



Published plans and annual reports 2022–2023: Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry

Plans for 2022–2023, and results and outcomes of all provincial programs delivered by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry in 2021–2022.

Ministry overview

Ministry's vision

The people of Ontario benefit from the health and wealth of the province's natural resources, today and in the future.

Ministry's mission

To manage and promote the responsible use of Ontario's natural resources and promote northern economic and community development.

Mandate

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) is responsible for protecting and managing the province's diverse natural resources to support Ontario's economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and quality of life for the people of Ontario. The ministry is also responsible for the provincial minerals sector and is the regional ministry for Northern Ontario.

To achieve its mandate commitments, the ministry oversees and implements seven key activities:

- **protect the public from natural disasters or hazards**, such as floods and wildland fires
- **deliver direct services to the public and industry**, such as fishing and hunting licences
- **promote economic growth and job creation** by supporting industries like forestry, aggregates, and hunting
- **conduct monitoring, research and planning** for the management and use of Ontario's natural resources
- **develop legislation, policies and implement programs** to regulate the sustainable and responsible use and management of Ontario's natural resources and Crown lands
- **advance economic development in Northern Ontario** through collaborative partnerships and solutions that reflect the unique needs of northerners
- **support a strong and sustainable minerals sector in Ontario**, including the development of the Ring of Fire area, and ensure the fair, effective and efficient administration of Ontario's *Mining Act* for the protection of public health and safety, and the environment

In addition to its key activities, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry is continuing to explore opportunities to advance the government's fiscal commitments to put Ontario on a sound financial footing so we can protect Ontarians against threats like COVID-19 and create opportunities for the people of Ontario to prosper. These commitments include driving further internal efficiencies, such as modernizing business processes and functions, innovative improvements to program efficiency and effectiveness, collaborative partnerships, and horizontal streamlining with other ministries.

COVID-19 response

The ministry supported resource-based tourism businesses that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible Commercial Outpost Camps and hunting and fishing outfitters received relief from certain rents and fees (e.g., bear hunting and baitfish fees and licences, land use fees for Commercial Outpost Camps permits or leases) in 2020 and 2021, providing approximately \$2.678 million in financial relief. The ministry will continue to provide this relief to resource-based tourism businesses in 2022,

committing an additional \$1.44 million in financial relief. This will help with the recovery of the sector by supporting businesses that employ residents and contribute to local communities.

Through the Remote Air Carrier Support Program (RACSP), NDMNRF, in consultation with the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs Ontario, has partnered with the federal government to support air carriers serving Northern Ontario's remote communities to ensure continuity of passenger service and the movement of essential goods and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2020, the ministry reached out to a number of Indigenous communities in the Ring of Fire region to provide additional support in response to COVID-19 impacts and pressures on their projects and deliverables focused on digital upgrades and solutions to help address barriers to consultation and communication.

2022-23 Strategic plan

The ministry's strategic plan contains clearly focused long-term goals, and desired strategic outcomes that will guide NDMNRF and focus efforts to advance the achievement of our mandate and priorities.

NDMNRF is committed to economic development, job creation, responsive customer service and fiscally responsible service delivery. NDMNRF continues to use evidence-based decision-making throughout its strategic planning and priority setting. As a result of these efforts, the ministry is improving its ability to measure its performance more accurately in achieving outcomes and value-for-money.

The ministry is undertaking several initiatives throughout 2022-23 to advance the government's priorities. Select ministry initiatives in relation to each priority are described below.

Ministry contribution to government priorities and results

Government priority: Advance economic development

- **Ministry priorities**

- Increased business and job creation in Northern Ontario and the province's

natural resources economies.

• Deliverables

- Promote economic growth and job creation in Ontario's forestry, aggregates, and fishery sectors.
- Promote sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Support provincial initiatives in the North and address unique regional needs.

• Key activities

- **Implementation of Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy**
 - On August 20, 2020, Ontario released a Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy (FSS). The FSS aligns with the government's priorities to reduce red tape, create jobs, and promote economic growth and prosperity across the province, while ensuring forests continue to be managed sustainably for future generations. In 2021-22, a committee comprised of industry, Indigenous and municipal members was formed by the Minister to support the development of an implementation plan for the strategy and to develop key performance indicators to measure and report on progress and the overall success of the strategy. Implementing FSS actions will require continuing collaboration with ten other ministries who are leads on one or more actions within the FSS as well as external partners, many of whom have been identified within the ministry's 2022-23 Transfer Payment Plan. Through activities of NDMNRF, other ministries and external partners work will be undertaken to advance the 34 action items identified in the FSS.
- **Forest Biomass Action Plan (FBAP)** – as part of delivering on commitments in the FSS, the ministry will begin implementation of the FBAP in 2022-23 following its finalization and release in March 2022.
- **Forest policy framework** – The ministry is committed to enhancing sustainable forest management in Ontario's managed forests to support long-term forest health, while ensuring that Ontario's Forest sector and products continue to meet standards of responsible forestry. Activities include modernizing forest management planning and personal use harvest, reviewing the Independent Forest Audit process and revising the Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scale.

The ministry continues to make information available on how to consider climate change and is developing strategic direction for managing forest pests in Ontario.

- **Public Land Act policy framework** – The ministry will enable economic development on public lands in rural and Northern Ontario by continuing to provide policy direction on how development can proceed where approvals may be required under the *Public Lands Act*.
- **Conservation Authorities Act** – The ministry will work with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and with the Conservation Authorities Working Group to support regulatory development under the Act related to natural hazards management.
- **Aggregate resources policy framework** – The ministry is focused on ensuring the new regulation and technical standards requirements that came into effect in 2021 and 2022 are clearly understood by industry and the public. The ministry remains committed to providing business certainty, while also maintaining our commitment to limit impacts to communities and the environment.
- **Geospatial data services** – The ministry provides foundational geospatial data that is critical to supporting the province's Open for Business and Open Government initiatives, and Ontario's digital economy. This includes the geospatial and land tenure data required for resource development and economic growth in the mining, water and wind power, engineering, and construction industries. The data also underpins the delivery of mobile, cost-effective, location-based services to Ontarians.
- **Science and research** – The ministry is an authoritative source within the Ontario Public Service of science services that contribute to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of Ontario's natural resources. Science services including inventory, monitoring, research, analyses, and reporting, all provide diagnostics to inform decision-making and policy development related to the management and regulation of natural resources and the environment.
- **Outdoor recreation opportunities** – The ministry will continue to promote fish and wildlife outdoor activities in 2022-23 through marketing and communications channels, including social media, fishing, and hunting regulation summaries, newsletters, outreach events, the Learn to Fish

program and Fish ON-Line. Anglers and hunters spend over \$2.4 billion annually in Ontario.

- **Fish and wildlife** – The ministry supports commercial fisheries through science and monitoring programs that support sustainable quotas for the industry. Fishers have access to programs that provide for licensing and quota tracking that support business needs. The ministry directly supports industry initiatives such as Marine Stewardship Certification. This certification allows fisheries to access markets requiring “eco-certification” and ensures that Ontario’s commercial fish products are well represented in the broader marketplace. The ministry supports the recreational fishery, which is important to the province, both economically and socially. With more than 250,000 lakes and countless rivers and streams, Ontario’s vast aquatic resources provide anglers a wide range of fishing opportunities, from shoreline fishing in the city to fly-in fishing trips in remote areas of the province. The 1.2 million licensed anglers spend \$1.75 billion per year on recreational fishing in Ontario. The ministry also supports sustainable native wildlife populations and their ecosystems, which provide important ecological, cultural, economic, and social benefits for Ontarians. Hunters spend more than \$587 million annually on hunting trips, which support jobs and businesses in many rural and northern communities that depend on them. The ministry promotes fish and wildlife outdoor activities through marketing and communications, including social media, delivery of annual fishing and hunting regulation summaries, newsletters, outreach events, the Learn to Fish program and Fish ON-Line.
- **The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation** – The ministry builds a stronger Northern economy by making strategic investments through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). The NOHFC provides financial assistance to projects that stimulate growth, job creation, and develop a skilled workforce. The NOHFC continues to implement programs which target existing and emerging markets, support more projects in small rural communities, address the skilled labour shortage, and make it easier for more people and businesses to apply.
- **The Northern Energy Advantage Program (NEAP)** – The ministry supports Northern Ontario’s largest industrial electricity consumers to reduce costs, sustain jobs, and maintain global competitiveness. The program has been expanded to allow for the participation of new mining and forestry

operations coming into production in the future, and to create an investor class stream that will encourage companies to undertake transformational investments such as reducing greenhouse gasses and transitioning to clean technologies.

- **The Northern Ontario Resource Development Support (NORDS) Fund –**
The ministry provides support to municipalities in Northern Ontario to help invest in municipal infrastructure impacted by resource development.
- **Northern transportation networks** – The ministry plans and delivers an efficient core transportation network to meet transportation needs in the north, promoting economic development while safely and efficiently moving people and goods. The ministry supports strategic investments in infrastructure through programs such as the Northern Highways Program, Local Roads Boards, and the Winter Roads Program.
- **Red Tape Reduction:** Since 2019, the ministry has reduced direct annual costs to business by over \$3 million and regulatory compliance requirements by 12%. These contributions make the ministry the second largest contributor to the government's burden reduction commitments. NDMNRF will continue to reduce red tape by modernizing the regulatory environment and being responsive to stakeholders, improving our natural resources programs and services and growing Ontario's natural resources sector.

Government priority: Fiscally responsible service delivery

• Ministry priorities

- Prudent fiscal management.
- Service delivery that maintains service level standards.

• Deliverables

- Managing from within Treasury Board approved allocations.
- Promote innovative strategies that enable more efficient and sustainable public service delivery that effectively maintains service level standards.

• Key activities

- **Budget management** – The ministry demonstrates fiscal responsibility and supports the government's commitment to put Ontario on a sound financial

footing so we can protect against threats like COVID-19 and create opportunities for the people of Ontario to prosper. This includes modernizing and transforming our processes and functions using lean six sigma principles to ensure sustainable public services, improving business outcomes, and continuing to sustainably manage Ontario's natural resources.

- **Integrated resource monitoring** – The ministry is implementing recommendations developed through the Integrated Monitoring Framework initiative to modernize and increase the efficiency of monitoring programs that support effective management of forest, wildlife, and fisheries resources.
- **Geospatial data services** – The ministry coordinates partnerships to acquire, use and distribute foundational geospatial data across governments, the broader public service, academic and business sectors, and the public to reduce costs and ensure that geospatial data is accurate and accessible. The ministry delivers mapping tools, enterprise agreements and shared solutions that reduce duplication and costs.
- **Crown land management** – The ministry ensures that users and occupiers of Crown land under the *Public Lands Act* pay fair market value for private and commercial use of Crown land, including implementing sector-based initiatives.
- **Lean** – The ministry is committed to using Lean processes to develop efficient, effective, and nimble public services. A strategy was developed focused on communications, training and applying lean practices with a vision of actively seeking to continuously improve our business processes and work experience by challenging business as usual. The ministry increased its capability to use Lean processes by leveraging dedicated training and a community of practice to implement lean processes.

Government priority: Responsive Customer Service

• Ministry priorities

- Deliver services that are flexible, customer-focused, and cost-effective.

• Deliverables

- Promote service delivery modernization strategies that enable more accessible and convenient service delivery to the people of Ontario.

- **Key activities**

- **Fishing and hunting customer service and support** – The ministry continues to provide customer service to anglers and hunters, including licensing and big game draw services, contact centre support, social media and the fish and wildlife licence issuer network. The ministry's call centre is undergoing Lean changes to enhance the client experience and will also explore modernized service tools.
- **Natural resources enforcement** – The ministry received approval to hire an additional 25 Conservation Officers. This will allow the enforcement program to increase its focus on enforcement priorities such as prevention of illegal moose hunting, promotion of hunting safety, prevention of illegal trade and commercialization of Ontario's animal and plant species, and prevention of the introduction and spread of invasive species. In 2022-23 the ministry will complete orientation training for the new conservation officers, assign them to coach officers with the goal of having all new recruits conducting independent field operations by the end of the fiscal year.
- **Natural Resources Information Portal (NRIP)** – The ministry continues to implement the online Natural Resources Information Portal to reduce burden on businesses and people by providing them fast, accessible, and secure online approval and activity reporting services. In 2022-23, the ministry will continue to modernize services to clients focused on accessibility and improving functionality. This will include expanded ability to pay online and adding authorizations options for enhanced online submissions.
- **Approvals and authorizations modernization** – The ministry is modernizing services and approvals by reviewing 100% of all regulatory approvals under 23 pieces of legislation, seeking to optimize delivery. In 2022-23, the ministry is planning two releases with the first release moving 8 approvals online, providing clients 24-7 access to applications and completing user research on another 50 approvals with a target to move these approvals online late in this fiscal year.
- **Mineral tenure administration** in Ontario has been transformed and modernized by implementing an integrated, client-driven electronic system

that enables clients to register mining claims and manage these claims online. This ensures mineral exploration and development in Ontario is undertaken in a manner that promotes a balanced approach that benefits all Ontarians, while registering claims in a manner that is respectful of private landowners and Indigenous communities. The system continues to be updated and improved in response to stakeholder feedback.

- **One Window Co-ordination Protocol (OWCP)** is being reviewed and updated to ensure continued effective and efficient processes for co-ordination and delivery of environmental assessments, permitting and approvals across provincial ministries and with the federal government.

Ministry programs

The ministry's key program objectives and initiatives are described below.

1. Forest industry

The Forest Industry Program leads economic development for the forestry sector and implements initiatives to promote an economically viable forest industry in Ontario. The program oversees activities related to the allocation, use and pricing of Crown timber, the management and collection of Crown timber charges and the delivery of business development policies and initiatives affecting Ontario's Forest products sector.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Continue to defend Ontario's interest in the ongoing softwood lumber trade dispute between Canada and the United States (US). The dispute involves ongoing investigations, administrative reviews conducted by the US Department of Commerce, and multiple appeals taking place under NAFTA/CUSMA and the WTO. NDMNRF works closely with our partners in industry, other provinces, and the federal government to support the Canadian forest industry, advocate for free trade, and maintain market access in the United States.
- Implement Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy. The FSS was released on August 20, 2020, and is built on four pillars of action:

- promoting stewardship and sustainability
 - putting more wood to work
 - improving our cost competitiveness
 - fostering innovation, markets, and talent
- Details on the 34 actions within the FSS can be found online at: Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/sustainable-growth-ontarios-forest-sector-strategy>) .
 - Implement the actions of the FSS through collaboration with 10 other ministries who are leads on one or more actions within the FSS and external partners, many of whom are identified within the ministry's Transfer Payment (TP) Plan. The TP projects seek to improve forest industry efficiencies in putting more wood to work, identifying innovation opportunities for technologies and processes, and shifting Ontario's building sector towards more cost and time effective strategies through the use of wood for non-traditional projects.
 - Upon its release in March 2022, begin implementation of the five-year Forest Biomass Action Plan (FBAP), as committed under Pillar 3 of the FSS. The action plan focuses on protecting jobs and encouraging sustainability for the forestry sector, supporting northern economic development, and understanding the role biomass facilities have in supporting the forest sector and forestry dependent regions of Ontario. Key activities planned as part of FBAP implementation in 2022-23 include the review of initial market research and the procurement of three studies aimed at:
 - determining market pathways for available supplies of forest biomass
 - quantifying and documenting the socio-economic benefits of forest biomass use
 - considering approaches for building capacity for Indigenous community participation in the forest biomass sector
 - Lead the multi-ministry Ontario Bioheat Initiative to improve the business and policy environments for the use of biofuels for heat in Ontario. This initiative supports the increased demand for wood-based biofuels, which contributes to economic growth in Ontario's forest industry by providing new markets for Crown forest resources.

- Continue to deliver the Forest Sector Investment and Innovation Program (FSIIP), which supports an action in the Putting More Wood to Work and Fostering Innovation, Markets and Talent pillars of the FSS. Due to COVID-19, several projects were delayed or put on hold in 2020-21 and 2021-22, however, there is currently high demand for support from this program. FSIIP will continue to encourage regional economic development, business growth and job creation in forest-dependent regions across northern and rural Ontario by emphasizing:
 - impact on the regional economy
 - importance to Ontario's Forest sector
 - process and / or product innovation
 - exports / market expansion
 - productivity improvements
- Continue to deliver the Provincial Forest Access Roads Funding Program to support rural road infrastructure in Crown forests used by the forest industry, mining companies, utilities, railways, hunters, campers, anglers, and Indigenous communities, and to support emergency preparedness.
- Establish a wildfire solutions forum with forest industry leadership and provincial wildfire leadership to improve forest industry resilience. The forum will promote dialogue and collaboration by developing solutions to improve wildfire response, prevention, mitigation and forest industry business practices.

2. Natural resources policy

The Natural Resources Policy Program leads the development, guidance and evaluation of evidence-based provincial legislation, regulations, policies, and programs. The program ensures that its activities meet the Crown's rights-based obligation to consult with Indigenous peoples and communities, and engages relevant partners, stakeholders, government, and non-government interests across the province.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Implement Ontario's Flooding Strategy by working with several ministries, and partners to make Ontario more resilient to flooding in the long term. Priorities include developing new guidance to enable enhanced flood mapping and

promote sound land use planning decisions.

- Develop policy to ensure the sustainable use and management of Crown land, natural heritage, mineral aggregate resources, oil, gas and salt resources, and waters.
- Collaborate with other Great Lakes jurisdictions to support the implementation of Great Lakes priorities to manage and protect the shared waters for future generations.
- Work with the Niagara Escarpment Commission to implement the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* and the Niagara Escarpment Plan to conserve this important feature and the social and economic benefits it provides.
- Continue to implement risk-informed approaches to dam safety under the *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act*, including streamlined approaches for low-risk dam repairs and agreements with qualified dam owners.

3. Natural resource science and research

The Science and Research Program provides quality science services to inform natural resource management decisions that contribute to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of Ontario's natural resources. The program accomplishes this by leading, coordinating, and developing applied research; developing and implementing provincial resource inventory and monitoring programs; and information management, analysis, and reporting. NDMNRF also provides science support including research, expertise, and access to data / mapping resources for species at risk to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Utilize a new technology to inventory Ontario's Crown forests, which is used to monitor the land base and wood supply in Ontario. The new inventory will use LiDAR technology to create a three-dimensional image of the forest. The technology will provide more accurate measurements and forecasting of wood supply than previous inventories. Ontario's application of the technology is one of the largest LiDAR projects in Canada. LiDAR's application across the broader natural resource sector will also be explored.
- Use applied aquatic research and broad-scale monitoring of inland lakes to provide information on the health of Ontario's freshwater ecosystems and

support management of recreational and commercial fisheries.

- Utilize forest health monitoring to support forest pest management, including undertaking annual forest health surveys to assess the impact of forest pests, supporting pest control programs for jack pine budworm and spruce budworm in the Boreal Forest and forecasting potential *Lymantria dispar dispar* (LDD) moth (previously referred to as gypsy moth) infestations throughout the LDD outbreak cycle.
- Undertake wildlife research and monitoring to inform Ontarians about the health of wild game across the province; conducting aerial inventories of moose populations and monitoring of double-crested cormorant populations, delivery of Ontario's black bear population monitoring project; rabies control program; and testing to monitor for the presence of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a fatal disease affecting white-tailed deer, American elk, moose, and woodland caribou. Sightings of wild pigs, a potentially costly invasive species will be investigated, and animals removed as required. Select wildlife species will be monitored for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

4. Mapping and geographic information

The Mapping and Geographic Information Program provides geographic information, Crown land surveying and information management services to government, academia, business, and the public. In support of this program, Land Information Ontario (LIO) ensures geographic data is effectively collected, managed, and maintained and meets the objectives of Ontario's Open Data Directive. Geographic data has many uses across the public, private and academic sectors, by supporting locational insight, place-based decision-making, and navigation. The program also supports the *Surveyors Act*, *Surveys Act*, *Mining Act* and *Public Lands Act* to ensure Ontario's property framework continues to support a strong economy.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Support Ontario's Flooding Strategy by establishing a Provincial Elevation Mapping Program to acquire Lidar data required for flood mapping and participating in the ministry Flood Mapping Technical Team to ensure effective collaboration and program operations.
- Provide public access to over 400 geographic datasets through Ontario GeoHub, a data discovery and access tool. By providing public access to government data,

NDMNRF is supporting the Ontario government's Open Government and Open Data initiatives as well as Ontario's digital economy and ensuring Ontario is delivering simpler, faster, and better services for people and businesses.

- Provide survey advice to the mining, waterpower, and construction industries to accurately delineate land boundaries, and to support First Nations land claim negotiations.
- Expand partnerships through LIO to collect and improve a range of foundational geospatial data such as land parcels, aerial photography, elevation, roads and water to avoid duplication, reduce costs and enhance data quality.
- Encourage Ontarians to participate in geographic naming decisions within their communities by completing online questionnaires. These names help to identify historic, cultural, and natural features on the landscape that are essential for mapping, emergency response, resource management, travel and tourism and law enforcement.

5. Forest management

The Forest Management Program enables a healthy and viable forest industry in Ontario by fostering a competitive business environment, jobs and investment opportunities for the province's forest and wood products sectors. The program guides the development and maintenance of sustainable forest management policy and programs that are critical to supporting a healthy forest industry while protecting forests for future generations. The program accomplishes its mandate through inter-governmental co-operation on national forestry initiatives; Crown forest management planning, renewal, and protection from pests; monitoring; auditing; information management; and public reporting.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Revise the Forest Management Planning Manual and the Forest Information Manual and associated technical specifications to provide for small scale forest management in an area north of the current managed forest. The addendum would allow a First Nation to undertake forest management in support of community economic development and energy security.
- Review the forest management planning framework to identify additional modernization opportunities for the preparation of new forest management

plans (FMPs). Areas of consideration include broader scale planning for some components of FMPs, increased focus on professional reliance, and allowing planning effort to be matched to the level of forest management activities (i.e., reduced effort where reduced activities are occurring).

- Review the *Professional Foresters Act*, in partnership with the Ontario Professional Foresters Association. Changes to the act may be proposed to clarify the scope of practice in support of improved governance.
- Develop strategic direction for managing forest pests in Ontario that proposes establishing strategic, risk-based direction to enhance our response to forest pest outbreaks, help protect forest health and improve resiliency of Ontario's forests. The objective is to maintain healthy and resilient forests, minimize socioeconomic impacts from forest pests, and raise awareness of forest pests.
- Represent Ontario's interests in intergovernmental initiatives such as the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFMs), including involvement in the CCFMs Forest in Mind Program. Other initiatives include the implementation of the Canadian Wildfire Management Strategy and the Pan Canadian Dialogue on Forest Resiliency in the face of wildland fires, updates to the National Forest Pest Strategy, and participation in ministerial conferences to contribute to strategic priorities for future inter-governmental activities.
- Continue to work with industry to improve and modernize wood measurement practices and policies, explore new technology and concepts, and draft revisions to the Scaling Manual.

6. Fish and wildlife

The Fish and Wildlife Program manages Ontario's fish and wildlife resources to ensure the sustainability of fish and wildlife populations, and the management of fishing, hunting, and trapping opportunities for the ecological, social, cultural, and economic benefit of Ontarians. The program accomplishes its mandate through resource management planning, research and monitoring, and the delivery of public services to sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations for Ontario's future.

As part of the ministry's program review cycle, NDMNRF has completed a review of the Fish and Wildlife Program to identify opportunities for continuous improvement with respect to strategic alignment, value for money and objective achievement.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Development and implementation of a continuous improvement plan in response to the Fish and Wildlife Program Review which identified opportunities for improvement with respect to strategic alignment, coordinated delivery, governance, and accountability. Efforts in 2022-23 will help ensure the program realizes its full potential with respect to delivering value and benefits to Ontarians now and into the future.
- Continue to manage the Great Lakes fisheries to ensure long-term sustainable economic and social cultural benefits from recreational, commercial and Indigenous fisheries. This includes working collaboratively with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation and Parks Canada on the Together with Giigoonyag (fishes) research project. The project aims to better understand the health of dikameg (lake whitefish) and other fish species in parts of Lake Huron using a Two-Eyed Seeing Approach that brings together Saugeen Ojibway Nation's ecological knowledge and western science. The ministry is also working collaboratively with the commercial fishing industry and Indigenous communities to consider options to improve lake whitefish populations in Lake Huron.
- Manage the cage aquaculture industry in the Great Lakes to ensure further economic, social, and responsible use. This includes implementing a longer term 20-year licencing regime and land tenure authorization process, standardized environmental monitoring and licence conditions, and working with Indigenous communities in support of a collaborative approach to responsible management of this industry.
- Continue emphasis on moose research and monitoring efforts to identify science priorities to ensure sustainable management of Ontario's moose population and optimization of monitoring programs such as the moose aerial inventory program.
- Implement the ministry's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) plan, and new legislative and regulatory amendments to support (CWD) prevention and response.
- Implement changes to Ontario's trapline allocation policy to improve consistency, clarity and fairness for the management and allocation of vacant registered trapline areas.
- Implement Ontario's Sustainable Bait Management Strategy which addresses

ecological threats and increases protection for Ontario's vibrant fisheries while minimizing impacts on anglers and increasing business certainty for the commercial industry that relies on bait.

- Implement the *Invasive Species Act* and priority actions in the Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan. These actions include conducting risk assessments to identify priority invasive species for possible regulatory or other management actions and working closely with external partners to mitigate impacts to the outdoor recreation and natural resource sectors.

7. Regional natural resources operations

The Regional Natural Resources Operations Program is responsible for the localized coordination and delivery of ministry programs and services. Specifically, the program delivers public services through a network of regional, district, and field offices located across the province via an inter-disciplinary workforce. Services include land-use planning, management, and allocation of resources, permits, licences and approvals in the areas of forests, fisheries, wildlife, Crown lands (including dams), waters, wetlands, aggregates, and the petroleum sector.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Issue and maintain Sustainable Forest Licences to enable the harvest and use of forest resources within a management unit and confer responsibility for forest management activities on the forest manager.
- Continue to implement and improve the ministry's Natural Resources Information Portal (NRIP), including service delivery modernization for forest management planning, aggregate resource management services, and other natural resource approvals. The new portal makes it easier and faster to exchange mandatory information with the forest and aggregate sectors, reduces costs and risks associated with outdated software, eliminates complex and confusing paper forms, and provides more effective online public engagement and access to natural resource management information. The portal provides a digital first approach and will be the central data repository to store submitted information, which will enable more efficient and cost-effective approval processes for forestry, aggregates, and other resource approvals.

- Advance economic development through the localized operational delivery of the ministry's Forest Sector Strategy, and modernization of the aggregates program.
- Work with qualified dam owners to streamline approvals for low-risk alterations, improvements, and repairs to dams to reduce burden to the waterpower industry, while enhancing dam safety.
- Develop and begin the implementation of a comprehensive, long-term strategy to help to manage the risks posed by legacy wells (petroleum and other wells) and related subsurface gas migration hazards. The ministry will invest \$5.4 million into this strategy which will be designed and implemented in collaboration with other relevant ministries, the federal government, municipalities, indigenous communities, industry, and other stakeholders to ensure coordinated effort and shared benefits.

8. Natural resources enforcement

The Natural Resources Enforcement Program delivers professional enforcement services and activities to ensure compliance with natural resource legislation for the protection of Ontario's natural resources and public safety. The program accomplishes its mandate through public engagement, investigations, focused deterrence activities, responses to public complaints and prosecution of natural resource offenders. The program also contributes to the development and renewal of natural resource management policy and legislation.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Complete orientation training for new conservation officers, partner them with coach officers with the goal of having all new recruits conducting independent field operations by the end of the fiscal year.
- Collect and analyze information related to hunting incidents and offences related to unsafe hunting to increase staff understanding and to focus future work of monitoring compliance with hunting safety rules.
- Raise awareness of illegal moose hunting through social media communications.
- Collect information and develop intelligence to inform enforcement actions related to illegal commercialization and trade of Ontario's natural resources.
- Work with Indigenous communities through the Collaborative Compliance

Initiative to resolve natural resource offences involving Indigenous persons through community-based restorative justice.

9. Far North

The Far North Program is responsible for the delivery of the *Far North Act* within a specific geographic area. The program implements a joint community-based land use planning process with Far North First Nations partners. It also supports the review of economic development opportunities, including all-season roads, transmission corridors and mining development in the Ring of Fire region.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Continue to implement a joint community-based land use planning process with Far North First Nations. NDMNRF will focus on supporting joint planning with willing First Nations partners.
- Legislative amendments to the *Far North Act* were passed under Schedule 10 of Bill 43, *Build Ontario Act* (Budget Measures), 2021, that was introduced on November 4, 2021, and received Royal Assent on December 9, 2021. Recent changes to the joint body provision of the Act clarify the process for establishment of this advisory body between Far North First Nations and the Minister. It is anticipated that calls for establishment of the joint body will emerge in 2022-23. When at least 7 First Nations indicate support for the establishment of the joint body, a Terms of Reference will be prepared to guide and regulate the establishment and functions of the Joint Body and set out matters that are to be considered in scope for discussions.
- Continue to support strategic initiatives including the Ring of Fire and all-season road proposals; and provide expert advice and input to NDMNRF and OPS policy initiatives that impact the Far North.

10. Public safety & natural hazard emergency response

The Public Safety and Natural Hazard Emergency Response Program provides specialized wildland fire, emergency management and aviation services to protect people and economic values from the following seven natural hazards: wildland fires, floods, drought/low water, dam failure, oil, gas, salt solution-mining and underground storage emergencies, erosion, soil, and bedrock instability. The program aims to prevent the loss of human life and injury, and to prevent and mitigate other losses

and economic and social disruption. The program also delivers frontline operations for wildland fire management and provides support to the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Emergency Management Ontario and other ministries in the delivery of their emergency response responsibilities in Ontario. This includes the evacuation of residents in communities affected by flood, fire, and smoke risks.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Invest \$7.57 million in 2022-23 to protect Ontarians from natural disasters such as wildland fires and floods. Through this investment, the program will:
 - hire critical wildland fire response staff, invest in technology and science (including drones), fire analytics and modelling to mitigate the highest risk to adequately prepare and respond to the growing impacts that wildland fires pose to people, communities, and businesses
 - undertake the first year of a multi-year review of Ontario's natural resource disaster management programs, including legislation, regulations, policies, practices, and business and technology solutions, to modernize our prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies to meet the needs of Ontario today and long into the future
- Continue to participate in collaborative pan-Canadian prevention and mitigation efforts, as well as increase public awareness and education in Ontario on how property owners, communities and land managers can prepare for and mitigate the risks and adverse impacts of wildland fire; through the implementation of the FireSmart program, Community Wildfire Protection Planning, and the FireSmart Communities Transfer Payment incentive program.
- Continue to develop a strategy to modernize the ministry's wildland fire prevention and mitigation programs with the intent of expanding, streamlining, and increasing the effectiveness of these programs.
- Plan for, monitor and respond to wildland fires based on the Wildland Fire Strategy for Ontario while ensuring COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts are in place to ensure emergency response capacity is maintained. Continue to support mutual aid partners across Canada, the United States, and internationally.
- Promote understanding of the ecological role of fire and use of fire to benefit resource management as well as supporting wildland fire management

objectives as indicated in the Forest Sector Strategy.

- Engage Indigenous partners in the planning of collaborative research seeking to understand the impact of wildland fire and wildland fire management practices (e.g., decision-making, strategies, processes) on indigenous people and communities to enable the improvement towards more inclusive and culturally representative practices.
- Provide active emergency management training and development of staff and continuity of operations planning. Lead and support inter and cross-ministry prevention, mitigation, and preparedness planning as well as coordination of response to emergencies. Participate in provincial corrective action initiatives to provide for the public safety of Ontarians.
- Provide specialized aviation services in support of NDMNRF's Natural Hazard Emergency Response, and Natural Resource Management programs. Implement approaches to improve the quality and efficiency of aviation services as part of a continuous improvement initiative.
- Implement Ontario's Flooding Strategy by working with several ministries and partners to make Ontario more resilient to flooding in the long term.
- Implement Ontario Low Water Response by working with several ministries and partners to make Ontario more resilient to drought/low water in the long term.
- Continue to co-manage operation and maintenance of the Ontario Hydrometric network with Environment and Climate Change Canada. Participate in national initiatives for this river and lake water monitoring network to ensure the efficiency and maximum value are achieved for the interests and public safety of Ontarians.

11. Northern Development

As the regional ministry for Northern Ontario, NDMNRF supports provincial initiatives in the North and addresses unique regional needs. The ministry leads government programs aimed at growing the economy, building strong northern communities, and creating sustainable job opportunities in the North. This is done, in part, through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), a provincial agency chaired by the Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

Through a network of regional offices and strategic program and policy development,

NDMNRF ensures northerners have access to government programs and services, as well as a voice in government decisions affecting the North. To address northern infrastructure needs, NDMNRF works with partner ministries, municipalities, and Indigenous communities to expand and maintain the northern highways system, roads in unincorporated areas, resource access roads and winter roads to remote First Nation communities.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Lead, deliver, and co-ordinate government programs and policies aimed at supporting economic growth and business development, and address infrastructure and transportation network needs, in Northern Ontario.
- Support the development and implementation of strategic policies and programs by undertaking research and collect and analyze regional information. This analysis focuses on opportunities to support the Northern Ontario economy that will ultimately strengthen and diversify Northern Ontario communities and businesses.
- Ensure the North's voice is reflected in the policies and priorities of the government, by working in collaboration with various partners including all orders of government, industry and business, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations, and other public and private sector institutions.
- Administer the Northern Transportation Networks program by planning and delivering an efficient core transportation network to meet transportation needs in the North, promoting economic development while safely and efficiently moving people and goods. The ministry supports strategic investments in infrastructure through programs such as the Northern Highways Program, Local Roads Boards, and the Winter Roads Program.
- Promote and deliver programs, services, and funding to assist business start-ups, expansions, inward investment, trade, and innovation efforts. A network of integrated area teams (Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, North Bay, and Kenora) with offices in 23 communities across the North, serves as the focal point for private sector clients and northern stakeholders for the delivery of programs and services in support of economic development.
- Help local companies grow and expand their business globally by facilitating export and promotes development opportunities in Northern Ontario internationally to help attract new investment in the region. Through the NOHFC

funding programs, the ministry invests in business development and supports projects across the North.

- Administer the Northern Energy Advantage Program (NEAP), which has replaced the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, which supports Northern Ontario's largest industrial electricity consumers to reduce costs, sustain jobs, and maintain global competitiveness. With ongoing funding of \$120 million per year, increasing to more than \$176 million per year by 2025-26, the program protects jobs in the North and supports the development of industrial energy management plans.
- Deliver the Veterinary Assistance Program (VAP) across northern and rural Ontario, which helps promote the viability of the livestock industry by supporting the provision of veterinary services to livestock producers. It does this by providing funding to offset the travel, locum, and continuing education costs incurred by participating veterinary practices. The annual allocation for the program is \$830,000.
- Promote and deliver programs, services, and funding to build community infrastructure and assist communities in undertaking economic development projects. A network of integrated area teams (Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, North Bay, and Kenora) with offices in 23 communities across the North serves as the focal point to provide programming and advisory services, to assist communities as they build community infrastructure and undertake economic development projects.
- Deliver the Northern Ontario Resource Development Support (NORDS) Fund which provides support to municipalities in Northern Ontario to help invest in municipal infrastructure impacted by resource development.
- Provide advice and funding to support services in unincorporated areas without municipal structure. The ministry provides administrative oversight, advice, and funding support to Local Services Boards (LSBs). There are 45 LSBs, which deliver basic community services, as described under the *Northern Services Board Act*, in territories without municipal organization. The LSB program has an annual funding allocation of \$625,000.

12. Mines and minerals development

The ministry supports a strong and sustainable minerals sector by promoting investment and exploration, by providing information to global clients on Ontario's

wealth of mineral resources, and by the fair, effective and efficient administration of Ontario's *Mining Act*, in a manner consistent with Indigenous reconciliation, protection of public health and safety, and the environment.

The ministry administers the Regulatory Administration of the *Mining Act* through regulatory tools that promote and sustain mineral exploration and mining in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. As part of this mandate, the ministry has transformed and modernized mineral tenure administration in Ontario by implementing an integrated, client-driven electronic system that enables clients to register mining claims and manage these claims online. This ensures mineral exploration and development in Ontario is undertaken in a manner that promotes a balanced approach that benefits all Ontarians, while registering claims in a manner that is respectful of private landowners and Indigenous communities. The system continues to be updated and improved in response to stakeholder feedback.

The Ontario Geological Survey (OGS) collects and disseminates geoscience information for all regions across Ontario to support investment decisions and policy development related to mineral exploration and development, public health and safety, the environment and land use planning. Geoscience products and services support economic development through source water protection, mineral, energy and groundwater-resource related development opportunities, land use planning, and safeguarding public health and safety related to geological hazards.

Through the mineral sector's development, investment and opportunity program, the ministry provides information, support, advice and brokers relationships between stakeholders, partners, investors, and other key government officials, agencies, and associations to ensure Ontario is recognized as the global leader in exploration, mine production, and related services.

To support Ring of Fire Economic Development and Community Readiness the ministry is working with First Nation communities to leverage federal, provincial, and industrial partnerships that enable the planning and implementation of economic development opportunities and improvement or expansion of community infrastructure assets such as new housing and renovations, worker, and visitor accommodations, streetlighting and multi-purpose centres.

Investments have been made by working with First Nations and federal partners to advance community capacity and readiness to participate in Ring of Fire development

opportunities. Activities include supporting First Nations capacity-building through various mechanisms to actively participate in mining and mineral developments, industry dialogue, and environmental assessment consultation processes. Work continues to help advance community readiness priorities including skills and training, on-reserve drivers licensing, financial management and governance, and community engagement and planning.

The Ring of Fire Infrastructure Development focuses on regional infrastructure, such as all-season roads and broadband, required to advance Ring of Fire developments and support First Nations access and participation. Marten Falls and Webequie First Nations are proponents for environmental assessments for proposed new roads that will, if approved, connect their communities to the provincial highway network through a proposed north-south corridor and connect to proposed Ring of Fire developments to benefit from these opportunities. The ministry has expanded its funding to provide consultation support to those First Nations potentially impacted by the proposed road environmental assessment projects that will connect the Ring of Fire mining camp to existing road infrastructure. The ministry continues to support a joint initiative with the federal government to connect Marten Falls, Webequie, Nibinamik, Eabametoong and Neskantaga First Nations to broadband fibre which will facilitate business and economic opportunities; skills, training, and education; and health supports.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Continue supporting a safe and sustainable minerals industry by promoting minerals sector exploration and investment. This includes collecting and distributing geoscience information, encouraging, and facilitating Indigenous participation in the minerals sector, administering Ontario's *Mining Act*, and ensuring safe, environmentally sound mineral development and rehabilitation of mining lands.
- Continue to invest in the rehabilitation of abandoned mine sites on Crown-held lands to ensure public safety, improve the environment, and make the lands available for productive use.
- Continue to review and update the One Window Co-ordination Protocol (OWCP) to ensure continued effective and efficient processes for co-ordination and delivery of environmental assessments, permitting and approvals across provincial ministries and with the federal government.

- Lead and facilitate the development in the Ring of Fire, by engaging and collaborating with Indigenous peoples and communities, northerners, the mining industry, federal departments, and other provincial ministries to encourage responsible and sustainable development in the region. Located more than 500 kilometers northeast of Thunder Bay, the Ring of Fire is one of the most significant mineral discoveries in the province.
- Supporting an integrated, intergovernmental co-ordination and planning approach, including working with First Nation proponents to advance the development of strategic transportation and community infrastructure in the Ring of Fire region in an environmentally responsible way.

13. Corporate management

The Corporate Management and Information Division leads the ministry's strategic business planning, which is integral to effective and efficient ministry operations. Corporate management functions include fiscal controllership and financial governance; sustainable infrastructure and facility management; strategic human resources planning and management; supply chain management; records and information management, French Language Services, and the administration of the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act*.

Key program initiatives in 2022-23

- Continue to support digital improvements to the Freedom of Information (FOI) request process to improve response rates, and provide Ontarians with better access to information.
- Support Ontario Digital Service and Open Government priorities by continuing to share data and information openly, promoting transparency and opportunities for innovation.
- Advance the ministry's modernization efforts through ongoing hiring controls and vacancy management, development, and implementation of organizational changes to support the government's fiscal commitments and better align workforce capacity with priority outcomes.
- Play a critical role in establishing and supporting the implementation of financial processes and centralized initiatives, such as the further growth of NDMNRF's risk profile for Enterprise Risk Management and other ongoing horizontal

streamlining initiatives across the Ontario Public Service.

- Lead the ministry's efforts to create and nurture a respectful, equitable, accessible, diverse, and inclusive (READI) organizational culture and workplace that is anti-racist and free from discrimination and harassment for all employees - through key initiatives such as senior leadership diversification and anti-racism action planning.
- Lead the ministry's recovery and renewal efforts including:
 - making Ontario's programs and frontline services more convenient, more reliable, and more accessible. NDMNRF has committed to moving from 12% to 100% of services online over 3 years providing clients with information at their fingertips anytime, anywhere and on any device
 - launching a paper digitization initiative which will make information available digitally to clients and staff who need it
 - overseeing and supporting the reintegration of staff in our workplaces to ensure a safe and healthy work environment (whether in office or working remotely) and implementing our reintegration plan which will support the return of over 1,000 staff back to the physical workplace throughout the province
 - continuing to enable our workforce with the technology needed to deliver services remotely where needed
 - continuing to advance culture change within the ministry promoting modern, flexible, and empowered practices leading to improved employee experience results

COVID-19 response

NDMNRF continues to collaborate with its key stakeholders to protect jobs and support Northern and rural communities through the economic recovery of various sectors in Ontario directly affected by COVID-19.

The ministry continues to adapt to ensure continuity of its operations during the COVID-19 response and recovery, by modernizing the way we deliver services to Ontarians.

Ministry performance measures and achievements

Ministry performance measures and achievements (updated)

Performance measures	2019 -20 Achi eve men t	2020 -21 Achi eve men t	2021- 22 Targe t	2022- 23 Targe t
% of available Crown timber harvested	49%	47 . 3%	49 . 8 %	52 . 3 %
% online-self-service/automated registrations ^[1]	94%	96%	94%	96%
% of program compliance rate with the ministry's external service standards	85 . 8%	76 . 8%	90%	90%
Number of provincial flood messages warnings issued	110	97	116	71
% of wildland fires that are deemed to require a full response, where NDMNRF is the first response and the fire met one of two criteria thresholds of 1) fire size and 2) time from report to being held.	95%	90%	96%	95%

Performance measures	2019 -20 Achi eve men t	2020 -21 Achi eve men t	2021- 22 Targe t	2022- 23 Targe t
% of high-volume services available online	33%	38%	70%	70%
% of high-volume interactions that can be conducted digitally	70%	74%	50%	50%
% satisfaction rating for digital services	Und er Dev elo pme nt	Und er Dev elo pme nt	75%	75%
% completion of Emergency Management Program legislative requirements	100 %	100 %	100%	100%
Total number of Outdoors Cards, fishing and hunting licenses sold	2.1 47 mil lio n	1.7 19 mil lio n	2–2.3 million	2–2.3 million
% annual increase in Ontario's forest industry exports	–4%	1%	2%	2%

Performance measures	2019 -20 Achi eve men t	2020 -21 Achi eve men t	2021- 22 Targe t	2022- 23 Targe t
Variance in spending of approved allocation	1 . 8 4%	1 . 8 4%	1%	1%
Number of Lean initiatives completed	N/A *****	8	2	2
Number of Modernization/Program reviews completed	11	14	14	14
Number of staff with Lean White Belt Training	26	428	150	150
% of eligible First Nation communities covered by a resource revenue sharing agreement	79%	90%	100%	100%
New: Forest Regeneration proportion of regenerating area assessed that is established	N/A *****	94%	N/A *****	90%
New: Percentage compliance with inspections of petroleum operations	N/A *****	56%	N/A *****	71%

Performance measures	2019 -20 Achi eve men t	2020 -21 Achi eve men t	2021- 22 Targe t	2022- 23 Targe t
New: The number of open geospatial datasets available through GeoHub	N/A *****	350	N/A *****	360
New: The number of users accessing Ontario GeoHub	N/A *****	99, 782	N/A *****	109, 000
Annual value of multi-factor productivity index	105 .5	105 .1	114. 56 (#1 rank ing in Cana da)	114. 56 (#1 rank ing in Cana da)
Annual % change in the number of jobs in the North	-4. 8%	-4. 98%	1%	1%
Capital investment in mining in Ontario	\$2. 1 bil lio n	\$2. 1 bil lio n	\$2.5 bill ion	\$2.5 bill ion
% of current Ring Of Fire road projects with a high -	100	100	100%	100%

Performance measures	2019 -20 Achi eve men t	2020 -21 Achi eve men t	2021- 22 Targe t	2022- 23 Targe t
medium progress level in the Planning & EA phase *****	%	%		
% of Transfer Payment agreements onboarded to TP Ontario *****	30%	60%	100%	100%
Number of jobs created and sustained by funded projects	312 4	179 2	3,00 0	3,00 0
Ontario's percentage of Canadian market share of exploration expenditures	23. 8%	27. 2%	26.5 %	26.5 %

Detailed financial information

Ministry planned expenditures 2022-23	
Cost type	Ministry planned expenditures ^[2] (\$M) *****

Cost type	Ministry planned expenditures ^[2] (\$M)
Operating	1,001.5
Capital	537.8
Total	1,539.3

Ministry distribution of 2022-23 operating expense allocation by vote/item /sub-item

Regional operations	12%
Policy and planning	2%
Forest industry	17%
Land and resources I&IT cluster	3%
Public safety and emergency response	13%
Mapping and geographic information	1%
Fish and Wildlife Special Purpose Account	7%
Provincial services, science and research	5%
Mines and minerals	6%
Northern development	29%

Ministry administration

5%

**Ministry planned operating expenditures by
vote/item/sub-item 2022-23**

Activity name	Ministry planned expenditures (\$M)
Fish and Wildlife Special Purpose Account	75 . 0
Forest industry	174 . 5
Mapping and geographic information	9 . 6
Mines and minerals	58 . 3
Northern development	291 . 3
Policy and planning	24 . 5
Provincial services, science and research	45 . 5
Public safety and emergency response	125 . 8
Total planned expenditures by vote/item/sub-item	1,001 . 5

Activity name	Ministry planned expenditures (\$M)
Regional operations	116.8
Ministry administration	49.9
Land and resources I&IT cluster	30.2
Total planned expenditures by vote/item/sub-item	1,001.5

Operating and capital summary by vote

Operating expense						
Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	1,001,479,314	31,938,900	3.3	969,540,414	1,142,393,714	1,095,531,808

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Ministry administration program	52,685,400	2,145,300	4.2	50,540,100	49,042,200	49,355,337
Natural resource management program	293,606,300	10,839,400	3.8	282,766,900	328,457,300	266,401,786
Public protection	136,937,700	6,457,200	4.9	130,480,500	278,054,400	147,615,860
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	1,001,479,314	31,938,900	3.3	969,540,414	1,142,393,714	1,095,531,808

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Land and resources I&IT cluster program	30,725,700	1,285,500	4.4	29,440,200	32,734,400	28,977,269
Northern development program	276,386,300	5,048,200	1.9	271,338,100	273,578,700	216,428,196
Mines and minerals program	59,653,300	8,991,300	17.7	50,662,000	51,989,000	37,286,978
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	1,001,479,314	31,938,900	3.3	969,540,414	1,142,393,714	1,095,531,808

Votes/prog rams	Esti mat es 202 2-23 \$	Chang es from 2021- 22 estim ates \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Inter im actu als 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act ual s 202 0-2 1 [3] \$
Total operating expense to be voted	849, 994, 700	34,766 ,900	4.3	815, 227, 800	1,013 ,856, 000	746, 065, 426
Statutory appropriati ons	5 , 6 69 , 014	N/A *****	N/ ***** A ***	5 , 6 69 , 014	2 , 56 7 , 01 4	3 , 0 27 , 496
Ministry total operating expense	855 , 66 3 , 7 14	34 , 76 6 , 900	4 . 2	820 , 89 6 , 8 14	1 , 01 6 , 42 3 , 01 4	749 , 09 2 , 9 22
Consolidati on adjustment - Algonquin Forest	24 , 579 , 50 0	784 , 5 00	3 . 3	23 , 795 , 00 0	24 , 3 06 , 2 00	22 , 738 , 69 2
Total including consolidati on & other adjustment s	1,00 1,47 9,31 4	31,938 ,900	3.3	969, 540, 414	1,142, 393,7 14	1,09 5,53 1,80 8

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Authority						
Consolidation adjustment - Forest Renewal Trust	56,688,700	(3,419,800)	(5.7)	60,108,500	54,888,700	53,531,551
Consolidation adjustment - General Real Estate Portfolio	(25,271,100)	(701,200)	N/A	(24,569,900)	(26,361,900)	(29,540,242)
Consolidation adjustment - Ontario Clean	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	(1,660,410)
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	1,001,479,314	31,938,900	3.3	969,540,414	1,142,393,714	1,095,531,808

Votes/prog rams	Esti mat es 202 2-23 \$	Chang es from 2021- 22 estim ates \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Inter im actu als 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act ual s 202 0-2 1 [3] \$
Water Agency						
Consolidati on adjustment - Ontario Infrastruct ure and Lands Corporation	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/ ***** A ***	N/A *****	N/A *****	(59 8, 0 01)
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation	14, 818 , 50 0	508, 5 00	3 . 6	14, 310 , 00 0	3, 02 6, 20 0	34, 003 , 10 9
Operating expense adjustment	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/ ***** A ***	N/A *****	N/A *****	201 , 67
Total including consolidati on & other adjustment s	1,00 1,47 9,31 4	31,938 ,900	3.3	969, 540, 414	1,142, 393,7 14	1,09 5,53 1,80 8

Votes/prog rams	Esti mat es 202 2-23 \$	Chang es from 2021- 22 estim ates \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Inter im actu als 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act ual s 202 0-2 1 [3] \$
- Capital Asset Reclassifica tion						3,2 89
Operating expense adjustment - Section 15 Recoveries	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/ A ...	N/A *****	N/A *****	3,1 02, 099
Operating expense adjustment - Special Purpose Accounts for Fish and Wildlife	75, 000 ,00 0	N/A *****	N/ A ...	75, 000 ,00 0	70,1 11,5 00	63, 188 ,79 9
Total including consolidati on & other adjustment s	1,00 1,47 9,31 4	31,938 ,900	3.3	969, 540, 414	1,142, 393,7 14	1,09 5,53 1,80 8

Operating assets

Votes/ progra ms	Esti mat es 2022 -23 \$	Chang es from 2021-2 2 estima tes \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Interi m actua ls 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act uals 202 0-21 [3] \$
Ministr y adminis tration progra m	1,00 0	(2,000)	(6 6. 7)	3,00 0	2,000	N/A *****
Natural resourc e manage ment progra m	2,80 6,90 0	(1,587 ,300)	(3 6. 1)	4,39 4,20 0	3,499 ,300	N/A *****
Ministr y total operati ng assets	2,85 7,40 0	(1,593,3 00)	(35 .8)	4,450 ,700	3,557, 800	53,9 50

Votes/p rogram s	Esti mat es 2022 -23 \$	Chang es from 2021-2 2 estima tes \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mate s 2021- 22 ^[3] \$	Interi m actua ls 2021- 22 ^[3] \$	Act uals 202 0-21 ^[3] \$
Public protecti on	46,5 00	(3,000)	(6 .1)	49,5 00	53,50 0	53, 950
Land and resourc es I&IT cluster	N/A *****	(1,000)	(1 00 .0)	1,00 0	N/A *****	N/A *****
Norther n develop ment progra m	2,00 0	N/A *****	N/ A ***	2,00 0	2,000	N/A *****
Mines and mineral s	1,00 0	N/A *****	N/ A ***	1,00 0	1,000	N/A *****
Ministr y total operati ng assets	2,857 ,400	(1,593,3 00)	(35 .8)	4,450 ,700	3,557, 800	53,9 50

Votes/p rogram s	Esti mat es 2022 -23 \$	Chang es from 2021-2 2 estima tes \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mate s 2021- 22 ^[3] \$	Interi m actua ls 2021- 22 ^[3] \$	Act uals 202 0-21 ^[3] \$
progra m						
Total operati ng asset to be voted	2,85 7,40 0	(1,593,3 00)	(35 .8)	4,450 ,700	3,557, 800	53,9 50
Ministr y total operati ng assets	2,857 ,400	(1,593,3 00)	(35 .8)	4,450 ,700	3,557, 800	53,9 50

Capital expense

Votes/pro grams	Esti mat es 202 2-23 \$	Chan ges from 2021- 22 estim ates \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Inter im actu als 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act ual s 202 0-2 1 [3] \$
Ministry administra tion program	1,0 00	N/A *****	N/ ***** A ***	1,0 00	1,00 0	N/A *****
Natural resource manageme nt program	26, 152 ,30 0	(1,31 0,600)	(4 .8)	27, 462 ,90 0	26,0 05,7 00	19, 848 ,65 7
Public protection	5,3 70, 000	166,2 00	3. 2	5,2 03, 800	3,83 6,40 0	946 ,18 8
Total including consolidati on & other adjustment s	537 ,82 5,1 00	40,35 8,100	8. 1	497 ,46 7,0 00	580, 928, 300	410 ,20 0,1 54

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Northern development program	96,553,000	13,050,000	15.6	83,503,000	103,303,000	65,335,488
Mines and minerals program	5,825,700	296,200	5.4	5,529,500	81,687,400	4,136,406
Total capital expense to be voted	133,902,000	12,201,800	10.0	121,700,200	214,833,500	90,266,739
Statutory appropriations	407,690,900	29,421,700	7.8	378,269,200	378,269,200	347,473,90
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	537,825,100	40,358,100	8.1	497,467,000	580,928,300	410,200,154

Votes/prog rams	Esti mat es 202 2-23 \$	Chang es from 2021-2 2 estim ates \$	Ch an ge %	Esti mat es 2021 -22 [3] \$	Inter im actu als 2021- 22 [3] \$	Act ual s 202 0-2 1 [3] \$
Ministry total capital expense	541, 592, 900	41,623 ,500	8.3	499, 969, 400	593,1 02,70 0	437, 740, 229
Consolidati on adjustment - Algonquin Forest Authority	140 ,00 0	(110, 000)	(4 4. 0)	250 ,00 0	243, 000	154 ,13 9
Consolidati on adjustment - General Real Estate Portfolio	(3, 582 ,10 0)	(1,42 3,300)	N/ ***** A ***	(2, 158 ,80 0)	(7,2 00,0 00)	N/A *****
Total including consolidati on & other adjustment s	537 ,82 5,1 00	40,35 8,100	8. 1	497, 467, 000	580, 928, 300	410 ,20 0,1 54

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Consolidation adjustment - Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/A *****	(19 4 , 2 14)
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation	(32 5 , 7 00)	267 , 9 00	N/A *****	(59 3 , 6 00)	(5 , 2 17 , 4 00)	(27 , 50 0 , 0 00)
Total including consolidation & other adjustments	537 , 82 5 , 1 00	40 , 35 8 , 100	8 . 1	497 , 467 , 000	580 , 928 , 300	410 , 20 0 , 1 54

Capital assets

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 Estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim Actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Ministry administration program	1,000	N/A *****	N/A *****	1,000	1,000	N/A *****
Natural resource management program	29,770,200	(8,176,900)	(21.5)	37,947,100	24,877,100	22,775,838
Public protection	29,654,900	21,164,800	249.3	8,490,100	12,867,100	12,010,012

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 Estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim Actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Northern development program	492,654,400	(4,004,000)	(0.8%)	496,658,400	621,613,400	578,222,656
Mines and minerals program	800,000	174,000	27.8%	626,000	626,000	1,217,469
Total capital assets to be voted	552,880,500	9,157,900	1.7%	543,722,600	659,984,600	819,920,852
Ministry total capital assets	552,880,500	9,157,900	1.7%	543,722,600	659,984,600	819,208,525

Votes/programs	Estimates 2022-23 \$	Changes from 2021-22 Estimates \$	Change %	Estimates 2021-22 [3] \$	Interim Actuals 2021-22 [3] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [3] \$
Ministry total operating and capital including consolidation and other adjustments (not including assets)	1,539,304,414	72,297,000	4.9	1,467,007,414	1,723,322,014	1,505,731,962

Historic trend analysis

Historic trend analysis data	Actuals 2019-20 [4] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [4] \$	Estimates 2021-22 [4] \$	Estimates 2022-23 [4] \$
Ministry total operating and capital including consolidation and other	1,354,794	1,505,735	1,467,007,414	1,539,304,414
Percent change	N/A	11%	-3%	5%

Historic trend analysis data	Actuals 2019-20 [4] \$	Actuals 2020-21 [4] \$	Estimates 2021-22 [4] \$	Estimates 2022-23 [4] \$
adjustments (not including assets)	8,447	1,962	414	414
Percent change	N/A *****	11%	-3%	5%

Agencies, boards and commissions

Classified agencies

Algonquin Forestry Authority

- Responsible for forest management, including timber harvesting, in Algonquin Park. The authority sorts, sells and delivers harvested logs to regional mills. It also may advise on, undertake, and carry out forestry, land-management and other programs and projects as the Minister may authorize.

Big Game Advisory Committee

- Responsible for providing advice to the Minister respecting policy and programs related to the management of species of big game in Ontario, and reviews and recommends changes to the allocation of harvesting opportunities for big game.

Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission

- Established under the *Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act*, the Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission makes recommendations to the Minister on ways to encourage people to value Ontario's fish and wildlife resources, promote more

participation in conservation and other programs, and to explore new fish and wildlife-related opportunities.

Nawiinginiima Forest Management Corporation

- Responsible for sustainable forest management, and the marketing and selling of wood supplies to both existing forest industry customers and new entrants on two forest management units, the Pic and the White River Forests, and the proposed addition of a third forest (Nagagami Forest) over the next two years.

Niagara Escarpment Commission

- Administers the Niagara Escarpment Plan through promoting the objectives of the plan; processing and making decisions on development permit applications; and making recommendations on plan amendments.

Ontario Geographic Names Board

- Develops policy and principles for naming geographic features and unincorporated places in Ontario. The Board reviews official geographic feature name submissions on behalf of the Minister and enters approved submissions and suitable place name submissions into the official record.

Rabies Advisory Committee

- Advises on the scientific steps necessary for developing a successful rabies research and response program, which includes developing suitable vaccines and systems for vaccinating wild animal populations.

Temagami Forest Management Corporation

- Responsible for sustainable forest management, and the marketing and selling of wood supplies to both existing forest industry customers and new entrants on the Temagami Forest management unit.

Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)

- A statutory corporation established in 1988 under the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Act to advise and make recommendations on any matter relating to the

growth and diversification of the Northern Ontario economy, and to promote and stimulate economic initiatives by providing loans and grants to stabilize, diversify, and foster the economic growth of Northern Ontario.

Unclassified agencies

Council of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors

- Regulates the practice of professional land surveying and governs the profession in accordance with the *Surveyors Act*, its regulations, and by-laws.

Council of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association

- Regulates the practice of forestry and governs its members in accordance with the *Professional Foresters Act*, its regulations, and by-laws. The governing council manages, administers, and oversees the functioning of the association.

Lake of the Woods Control Board

- Regulates the water levels in the Lake of the Woods, Lac Seul and in the Winnipeg and English Rivers between the lake outlets and their confluence. Membership includes representatives from Canada, Ontario, and Manitoba.

Ottawa River Regulation Planning Board

- A partnership among Canada, Quebec, and Ontario to formulate and review policies that will lead to integrated management of the reservoirs in the Ottawa River basin.

A classified agency, though established by the government, is not considered part of the ministry. The government appoints most of its members, assigns responsibility to perform a public function, and holds the agency to account.

An unclassified agency is excluded from the financial and administrative requirements of the Management Board of Cabinet. The government makes at least one appointment to each non-classified agency board.

Expenditure and revenue data for agencies, boards and commissions

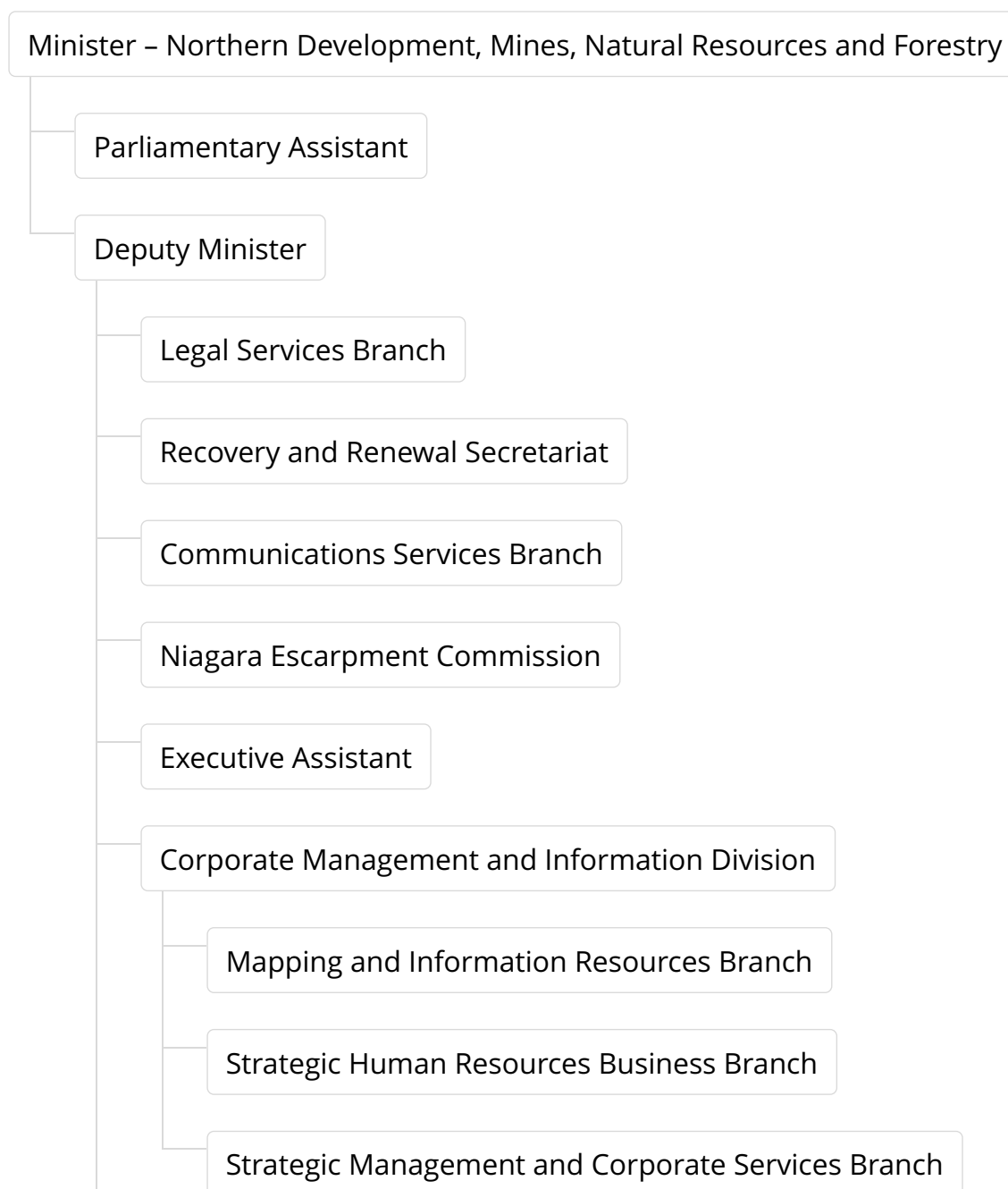
Name	2022-23 Estimate s: expenditure \$	2022-23 Estimate s: revenue \$	2021-22 Interim actuals: expenditure \$	2021-22 Interim actuals: revenue \$	2020-21 Actuals: expenditure \$	2020-21 Actuals: revenue \$
Algonquin Forestry Authority	\$29,750,000	\$29,980,000	\$25,561,000	\$25,207,000	\$27,551,000	\$27,622,000
Big Game Management Advisory Committee	\$30,000	\$0	\$3,067	\$0	\$11,946	\$0
Council of the Association of Ontario Land	\$26,000	\$0	\$8,600	\$0	\$13,040	\$0

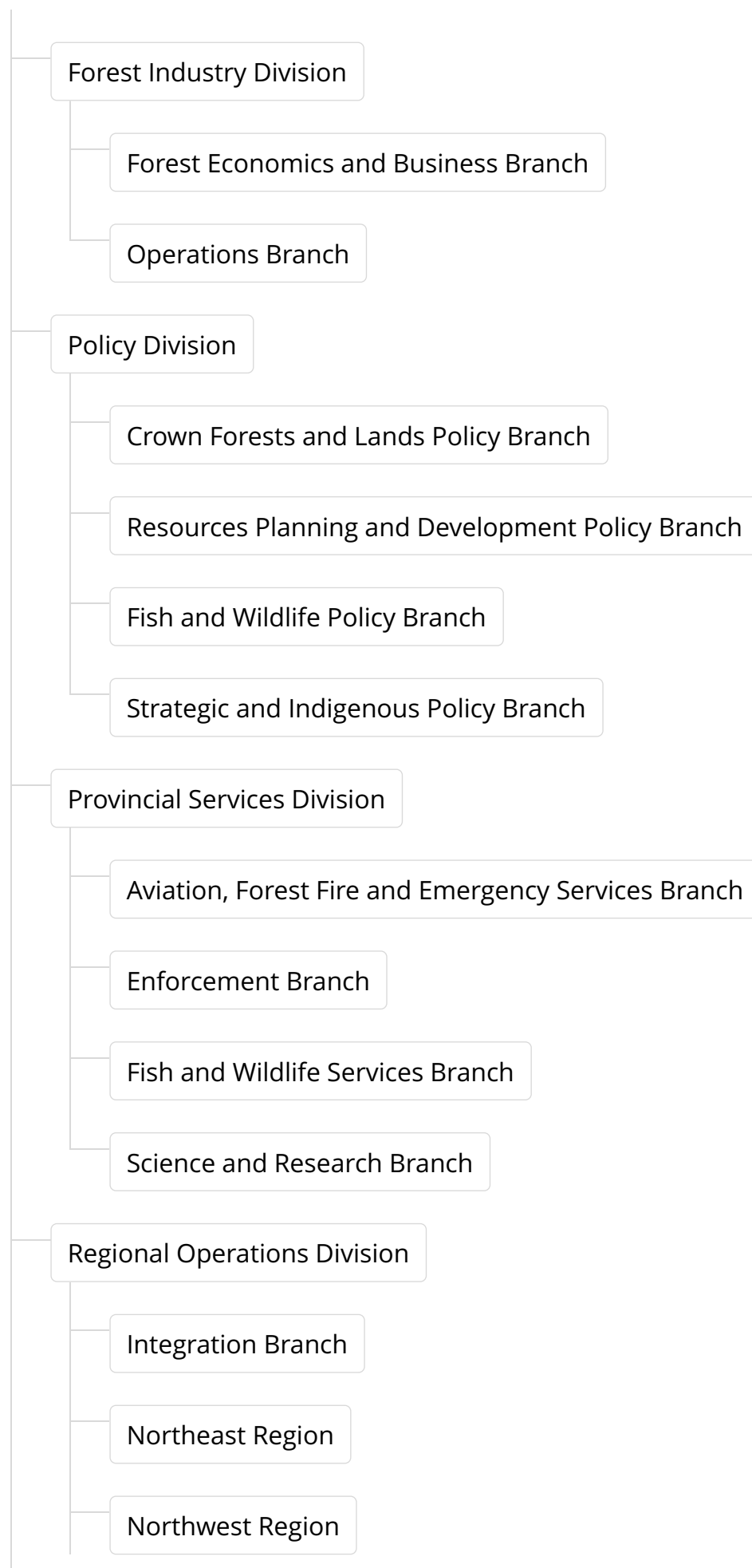
Surveyors						
Council of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association	\$26,000	\$0	\$13,500	\$0	\$13,040	\$0
Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission	\$30,000	\$0	\$11,305	\$0	\$13,000	\$0
Lake of the Woods Control Board	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Nawiin ginokii ma Forest Management Corporation	\$1,951,888	\$3,634,171	\$1,951,000	\$3,921,000	\$1,877,000	\$3,866,000

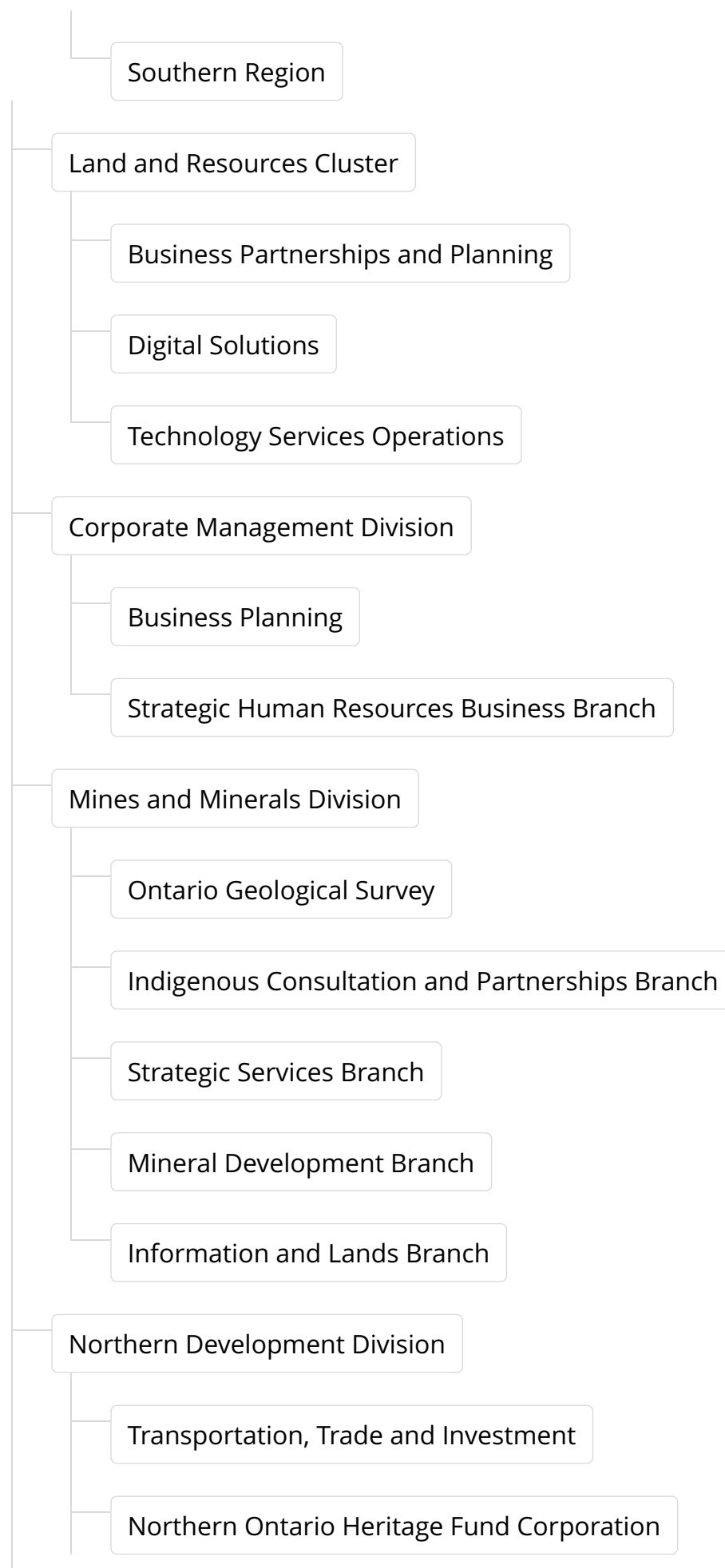
Niagara Escarp ment Commis sion	\$2,6 01,6 00	\$0	\$2,59 0,919	\$0	\$2, 581 ,01 6	\$0
Norther n Ontario Heritag e Fund Corpora tion	\$60, 000, 000	\$0	\$60,0 00,00 0	\$0	\$55 ,00 0,0 00	\$0
Ontario Geogra phic Names Board	\$975	\$0	\$975	\$0	\$72 5	\$0
Ottawa River Regulat ion Plannin g Board	\$71, 747	\$0	\$70,5 76	\$0	\$61 ,48 4	\$0
Rabies Advisor y Commit tee	\$2,8 50	\$0	\$1,65 0	\$0	\$2, 475	\$0
Temaga mi Forest	\$409 ,403	\$836 ,078	\$193, 468	\$1,2 81,6	\$0	\$0

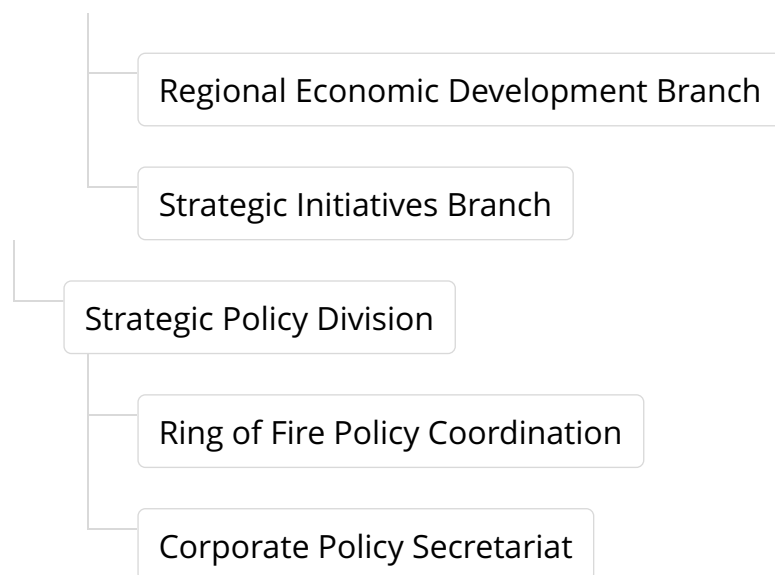
Management Corporation				00		
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Ministry organization chart









Appendix: 2021-22 Annual report

2021-22 Results

Key activity 1: Protect the public from natural disasters or hazards

- Ontario is recognized internationally as a leader in wildland fire management and remains committed to preserving and protecting our natural resources. The ministry has a renewed focus on adopting a risk-reduction approach to wildland fire management and supporting a shift to a whole-of-society approach to wildland fire and risk reduction. Ontario is an active partner in the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre led steering committee for the development of the National Strategy for Prevention and Mitigation.
- The ministry protected residents, communities, and businesses during one of the most active and impactful wildland fire seasons in several decades. Activity increased in the northwest region with severe drought and dry weather conditions, not seen in over 50 years. This led to a record number of fires, including a 200,667-hectare fire named Kenora 51, the largest in Ontario's history.
- In the 2021 fire season, 1,198 wildland fires were recorded across the province with 793,440 hectares burned, compared to 608 fires and 14,690 hectares burned in 2020. This was well above the 10-year average (2011-2020) of 840 fires and 162,813 hectares burned.

- As fire fighting demand exceeded Ontario's resources during the summer's fire escalation, Ontario requested and received the assistance of additional fire personnel and aircraft through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center (CIFFC). This support included assistance from provinces across Canada, the United States, Australia and from Mexico.
- In the spring of 2021, Ontario deployed 85 fire personnel to Manitoba and one to the Northwest Territories to assist with their firefighting efforts.
- COVID-19 Emergency Procurement Response and Operations
The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced many challenges to emergency response planning in the ministry, to ensure the safety of staff as well as the public. To meet those challenges and mitigate health and safety risks associated with COVID-19, the ministry implemented several emergency procurements and operational measures, including:
 - trailer rental services for accommodations and office space
 - facility services
 - sanitization supplies
 - personal protective equipment
 - additional accommodations
 - isolation rooms
 - miscellaneous services and supplies
 - land transportation
- The record-breaking 2021 fire season in Ontario was supported by approximately 2,500 personnel, including Fire Rangers, fire management support staff, out-of-province personnel, as well as dozens of pilots and engineers.
- Ontario received the assistance of nearly 500 fire personnel and 25 aircraft. This support included assistance from Canada, the United States, and 20 specialized fire personnel from Australia and over 100 firefighters from Mexico.
- To help stop the spread of COVID-19, Fire Rangers were required to follow the health and safety guidelines recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, such as physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and daily self-assessments by staff.

- The ministry prioritized access to vaccines for essential fire staff, including resources coming from out of province to help Ontario with their fire fighting efforts. A rapid antigen testing program was implemented for fire staff and out of province resources were also tested for COVID-19 upon arrival and departure to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Ontario and to ensure a safe return home for all fire fighters.
- Close to 3,000 residents from Indigenous residents were safely evacuated and returned to their homes due to the risk from smoke and fire from the following communities:
 - Naicatchewenin First Nation (June)
 - Deer Lake First Nation (July)
 - Poplar Hill First Nation (July)
 - Pikangikum First Nation (July)
 - Municipality of Red Lake (July)
 - Cat Lake First Nation (July)
 - Wabaseemoong Independent First Nations (August)
- Emergency Area Orders that restrict public access to active fire areas were implemented throughout the summer in the northwest fire region, in order to facilitate effective fire suppression and potential evacuations.
- From mid July to mid August, an Implementation Order was put in place with restrictions on industrial operations including forestry and mining throughout Northwestern Ontario to help prevent human caused fires.
- On June 30, due to extreme fire hazard and increased fire activity, a Restricted Fire Zone was implemented for parts of the northwest region for 62 consecutive days to assist in preventing human-cause fires and allow the ministry to continue to fight new and existing fires.
- Earlier in the summer, Ontario deployed more than 80 fire personnel to Manitoba and one to the Northwest Territories to assist with their firefighting efforts.
- Through the Ontario FireSmart Communities Transfer Payment program, municipalities applied for funding to assist with the development of wildland fire

hazard forest maps and a Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan that identifies mitigation opportunities to reduce wildland fire hazards.

- The ministry participated in Operation Remote Immunity by arranging the non-medical transport of teams into communities to deliver and administer COVID-19 vaccines to residents of 32 First Nation communities.
- NDMNRF led continued implementation of Protecting People and Property: Ontario's Flooding Strategy, released in March 2020. The strategy includes commitments from 6 provincial ministries and partners in over 90 initiatives spread across the pillars of emergency management. Highlights are:
 - after establishing the Flood Mapping Technical Team in 2020 with participation from municipalities, conservation authorities and federal partners, the team (and sub-teams) have been developing:
 - survey and mapping specifications – to promote consistent mapping techniques across Ontario for identifying hazard areas through recommended data specifications
 - hydraulics and hydrology bulletin – to revise hydrological (flow) and hydraulic (level) modelling to improve the relative accuracy to better understand and characterize the flooding dynamics observed on the ground
 - mapping prioritization criteria – to provide evidence and support in determining areas where flood mapping is needed or needs updating
 - continuation of the province's partnership with the federal government to provide high quality water level and flow information for watercourses across the province, which helps to determine the potential for flooding and aids in the provision of early warning messages for flooding
 - engagement with municipalities, watershed partners and other key stakeholders in Muskoka, Magnetawan and Upper Ottawa River areas on key water management and operational decisions
 - continuation of Ontario's support, through participation on various committees of the International Joint Commission, which contributes to the ongoing management of water levels and flows in the Great Lakes
- The Surface Water Monitoring Centre:

- migrated centre operations to 100% remote delivery without interruption of time-critical early warning data services during the pandemic
 - issued 40 flood messages and 17 drought/low water messages (as of January 31, 2022) to partners which enable them to respond to local issues
 - collaborated with Environment and Climate Change Canada to ensure all COVID-19 protocols were included in return to service standards for critical water monitoring stations. Modernized the Great Lakes Storm Surge Modelling System to support better decision-making for flood events with enhanced system accessibility
 - collaborated with Environment and Climate Change Canada to replace the flood forecasting and warning water monitoring network on the Trent-Severn Waterway and Rideau Canal, ensuring reliable high-quality data is available to ministries and partners
 - modernized the Extranet to comply with accessibility requirements and provide a better user experience for ministry and partner staff
- NDMNRF worked with the Ministry Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) to create O. Reg. 686/21 under the *Conservation Authorities Act* outlining the mandatory programs and services to be delivered by conservation authorities to ensure they are focused on their core roles and responsibilities of keeping people and properties safe from natural hazards.
 - NDMNRF supported natural hazard management and repairs to flood and erosion control structures by providing \$3.8 million in grant funding to the 36 conservation authorities (CAs), plus \$5.0 million in capital funding to 32 CAs for water and erosion control infrastructure projects.
 - In response to a serious natural gas explosion in Wheatley, the ministry took immediate action to support the municipality. The ministry engaged expert engineering resources to take over gas monitoring in and around the evacuation zone and perform technical investigations to determine the source of the gas leak, as well as identifying mitigation options. In addition, the ministry established a multi-agency Leadership and Technical Advisory Group with representation from NDMNRF, Solicitor General (Emergency Management Ontario & Office of the Fire Marshal), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and the

municipality of Chatham-Kent to ensure provincial support to both the municipality and affected business and residential communities as a result of the Wheatley emergency.

- Developed foundational geospatial data, mapping tools and technical infrastructure to support the ministry's response in protecting the public from natural disasters, including forest fires and floods.

Key activity 2: Deliver direct services to the public and industry

- The ministry provided fishing and hunting opportunities to approximately two million Outdoors Card holders generating almost \$50 million in licence sales.
- Launched an online hunter education course which satisfies the increasing demand from clients for online options and improved service delivery processes. An instructor-led course is also available for clients who prefer to learn in-person or who do not have access to the internet.
- Trained approximately 20,000 new hunters through the Ontario Hunter Education Program, generating over \$600,000 in revenue directed to the Fish and Wildlife Special Purpose Account.
- Issued more than 8,000 trapping licences and trained more than 260 new trappers, generating over \$250,000 in revenue directed to the Fish and Wildlife Special Purpose Account.
- Provided exceptional customer service to two million anglers and hunters, including licensing and big game draw services, contact centre support, social media and the fish and wildlife licence issuer network. In 2021, the Natural Resources Information and Support Centre (NRISC) handled approximately 77,000 calls and 22,500 email inquiries related to fishing, hunting and/or licencing in Ontario.
- Provided approximately six million fish for stocking purposes and population rehabilitation through the Fish and Wildlife Program's fish culture stations.
- Continued implementation of recommendations from the Hunting, Fishing, and Resource-based Tourism Ministerial Advisory Council to support key recovery actions.
- Conducted a designed survey of Ontario white-tailed deer hunters to gather information from clients on their hunting activities and expenditures to better

inform program decision making.

- In 2021-22, ministry conservation officers contacted over 100,000 members of the public while on duty even though outreach events were not scheduled due to pandemic restrictions. During these contacts with the public, educational messaging pertaining to safe and sustainable natural resource use was relayed as appropriate.
- As part of the Collaborative Compliance Initiative with Indigenous communities, the ministry's Enforcement Branch has successfully completed 10 restorative justice cases to date in 2021-22 and is anticipating at minimum another 6 cases to be completed by the end of March 2022.
- Leveraged social media and other communication channels to promote public safety and compliance with Ontario's natural resource laws. Social media videos were released promoting safe hunting on topics such as Shooting down a Roadway and Identifying Big Game. Enforcement careers were also highlighted through two videos promoting Conservation Officer Recruitment and the Provincial Communication Unit.
- Provided the public with *Lymantria dispar dispar* (LDD) moth forecasts and information, including options for managing LDD on properties during the current LDD outbreak in southern Ontario and some areas in the northeast region of the province.
- The ministry continued to be a recognized leader in rabies surveillance and control. Since Ontario's recent rabies outbreak began in December 2015, there have been 494 cases of raccoon strain rabies (14 in 2021) and 21 cases of fox strain rabies (no new cases in 2021) confirmed in southern Ontario. In response, over seven million oral rabies vaccine baits (over 840,000 in 2021), which help immunize most raccoons, skunks and foxes that eat them have been distributed. The ministry's efforts helped reduce the number of annual rabies cases by approximately 95 percent since 2016.
- Distributed approximately 840,000 rabies vaccine baits, tested 2,872 samples for rabies, and vaccinated over 4,000 raccoons and skunks by hand through the trap-vaccinate-release program. Raccoon and fox strain rabies cases in the province declined by 95% since 2016.
- Conducted monitoring of 121 inland lakes as part of the Broad-scale Monitoring Program for Inland Lakes, as well as five Provincially Significant Inland Fisheries,

including Lake Nipissing, Lake Simcoe, and Lake of the Woods.

- Received and considered 33 name proposals from members of the public for geographic features, 6 deferrals, 11 new (unprocessed), and 16 pending consultation input.
 - 45 recommendations are in the process of being finalized for island names for 911 addressing to assist with emergency response.
- Provided 8 additional geographic feature names for the Ontario portion of an update of the national map *Stories from the Land: Indigenous Place Names in Canada*.
- Collected fees including rent from 11,000 tenants who occupy Crown land for a range of purposes, including those related to aggregates, petroleum, land rentals/sales and renewable energy, generating approximately \$106.3 million in revenue up to December 31, 2021. The ministry is continuing to work to ensure that *Public Lands Act* service fees are aligned with the costs of providing services.
- Provided 1,153 Crown Patents records to clients from April 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021.
- Served more than 480 Ontario Wood partners by promoting their businesses to the people of Ontario through brand awareness that wood products from Ontario come from responsibly and sustainably managed public forests.
- The ministry continued to support the forest industry as it continued to operate during the pandemic and move towards economic recovery. The ministry provided services to industry and to communities through the implementation of the Forest Sector Strategy (FSS). Examples include the following.
 - The ministry collaborated with the Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bioeconomy (CRIBE), NRCan and industry to create ForestEdge, a geospatial referenced Economic Fibre Supply Model (EFSM) to help investors and communities estimate the cost, quality, and quantity of fibre available to increase utilization and find new markets. Using the EFSM, development was initiated for the Nexfor Innovation Hub, a cloud-based, public-facing platform allowing users to access information on the forest products sector, wood flow, fibre volumes, fibre availability, and costs.
 - Supported Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve to study the amount, quality, and cost of biomass available for use as a low carbon alternative to

coal and natural gas and initiated development for a 150,000 metric tonne wood pellet plant by Eacom in Nairn Centre.

- Facilitated the establishment of the Temagami Forest Management Corporation as the second Local Forest Management Corporation in Ontario to provide opportunities for Indigenous peoples to partner in forest management and the supply of Crown wood to local mills.
- Convened funder table discussions with 21 communities, bringing together potential funding and support partners to provide assistance to communities contemplating a forestry or biomass related project for their community.
- Connected with 38 Indigenous communities regarding the proposed Forest Biomass Action Plan and explored their interest in engaging in forest biomass projects or opportunities.
- Worked with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to facilitate more than \$5 million for training projects for the forestry and wood manufacturing sectors.
- Proactively lobbied with provincial and federal partners to mitigate trade barriers resulting in a veto of the California deforestation bill that helped raise awareness of Ontario's robust sustainable forest management practices.
- The ministry enhanced Ontario's forest policy framework to modernize and digitize service delivery and support the FSS. Engaging with Indigenous communities and stakeholders as well as clients, professionals, and the public is helping the ministry reduce burden to the forest industry and streamline processes for clients while providing for forest sustainability and a high standard for professional forestry. Changes include:
 - amended the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* to support personal use harvest and the *Professional Foresters Act* to provide clarity on the scope of professional forestry advanced through Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act, 2021* to reduce red tape and regulatory burden
 - completed a forest management planning modernization project to identify opportunities to reduce burden for forest industry and NDMNRF while maintaining the sustainability of Ontario's Crown forests
 - drafted Forest Management Planning Manual Amendment for Neskantaga

First Nation to support a proposed community bioenergy project

- modernized provincial forest reporting, including public release of the State of Natural Resources – Forests 2021 Report, and the Forest Resources of Ontario Report
- supported activities of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers to share information on the sustainable management of Ontario's forests
- Published 12 new datasets to the Ontario Data catalogue and updated 52 datasets in the Ontario Data catalogue, including moving 2 data sets from restricted access to open access.
- Responded to over 12,000 inquiries about Ontario's geospatial data and mapping services and products.
- NDMNRF processes more than 215 additional approval types to more than 45,500 clients resulting in more than 81,000 interactions annually. At present:
 - 178 approval types are paper based (down from 202 last fiscal), with 36,000 individuals completing over 70,000 interactions
 - 39 approval types are available online (up from 28 last fiscal), with approximately 8,850 individuals completing 11,250 interactions
- Developed and implemented a multi-faceted user research program to ensure digital channels meet client needs, currently piloting the approach with the first 9 approvals.

Key activity 3: Promote economic growth and job creation

- The ministry continues to reduce duplication and streamline processes to support sustainable economic development for important natural resource sectors in Ontario. This includes streamlining requirements for trappers so they can continue to make a living, while ensuring the necessary protections are in place to ensure trapping is pursued humanely. In addition, the ministry responded to the aquaculture industry's interest in more flexible licensing, while ensuring that facilities are developed and operated in an environmentally sustainable manner. Further, forest management manuals were streamlined under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*, and the ministry continues to modernize aggregate management. Overall, the ministry has reduced regulatory compliance requirements by 14% and reduced direct costs to business by over \$3 million.
- Led the delivery of the Forest Sector Investment and Innovation Program (FSIIP), in cooperation with MEDJCT. FSIIP provides up to \$10 million per year for strategic investments in the forestry sector that: improve productivity and innovation; enhance competitiveness; support new market access; strengthen regional economies; and provide benefits to Ontario's broader forest sector (i.e., beyond the direct benefits to the Applicant). Since established, the program has approved close to \$40 million in funding to leverage \$285 million in new investment, creating 225 new jobs and helping to maintain close to 2,500 jobs.
- Ontario supported its forest products industry through a variety of measures to ensure safe and consistent operations to help mills stabilize production. These measures included accelerating implementation of the 2021-22 Provincial Forest Access Roads Funding Program – the mechanism Ontario uses to reimburse the industry for the government's proportional fair share of the costs to build and maintain public access roads in Crown forests. Forest access roads benefit not only the forest industry, but also mining companies, tourism operators, Indigenous communities, utility and railway companies, hunters, anglers, campers, trappers, cottagers, and the public. These roads also provide part of the rural infrastructure for emergency preparedness and response. To support the forest industry through the continuing COVID-19 pandemic the ministry once again advanced implementation of the 2021-22 Provincial Forest Access Roads Funding program to enable companies to receive funding months earlier than usual. Total funding was \$53.2 million for 2021-22.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the ministry also implemented several measures to provide support to the forest industry to help ensure continued operations while protecting workers and communities. These included:

- making \$3.0 million in funding available to support implementation of COVID-19 health and safety measures for silvicultural companies to support the 2021 tree planting season
 - concluding the Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund, disbursing \$4.84 million in funding to small to medium sized forestry companies to reimburse them for costs incurred to implement COVID-19 health and safety measures at their workplaces in 2020-21
- There are currently three Resource Revenue Sharing (RRS) Agreements in mining and forestry with Grand Council Treaty #3, Wabun Tribal Council and Mushkegowuk Council, representing 35 communities in northern Ontario. The Agreements provide that Ontario will share 45% of government revenues from forestry stumpage, 40% of the annual mining tax and royalties from active mines at the time the Agreements were effective, and 45% from future mines in the areas covered by the Agreements. The payments are made every December and are based on revenue collected in the previous fiscal year. To date, almost \$94 million has been shared with the participating First Nations, who may allocate RRS funds towards key priorities that support economic development, education, health, community development and cultural development.
- Continued collaboration with the Forest Biomass Action Plan Working Group to gather input for the development of the provincial Forest Biomass Action Plan (FBAP). To gather broader public comment on the plan, a draft version of the FBAP was posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario in summer 2021. As part of consultation on the FBAP, a copy of the plan was shared with Indigenous communities across the province, while informational sessions were held virtually to provide opportunity to engage with the ministry remotely.

- To inform implementation of the final FBAP, NDMNRF procured three initial studies which will guide future actions in the plan:
 - a report to benchmark the technical and commercial readiness of various forest biorefining and forest biomass conversion technologies
 - a jurisdictional scan examining global approaches to forest biomass development and commercialization
 - a financial contribution assessment, aimed at quantifying the benefits of forest biomass use to individual mill operations, the forest sector, and the provincial economy
- In the ongoing softwood lumber trade dispute between Canada and the U.S., the ministry led the completion of two questionnaire responses for the third administrative review conducted by the U.S. government, which required the preparation of expert reports by consultants, along with NDMNRF staff and subject matter experts from three other ministries and one Crown agency, answering hundreds of questions. This was completed over seven weeks during the spring of 2021 and totaled over 60,000 pages. The ministry also completed two additional supplemental questionnaires in 2021-22.
- The ministry supported an increase in domestic consumption through the Ontario Wood brand. Ontario Wood aims to provide consumers with a strong sense (i.e., the brand) of 'why' they should buy Ontario Wood products that are produced locally, from responsibly and sustainably managed public forests, while building a connection between wood products and the families and communities who depend on Ontario's forest industry. This increases demand for locally produced wood products and the success of wood-based businesses in Ontario.
- Completed the development and is currently undertaking public roll-out of a free online buildings carbon calculator tool (<https://www.ghgmat.ca>) to support building design and procurement in assessing and accounting for the carbon footprint of structural building materials, highlighting the carbon benefit of wood construction.
- Modernized scaler licencing and training by:
 - establishing a tiered scaler licensing system to reduce burden on forestry industry in Northern Ontario
 - developing online provincial scaling course modules and delivering the

classroom portion of the 2021 Provincial Scaling Course virtually using the new approach

- The forest sector is an important part of Ontario's history and a critical part of the province's future. In 2020, the forest sector generated \$18 billion in total revenue (Statistics Canada, 2020), \$7.5 billion in export revenue (Government of Canada, 2021), contributed \$4.3 billion to provincial GDP (Statistics Canada, 2020) and supported 149,000 jobs across the province (MNRF, 2021). Through implementation of the FSS, the Ontario government and the forest industry, along with partners in the research and education sector, Indigenous communities, and other levels of government, are working to create a business climate that fosters growth, promotes innovation, helps the industry adapt to an ever-changing business climate, and ensures that Ontario's forests will continue to be managed responsibly and sustainably for future generations.
- To aid with FSS implementation, the FSS committee was created to support the development of an implementation plan and develop key performance indicators to measure and report on progress and the overall success of the strategy.
- Since the draft FSS was posted on the Environmental Registry, the ministry has:
 - released a draft Forest Biomass Action Plan to explore innovative uses of forest biomass
 - implemented legislative changes to increase industry efficiency, remove duplicative *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* (CFSA) requirements in the Endangered Species Act, amend the four CFSA forest manuals, and reduce the frequency of independent forest audits to reduce associated workload and costs
 - continued to lead delivery of the FSIIP in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Since its inception, close to \$40 million in funding has been approved to leverage \$285 million in new investment, create 225 new jobs and help to maintain close to 2,500 jobs
 - provided \$53.2 million in annual Provincial Forest Access Roads funding over the past two fiscal years
 - shared \$8.7 million in resource revenues with 31 First Nation communities and initiated discussions to expand resource revenue sharing with additional Indigenous communities

- provided funding for nine proposals in collaboration with Indigenous communities to help support their forestry related projects, leveraging an additional \$958,000 in federal funding from Natural Resources Canada and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
- collaborated with external forest sector partners through transfer payment agreements to carry out projects that seek to improve forest industry efficiencies in putting more wood to work, identifying innovation opportunities for technologies and processes, and shifting Ontario's building sector towards more cost and time effective strategies through the use of wood for non-traditional projects
- Responded to recent interest in the development of compressed air energy storage technology in Ontario by proposing changes to O. Reg. 245/97 under the *Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act*. The proposed changes would provide increased protection of public and environmental safety, as well as provide greater clarity and certainty for the energy storage industry, local and Indigenous communities, and the public.
- In response to industry interests in carbon dioxide geologic storage, as part of the Open for Business, Red Tape Reduction Bill, the ministry announced a review of rules and is working with other ministries to explore approaches to a regulatory framework for geologic carbon storage. A discussion paper was posted for public consultation on the Environmental Bill of Rights and Regulatory Registries for over 60 days to gather feedback.

Key activity 4: Conduct monitoring, research, and planning

- Collaborated with multiple provincial and federal government agencies and partners to conduct SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, surveillance in certain wildlife species and contributed to the development of wildlife handling recommendations when working in the field.
- Working with regulatory partners across the OPS, the ministry participated in multiple compliance campaigns regarding COVID-19 emergency orders as an active member of the Multi-Ministry Team.
- The Fish and Wildlife program implemented a number of key initiatives and changes, which included the following.
 - Ontario's Sustainable Bait Management Strategy, reducing the ecological

risks associated with using and moving bait while providing transparency and certainty to support a sustainable bait industry. The strategy limits the movement of most bait to within the same bait management zone where it was harvested, and establishes four bait management zones across the province.

- Ontario's Chronic Wasting Disease Prevention and Response Plan, finalizing the response action plan and establishing an agreement with the federal government on response actions.
 - Legislative and regulatory changes to support hunting and trapping, including establishing a new penalty approach for non-compliance with mandatory hunter reporting, new deer and turkey seasons, new opportunities for falconry, and changes to support the International Agreement on Humane Trapping Standards.
 - Support for the Resource Based Tourism Sector impacted by COVID-19 by providing certain Crown land fee and rent relief in 2021.
- Sampled 121 of Ontario's inland lakes as part of the ministry's broad-scale monitoring program to describe status and trends of fish species important to recreational, commercial and subsistence fisheries. Focused aquatic monitoring was also conducted on provincially significant inland fisheries, Lake of the Woods, Ottawa River, Lake Scugog, Lake Simcoe and Lake Nipissing. Creel surveys were conducted on Lake Nipissing, Lake Simcoe, and Lake of the Woods to help understand fishing pressure and catch.
 - Conducted science development projects to support continuous improvement of its monitoring methods, including brook trout monitoring on Lake Nipigon, fish community net calibration, aerial/roving creel calibration, digital data capture for creels, phytoplankton sampling, and environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring.
 - Continued to provide science advice and deliver applied research through the pandemic in support of the ministry's efforts to sustainably manage Ontario's fisheries and water resources. Highlights include work to model the future spread of invasive species based on population growth and likely pathways of spread as well as modeling the impacts of climate change on aquatic ecosystems to inform future fisheries management decisions and policy.
 - The Lake Ontario Management Unit participated in the lake-wide spring prey fish survey in partnership with New York State Department of Environmental

Conservation and the United States Geological Survey Oswego Research Station. The lake wide survey provides vital information on the status of prey fish that informs bi-national fish stocking levels, which helps maintain the world class trout and salmon fishery. Results of the 2021 survey show a lake wide increase in prey fish abundance, which supported a binational decision to increase Chinook stocking levels in 2022. In addition to the completing the community index program for Eastern Lake Ontario/Bay of Quinte and St. Lawrence River, the Lake Ontario Management Unit assessed the fish community in Hamilton Harbour which indicates that walleye restoration efforts continue to show signs of success with several generations of walleye present.

- The Upper Great Lakes Management Unit completed independent offshore fish community index surveys on both Lake Huron and Lake Superior to inform the setting of commercial fish quotas on both lakes. In addition to this, fishery dependant commercial catch sampling was conducted on shore and on-board industry vessels. Nearshore programs focused on broadscale monitoring of the fish community on both lakes, Saugeen River rainbow trout population monitoring on Lake Huron and Coaster brook trout monitoring on Lake Superior to name just a few programs. Significant effort continues to be put forward on Lake Huron by the ministry in collaboration with partners like the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, other Indigenous communities, and Parks Canada to understand the significant declines in lake whitefish (the prime target species of the multi-million-dollar commercial fishery). In addition to this work, the management unit continues to engage Indigenous communities, stakeholders, and Fisheries Management Zone Council 13/14 on the development of a Walleye Management Plan for Lake Huron and the implementation of a 20-year licencing and land tenure authorization process for the cage aquaculture industry on Lake Huron.
- Ongoing work with deer hunters to conduct comprehensive Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) monitoring in Wildlife Management Unit 65 in response to the detection of CWD on a game farm in Quebec. In 2021-22, two surveillance zones, one in eastern Ontario and one in southwestern Ontario, were monitored for CWD. To date, the disease has not been detected in any sample.
- The forest health monitoring program identified 346,266 hectares of forest defoliated by jack pine budworm in Northwestern Ontario and 1,302,537 hectares of forest defoliated by spruce budworm in Northeastern Ontario and identified 1,779,744 hectares of forest defoliated by *Lymantria dispar dispar* (LDD) moth, primarily in southern Ontario. Provided forecasts on potential LDD moth

impacts for spring 2022 and additional information to help the public and other private landowners determine how to best manage LDD moth infestations.

- Continued to re-measure long-term provincial growth and yield plots (i.e., Permanent Sample Plots, Permanent Growth Plots, and stem analysis plots) throughout 2021-22 which are used to provide up-to-date information to support wood supply analysis and forest management plans.
- Continued to measure National Forest Inventory plots as part of a federal-provincial memorandum of understanding.
- Established and measured a Vegetation Sampling Network (VSN) to calibrate the new LiDAR-based Forest Resource Inventory, as well as provide quality assurance/quality control of provincial contractors establishing VSN plots for the ministry.
- Continued moose aerial inventories while developing an expanded survey plan designed to increase the number of surveys.
- Began implementation of a new Ontario Wildlife Monitoring Network to support harvest planning for large game and furbearing species, use as a tool to iteratively improve wildlife habitat and land use policies; and monitor the sustainability and resilience of wildlife populations. Wildlife monitoring was initiated at a number of sites and will be expanded in the coming years. The network complements recent modernization initiatives and will be used to inform both wildlife and forest management activities.
- Extensive First Nation and stakeholder engagement related to the proposed refocussing of the *Far North Act*, including in-person and virtual engagement sessions, a joint process to review the Act with Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, and an environmental registry posting to seek input on proposed amendments.

Key activity 5: Develop legislation, policies and implement programs

- Under the Forestry Futures Trust a new purpose “COVID-19 Incremental Silviculture Cost Program” was introduced in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support the forest sector renewal efforts with new safety measures to protect public health. This program was extended in 2021 with an additional \$3 million available for continued support of incremental silviculture costs incurred by the forest industry to safely deliver the 2021 provincial tree planting program.

- In response to the impacts of COVID-19, the ministry supported the resource-based tourism sector by providing financial relief through waiving and refunding Crown land fees and rents in 2020 and 2021 (e.g., bear hunting and baitfish fees and licences, land use fees for Commercial Outpost Camps permits or leases).
- In support of the Government's *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* measures to combat the spread of COVID-19, the ministry implemented an Order prohibiting recreational camping on Crown land in April 2021.
- The *Public Lands Act* was amended as part of Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act*, 2021 to support economic and resource-based development opportunities, as well as to improve clarity, customer service, and reduce unnecessary burdens, including:
 - eliminated the adverse possession of public lands by third parties (squatting) after 60 years
 - provided ability, in limited circumstances, to allow dispositions or transfers of lands bordering waterbodies where less than 25 per cent of the frontage would remain public lands
 - provided the Minister with explicit authority to set, charge, waive, change, or refund fees for any service, permission or decision related to the management, use or disposition of public lands under the *Public Lands Act*
 - provided the Minister authority to make public lands-related decisions that previously rested with the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC) through Orders in Council (e.g., remove a habendum and to set apart lands for research or protection)
- Under the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*, made a regulatory change to move away from a lengthy text boundary description to a user-friendly mapping format. The new format will enhance the accessibility, efficiency, and public recognition of the Niagara Escarpment area of development control.
- The ministry proposed regulatory changes under the *Aggregate Resources Act*. Consultation resulted in over 200 comments received. O. Reg. 244/97 and the Aggregate Resources of Ontario Provincial Standards were amended to support the growth of communities, reduce burdens to the aggregate industry while managing community impacts, and maintaining strong environmental protections. Implementation was phased, with changes taking effect April 1, 2021, and January 1, 2022. Changes made will modernize the way aggregate

resources are managed, including:

- new and updated technical reports and information requirements for applications to establish a new pit or quarry including enhanced water study requirements
 - updated site plan requirements for new pit and quarry applications
 - enhanced notification and consultation requirements for new pit and quarry applications
 - updated conditions that will apply to newly issued licences and permits
 - new application requirements for existing pit or quarry operators wishing to make an amendment to extract below the water table or to expand into an adjacent road allowance
 - new rules requiring custom plans be prepared for applications seeking to extract from land under water
 - exemptions from needing a licence for some small excavations on private land if rules set in regulation are followed
 - new rules to allow self-filing of some minor routine site plan amendments (e.g., re-location of some structures or fencing as long as setbacks are respected)
 - updated operating requirements that apply to all pits and quarries authorized under the *Aggregate Resources Act*
 - updated annual compliance reporting requirements, including a streamlined report for inactive sites
- As an incremental step in the modernization of *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act* approval, in April 2021, the ministry signed a new three-year agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada to streamline the application review and approval processes for the construction of new, and alterations to, existing low hazard wetland dams that are not subject to the rules in regulation approach established in 2020 under O. Reg. 454/96 (Construction). The new agreement now also includes eligible Ducks Unlimited Canada dam decommissioning of existing low hazard wetland dams and may serve to inform future regulatory reform for wetland dams.
 - Developed and implemented a \$4.5 million work plan for fiscal year 2021-22,

making progress on commitments under the bi-national Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health.

- Implemented the findings of Ontario's Moose Management Review, which included comprehensive regulation changes, a new harvest system, and a new moose tag allocation system.
- Made changes to the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* and its regulations to support mandatory hunter reporting.
- Completed short form wording amendments under the *Provincial Offences Act* and updated associated set fines for fish and wildlife related offences.
- As part of ongoing efforts to implement the *Invasive Species Act*, amended regulations under the *Invasive Species Act* to regulate 13 new species and watercraft as a carrier of invasive species and established additional rules for pigs. The regulation of these species and carriers improves Ontario's ability to prevent and manage the spread of invasive species and avoid future ecological, social, and economic harm. These changes came into effect January 1, 2022. Additionally, Ontario finalized a Strategy to Address the Threat of Invasive Wild Pigs in October 2021. The strategy outlines a proactive approach to prevent the establishment of invasive wild pigs in the province.
- Worked collaboratively with the Ontario Biodiversity Council, other jurisdictions, and partners to support nature-based solutions and planning for the post-2020 global, national, and provincial biodiversity frameworks.
- Continued to prioritize the good stewardship of Crown land, ensuring fair return to the Crown by:
 - adjusting and providing longer term certainty to rental rates for communication towers on Crown land
 - implementing the fourth and final year of a four-year phase in of full cost recovery for discretionary administrative fees
- Delivered legislated tax incentive programs and stewardship granting programs for landowners, stakeholders, and partners, including Indigenous organizations and individuals.
 - saved approximately \$21,000 in annual expenditures for the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) and Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) after applying modernized approaches

- for the 2021 tax year, 25,000 properties qualified to receive a property tax exemption under CLTIP, protecting 714,000 acres (289,000 hectares), and 19,500 properties qualified for MFTIP, promoting good forestry practices on 1,879,000 acres (760,000 hectares)
- Continued to engage key dam industry stakeholders through the Dam Owners Advisory Committee, which provides a forum for regular dialogue between government and industry, and for industry to provide advice to government on policy and programs related to dams.
- Concluded the Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund, disbursing \$4.84 million in funding to small to medium sized forestry companies to reimburse them for costs incurred to implement COVID-19 health and safety measures at their workplaces in 2020-21.
- Amended the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* as part of Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act*, 2021 to enable the development of a new streamlined authorization and regulatory requirements for the harvest of Crown Forest resources for personal, non-commercial use (e.g., firewood, building products, and Christmas trees). The proposed changes also support the government's commitment to reduce unnecessary red tape and regulatory burden.
- Amended the *Professional Foresters Act* as part of Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act*, 2021 to amend the scope of practice of professional forestry to improve the delivery of professional forestry services in Ontario.
- Working with forest industry, completed the forest management planning modernization project to identify opportunities to modernize the forest management planning process to further reduce burden for forest industry and the ministry while maintaining forest sustainability.
- To provide accountability and transparency to maintain public confidence in our sustainable forest management practices and consumers' confidence in our forest products, the ministry:
 - released the State of Ontario's Natural Resources – Forests 2021, Ontario's state of forests report
 - modernized the Provincial Report on Forest Management to provide a digital first approach and more frequent updates
 - published the Forest Resources of Ontario 2021 report

- Continue to work collaboratively with the Forestry Futures Committee, an independent committee appointed by the Minister, to deliver the objectives of the Forestry Futures Trust. Committee members administer programs with a focus on supporting silviculture projects, forest genetics management, Independent Forest Audits, tenure modernization, an enhanced forest inventory program, scientific memberships, and a new purpose “COVID-19 Incremental Silviculture Cost Program” introduced in 2020.
- Extended the Forestry Future Trust’s COVID-19 Incremental Silviculture Cost Program for the duration of 2021, which enabled the continued support of the forest sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Extended the Forest Genetics Resource Management purpose of the Forestry Futures Trust for an additional five years. This commitment recognizes that Ontario and its partners are invested in managing forest genetic assets that contribute to healthy and resilient forests for the benefit of all Ontarians.
- Completed an internal review of both the Forestry Futures Trust and Forest Renewal Trust and confirmed the value they provide to Ontario.
- Supported the activities of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers with participation in national and international events to collaborate on issues impacting trade and market access, respond to global trends, and share information on the sustainable management of Ontario's forests.
- Collaborated with Canadian jurisdictions on forestry opportunities through the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers to help address issues like environmental reputation, Indigenous relations, forest pests, climate change, and forest fire management.
- Played a leadership role on interjurisdictional policy and technical committees, including the Canadian Dam Association, Canadian Council of Geomatics, and the Canadian Land Directors Association. Participation has advanced evidence-based policy development through information-sharing and building relationships with regulators across Canada.
- Continued support of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, the regulator for the land survey industry, in accordance with the *Surveyors Act*, by maintaining a presence at council to serve and protect the public interest and contribute to regulatory change.
- Continued to maintain a suite of forest management guides to ensure that

direction is based on the most current scientific, community, and Indigenous traditional knowledge, is easy to use, addresses climate change, and does not unnecessarily restrict the forest industry or other forest users.

- Collaborated with industry partners to prepare an Afforestation Guide as a companion to the Southern Ontario Silviculture Guide. The guide contains advice and best management practices to support afforestation planning in southern Ontario. The guide will assist stakeholders, conservation authorities, woodlot owners, municipalities, consultants, and growers in making decisions on plantation establishment and management.
- A new approach to Forest Compliance Inspector Certification was implemented in 2021. The process has shifted to a modern mentor-based, collaborative model which improves forest industry and NDMNRF access to certification, reduces industry burden and improves forest compliance inspector competency.
- Worked with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to implement training for new and existing workers in the forestry and wood manufacturing sectors across Southern and Eastern Ontario in 2021-22.
- Continued to lead projects within the OPS, the broader public service and private sector to acquire aerial photography. This collaboration achieved cost savings for participants and ensured the data is accessible.
- Provided access to more than 400 open data sets in Ontario GeoHub, a data discovery and access tool that allows users to download or stream the data they need.
- Maintained key foundation geospatial data sets including over 260,000 kilometers of roads and over 75,000 square kilometers of water.
- Partnered with all levels of government, First Nations, the private sector, and other organizations to acquire 50,000 square kilometers of aerial photography in Central Ontario, from Parry Sound in the south, west to Thessalon and north to Timmins.
- Maintained more than 60,000 official geographic names to aid navigation and emergency response across Ontario.
- Provided survey advice and support to negotiators on several active land claims.
- Supported the Geographic Names Board's consideration of 38 name proposals resulting in 20 recommendations to the Minister.

- Supported multiple objectives, including recovery planning that aligns with the Gradual Re-opening of the OPS Workplaces, developing strategies and business submissions that advance the objectives of Ontario Onwards (Future State Modernization), supporting the economic and business recovery of the ministry's sectors, and accelerating the Technology Roadmap and Investment Plan (TRIP).
- Launched the paper digitization initiative supporting two key pilots making over 61,000 files available digitally to clients and staff who need it.
- Provided online 24-7 access to an additional 6% of approvals, primarily focused on the aggregates and oil and gas industries.
- Designed an assessment process to Lean the delivery of identified approvals, including regulatory and legislative changes, to ensure the appropriate level of oversight is given to the risk level of the activity and to coordinate updates to the necessary legislation, regulations, or policies.

Key activity 6: Advance economic development in Northern Ontario

- The ministry builds a stronger Northern economy by making strategic investments through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). The NOHFC is an agency of the Government of Ontario that promotes and supports economic development across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects – big and small, rural and urban – that stimulate growth, job creation, and develop a skilled workforce. For 2021-2022, the NOHFC is expected to commit more than \$100 million in project funding, resulting in more than 800 projects, leveraging more than \$200 million, and creating or retaining approximately 1,800 jobs. The NOHFC continues to implement the new programs launched on February 11, 2021, which target existing and emerging markets, support more projects in small rural communities, address the skilled labour shortage, and make it easier for more people and businesses to apply.
- Northern Industrial Electricity Rate (NIER) Program supports Northern Ontario's largest industrial electricity consumers to reduce costs, sustain jobs, and maintain global competitiveness. With ongoing funding of up to \$120 million per year, the program continues to protect jobs in the north and supports the development of energy management plans. On average, industrial electricity prices can be reduced by up to 25 per cent through the program. In 2021-22, the NIER Program provided more than \$108 million in funding to assist 21 mining, forestry, and manufacturing companies, representing 28 facilities across

Northern Ontario. The NIER Program's existing term expired on March 31, 2022. Beginning April 1, 2022, the Northern Energy Advantage Program (NEAP) opened and replaced the NIER Program.

- In December 2021, the ministry launched the new Northern Ontario Resource Development Support (NORDS) Fund which will share the benefits of resource development with municipalities in Northern Ontario. Beginning in 2021-22, the NORDS Fund will provide an additional \$15 million of annual funding over five years to help support investments in municipal infrastructure impacted by resource development.
- Through the Northern Highways Program, the ministry continues to strengthen the North's economy by improving critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges and making highway travel safer and more efficient. Northern Ontario has more than 11,000 kilometres of provincial highways, about 60 per cent of the provincial highway network. More than \$641 million was committed for the Northern Highways Program in 2021-22, including \$496 million for rehabilitation and nearly \$145 million for expansion projects. Ontario's investments have supported the construction and operation of an approximately 3,170-kilometre road system connecting the Town of Moosonee and 31 remote First Nations communities without year-round road access to the provincial road and rail system. These vital connections to all-season roads make it easier to bring in essential goods and services such as food, medical, and construction supplies to remote communities. The winter road network serves a total resident population of about 24,000. The government invested \$6 million to assist in building winter roads in the Far North in 2021-22.
- Ontario has partnered with the Government of Canada to provide financial support to small air carriers serving remote First Nation communities in Northern Ontario. The investment helped to ensure access to essential goods and services during COVID-19. Upon completion of the program in March 2022, the Remote Air Carrier Support Program will have collectively provided over \$19.8 million to small air carriers to ensure critical services are maintained. Remote First Nation communities rely on air carriers to provide access to employment, health care, education, justice, child and family services, and social services, in addition to helping maintain cultural and familial connections.
- Indigenous Economic Development funding supports the engagement of Indigenous groups across core ministry functions on a variety of policy objectives. The program develops and sustains productive and effective relationships among

government, Indigenous communities, industry, municipalities, and other partners. This supports greater economic development opportunities, including in the minerals sector, that benefit Indigenous Peoples by strengthening Indigenous participation and enhancing the readiness of Indigenous communities to participate in Ontario's economy. Ontario supports First Nations through individual agreements that address individual community priorities such as all-season roads, economic development opportunities, capacity building, community readiness, and cultural and environmental studies.

Key activity 7: Support a strong and sustainable minerals sector

- The Ontario government remains confident in the economic opportunity in the Ring of Fire region. Building all-season road access to the Ring of Fire is a critical step to unlocking economic opportunities and benefits in the region. The ministry is working directly with First Nations through funding agreements that support each community's unique needs and priorities, including all-season access to their communities and the Ring of Fire. Two First Nation communities are leading the Environmental Assessment processes for three proposed road projects in the region for community access roads and multi-use road access to the Ring of Fire, including assessing potential impacts on their traditional ways and maximizing opportunities for First Nations people.
- Ontario's mining industry, one of the nation's largest producers of minerals by value, directly employs about 28,000 workers and generates about \$12.9 billion annually to Ontario's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2021, Ontario was Canada's third-largest mineral producer, producing \$11.1 billion worth of minerals — 20 per cent of Canada's total mineral production. In 2021, Ontario mineral exploration expenditures increased by 55 per cent from 2020. In 2021, Ontario was second in Canada for mineral exploration expenditures totalling \$878 million – roughly 24 per cent of all mineral exploration expenditures in Canada.
- Toronto is the mining finance capital of the world. In 2021, the Toronto Stock Exchange and Toronto Venture Exchange raised \$10 billion in new equity capital for mining. In 2021, Pure Gold's Madsen Red Lake Gold Mine became the newest mine to open. New mine construction is underway at five projects in Ontario: IAMGOLD's Cote gold project near Gogama, Argonaut's Magino gold project near Dubreuilville, Evolution Mining's Bateman gold project in Red Lake, Gowest's Bradshaw gold project near Timmins, and Glencore's Onaping Depth nickel-

copper project in Sudbury. In 2021, 344 permits were approved and approximately 71,000 new mining claims were recorded. The Ontario Geological Survey supported 69 geological projects across Ontario during 2020-21 and published 53 new geoscience products with more than 470,000 file downloads of digital products.

- During the pandemic, a number of First Nations communities advised the ministry that they no longer had capacity to provide comments on exploration proposals, due to lockdowns and staff isolating. The ministry responded by placing permit applications on temporary hold until its duty to consult could be satisfied.
- On March 10, 2021, the Ontario government announced it is developing its first-ever Critical Minerals Strategy to help generate investment, increase the province's competitiveness in the global market, and create jobs and opportunities in the mining sector. It will also support Ontario's transition to a low-carbon economy both at home and abroad. Ontario is well positioned to become a global supplier, producer, and manufacturer of choice for certain critical minerals, including, but not limited to nickel, copper, cobalt, and platinum group elements. New technologies and high-growth sectors that rely on critical minerals include information and communications technology, electronics, energy, aerospace and defence, health and life sciences and transportation. To inform the Critical Minerals Strategy, the Province released a discussion paper in the spring of 2021 for public consultation on the Environmental Registry of Ontario. Virtual consultations with industry and Indigenous communities also helped guide the development of the Strategy, scheduled to be released in spring 2022.
- The mining sector is an important driver of economic growth. The success of junior exploration is critical to the discovery of existing and new mineral deposits that support larger mining companies, equipment manufacturers and investors across the province. To support junior mining companies, Ontario is investing \$5 million over the next two years (\$2 million in 2021-22 and \$3 million in 2022-23) in the new Ontario Junior Exploration Program. Through the program, junior mining companies can apply for funding to cover eligible costs of up to \$200,000 per mineral exploration or development project. This program will attract investment, improve Ontario's competitiveness in the exploration sector and help facilitate the discovery of promising mining opportunities.

Ministry interim actual expenditures 2021-22

Cost type	Ministry interim actual expenditures (\$M) 2021-22 ^[5]
COVID 19 approvals	48.3
Operating expense	1,106.6
Capital expense	568.4
Total expense	1,723.3

For additional financial information, see:

- Expenditure Estimates (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/expenditure-estimates>)
- The Public Accounts of Ontario 2020-21 (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/public-accounts-ontario-2020-21>)
- 2020 Ontario Budget (<http://budget.ontario.ca/2022/index.html>)

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Further information about the ministry and its programs can be found on the ministry's website (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-natural-resources-and-forestry>) .

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Footnotes

- [1] ^ Includes ministry wide by tracking the online adoption and alternative service delivery of programs and services such as fishing and hunting licenses through the Fish and Wildlife Licensing System (FAWLS) and the Natural Resources Approvals Portal (NRIP).
- [2] ^ Numbers may not add up due to rounding.
- [3] ^ Estimates, interim actuals, and actuals for prior fiscal years are re-stated to reflect any changes in ministry organization and/or program structure. Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2022 Ontario Budget.
- [4] ^ Estimates and actuals for prior fiscal years have been re-stated to reflect any changes in ministry organization and/or program structure. The increase to the ministry's 2022-23 allocation is primarily related to investments in public protection and natural resource disaster management, expansion of the Resource Revenue Sharing program for forestry and mining activities, and additional funding for Northern Energy Advantage Program, the Ontario Junior Exploration Program, and Environmental Assessments for the Ring of Fire. New funding was also provided for the Northern Ontario Resource Development Support Fund and the Critical Minerals Innovation Fund.
- [5] ^ Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2022 Ontario Budget.