



July 29, 2026

The Honourable Kevin Holland
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
18th Floor Suite 1802, 438 University Ave
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8
Sent by email: minister.mnrf@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Holland,

On behalf of the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), representing 110 municipalities across Northeastern Ontario, I would like to commend you and the Government of Ontario for releasing A Roadmap to Protecting Ontario's Forest Sector on April 28, 2026. The Roadmap provides a clear vision for strengthening one of Ontario's most important economic sectors through coordinated actions over the next two, five, and ten years.

FONOM strongly supports the Province's commitment to protecting jobs, improving competitiveness, attracting investment, strengthening Northern communities, and ensuring Ontario's forest sector remains a global leader. Our municipalities recognize the forestry industry as one of the economic foundations of Northern Ontario, supporting thousands of direct and indirect jobs while sustaining many rural and Indigenous communities.

As municipalities review the Roadmap, one issue that stands out is the importance of maintaining reliable access to Ontario's working forests. Forest access roads are far more than industrial transportation routes. They are essential public infrastructure that supports forestry operations, mineral exploration, tourism, emergency response, Indigenous access to traditional territories, outdoor recreation, and regional economic development.

For that reason, FONOM is pleased to support the attached resolution adopted by the Township of Terrace Bay regarding the need for sustainable provincial funding for the long-term maintenance and rehabilitation of the Goldfield Road and Diversion Road. The resolution recognizes that these roads serve multiple users and provide critical

access for surrounding municipalities, First Nations, industry, emergency responders, and the travelling public. It also highlights that local municipalities and Indigenous communities lack the financial capacity to assume responsibility for maintaining these significant regional transportation corridors.

FONOM believes this issue extends well beyond the communities identified in the resolution. Across Northern Ontario, forest access roads support the objectives outlined in the Province's Roadmap by enabling sustainable forestry operations, encouraging new investment, supporting mineral development, expanding tourism opportunities, improving emergency preparedness, and strengthening regional economic resilience.

As the Province begins implementing its Roadmap over the coming years, FONOM respectfully encourages the Ministry to consider sustainable, long-term funding for Ontario's Provincial Forest Access Roads Program as a strategic investment in the future of the forest sector. Reliable access to Ontario's forests is fundamental to maintaining a competitive forestry industry and achieving the Roadmap's long-term objectives.

We also encourage the Ministry to work collaboratively with municipalities, Indigenous communities, forest companies, tourism operators, and regional stakeholders to develop a long-term strategy that recognizes forest access roads as essential multi-use infrastructure. Such a strategy would provide greater certainty for communities, improve public safety, support economic development, and reinforce Ontario's commitment to a strong and sustainable forest sector.

FONOM appreciates the leadership your government has demonstrated in developing A Roadmap to Protecting Ontario's Forest Sector. We believe that sustainable investment in forest access roads represents a practical and meaningful opportunity to advance the Roadmap's vision while strengthening Northern Ontario's economy and the communities that depend upon it.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your ministry in support of Ontario's forest sector.

Yours sincerely,



Dave Plourde, President of FONOM

cc: Minister of Northern Development
Minister of Indigenous Affairs