

Handbook for Getting Involved in Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario

April 2018

Policy Division

Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch

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Introduction

The content of this handbook is intended to assist the public, forest users, loggers, Indigenous peoples and others to gain a clear understanding of how you can help manage forests on Crown lands in Ontario and how you can get information to support your involvement. It includes information on forest management planning and operations, policy and administration.

Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented. It should be noted that this document is not intended to interpret rules relating to forest management planning and operations, nor does it create any new or additional policy or administrative requirements.

Overview of Forest Management and Environmental Assessment

What is forest management?

Forest management is the use of current forestry principles, policies, practices and business techniques to achieve sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits from a forest over time.

Forest management includes:

- maintaining legislation and policies that support healthy, sustainable forests
- preparing forest management plans (FMPs) that enable the:
 - building and maintaining of access roads into the forest
 - harvesting of trees
 - [renewal and tending of the forest](#)

Why is forest management important?

Ontario's Crown forests provide social, economic and environmental benefits for present and future generations. Managing the health and sustainability of Crown forests is the responsibility of Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), the forest industry, Indigenous peoples, and the public. MNRF must consider the opinions of all Ontarians in making forest management decisions.

What is an environmental assessment?

An environmental assessment is a planning and decision-making process that considers potential environmental impacts before a project on Crown land can begin. The goal of the assessment is to ensure Ontario's environment is protected, conserved and wisely managed.

What are the environmental assessment requirements for forest management?

The environmental assessment requirements for forest management are contained in Declaration Order MNR-75. It contains 61 conditions that the MNRF and the forest industry

must follow when managing forests on Crown lands. The document you are reading has been produced to meet condition 54(c) of the Declaration Order.

Where does forest management occur on Crown lands in Ontario?

The area in Ontario where commercial forest management can occur on Crown land is referred to as the Area of the Undertaking (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Area of the Undertaking



What are the other requirements MNR must follow?

There are laws and policies in Ontario to ensure the sustainable management and use of Crown forests (e.g., Crown Forest Sustainability Act). Learn more about forest [legislation, policies, manuals and guidelines](#).

How can I get Involved in Forest Management?

Why is the MNRF asking for my involvement?

The MNRF wants to understand your interest in forest management so it can make informed and fair decisions. MNRF and forest industry will ask for your input at key times as part of consultation processes associated with forest management planning or forest policy development.

How will I know that a consultation process is underway?

When the MNRF holds consultations for a FMP or forest policy, it notifies the public through some or all of the following:

- direct mail or email
- digital media and/or notices in local newspapers
- notices posted to the [Environmental Registry](#)

You will find more information about consultations in the forest management planning and forest policy sections of this document.

How can I get involved or provide input on a forest management plan or policy?

During the development of FMPs or other forest management policy you can get involved by:

- **Calling or emailing the MNRF or the forest industry contacts** identified in the notices to get information or discuss a particular interest or concern you may have.
- **Attending information centres/open houses** identified in the notice where information is typically displayed in maps, documents and tables. Representatives will be available to answer questions and discuss any concerns you have about the FMP or project.
Comment sheets are also available.
- **Becoming a member of a local citizens' committee** to provide advice to the MNRF district manager and the planning team on the development of a FMP. Members typically include people with an interest in forest management such as trappers, tourism operators, hunters and anglers, First Nation and Métis peoples and other stakeholders.

What is the role of the local citizens' committee in forest management planning?

The local citizens' committee's main role is to represent the interests of the public and Indigenous peoples by providing advice to the MNRF district manager and the planning team during the development and implementation of the FMP.

You can request a meeting with a member of the committee at any time during the planning process to discuss the FMP or for assistance with the forest management planning process.

What does the MNRF do with the comments I provide?

MNRF considers all comments from the public, First Nation and Métis communities, and stakeholders during the FMP or policy development processes. You can review the information that has supported the development of the FMP on the [forest management planning website](#) to see how comments were considered. You can also review the Environmental Registry decision posting to see what comments were considered on a forest policy matter.

Information on the Forest Management Planning Process

How are Crown forests managed?

Crown forests are managed through the preparation and implementation of Forest Management Plans (FMPs). These plans ensure the province's Crown forests remain healthy and provide benefits such as timber and other commercial products, wildlife and species at risk habitat, and recreation opportunities. A FMP is prepared for each of Ontario's management units.

What is a management unit?

Ontario's Crown forests are divided into geographic planning areas known as management units. Most of these management units are managed by the forest industry under sustainable forest licences. Sustainable forest licence holders are responsible for forest management planning and forest operations (i.e., access road construction, harvest, renewal) subject to the requirements of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

The Crown, or a designated company, is responsible for preparing and implementing a FMP for management units that are not managed by sustainable forest licence holders.

You can visit the [forest management planning website](#) to view a map of all management units and the status of the FMP for each unit.

What is a forest management plan?

A FMP outlines the objectives over a 10-year period for a management unit and what forest operations will be completed over that time to achieve those objectives. There must be an approved FMP before any forest operations can take place in a management unit.

What guides the preparation and implementation of a forest management plan?

There are three manuals that provide direction for the preparation and implementation of forest management plans. Each manual contains technical direction and a glossary of the technical terms used. The manuals include:

1. The [Forest Management Planning Manual](#) is the primary document that guides the preparation of a forest management plan for a management unit.
2. The [Forest Operations and Silviculture Manual](#) sets out the principles and accepted approaches for forest management, the standards for forest operations and [silvicultural practices](#), the minimum qualifications for forestry workers, and the procedures for the evaluation of forest management in Ontario.
3. The [Forest Information Manual](#) provides direction for the exchange of forest management information between MNRF and the forest industry. It describes what information is required for forest management planning and the preparation and delivery of forest resources inventories, maps, forest operations inspections, forest values, and base data.

How is a forest management plan implemented?

Annual work schedules direct the implementation of a FMP over its 10-year period. Forest operations must be reported every year in annual reports.

The following forest management activities can only occur on Crown lands if an approved FMP and annual work schedule are in place:

- roads can be built and maintained to provide access to the forest
- roads can be decommissioned when they are no longer needed
- trees can be harvested for lumber, paper or other products
- tree planting and seeding can occur to renew the forest
- young trees can be tended to keep them growing well

Who prepares a forest management plan?

A FMP is prepared by a plan author who is a registered professional forester in Ontario. The plan author is assisted by a planning team and a local citizens' committee. The planning team includes representatives from MNRF, the forest industry, the local citizens' committee, and First Nation and Métis communities. Once the FMP has been prepared and is ready for approval, the

plan author will certify that it provides for the sustainability of the Crown forest, and submit it to the MNRF for approval by the MNRF regional director.

When can I get involved in the preparation of a forest management plan?

There are five stages of consultation involved with preparing and approving a FMP, as per Table 1. At the beginning of each of the five consultation stages, notices are sent to people and organizations on the mailing list, and notices are placed in local newspapers and on the Environmental Registry. The notices will tell you if a FMP is being prepared in an area that interests you.

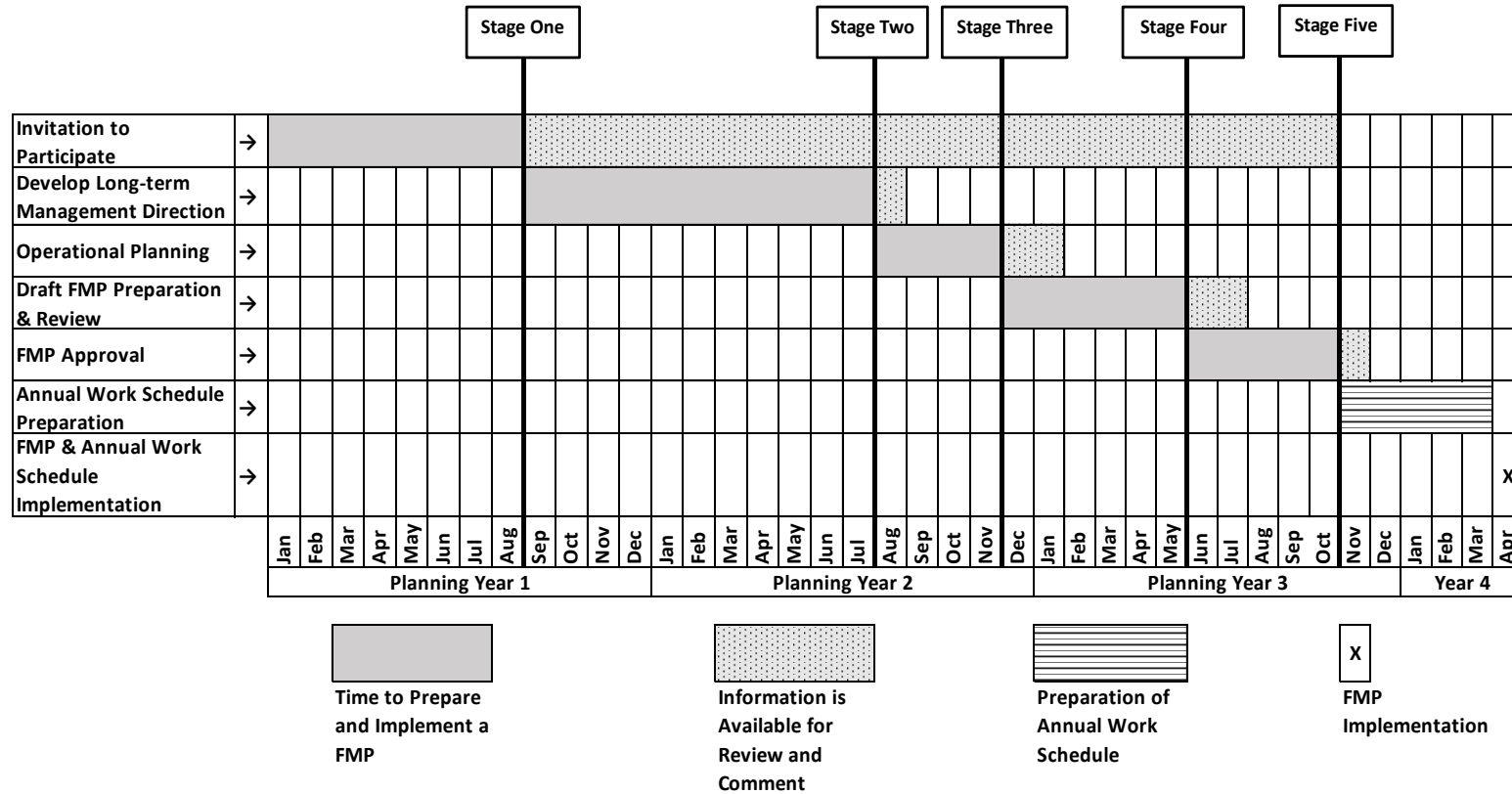
Table 1: Stages of Consultation in Preparing a Forest Management Plan

Stages of Consultation in Preparing a Forest Management Plan	
<u>Stage One</u>	Invitation to Participate
<u>Stage Two</u>	Review of the Proposed Long-Term Management Direction
<u>Stage Three</u>	Information Centre: Review of Proposed Operations
<u>Stage Four</u>	Information Centre: Review of Draft Forest Management Plan
<u>Stage Five</u>	Inspection of Approved Forest Management Plan

How long does it take to prepare a forest management plan?

It takes approximately three years to complete a forest management plan. Figure 2 provides an overview of a forest management planning schedule.

Figure 2: Forest Management Planning Schedule



How can I get involved in the preparation of a forest management plan?

Public and Indigenous input is an important part of the forest management planning process.

The planning team wants to hear from people and organizations who are interested in, and affected by, forest operations.

Here are some ways you can find out about, and get involved with FMPs. You can:

- visit the [forest management planning website](#) to see what FMPs are being prepared that interest you
- review the current FMP for background information
- look for notices in local newspapers for each stage of consultation and make note of the key MNRF and Sustainable Forest License contacts
- look for notices for each stage of consultation on the [Environmental Registry](#) by entering the keyword “forests”, or sign up for environmental registry alerts
- contact your local MNRF office and ask to be included on the FMP mailing list
- arrange a meeting with MNRF staff, the plan author, or a representative of the local citizens’ committee
- go to information centres to speak with members of the planning team or local citizens’ committee. You can also submit comment forms at the centres
- write a letter to the plan author or the [local MNRF office](#) to identify your interests related to the FMP

Are there other forest management planning or implementation processes and documents that I can get involved in or view?

Public and Indigenous input is an important part of forest management planning and implementation. In addition to the opportunities to get involved in the preparation of a forest management plan, you have opportunities to get involved in the preparation of a:

- [Contingency Plan](#) – a short-term FMP with a maximum length of three years
- [Forest management plan extension](#) – adds up to two years to the period of a FMP so the plan can continue to be implemented

- [Forest management plan amendment](#) – a change that may be needed during the implementation of a FMP
- [Insect pest management program](#) – a planning process MNRF completes to determine the types and locations of operations that are required to remove or control an insect pest

You also have the opportunity to view:

- [Mid-plan check](#) – a review of any new information or changes that have occurred on the management unit since the FMP was approved
- [Annual work schedule](#) – identifies forest operations from the approved FMP that are scheduled to be implemented during a specific year
- [Prescribed burn plan](#) – identifies areas on the management unit where fire will be used to help manage the forest
- [Annual aerial herbicide and insecticide projects](#) – identifies specific areas on the management unit where the applications of herbicides by an aircraft will be used to control vegetation that might compete with trees growing on a site after it has been harvested or the application of insecticides to control unwanted insects within the management unit

What if I have a concern that hasn't been resolved?

Sometimes the plan author or planning team are unable to address your concern to your satisfaction during the preparation of:

- a FMP
- a FMP amendment (minor, major or long-term management direction)
- a long-term FMP extension
- a contingency plan
- an insect pest management program

When that happens, you can start a formal issue resolution process by submitting a request in writing to MNRF. In your request you should identify:

- your issue(s)
- if your issue(s) relates to the long-term management direction or proposed operations of the FMP and include the location of those operations
- facts or evidence you have to support your issue(s)
- a proposed solution

After the MNRF receives your request, you will be invited to attend a meeting (i.e., conference/video call or face-to-face) to discuss your issue(s). Either the MNRF district manager or regional director will hear your issue(s), depending on the stage of preparation the forest management plan is at when you raise your issue. You will receive a written response from the MNRF district manager or regional director that heard your issue(s).

Public Involvement in Preparing a Forest Management Plan

Stage One - Invitation to Participate

What is the purpose of Stage One?

The Invitation to Participate tells you that a new FMP is being prepared and invites you to get involved in the planning process.

How can I get involved at Stage One?

During Stage One, you can meet with the planning team, plan author, and local citizens' committee to discuss your interests and share what you know about the forest.

What kind of information can I provide at Stage One?

At this stage, you are invited to share your views on what you want your forest to look like in the future and what benefits you want the forest to provide.

You are also encouraged to share information about values or important ecological features on the forest. These may include:

- location of tourism establishments
- canoe routes
- mining claims
- archaeological sites
- traplines
- cabins
- trails
- species at risk, and
- wildlife habitat areas

Where can I get information at Stage One?

Information is available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and at the [local MNRF office](#).

What does the planning team do with the information I provide?

The planning team considers all information submitted by the public, First Nation and Métis communities, and stakeholders.

The planning team meets with the local citizens' committee to share the information it has received and to begin defining what the forest should look like in the future and what sorts of benefits can be made available. In addition to providing wood to mills, forests provide habitat for fish and wildlife, and opportunities for recreation and tourism. Once benefits are identified, objectives can be proposed and computer models can predict what the future forest might look like based on different management options.

The information you provide as part of Stage One assists the planning team in the development of the proposed long-term management direction. The proposed long-term management direction includes the levels of the desired benefits such as harvest area and wildlife habitat.

What if I have an unresolved concern?

If you raised a concern with the plan author during this stage and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager. If your issue is still not addressed to your satisfaction you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF regional director.

Stage Two - Review of the Long-Term Management Direction

What is the purpose of Stage Two?

The long-term management direction is the backbone of the FMP. During this stage, the planning team analyzes the background information collected, including input it has received from the public, First Nation and Métis communities, stakeholders, and the local citizens' committee. The team uses this information to determine the objectives for the plan and how those objectives will be measured.

The long-term management direction is proposed after testing how well different management options meet identified objectives. This approach provides for the best balance of the benefits that the planning team can achieve (e.g., wildlife habitat, wood supply).

In this stage, the planning team also establishes a maximum sustainable harvest area that cannot be exceeded during each 10-year FMP.

How can I get involved at Stage Two?

The Stage Two notice invites you to review and comment on the proposed long-term management direction for the forest, areas that may be harvested and primary roads (long-term) that may be built during the 10-year period of the plan.

Here are some examples of information that you may be interested in reviewing and commenting on:

- a summary of the proposed long-term management direction for the forest
- a summary of comments received on the plan and responses sent to date
- a summary of the results of the desired forest and benefits meeting held between the planning team, the local citizens' committee, and First Nation and Métis communities
- maps showing ten years of past harvest operations
- the criteria used to choose potential harvest areas for the new FMP
- how the preferred harvest areas for the new FMP were chosen
- the proposed locations of primary roads

- the use management strategies for proposed primary roads
- a summary of the local citizens' committee activities to date

You have 30 days to review and comment on this information. Your input may result in changes to the long-term management direction before it is approved by the MNRF regional director.

Where can I get information at Stage Two?

Information will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and the [local MNRF office](#). It will also be available on the [forest management planning website](#).

What if I have an unresolved concern?

If you raised a concern with the plan author during this stage and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager. If your issue is still not addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF regional director.

Stage Three - Review of Proposed Operations

What is the purpose of Stage Three?

After the long-term management direction is approved by the MNRF, the detailed planning of forest operations for the 10-year period begins. The Stage Three notice invites you to attend an information centre where the plan author, members of the planning team and a representative from the local citizens' committee will be able to answer questions.

How can I get involved at Stage Three?

Here are some examples of information that you may be interested in reviewing or commenting on:

- the proposed locations of roads and locations where aggregates may be extracted
- the use management strategies for proposed roads
- the proposed locations of harvest, renewal, and tending operations
- the location of values or important ecological features
- how impacts to values or important ecological features will be prevented, minimized, or mitigated during forest operations
- whether you have information relating to values and important ecological features that could be affected by forest operations

Your input may result in changes to the proposed operations for the management unit.

Where can I get information at Stage Three?

Information will be available at the information centre, and for 60 days after the information centre at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and at the [local MNRF office](#).

What if I have an unresolved issue?

If you raised a concern with the plan author during this stage and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager. If your issue is still not addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF regional director.

Stage Four - Review of Draft Forest Management Plan

What is the purpose of Stage Four?

After operational planning is completed, a draft FMP is prepared and reviewed by the MNRF. The Stage Four notice invites you to attend an information centre to review and comment on the draft FMP.

How can I get involved at Stage Four?

You can comment on the proposed forest operations in the draft FMP and review whether your interests and issues have been addressed. You can also provide any additional information that will help the planning team finalize the FMP. The plan author, members of the planning team and a representative from the local citizens' committee will be at the information centre to answer questions.

Your input may result in changes to the FMP before it is approved by the MNRF regional director.

Where can I get information at Stage Four?

The draft FMP and the draft FMP summary will be available at the information centre and during the 60 day review and comment period at the office of the sustainable forest licensee, the [local MNRF office](#) and on the [forest management planning website](#).

What if I have an unresolved issue?

If you raised a concern with the plan author during this stage and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager during the 60-day review and comment period of the draft FMP. If your issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF regional director within 30 days after the 60-day review and comment period of the draft FMP.

Stage Five - Inspection of Approved Forest Management Plan

What is the purpose of Stage Five?

After the 60 day period for reviewing and commenting on the draft FMP, the plan is revised to address the comments received. It is then submitted to the MNRF regional director for approval. Once the director has approved the FMP you will have 30 days to inspect it.

Where can I get information at Stage Five?

The approved FMP and the FMP summary will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved FMP, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

What if I have an unresolved issue?

You may make a written request for an [individual environmental assessment](#) of specific planned operations during the 30-day inspection period if:

- you raised concerns through the formal [issue resolution](#) process and they have not been addressed to your satisfaction, or
- you believe the approved FMP contains operations that will result in significant adverse environmental effects

The request must be sent to the Director, Environmental Assessment and Permissions, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. The request must identify the specific forest management activities and location you have concerns about.

Contingency Plans

What is a contingency plan?

A contingency plan is a short-term FMP with a maximum length of three years.

When are contingency plans prepared?

Contingency plans are prepared when:

- a ten-year FMP will not be approved on schedule
- the preparation of a ten-year FMP is delayed
- there is a proposal to combine management units
- a new plan is needed to address something that wasn't expected (e.g., a major fire on the management unit)

How would I know a contingency plan is being prepared?

People and organizations on the FMP mailing list will receive a notice. A notice is also placed in local newspapers and on the Environmental Registry.

Where can I get information on a contingency plan?

Information on a contingency plan, including the draft plan, will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

How can I get involved in the preparation of a contingency plan?

The planning team will prepare the contingency plan and wants to hear from people and organizations interested in and affected by forest operations. There will be at least one opportunity to review and provide comments on the forest operations that are part of the contingency plan. Opportunities may vary depending on the consultation that has occurred to date on the preparation of the next ten-year FMP.

What if I have an unresolved issue?

If you raised a concern with the plan author and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager during the 60-day review and

comment period of the draft Contingency Plan. If your issue is still not addressed to your satisfaction, you can request issue resolution with the MNRF regional director.

Where can I view an approved contingency plan?

Contingency plans are available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved contingency plan, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Public Involvement in Administering a Forest Management Plan

Forest Management Plan Extensions

What is a forest management plan extension?

A FMP extension adds time to the period of a FMP so the plan can continue to be implemented. There are no changes to the approved operations. There are two types of FMP extensions: a short-term FMP extension of up to three months and a long-term FMP extension of up to two years.

Where can I get information on a forest management plan extension?

Information on a FMP extension, including the draft FMP extension, is available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

See Figure 3 illustrating the timeline for a FMP extension.

How can I get involved in the preparation of a forest management plan extension?

If you are interested in the FMP, or are directly affected by planned operations in the FMP extension, you will receive a notice about the FMP extension. You will have 15 days from the date of the notice to comment on the FMP extension.

Here are some examples of information that you may be interested in reviewing and providing input on:

- existing agreements you have with the forest manager regarding the completion of operations
- the location of forest operations during the FMP extension
- information relating to values and important ecological features that could be affected by forest operations

What if I have an unresolved issue?

If a long-term FMP extension is proposed you will have an opportunity to request [issue resolution](#). If you raised a concern with the plan author and it has not been addressed to your

satisfaction, you can request issue resolution with the MNRF district manager. If your issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction, you can request issue resolution with the MNRF regional director.

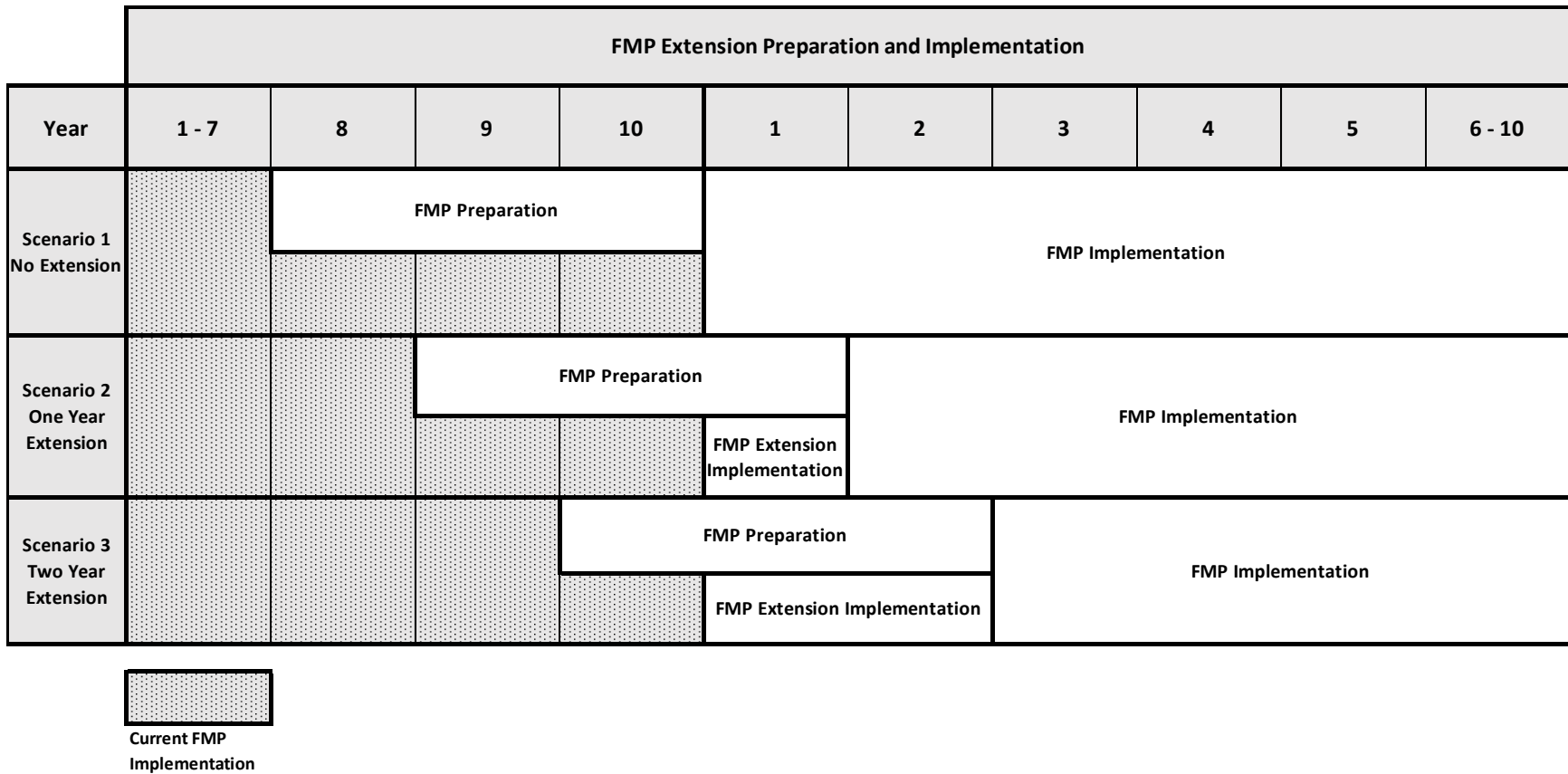
There is no opportunity to request [issue resolution](#) for short-term FMP extensions.

Where can I view an approved forest management plan extension?

FMP extensions are available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved plan extension, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Figure 3: Forest Management Plan Extension Timeline



Forest Management Plan Amendments

What is a forest management plan amendment?

An amendment is a change that may be needed at any time during the implementation of a FMP. A significant change may require extra planning or consultation. An example of an amendment is changing the location of harvest operations.

What are the different types of forest management plan amendments?

There are four types of amendments: administrative, minor, major and amendment to the long-term management direction.

Who can request a forest management plan amendment?

Any person can make a written request to the MNRF district manager to amend a FMP. Requested amendments will be categorized by the MNRF district manager, in consultation with the local citizens' committee and the plan author, as either administrative, minor, or major. Only the MNRF regional director can require an amendment to the long-term management direction of an approved FMP and only to address:

- changes in legislation and policy, or
- a major disturbance that had occurred on the management unit (e.g., forest fire).

How can I become involved with the different types of forest management plan amendments?

Administrative Amendments

These amendments are usually simple corrections or small changes to the FMP that have limited potential to impact operations. MNRF does not consult on administrative amendments.

Minor/Major Amendments

These amendments require additional planning and consultation. The planning team wants to hear from people and organizations interested in, and affected by, minor or major

amendments. Notices are sent to people and organizations on the mailing list and a notice is placed in local newspapers and on the Environmental Registry.

Here are some examples of information that you may be interested in reviewing and providing input on:

- the proposed locations of roads and locations where aggregates may be extracted
- the use management strategies for proposed roads
- the proposed locations of harvest, renewal, and tending operations
- the location of values or important ecological features
- how impacts to values or important ecological features will be prevented, minimized, or mitigated during forest operations
- whether you have information relating to values and important ecological features that could be affected by forest operations

For minor and major amendments you will be asked to provide input within a specific timeframe. Members of the planning team and local citizens' committee will be available to answer questions and discuss any concerns you have about the amendment.

Long-term Management Direction Amendments

This type of amendment requires a change to the strategic direction of the FMP and has three consultation stages. At each stage, notices are sent to people and organizations on the mailing list and a notice is placed in local newspapers and on the Environmental Registry.

At each stage you can review and comment on maps and relevant information associated with the amendment. This information includes:

- proposed changes to the long-term management direction and the summary of the proposed long-term management direction for the forest
- areas that may be reasonably harvested, and any changes to the preferred harvest areas for the remainder of the FMP
- changes to primary road corridors, and any alternative corridors
- proposed areas for harvest, renewal and tending operations

- proposed locations of roads and locations where aggregates may be extracted
- the use management strategies for proposed roads
- any new information about values or important ecological features that may exist on the management unit that can be used in planning

You will be asked to provide input within a specific timeframe. Members of the planning team and local citizens' committee will be available to answer questions and discuss any concerns you have about the amendment.

What if I have an unresolved issue on a minor, major, or long-term management direction amendment?

There is an opportunity to request [issue resolution](#) on minor, major, or long-term management direction amendments. If you raised a concern with the plan author for these types of amendments and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can request issue resolution with the MNRF district manager. If your issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, you can request issue resolution with the MNRF regional director.

There is also an opportunity to request an [individual environmental assessment](#) on specific planned operations that have been approved through a major or long-term management direction amendment. You may make a written request for an [individual environmental assessment](#) of specific planned operations during the 30-day inspection period if:

- you raised concerns through the formal issue resolution process and they have not been addressed to your satisfaction, or
- you believe the approved amendment contains operations that will result in significant adverse environmental effects

The request must be sent to the Director, Environmental Assessment and Permissions, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. The request must identify the specific forest management activities and the specific location with which you have concerns.

Where can I view an approved forest management plan amendment?

FMP amendments are available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved amendment, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Mid-Plan Checks

What is a mid-plan check?

A mid-plan check is a review of any new information (e.g., change in legislation) or changes that may have occurred on the management unit (e.g., forest fire) since the FMP was approved. The mid-plan check determines if there is a need to amend the FMP or prepare a new FMP.

When is the mid-plan check done and who completes it?

A mid-plan check is completed late in the fourth year of the FMP's implementation (see Figure 4). This review is completed by the plan author and MNRF. The decision to amend or rewrite the FMP is made by the MNRF regional director.

Where can I view an approved mid-plan check?

The approved mid-plan check will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the mid-plan check, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Public Involvement in Implementing a Forest Management Plan

Annual Work Schedules

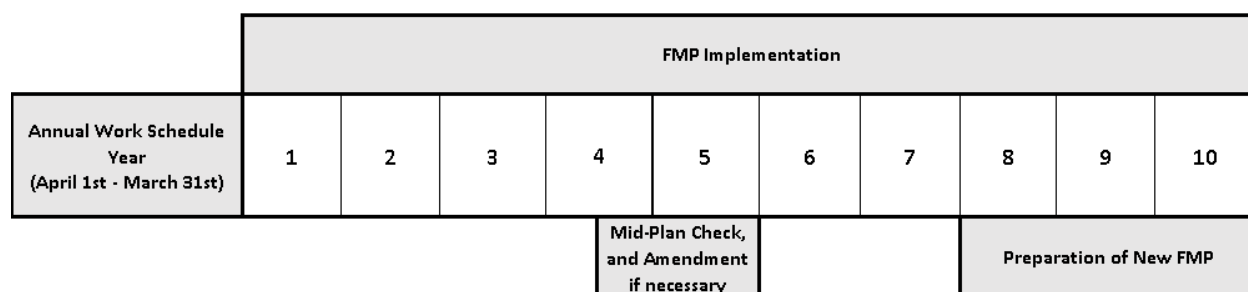
What is an annual work schedule?

An annual work schedule identifies forest operations from the approved FMP that are scheduled to be implemented during a specific year.

When is an annual work schedule prepared?

An annual work schedule is prepared every year and is normally submitted for approval at least three months before the anticipated April 1st start date. Annual work schedules always end on March 31st of the next calendar year (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Timeline for Annual Work Schedules and Mid-Plan Check



What is included in an annual work schedule?

Forest operations that will be identified in the annual work schedule include:

- areas to be harvested, possibly including locations where fuelwood (firewood) can be obtained
- areas to be site prepared, planted, seeded, naturally regenerated, or tended
- road construction and decommissioning operations
- locations for water crossing construction and decommissioning
- access controls (e.g., gates, berms, signage)
- aggregates

Prescribed burn plans and aerial herbicide and insecticide projects are prepared annually as required and become part of the annual work schedule once they are approved.

Can I get involved with the preparation of an annual work schedule?

No. Interested people and organizations were invited to provide input on planned operations during the preparation of the FMP.

Where can I view an approved annual work schedule?

The approved annual work schedule will be available for one year (until March 31st of the following year) at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

When the annual work schedule is approved, people and organizations on the mailing list will be notified and a notice will be placed in local newspapers at least 15 days before operations begin. If you are interested in discussing the approved annual work schedule, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Prescribed Burn Plans

What is a prescribed burn?

A prescribed burn is the deliberate use of fire in a specific area, under certain conditions, to help manage the forest.

Prescribed burns can:

- clear areas to prepare for planting
- remove undesirable plants that compete with desired species for nutrients
- remove undergrowth and allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, encouraging the growth and survival of selected tree species
- control insect pests and diseases
- make nutrients more readily available to the ecosystem

What is a prescribed burn plan?

Prescribed burn plans are prepared for a specific geographic area in accordance with the MNRF policy and guidelines. The [Prescribed Burn Manual](#) describes the requirements for preparing prescribed burn plans. Once the plans are approved by the MNRF they become part of the approved annual work schedule.

Will I be notified that a prescribed burn is to occur?

If you have identified an interest in a specific prescribed burn, you will receive a notice at least 30 days before the anticipated date of the burn, and a notice will be placed in local newspapers at least 30 days before the anticipated date of the burn. This notice will include contact information if you have specific questions about the prescribed burn.

Signs will be posted at main roads that lead to the prescribed burn area indicating when the burn is to occur, and who to contact if you have questions.

Where can I view the prescribed burn plan?

The approved prescribed burn plan will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved prescribed burn plan, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Annual Aerial Herbicide and Insecticide Projects

What are aerial herbicide and insecticide projects?

Aerial herbicide projects involve the application of herbicides by aircraft to control vegetation that might compete with the trees growing on a site after it has been harvested.

Aerial insecticide projects involve the application of insecticides by aircraft to control unwanted insects within the forest such as the Spruce Budworm or the Forest Tent Caterpillar.

Aerial herbicide and insecticide projects happen only in the management unit for which they are prepared.

Once these projects have been approved by MNRF they become part of the annual work schedule.

Can I get involved in the preparation of an aerial herbicide or insecticide project?

No. Interested and affected people and organizations were invited to provide input on planned operations during the preparation of the FMP.

Will I be notified that an aerial herbicide or insecticide project is to occur?

If you have identified an interest in aerial herbicide or insecticide projects on the management unit, you will receive notice of the operation at least 30 days before the anticipated date of the operation. If you live, or own land, within one kilometre of the operation you will receive notice of the operation at least 30 days before the anticipated date of the operation, and a notice will be placed in local newspapers at least 30 days before the anticipated date of the operation. The notice will include contact information if you have questions.

Seven days before the operation is scheduled to begin, signs will be posted in areas where herbicide or insecticide applications are planned. These signs will include contact information if you have questions.

Where can I view aerial herbicide or insecticide projects?

The approved aerial herbicide and insecticide project plans will be available at the office of the sustainable forest licensee and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved aerial herbicide and insecticide project plans, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Opportunities to get Involved with Insect Pest Management Programs

What is an insect pest management program?

An insect pest management program is a planning process MNRF completes to determine the types and locations of operations that are required to remove or control an insect pest.

When and where are insect pest management programs implemented?

An insect management program is only implemented when and where a major insect pest infestation occurs and usually where multiple management units are affected. On average this kind of program is implemented once every five years.

What happens during an insect pest management program?

The program identifies and maps areas that require some form of treatment. It also details treatment options to remove or control the insect pest (e.g., redirecting harvest areas to target the insect habitat).

The option selected may require an amendment to the FMP. You will have the opportunity to become involved in amendments to the FMP.

What does the MNRF consider a major insect infestation?

Major insect infestations affect very large areas (multiple management units), have affected an area in the past, and/or are of provincial significance. The treatments need to be planned and implemented quickly to control the spread of the insect and the amount of area affected. The occurrence and extent of insect infestations are determined on an annual basis.

How can I become involved in the preparation of an insect pest management program?

A planning team made up of representatives from MNRF, the forest industry and the local citizens' committee(s) prepares the program. The planning team wants to hear from people and organizations that are interested in and affected by the operations proposed in the insect pest management program. If you have expressed an interest in insect pest management programs to the MNRF, you will receive a notice on the proposed insect pest management program and any potential proposals for specific aerial insecticide projects.

You can also visit an information centre to discuss your concerns and submit comments. At the information centre you can review:

- infestation maps and population forecasts
- areas eligible for insect pest management
- values information for the area

After you review the insect pest management program you can provide input on:

- the evaluation of management options
- the selected course of action
- draft project proposals for the specific aerial insecticide projects, and associated maps

You will have 15 days from the date of the information centre to submit comments to the MNRF.

What if I have an unresolved issue?

If you raised a concern during the preparation of an insect pest management program and it has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you have the opportunity to request [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF regional director during the 15 day period following the information centre.

Where can I view the approved insect pest management program?

The approved insect pest management program will be available at the appropriate MNRF offices and on the [forest management planning website](#).

If you are interested in discussing the approved insect pest management program, you can arrange an appointment at the [local MNRF office](#).

Requesting an Individual Environmental Assessment

What should I do before I submit a request for an individual environmental assessment?

Before requesting an individual environmental assessment, you should attempt to address your issues by:

- getting involved in the forest management planning process
- discussing your issues with the plan author and the planning team
- making a request for [issue resolution](#) with the MNRF district manager or regional director

If you are not satisfied that your issues were addressed after discussing them, you can request an individual environment assessment.

Under what circumstances can I make a request for an individual environmental assessment?

You can request an individual environmental assessment if you believe an approved FMP, a major amendment to a FMP, or an amendment to the long-term management direction of a FMP contains operations that will result in significant adverse environmental effects.

Notification of the approval of a FMP, major amendment or amendment to the long-term management direction of an FMP is sent to people and organizations on the mailing list, placed in the local newspaper(s), and posted on the Environmental Registry. The notification provides a 30-day period to review the approved documents and to make a request for an individual environmental assessment.

Who do I send the request for an individual environmental assessment to?

Written requests must be sent to:

Director, Environmental Assessment and Permissions Branch
Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
135 St. Clair Ave West, 1st Floor
Toronto ON M4V 1P5

What do I include in my request for an individual environmental assessment?

You should include the following information in your request:

- your name and contact information
- the name of the Forest Management Plan you have issue with
- a clear statement that you are requesting an individual environmental assessment
- the specific planned forest operations you have issue with including a description and/or a map that identifies the geographic locations of those operations
- efforts you have made to discuss and resolve your issues with the MNRF during the development of the forest management plan
- any other information you believe is important

In your request you should:

- focus on the significant adverse environmental effects of the planned forest operations (e.g., road building, harvesting of trees, renewing the forest, tending and protecting the forest) that concern you

In your request you should not:

- include issues you may have that are not part of the forest management planning process, such as Crown land-use planning decisions or provincial policy (e.g., forest management guide direction)

What will the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change do when they receive my request?

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will contact you to confirm they have received your request for an individual environmental assessment. They may ask you for additional information or request that you attend a meeting to better understand your issues.

Your request for an individual environmental assessment may or may not be approved by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

Learn more about [individual environmental assessment](#).

First Nation and Métis Community Involvement in Forest Management

Forest Management Plans

How can First Nation and Métis communities get involved in forest management planning?

First Nation and Métis communities in or adjacent to a management unit can participate in the forest management planning process. Each community:

- may choose to have a representative on the planning team
- can work with the MNRF to develop a customized consultation approach
- can identify values or important ecological features they want protected
- can participate in the development and review of related reports
- can review and comment on the FMP while it is being prepared (e.g., Long-term Management Direction, Proposed Operations, Draft FMP)

How are First Nation and Métis Communities defined?

A First Nation community means a First Nation community that is in or adjacent to the management unit as determined by the district manager. A Métis community means a Métis community that is in or adjacent to the management unit as determined by the MNRF district manager.

Based on available information, for each community that the MNRF understands as having established or credibly asserted Aboriginal or treaty rights and is located in Ontario, the MNRF district manager will consider the following criteria when determining whether a community is a First Nation or Métis community in or adjacent to a management unit:

- whether the community's established or credibly asserted Aboriginal or treaty rights may be adversely impacted by forest operations in the management unit
- whether the community has traditional uses that may be affected by forest operations in the management unit

- whether the community has a local governance body or reserve in or near the management unit
- whether the community has expressed interest in forest management planning or forest operations specific to the management unit

How will my community know that the forest management planning process is starting?

The MNRF district manager will contact your community at least nine months before the start of the planning process for the next FMP. This notice is to let your community know that there are opportunities to be involved in the upcoming forest management planning process. These opportunities are intended to provide for the consideration of rights, interests, and traditional uses in the forest.

What are the opportunities for my community to be involved in the planning process?

Participation on the Planning Team and the Local Citizens' Committee:

Your community's leadership will be invited to identify a representative to be a member of the forest management planning team and another member to be on the local citizens' committee. The representatives, if identified, will have the opportunity to support your community's involvement in the planning process.

Input to the Steering Committee:

If there are concerns or disagreements raised by the planning team during the planning process, your community's representative on the planning team will have the opportunity to help resolve the concern or disagreement by providing their perspectives directly to the steering committee.

Use the standardized consultation approach:

Your community has the opportunity to participate in the public consultation opportunities available and will be contacted by the MNRF district manager each time a public information session is scheduled to determine whether there is an interest in having a First Nation or Métis

community information centre. Special notifications, involvement and presentations are available.

Developing a customized consultation approach:

Your community's leadership will also be invited to discuss the development of a consultation approach that will be effective for your community. The development of a customized consultation approach for your community is optional. If your community decides to proceed without a customized consultation approach, or a customized consultation approach is not agreed upon, your community can participate through the standard consultation process for First Nation and Métis communities.

What is a customized consultation approach and how is it developed?

The customized consultation approach describes how the community wants to be involved in the preparation and implementation of the FMP. If your community agrees to develop a customized consultation approach, it is developed by the community, the plan author and the MNRF. The community and the MNRF need to agree to the customized consultation approach. The customized consultation approach can be developed at any time during the preparation and implementation of the FMP. The approach may, among other things, address items such as how:

- the community is to be notified during the preparation of the FMP
- information is made available to the community to support the community's review and comment during the preparation of the FMP
- the community identifies and provides values information
- the community is to be involved in development of prescriptions to protect those values
- the community is to be involved in the planning of operations

The customized consultation approach may address all aspects of forest management planning including FMP amendments, contingency plans, FMP extensions, mid-plan checks, annual work schedules, prescribed burns, aerial herbicide and insecticide projects, or insect pest management programs.

How are First Nation and Métis communities consulted at each stage of consultation?

Input from First Nation and Métis communities is an important part of the forest management planning process. If your community chooses not to develop a customized consultation approach, your community will be consulted through the standard consultation process for First Nation and Métis communities. This process provides for the same, and more, opportunities to get involved as the public consultation process.

As detailed earlier in this document, the planning process is divided into five stages. At each stage, notices will be sent to your community and a notice will be placed in local Indigenous media, where available. In addition to the public consultation opportunities, your community will be invited to:

- identify First Nation or Métis values
- participate in the preparation of the First Nation and Métis Background Information Report
- participate in the desired forest and benefits meeting
- a presentation on the proposed long-term management direction
- participate in the planning of forest operations to address identified values
- request a special information centre for your community at the Review of Proposed Operations and the Review of the Draft FMP

What are some of the contributions my community can make in the preparation of the forest management plan?

During the preparation of the FMP, your community can participate in the development of a number of documents. These documents include:

- a First Nation and Métis Background Information Report
- a Report on Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values

During the development of these reports, the MNRF will seek the community's advice on making these documents available to the public.

What is the First Nation and Métis Background Information Report?

This report documents your community's values and traditional ecological knowledge. The community is invited to participate in preparing the First Nation and Métis Background Information Report. This report will include:

- a summary of how your community uses natural resources on the management unit (e.g., hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting of wood, and gathering)
- a summary of your community's concerns related to forest management
- a summary of your community's involvement in the preparation of the report
- a First Nation and Métis values map

What is the Report on the Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values?

This report documents how values identified in the First Nation and Métis Background Information Report have been addressed in the planning of forest operations. This report includes:

- a summary of proposed areas where harvest, renewal and tending will occur
- a discussion of proposed road locations of interest to your community
- the most current version of the values map(s) and the First Nation and Métis values map
- a discussion of proposed operational prescriptions for specific areas of concern associated with your community's values
- a discussion of how your community's values will be protected
- a comment sheet with the names of your community contact person and the MNRF contact person

What additional consultation opportunities are there for communities in the Far North?

For management units that are located in the Far North (e.g., Whitefeather Forest), elders from the communities within the management unit can provide guidance related to forest management planning. This may include providing advice, communicating with community members, and building community consensus. Elders can also be part of a steering group which will communicate with the planning team.

If your community is within the management unit for which a plan is being prepared, your community will have an opportunity to build community consensus before formal consultation opportunities occur with communities adjacent to the management unit.

There is also an opportunity for community elders, trappers, and other community members to be involved in monitoring forest operations. This will support gathering and recording your community's Indigenous knowledge to support forest management planning or other future plans.

Contingency Plans

How will my community be involved in the preparation or implementation of a contingency plan?

If your community has agreed to a customized consultation approach that contains provisions for contingency plans, the agreed upon approach to consultation will apply.

If your community decides to proceed without a customized consultation approach for the contingency plan, your community can participate through the standard consultation process for First Nation and Métis communities. The standard consultation process for First Nation and Métis communities includes all the opportunities that are included in the public consultation opportunities, plus additional opportunities.

Notices will be sent to your community and a notice will be placed in local Indigenous media where available.

Your community can also request a special information centre.

Forest Management Plan Implementation

How will my community be involved in forest management plan implementation?

If your community developed a customized consultation approach that contains provisions for FMP amendments, FMP extensions, mid-plan checks, annual work schedules, prescribed burns, aerial herbicide and insecticide projects, or insect pest management programs, that approach will apply to consultation on these matters.

If your community is using the standard consultation approach, the provisions for public consultation will apply with any modifications that are specific for your community.

The following questions and answers build on the standard consultation provisions.

What opportunity is there for my community to get involved in forest management plan amendments?

For minor amendments, your community will be invited to review and comment on the amendment and any updates to the Report on Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values.

For major amendments, your community will be invited to review and comment on the amendment and any updates to the Report on Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values and request a special information centre for your community.

For amendments to the long-term management direction, your community will be invited to participate in the planning of forest operations for the amendment to ensure your values are addressed. Your community will also be able to review and comment on the amendment and any updates to the Report on Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values. Your community can also request an information centre to learn more.

How will my community be involved in forest management plan extensions?

For FMP extensions, your community will be asked to review and provide comments to the MNRF regional resources manager to consider when deciding whether the FMP extension should proceed.

For long-term FMP extensions your community can request a special information centre as part of the consultation process.

How will my community be involved in mid-plan checks?

For mid-plan checks, your community will be asked to review and provide comments to the MNRF regional resources manager to consider when making a recommendation on whether a FMP amendment is required.

How will my community be involved in annual work schedules?

For annual work schedules, your community will be provided a copy of the draft annual work schedule when it is submitted to the MNRF and invited to a meeting to discuss the draft annual work schedule. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the operations and provide the opportunity for your community to identify any updated values that are important to your community and that may be affected by the forest operations. Your community will have 30 days to review and comment on the draft annual work schedule. If your community identifies new values they can also review and comment on the updated Report on the Protection of Identified First Nation and Métis Values.

How will my community know where and when specific prescribed burns and aerial insecticide projects are to occur?

Your community will be provided maps that identify the location of the operations associated with a prescribed burn or aerial herbicide and insecticide project.

How will my community be involved in insect pest management programs?

When an insect pest management program is being prepared, your community will be invited to review and comment on the program and the specific project proposals for the aerial insecticide projects. Your community can also request a special information centre.

Negotiations with Indigenous Peoples

Does the MNRF assist Indigenous peoples with economic opportunities that are associated with implementing a forest management plan?

Declaration Order MNR-75 requires the local MNRF district manager to have discussions with local Indigenous peoples whose communities are situated in a management unit. The intent of the discussions is to identify and implement ways of achieving a more equal participation by peoples in the benefits provided through forest management planning.

What kind of benefits could potentially result from these discussions?

Many arrangements and benefits have resulted from these discussions. Each of them can take a variety of forms and attempt to meet the unique needs, capacities, and situations of individual Indigenous communities. Some of the discussions have resulted in:

- wood allocated to, harvested or offered to Indigenous communities
- contracts made for:
 - road construction and maintenance
 - information gathering
 - education and training
 - tree marking
 - tree planting
 - cone collection
 - pre-commercial thinning
 - slash pile burning

How can my community participate in these discussions?

Indigenous communities may participate in discussions with the local MNRF office at any time. A forest industry representative may also participate, when appropriate, in the discussions as they are directly responsible for jobs and contracts in forestry.

For more information on how your community can participate in these discussions please contact your [local MNRF office](#).

Where can I find more information on the types of benefits that occur?

The results of the discussions between the MNRF and local Indigenous communities are reported in the [provincial report](#).

The MNRF continues to seek ways to improve the benefits for Indigenous peoples from participation in forest management not only at the local level, but also through broader provincial initiatives. Many of these broader initiatives are discussed in the [five-year environmental assessment report](#).

Involvement Opportunities in Independent Forest Audits

What is an independent forest audit?

An independent auditor assesses the performance of both the sustainable forest licence holder and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in meeting their forest management responsibilities.

Can I get involved in forests audits?

Yes, input is an important part of the independent forest audit process. Auditors typically issue notices advising that an independent forest audit is being conducted. The notices identify the purpose of the audit and invite comments. The notices are generally placed in local print media. Audit firms often include a survey on their websites and contact First Nation and Métis communities within or adjacent to the forest who participate in activities on the management unit inviting them to participate in the audit process.

Auditors typically want to learn of any forest management concerns, whether there are specific locations on the forest the auditors should examine, and whether forest management planning manual requirements have been met.

Local citizens' committees also play an important role in the audit process. Auditor's interview committee members to learn of any forest management concerns and a committee member is invited to participate in the audit.

Involvement Opportunities in Forest Policy

What is forest policy?

Forest policies provide direction on how forest management will be conducted, monitored and reported on. MNRF maintains policies to ensure the sustainable management and use of Crown forests. Examples of forest policy direction include:

- Policy Framework for Sustainable Forests
- Forest management guides
- Forest Compliance Strategy
- Provincial Wildlife Monitoring Program
- Provincial Wood Supply Strategy

MNRF maintains two provincial committees to receive advice on the development of forest policy:

- Provincial Forest Policy Committee: provide advice on provincial forest policy. Members represent a range of perspectives from the forest industry, environmental organizations, Indigenous groups, the financial sector, academia, professional foresters and forest related associations.
- Provincial Forest Technical Committee: provide advice on forest management guides. Members have expertise in forest management and forest sciences. Members represent a range of perspectives from the forest industry, environmental organizations, Indigenous groups, academia and research organizations.

Are there opportunities for involvement in forest policy?

When forest policies are being proposed or revised, they are normally posted on the Environmental Registry. There, interested people or organizations are encouraged to review and provide comments.

Reporting on Forest Operations

How often are reports on forest management operations prepared, what do they include, and where do I find them?

Annual reports are prepared every year for each management unit. They summarize forest management operations that occurred in the management unit over the previous year.

Finalized reports are available on the [forest management planning website](#).

MNRF summarizes the management unit annual reports into a [provincial report](#).

Every five years, MNRF also prepares a report that includes information on the [state of Ontario's forests](#) that summarizes important information about the health and well-being of the province's forests, communities and forest industry.

Declaration Order MNR-75 Administration Involvement Opportunities

Can the Declaration Order conditions be changed?

Yes. The process to change the Declaration Order starts with a “request for an amendment”. A request can be made by the MNRF, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, or any person or organization. The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change must agree to the amendment and must submit the amendment to the Ontario Cabinet for approval.

What should my request for amendment include?

Requests must follow clauses (k) – (p) of Condition 58 of the Declaration Order. Your request must include a description of the amendment and the proposed wording, and the rationale for the amendment. The rationale should include any new information or circumstances to justify the amendment.

Who do I submit my request for amendment to?

Amendment requests are submitted to the MNRF director, Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch. If you have additional questions on the amendment process, please contact the [Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch](#).

How can I provide comments on a request for an amendment?

All proposed amendments to the Declaration Order are posted on the Environmental Registry. There, interested people or groups are encouraged to review the proposed amendments and provide comments.

How often are the Declaration Order conditions reviewed?

The MNRF is required to submit a report to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change every five years. The report:

- describes how the conditions of the Declaration Order have been implemented over the previous five years
- identifies problems or concerns over those five years

- identifies and recommends conditions that should be amended

After the report has been submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, the MNRF would normally start the process to seek any amendments to the conditions. The process for the MNRF-led amendments is outlined in clauses (a) – (j) of Condition 58 of [Declaration Order MNR-75](#).

