



Media Release

Ontario Forest Industries Association Applauds Government's \$60 Million Investment in Forest Biomass Program

March 1st, 2024

Toronto, ON - The Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) is pleased to announce its full support for the Government of Ontario's recent commitment to inject \$60 million into the Forest Biomass Program. This historic investment marks a significant step towards building a stronger forest sector in the province.

"Ontario's multi-year commitment to the Forest Biomass Program is transformational for our industry," said Ian Dunn, President & CEO of the OFIA. "The OFIA has been impressed by the impact of the program in its first year. Ensuring the program's long-term future will drive significant economic growth, create jobs, bolster forest sustainability, and accelerate us towards a net-zero future."

The Forest Biomass Program aims to develop the economic potential and environmental benefits of underutilized wood and mill by-products, known as forest biomass. Over the next three years, the program will make targeted investments in forest sector initiatives, fostering innovation and modernization.

Jamie McRae of McRae Lumber Company, and Chair of the OFIA, emphasized the program's significance: "This funding is essential to improving the competitiveness of our sector, strengthening local communities, and is essential to fostering Ontario's circular bioeconomy."

Kent Ramsay, President of Thunder Bay Pulp & Paper, highlighted the program's role in driving technological advancement: "The Forest Biomass Program is essential for driving innovation in our sector, ensuring that we remain globally competitive."

Jennifer Tallman, Chief Forester at Interfor, echoed these sentiments: "This investment underscores the government's commitment to sustainable forestry practices and will help Ontario achieve their goal of transitioning to a net-zero economy. More than ever, developing markets for mill byproducts is incredibly important to the integrated forest sector."

The announcement of additional funding follows the successful completion of the program's third phase, which allocated more than \$6.1 million to 12 research, innovation, and modernization initiatives. Projects included supporting forest sector integration, building community readiness, and pursuing local community energy production.

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For 81 years, the OFIA has represented forestry companies ranging from multinational corporations to family-owned businesses across Ontario. OFIA's member companies produce various renewable forest products, including dimensional lumber, pulp and paper, packaging, clean energy, and engineered wood products. OFIA members invest heavily in advanced research, development, and innovative technologies, supporting a transition towards net-zero. Today, Ontario's forest industry generates over \$20 billion in revenue and supports 142,000 direct and indirect jobs in communities across the province.

To learn more about OFIA, visit www.ofia.com, or follow us on Twitter @OFIA_info.

For more information, please contact:

Lauren McBride
Operations Coordinator
Ontario Forest Industries Association
(905) 449-7922 | lmcbride@ofia.com