



15 Maple Ave Unit #103
Barrie, ON L4N 2N6

www.forestsontario.ca

MEDIA RELEASE

Steve Hounsell Speaks to the Need for Biodiversity and Ecological Sustainability Forests Ontario's Virtual Annual Conference February 9-11, 2022

[January 18, 2022] – Steve Hounsell, ardent advocate for biodiversity conservation and ecological sustainability, will deliver the keynote presentation at Forests Ontario's Annual Conference, *Strength in Biodiversity*, a virtual event to be held February 9-11, 2022.

Hounsell will highlight the importance of biodiversity and how nature-based solutions are critical for the twin issues of biodiversity loss and climate change, while also examining the critical benefits that biodiverse landscapes provide for people and their livelihoods.

A retired biologist with more than 46 years of experience across multiple sectors, Hounsell is particularly well-suited to speak to this year's conference theme of *Strength in Biodiversity*. Having spent most of his professional career with Ontario Power Generation, and the former Ontario Hydro, Hounsell was responsible for the development and implementation of a biodiversity policy, the first of its kind in the electricity industry. Hounsell has also chaired several organizations, including Forests Ontario and the Ontario Biodiversity Council, and is a Past President of Ontario Nature. He is a founding director of the Canadian Business and Biodiversity Council, a founding director of The Natural Step Canada, and a past director of the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative.

"I'm very excited to give the keynote presentation at Forests Ontario's Annual Conference," Hounsell said. "This is an excellent opportunity to share more on why we must work together to bend the curve of biodiversity loss and become nature-positive. Organizations like Forests Ontario are doing great work to deliver nature-based solutions, and I look forward to learning more from the many esteemed speakers."

The conference will emphasize how biodiversity is fundamental to ensuring healthy, resilient, and productive ecosystems, and feature sessions and discussions on forest management, micro and macro ecosystems, perspectives on forest values, wildfire challenges, and sustainable forestry and climate change.

"We are thrilled to have Steve Hounsell as the keynote speaker for *Strength in Biodiversity*," said Rob Keen, RPF and CEO of Forests Ontario and Forest Recovery Canada. "He has dedicated his career to advocating for nature-based and forest-based climate solutions. I can't think of a more knowledgeable expert to speak to the importance of biodiversity."

Join Steve Hounsell and dozens of industry leaders at Forests Ontario's Annual Conference February 9-11, 2022. **For more information and to register to attend, please visit www.forestsontario.ca.**

Forests Ontario Members save \$25.00 off the price of a General Admission ticket. General Admission is \$75.00 per ticket, and Student Admission is \$25.00 per ticket.

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

Colleen Mahaffie, Communications Officer

Forests Ontario / Forest Recovery Canada

W: 416.646.1193 ext. 225

E: cmahaffie@forestsontario.ca

About Forests Ontario & Forest Recovery Canada

Forests Ontario is a not-for-profit charity dedicated to greening the communities in which we live work, and play. Our ambitious large-scale forest restoration programs, extensive educational programs, and decades of community outreach result in millions of trees being planted each year.

Together with our national division, Forest Recovery Canada, we work with our many partners across the country to plant the right tree in the right place for the right reason, ensuring our efforts today thrive and grow into healthy, diverse forests of tomorrow, and for generations to come.

Forests Ontario is the voice for our forests.

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