



## Media Release

# Local Tree Planting Contributes to Ontario's 50 Million Tree Goal

## Tree planting ceremony recognizes efforts to fight climate change

Port Hope, ON, May 21, 2008 –Trees Ontario, local planting partner Northumberland Stewardship Council and Lou Rinaldi, MPP Northumberland-Quinte West, hosted an official tree planting ceremony today in recognition of the important tree planting work that is being done across the province for the Ministry of Natural Resources' 50 Million Tree Program.

In August 2007, the Ontario government introduced a program to plant 50 million trees by 2020, as part of its commitment to help fight climate change and green the province.

The 50 Million Tree Program is Ontario's contribution to the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign, and is the single largest commitment made to date to this worldwide campaign.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is partnering with Trees Ontario, a not-for-profit organization, to deliver the first phase of this program. This spring, Trees Ontario's partners will plant a total of 1.2 million trees for the program, mostly on rural privately owned land.

"Today's tree planting activity, and ones like it right across southern Ontario demonstrate that we can and will meet the 50 million target," said the Hon. Donna Cansfield, Minister of Natural Resources. "This is an example of how Ontario landowners are joining the battle to reduce our greenhouse gases and helping green our province."

"I am very pleased to participate in today's event," said Lou Rinaldi, MPP for Northumberland-Quinte West. "This demonstrates that everyone in our community can help in the important battle against climate change. More than 30,800 trees been planted in this area over the past year with assistance from Trees Ontario and Northumberland Stewardship Council, and many more can and will be planted in the years ahead."

Participants in today's event planted red oak trees grown from seeds native to the Oak Ridges Moraine. These seeds were collected through funding provided by the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation to help ensure the maintenance of the Moraine's biodiversity.

Participants also had a first-hand opportunity to see how large-scale tree planting is being done. This scale of planting not only helps to capture carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas, but also contributes to the protection of our watersheds and the diversification of our landscape. One healthy mature tree releases enough oxygen back in the atmosphere to support two human beings for one year.

### For more event information contact:

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## **Trees Ontario**

Trees Ontario, a not-for-profit organization, working with its partners, is the largest, not-for-profit tree planting partnership in North America. It is committed to the re-greening of Ontario through a range of tree planting activities. Trees Ontario is also partnering with the Ministry of Natural Resources to help deliver the Ontario government's commitment to plant 50 million trees by 2020.

The goal of Trees Ontario is to restore the province's tree planting capacity, especially throughout southern Ontario on private lands, by providing funding and planning support for its tree planting partners. These include local Conservation Authorities, Ontario Stewardship Councils, municipal governments and community volunteer groups.

Last spring Trees Ontario, with its partners, planted nearly 3 million trees. Its goal is to increase tree planting to 10 million trees every year by 2015. Visit the Trees Ontario website at [www.treesontario.on.ca](http://www.treesontario.on.ca). *Planting tomorrow's forests.*

### **50 Million Tree Program**

In August 2007, the Ontario Government introduced a program to fund the planting of 50 million trees across the province by 2020, as part of their commitment to help fight climate change and green the province.

This is the most ambitious program of its kind in North America and is Ontario's commitment to the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign by 2008/09.

In the first phase of the program, the Ministry of Natural Resources will partner with Trees Ontario as the delivery agent for the ministry.

The goal of the program is to sequester carbon; enhance and diversify southern Ontario's landscape; increase adaptive capacity to withstand climate change; moderate local climate by providing shade, moderating temperature extremes and reducing the effects of storms; increase wildlife habitat; increase soil and water conservation, and provide local economic opportunities.

The new program is designed to significantly reduce landowner's costs of large-scale tree planting and thereby increase the number of trees planted.

Trees Ontario will work with local tree planting agencies in Ontario, including regional Conservation Authorities and local Ontario Stewardship councils to implement this new program, as well as continuing to work with these agencies on its ongoing tree plant subsidy programs.

Planting agencies will work directly with landowners to determine site eligibility, allocate funding and coordinate planting.

To find out more and how to apply visit: [http://www.treesontario.on.ca/partners/index.php/fifty\\_million](http://www.treesontario.on.ca/partners/index.php/fifty_million).