



Media Statement for Immediate Release

Federal Tree Planting Deserves Major Project Status Not Cuts

(Huntsville, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 4, 2025) The Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières (CTNA-ACPF), which represents over 95% of the nation's forest restoration seedling producers, expresses profound disappointment following the recent federal government decision to cancel the balance of the Two Billion Trees (2BT) Program.

“This abrupt move not only threatens the long-term environmental recovery of Canada's forests—which have already been devastated by recent wildfires—but also jeopardizes the livelihoods of workers, critical infrastructure, and the entire forest restoration sector” stated Rob Keen, RPF, Executive Director of the CTNA-ACPF.

The Unprecedented Need for Forest Restoration:

Canada is facing a forestry crisis, having lost an estimated eight percent of its forests to wildfires between just 2023 and 2025 alone. More severe fires are predicted, and the need for more seedlings and enhanced forest restoration has never been higher.

Restoring just 15% of these burned areas would require more than 7.3 billion seedlings—far exceeding the scope of the original 2BT program. Such an effort could generate over 31,000 full-time jobs and inject billions of dollars into the economy, underscoring that large-scale forest restoration is both an ecological necessity and a major economic opportunity.

The 2BT Program was a foundational federal commitment with the potential to catalyze seed collection, production infrastructure, and the skilled workforce needed to meet this critical national demand. It offered the opportunity for stable multi-year forest restoration essential for the long-term viability of the forest restoration sector. Its cancellation dismantles this progress at the very moment it is most urgently required.

The Strategic Advantage of the Major Projects Office (MPO):

Instead of cancellation, moving the remaining funds to support an enhanced **National Post Wildfire Forest Restoration Program**, would have been a strategic and responsible choice to ensure success and continuity designating tree planting as a national major project would be a sensible next step. The MPO is ideally suited for this role.

The MPO's mandate is to expediate projects of national interest. Designation would link Canada's tree nursery sector directly to the country's climate, biodiversity, and rural economic goals. Tree nurseries and their partners already possess the expertise, facilities, and workforce to deliver large-scale reforestation. With proper coordination through the MPO, Canada could elevate this effort to a project

of true national importance—supporting Indigenous leadership, rural employment, and climate resilience.

The High Cost of Cancellation:

Keen observed “At a time of tariffs and unprecedented impacts on the forestry sector, with this cancellation, Canada risks dismantling existing forest restoration’s critical human and physical infrastructure when needed most. Jobs are threatened and momentum is stalled at a moment when forest sector and rural employment is already under significant pressure.”

A Call for Immediate Action:

The CTNA calls on the federal government to reset by immediately engaging with the forest restoration sector to:

- Establish a **National Post Wildfire Forest Restoration Program**, and
- Designate it as a Major Project under the MPO to ensure long-term stability and national coordination.

Keen concluded “Canada needs a predictable, well-funded, long-term restoration framework to address post wildfire impacts that leverages the investments and expertise of nurseries, supports rural jobs, and fulfills our climate commitments in the face of escalating wildfire impacts. The future health of Canada’s forests and forestry communities depends on bold, coordinated action—not abrupt cancellations. This is the time for national vision; tree planting must stand as a major project not a discontinued program.

-30-

To schedule an interview in French or English contact: Rob Keen, RPF, Executive Director Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières @ Cell 416-706-3230 or rkeen@ctna-acpf.ca

Information including the economic impact of the sector, province by province analysis of the need for 7.3 billion seedling for post wildfire forest restoration and the Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières can be found at www.ctna-acpf.ca

About Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières: The Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières (CTNA-ACPF) advocates on behalf of 62 tree nurseries from coast to coast to coast. Formed in 2023, the CTNA-ACPF is the only national voice representing tree nurseries in Canada. Our members grow 720+ million seedlings or more than 95% of the nation’s forest restoration tree seedlings.