

Plan in the fall, plant trees in the spring – now is the time to advance a Canada-wide tree planting strategy.

Opinion Piece by Rob Keen, Registered Professional Forester and CEO of Forests Ontario and Forest Recovery Canada (September 2020)

As Canadians, we need to ask ourselves this question – how do we build upon and deploy large-scale tree planting efforts such as the *Two Billion Tree Program* envisioned by Prime Minister Trudeau?

We are not alone with this idea. According to ETH Zurich University, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations, planting one trillion trees around the world may be one of the most effective ways to combat climate change impacts.

To respond to our moral and global responsibilities, and since Canada is able to contribute to the world's growing need for trees and new forests, I say it is time we build on the Prime Minister's visionary *Two Billion Tree* promise announced near Belleville last September with a climate focused national tree planting strategy.

Forest Recovery Canada and Forests Ontario are ready to help. With our dedicated partners, we already plant about 3 million trees a year from coast to coast in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Last spring, despite COVID-19, with the support of the Canadian government, our tree planting operations involving large numbers of paid tree planters were safe and successful.

As the global spotlight focuses on climate change, Canadians are ready to embrace the vision of planting two billion trees (or even more) at home. Growing and planting future forests is an excellent response to the climate crisis that provides a host of benefits, including green employment. I believe Canadians are ready and eager to be part of a tree-focused, tangible climate response. Now is the time to plan for spring tree planting.

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

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About Forest Recovery Canada

Forest Recovery Canada (FRC) <https://www.frc-rfc.ca> is the national tree-planting division of Forests Ontario, a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to forest restoration. We work with planting organizations, municipalities, First Nations, ENGOS and corporate sponsors to plant trees where they are most needed to lessen the effects of climate change. FRC uses a comprehensive approach to tree planting, ensuring the trees we plant today will thrive in tomorrow's forests.

About Forests Ontario

Forests Ontario www.forestsontario.ca 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.