of a fish and wildlife commission and a review of the moose tag draw system.
- b. **Increase outdoor recreational opportunities:** Identify and develop new programs to respond to the growing non-traditional and/or non-consumptive uses of natural resources (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, nature appreciation, extreme sports). Examine opportunity for development of the outdoor card for multiple uses.
- c. **Healthful benefits:** Compile research on and communicate the healthful benefits of outdoor recreation.



GOAL 2: ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR ONTARIO COMMUNITIES

Strategy 2.1

Provide New Ventures in Renewable Energy (Water, Wind, Co-generation, Biofuels)

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Site release:** Finalize preparation and review of policies to support wind and water power generation, including consideration of environmental effects, and implement site release policies to stimulate new opportunities.
- b. **Wind atlas:** Develop a wind power atlas to assist potential developers in planning new initiatives.
- c. **Co-generation:** In cooperation with the ministries of Energy, Agriculture and Food and Northern Development and Mines, investigate and promote co-generation and new bio-energy opportunities.

Strategy 2.2

Support Improved Aboriginal Relations Through Economic Development Opportunities and Partnerships

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Northern Boreal Initiative:** Expand the area of commercial forestry northward to provide increased self-sufficiency for remote Aboriginal communities.
- b. **Improved relations:** Seek broader government collaboration with First Nations through greater returns from natural resources and the development of a strategic approach to managing aboriginal issues. Develop human resource strategies to employ First Nations people in MNR (see organizational goal 5).



GOAL 2: ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR ONTARIO COMMUNITIES

Strategy 2.3 Stimulate Economic Development and Community Stability Particularly in Northern Ontario

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Forest sector strategy:** Develop a forest products sector strategy with consideration given to supporting improved economic performance of traditional resource industries, encouraging diversification of natural resource industries, and improving value-added production of forest products in Northern Ontario. Explore increased benefits to aboriginal communities.
- b. **Forestry cluster:** Examine opportunities to expand both the forest products and the forestry clusters which already exist in Northern Ontario and to support the growth of the clusters to further enhance their competitive advantage.
- c. **Resource development strategy:** Establish an internal MNR team to prepare a resource development strategy aimed at identifying natural resource economic opportunities, in support of healthy, strong communities. Examine opportunities to expand community economic development associated with parks.
- d. **Enhanced tourism:** Work with the Ministry of Tourism to support the provision of outdoor recreation tourism opportunities, marketing and fishing and hunting (e.g. Ontario Parks as a key component of the outdoor experience).

Strategy 2.4 Optimize Economic Benefits of Ontario's Natural Resources

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Valuing the resources:** Develop policies and tools (such as socio-economic models) to ensure adequate valuation of natural resources and a fair return to the province. Develop information materials to assist citizens in understanding the importance and value of ecosystems.
- b. **Full-cost pricing for services:** Move towards the full-cost pricing of services and management of natural resources where considered reasonable, appropriate and fair.

GOAL 2:
ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR ONTARIO COMMUNITIES

Strategy 2.5
Enhance Market Access and Manage External Influences

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Competitive positioning:** Position Ontario to maintain its competitive position with respect to softwood lumber and other natural resources, as required.
- b. **Certified forests:** Increase the proportion of Ontario's Crown forest that is certified by internationally recognized environmental management certification systems.
- c. **Off-shore strategy:** Promote international marketing of natural resources through the development of a market strategy.
- d. **Influence national and international initiatives:** Define improved ways for MNR to influence initiatives such as the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, Great Lakes management and trade and borders issues, in cooperation with provincial and federal agencies.



GOAL 3:

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY TO PROTECT OUR CITIZENS

Strategy 3.1

Lead Natural Resources Preventive and Emergency Management and Support Other Agencies

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Protect public resources:** Protect 85 million hectares of Crown land through mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery against emergencies such as forest fires, floods and erosion. Develop an integrated MNR emergency management strategy.
- b. **Protect life and property:** Where feasible, assist with the protection of life and private property values against emergencies such as fire, flooding, drought, oil and gas hazards, erosion, dam failures and unstable soils and bedrock.
- c. **Support other agencies:** Integrate operations with Emergency Management Ontario to support other provincial emergency situations.
- d. **Dam safety:** Provide for dam safety including both public and private dam infrastructure.
- e. **Safe drinking water:** Provide safe drinking water in operating provincial parks and other MNR facilities in accordance with provincial health standards.
- f. **Rehabilitation:** Ensure that abandoned pits, quarries and petroleum wells are rehabilitated. Take action to advance the clean-up of the Mid-Canada Line radar sites in Northern Ontario.

Strategy 3.2

Investigate and Manage Fish- and Wildlife-Borne Diseases

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Enhance understanding:** Increase capacity to understand the nature of fish- and wildlife-borne diseases (e.g. chronic wasting disease, rabies) through research, monitoring and inventory initiatives.
- b. **Manage and control:** Employ appropriate strategies such as prevention, containment, or elimination to help manage and control incidents of fish- and wildlife-borne diseases.
- c. **Cooperation:** Work with other government agencies to develop and implement a wildlife health strategy and respond to situations.
- d. **Rabies:** Control and, where feasible, eradicate fox and raccoon rabies in Ontario.
- e. **Bear Management strategy:** Lead a comprehensive management strategy, to reduce human-bear conflicts, improve public safety and recognize the importance of black bears as part of our natural heritage.



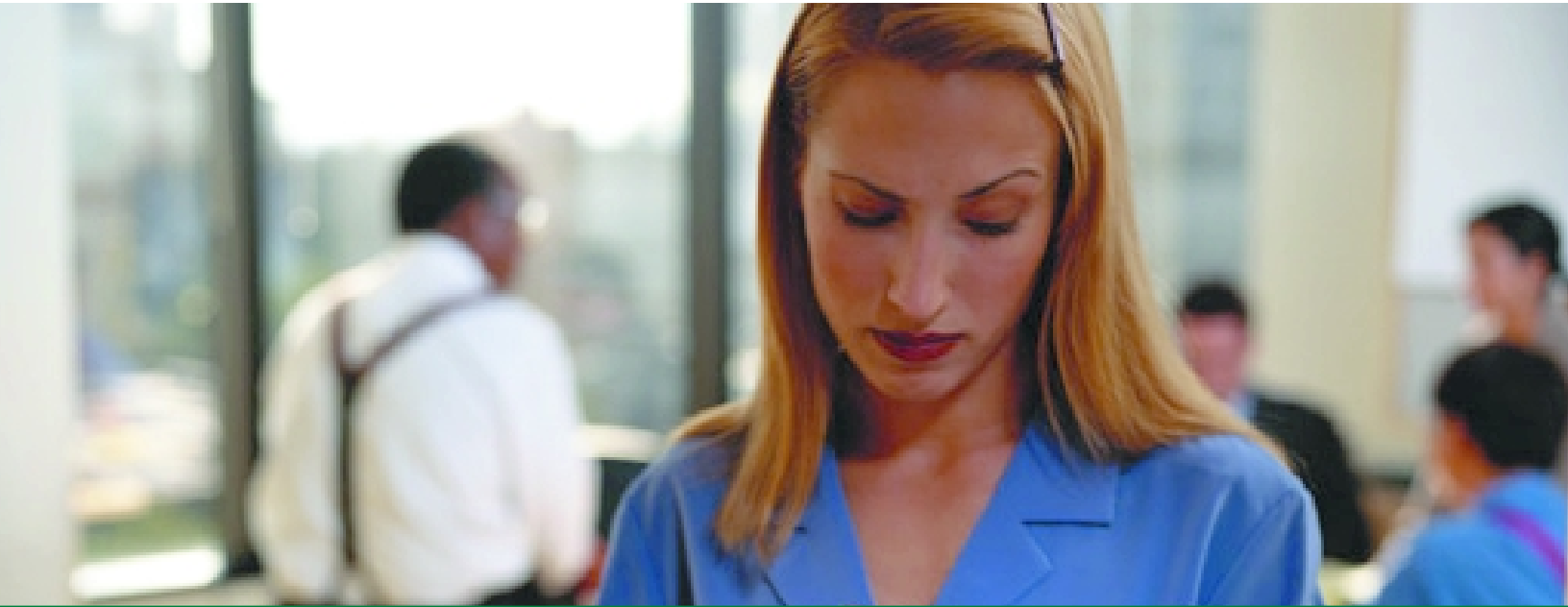
GOAL 4: STEWARDSHIP, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Strategy 4.1

Support Effective Partnerships and Promote Awareness Through Enhanced Outreach

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Partnership strategy:** Examine and rationalize partner relationships and focus on partnerships that are value-added and cost-effective. Develop a partnership support system, including best practices.
- b. **Private land stewardship:** Promote the ethic, values and techniques of private land stewardship. Align and focus the Ontario Stewardship Program with MNR programs and establish councils in the North where opportunities arise. Continue to develop and implement effective partnership initiatives such as the Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program, Eastern Habitat Joint Venture/North American Waterfowl Management Plan program and the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.
- c. **Enhanced outreach:** Recognize our evolving client base and their interests through communications and outreach efforts especially in Northern Ontario communities.
- d. **Towards e-democracy:** Investigate emerging methods of electronic communications that support the principle of e-democracy (policies regarding freedom of information and access to information, among others), and encourage staff to use effective methods.
- e. **Youth involvement:** Continue to implement MNR's youth programs which give young people valuable on-the-job training and skills, and help build a strong economy by investing in youth and communities.
- f. **Enhanced information exchange:** Continue to develop and deliver e-government services such as the Ontario Land Information Infrastructure, Land Information Ontario and other centrally located information repositories, with a particular focus on municipal clients in support of protection of natural heritage values.



GOAL 5: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICE

Strategy 5.1

Ensure MNR has a Competent and Diverse Workforce

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

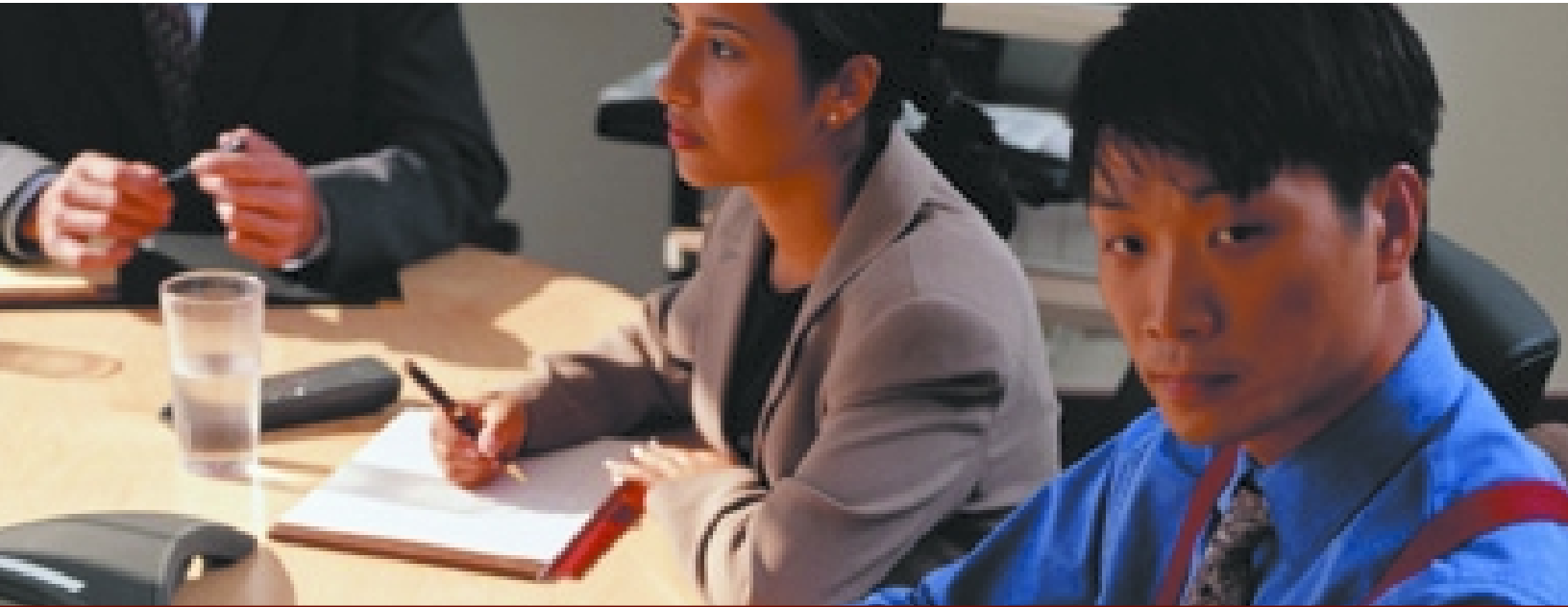
- a. **Continuous learning:** Encourage ongoing learning and development of staff through training, formal education, mentoring, special assignments and other means.
- b. **Human resources and transformation strategy:** Develop strategies to address human resource aspects of organizational transformation and to support enhanced employment opportunities in Northern Ontario and First Nation communities. Also define strategies to attract and retain MNR staff.

Strategy 5.2

More Efficient, Transparent and Accountable Governance

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **OPS transformation and integrated service delivery:** Actively address the elements of the OPS transformation agenda by providing simple, seamless, accessible government services, including support for:
 - Land and Resources Cluster
 - Land Information Ontario
 - ServiceOntario
 - Inspection, investigation and enforcement initiatives
 - Horizontal and vertical integration with other ministries and levels of government.
- b. **Efficient and accountable:** Through continuous improvement, take actions to ensure that the ministry is internally efficient and accountable, including:
 - Modern controllership
 - Enhanced relationship with service providers (Shared Services Bureau, Ontario Realty Corporation).
 - Quality management practices
 - A long-term infrastructure renewal and management program (including information technology and information systems).



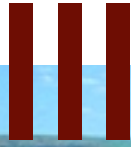
GOAL 5:
ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICE

Strategy 5.3
Support Decision-Making and Policy Development

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

- a. **Policy development:** Enhance the policy development process for MNR, including how best to engage clients, integrate science, address internal and external perspectives, and evaluate and refine policy in an ongoing and adaptive manner.
- b. **Science emphasis:** Ensure access to, and development of, the best possible science to support future policy and resource decision-making by establishing a new governance structure for MNR science and research, and preparing a strategy to support future program direction. Incorporate science staff expertise into the policy development process.
- c. **Information partnerships:** Enhance information partnerships with federal, provincial and municipal government agencies and others to leverage available resources and improve decision-making.
- d. **Socio-economic analysis:** Enhance staff capacity and competencies related to socio-economic analysis to support decision-making and policy development.

SECTION



SECTION III: IMPLEMENTATION

We will plan and implement our policies, programs and activities around the five goals described in this strategic plan. The strategies and proposed actions will provide the basis for results-based planning and measuring performance. Our renewed strategic directions and results-based plans will be supported by organizational transformation to enable MNR to deliver government priorities, meet fiscal challenges, and build greater flexibility to respond to new and emerging issues. Transformation will include enhanced efforts to protect green-space in southern Ontario, biodiversity conservation, the protection of source waters, support for new renewable energy supply and sustainable economic development, especially in Northern Ontario.

Transformation will aim to improve our traditional connection to communities throughout Ontario. We will enhance our focus on the development of policy, the allocation of resources, compliance and the science and information required to support these functions. Increasingly, we will move away from transactional activities and direct our operations to integrated service management.

The policy focus will require an enhanced capacity for integration of program policies and improved policy competencies in our organization. Allocation of natural resources will occur through planning, regulation, and disposition of resources, which includes setting conditions for resource use and monitoring resources to ensure ecological sustainability. The focus on compliance will include monitoring, inspections, and enforcement. It will also include a code of professionalism, risk-based planning, along with enhanced integration with other agencies.

MNR has a long tradition as a decentralized organization, and our transformation will retain our connection to the land and to communities, although not necessarily in all the same places or doing the same work. We will need to examine opportunities to shift away from functions that are not a core element of our mandate in order to focus on our priorities. We will aim to improve the provision of public services through the use of technology, continuous improvements in information management and a greater cooperation with other ministries and levels of governments. In addition, our transformation will increase our socio-economic analytical capacity and enhance the integration of science and information into our policy development processes and resource allocation decisions.



MONITORING AND MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to know how well we are performing in achieving our goals and to monitor the effectiveness of our strategies and actions. The following six topics will be considered when designing evaluations:

- Ecosystem health and natural resource sustainability
- Social and economic benefits
- Customer service
- Fiscal effectiveness
- Partnership effectiveness
- Organizational excellence.

MNR will use these topics to guide the selection of performance measures and standards for ministry core businesses. Specific measures and standards will be set out and reported on regularly. This approach to measuring performance will enable us to assess our progress in achieving our strategic directions and allow us to share our results with others. More comprehensive assessments of ecosystem health and natural resources sustainability, and social and economic benefits, will be developed through a new State of the Resources Assessment and Reporting initiative in the ministry.

STATE OF THE RESOURCES REPORTING

Keeping ecosystems healthy depends on our knowledge and understanding of how they function, the biological processes involved and the effects of human interaction.

In coming years, we expect to see increased concern about the health of our natural environment and ecosystems. As a result, the public will expect that resource information and status reports on the state of natural resources and the environment are readily available. The ministry will create an effective framework for preparing and sharing of this information. A system of monitoring, assessment and reporting will help to gauge our progress, and in the spirit of adaptive management, we will use this information to alter our management approaches or modify our strategies and actions in order to achieve results. Public reporting will ensure that we are transparent and accountable for results. Furthermore, it also enables the public and our clients to better engage as partners in resource management and decision-making.



MOVING FORWARD

The Ministry of Natural Resources is committed to sustainable development, ecological sustainability, and the conservation of biological diversity. These strategic directions support a healthier Ontario, a higher quality of life, an innovative resource economy and strong communities.

Many changes will continue to challenge our ability to successfully protect and manage our natural resources. However, with our considerable strengths to build on, the Ministry of Natural Resources will move forward to meet the challenges. We will work to promote healthy, sustainable ecosystems, protect significant natural areas and greenspace, conserve biodiversity, ensure source water protection, facilitate economic opportunities in the resource sector, promote renewable energy, and enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation.

MNR's role in contributing to sustainable development continues to evolve. As we move forward, our transformation will include a stronger focus on policy development and science support, including a system for assessing and reporting on the state of our natural resources. Ministry staff and the public will have the requisite information to measure effectiveness and establish future priorities and directions.

CARTE DE L'ONTARIO

MAP OF ONTARIO

