

50 Million Tree Program Reduces Tree Planting Costs for Landowners in the Niagara Watershed

Forests Ontario has planted almost 600,000 trees in the Niagara region

St. Catharines, ON [Feb. 6, 2020] –Property owners in the Niagara watershed plan to plant more than 45,000 trees in 2020 under Forests Ontario 50 Million Tree Program (50 MTP), according to new data.

Forests Ontario recently modified the program’s criteria. In the past, landowners needed to commit to planting on 2.5 acres of land to participate in the 50 MTP, but now anyone with room to plant a minimum of 500 trees may apply. Though planting sites vary, 500 trees can usually be planted on less than one acre.

“The 50 MTP is better and more accessible than ever,” said Rob Keen, Registered Professional Forester and CEO of Forests Ontario. “The new, expanded criteria opens the program to more land and property owners, meaning more trees in the ground. It’s a win-win for landowners, who save on tree planting costs, and for the environment.”

The 50 MTP is a large-scale tree planting program for property owners with the goal of increasing forest cover in Ontario. In 2019, the Government of Canada committed up to \$15 million over four years to support the program. Funding also comes from corporate sponsors and donors.

Increasing forest cover helps to promote healthy, natural landscapes; trees play an important role in reducing the risk of severe flooding by soaking up water with their roots, leaves, branches and trunks. A 2012 report from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority found that just 18 per cent of the watershed’s area remains forested.

Forests Ontario, non-profit charity, has facilitated the planting of more than 29 million trees through the 50 MTP since 2008. This total includes nearly 600,000 trees planted in the Niagara region.

The 50 MTP has allowed more than 5,000 landowners to plant trees, yielding more than 16,500 hectares of new forest and sequestering more than 22,000 tonnes of carbon annually. The 50 MTP also supports approximately 300 full-time, seasonal jobs.

Forests Ontario is currently taking applications for the 50 MTP. Those wishing to apply for the program can visit www.forestsontario.ca.

Forests Ontario is a not-for-profit charity dedicated to re-greening the province through the support of forest restoration, stewardship, education and awareness. We promote Canada's greatest natural resource – our forests – because healthy forests sustain healthy communities and healthy economies. Forests Ontario is the voice of our forests. Visit www.forestsontario.ca or follow us @Forests_Ontario to find out more.

For more information, photos, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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