



January 26, 2009

Michael Gluck
Forest Ecologist
Applied Research and Development Branch
Ministry of Natural Resources
Centre for Northern Forest Ecosystem Research
955 Oliver Road, Lakehead University Campus
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7B 5E1

**RE: Forest Management Guide for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Landscapes
(EBR #010-5226)**

Dear Mr. Gluck,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry posting of the draft Forest Management Guide for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Landscapes (EBR #010-5226), and to remain apprised of proposed changes to forest management practices in Ontario.

Conservation Authorities play a significant role in forest management, with a mandate to protect, manage and restore Ontario's woodlands, wetlands and natural habitat, and have a long history of partnering with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to carry out this mandate. Conservation Ontario, on behalf of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities, commends MNR for undertaking this initiative to make the forest management planning process more efficient and promote the conservation of forest biodiversity.

Please consider the following comments when finalizing the draft Guide, which are based upon a review by Credit Valley Conservation staff.

In general, the standards, guidelines and best management practices found in the Guide are detailed and comprehensive. It is noted that the Guide addresses landscape, stand and site protection, and the protection of habitat and special features.

The Guide has several recommendations related to achieving appropriate forest structure and composition. However, equally strong recommendations are required related to maintaining forest (or other natural values) ecosystem function. For example, there are no

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standards or guidelines related to connectivity. While connectivity is species-specific and problematic to prescribe in detail, general guidelines or best management practices should be given to highlight the importance of maintaining functional ecosystems. Recommendations regarding the maintenance of other ecosystem functions such as carbon balance and hydrology would further ensure that ecosystem functions are maintained in managed forested landscapes.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Forest Management Guide for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Landscapes. We look forward to also reviewing the draft boreal forest landscapes guide when it is posted for public comment. If you have any questions regarding the above comments please contact myself at (905) 895-0716 ext. 223 or Natasha Leahy at ext. 228.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Fox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "B" being particularly large and stylized.

Bonnie Fox
Policy and Planning Specialist

c.c. Environmental Commissioner of Ontario
All Conservation Authorities General Managers/CAOs
Jo-Anne Rzakki, Watershed Stewardship Coordinator, Conservation Ontario