

Trees Ontario Partners with MNR in 50 Million Tree Program

In August 2007, the Ontario Government introduced a program to fund the planting of 50 million trees across the province by 2020, as part of their commitment to help fight climate change and green the province.

This is the most ambitious program of its kind in North America and is Ontario's commitment to the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign.

The goal of the program is to sequester carbon; enhance and diversify southern Ontario's landscape; increase adaptive capacity to withstand climate change; moderate local climate by providing shade, moderating temperature extremes and reducing the effects of storms; increase wildlife habitat; increase soil and water conservation, and provide local economic opportunities.

The new program is designed to significantly reduce landowner's costs of large-scale tree planting and thereby increase the number of trees planted.

Trees Ontario will work with local tree planting agencies in Ontario, including regional Conservation Authorities and local Ontario Stewardship councils to implement this new program, as well as continuing to work with these agencies on its ongoing tree plant subsidy programs.

Planting agencies will work directly with landowners to determine site eligibility, allocate funding and coordinate planting.

Landowner and Site Requirements

In this new program, there are certain criteria that landowners must meet in order to be eligible for funding

The potential planting area must be:

- At least two hectares (ha) in size and productive; smaller areas may be considered depending on the landscape context and local program targets
- Open or mostly open land and not have been a woodland as defined by the Forestry Act for 10 years prior to this

If accepted into the program, the landowner must:

- Sign a 15-year management agreement to maintain the trees
- Employ good forestry practices
- Contribute \$0.15 per tree towards initial establishment costs
- Assume some of the additional costs to implement the plan and maintain the trees

Planting Agency Requirements

The 50 Million Tree Program is available to planting agencies with a proven ability to deliver large-scale tree planting operations.

Approved planting agencies must:

- Prepare a detailed site plan for each property that is approved and signed by a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or a member of good standing in the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA).
- Prescribe only native species (Norway spruce and European larch are acceptable)
 - No more than four species per hectare are permitted and planting density must be at least 1500 trees/ha and not greater than 2200/trees/ha
- Trees cannot be planted for the purpose of Christmas trees or landscape stock production

How to Apply

Interested landowners should contact their local planting agency or Trees Ontario at 1.800.646.1193. Local planting agencies, including forestry experts, Conservation Authorities and local Ontario Stewardship councils, should contact Trees Ontario or visit the website at www.treesontario.on.ca.