



SOUTH NATION
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FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

MARCH 2018



**SOUTH NATION CONSERVATION
FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN
2018 - 2037
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

SOUTH NATION CONSERVATION

South Nation Conservation (SNC) is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario. Established in 1947 under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, SNC has a strong history in watershed management and leadership in applying sustainable natural resource practices.

SNC's mission is to ensure that the management of natural occurrences, natural resources, and human activities results in the protection or improvement of natural resources.

THE SNC FOREST

The SNC Forest was established in 1961, in partnership with the Province of Ontario, under the *Agreement Forest Act*. Managed in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry for 40 years and then through SNC's own 20-year management plan, produced in 1998.

To further ensure forest sustainability and good management practices, SNC obtained certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) under the Eastern Ontario Model Forest's (EOMF) group certificate (RA-COC-000232) in 2005. Yearly audits are performed to retain this certification.

FOREST ADMINISTRATION

In addition to SNC Forest Policy, the SNC Forest is administered in compliance with several legislative and voluntary protocols, including:

- The Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program
- The Conservation Lands Tax Incentive Program
- Eastern Ontario Model Forest – Forest Certification Policies and Procedures Manual
- Forest Stewardship Council Canada – Certification Standard for the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Region
- Heritage Conservation Easement Agreements
- Utility Easements

There are 43 individual pieces of legislation that may affect forest operations and management.

FOREST RESOURCES

SNC owns and manages 11,633 acres of land. Organized by function, the land includes: productive forest (7,345 acres); protected forest (1,540 acres); wetlands (1,629 acres); flood control (836 acres); parks (192 acres); habitat restoration (57 acres) and other lands (34 acres). The Forest Management Plan applies primarily to the productive and protected forest area.

Soil provides the water, nutrients and medium of support for tree growth, and is derived from parent material of differing compositions. Outwash sand plains and glacial tills over fractured bedrock are the dominant land form in the forest, containing 25 distinct soil types with 72% of soils comprised of fine to coarse sands and sandy loams.

The range of parent material and soils provides for a rich biologically diverse forest. More than 792 species of plants and animals have been documented to inhabit 51 distinct ecological communities and numerous watercourses within the SNC Forest.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

The forest is organized into forest units with species of similar biological characteristics to which the same silvicultural prescriptions can be applied. An allowable harvest area (AHA) is determined for each forest unit. The AHA is one method of ensuring long-term sustainability of the forest. The total AHA for the forest is 265 acres; an increase from the previous AHA of 100 acres in the previous management period.

During the preparation of prescriptions, natural and cultural heritage values are identified as areas of concern (AOC) and prescriptions are adjusted to protect those values. Cultural heritage values include recreational opportunities and archaeological features. The forest receives more than 100,000 visitors annually. Natural heritage values include plants, animals and ecological communities, including 12 species at risk. Most information regarding natural and cultural values is gained through First Nation, research and community partnerships.

FOREST MONITORING

Forest monitoring ensures management actions are sustainable. In addition to previous techniques SNC plans to monitor forest regeneration; review local volume tables, and implement electronic data management. SNC will continue to monitor forest operations in an accurate and accessible way, monitor use of the forest and its impact, and continue to gather additional information on natural and cultural values with partners.

ECONOMIC BENEFIT

The SNC Forest provides direct revenue through sale of forest products while maintaining natural and cultural heritage features of the forest. Average income from forest operations is \$35,000 annually. Under proposed management recommendations revenue will increase.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the forest area following SNC Land Securement Strategy.
2. Increase the Allowable Harvest Area for all forest units, particularly hardwoods. This is the result of overall increases to the forest area and the completion of critical first thinnings in conifer plantations.
3. Enhancement of forest inventory procedures to document improved forest health and growth, forest regeneration and biodiversity.
4. Maintain and enhance partnerships with municipalities, First Nations, non-governmental organizations, federal and provincial governments and agencies and the research community.
5. Maintain or enhance protection of cultural and natural heritage values within the SNC Forest.