

Westwind Forest Stewardship Strategic Plan 2023



Westwind

WESTWIND FOREST STEWARDSHIP INC.





Overview

Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc. (WFS) is a not-for-profit, community-based company that holds the Sustainable Forest License (SFL #542411) for Ontario Crown land in the French-Severn Forest (FSF). It was founded in April 1997, in response to the provincial government's plan to transfer more forest management responsibility to the forest industry. Its modern tenure model and Board of Directors comprised of local community, Indigenous and forest industry members make it a unique Ontario forest management company. WFS was the first large public forest in Canada to receive Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) certification and continues to meet international requirements of a "Well Managed Forest".

Under its Sustainable Forest License (SFL), granted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Westwind assumes responsibility for:

- Gathering, recording and assessing forest information;
- Preparing and implementing forest management plans (FMP);
- Planning and implementing operational prescriptions for timber harvest and forest renewal to meet Forest Management Plan objectives;
- Monitoring and inspecting all forest operations to ensure they comply with strict government rules and regulations; and
- Annual reporting to the public.

This Strategic Plan is for the period April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2026 and identifies organizational goals and strategies to achieve its Mission. This strategic plan replaces the WFS 2018 Strategic Plan.

This 2023 Strategic Plan was reviewed and approved by the Westwind Forest Stewardship Board of Directors [July 25, 2023] and is supported for implementation by the WFS Board Chair and WFS General Manager. The WFS Board of Directors and staff will implement this plan and review it annually to ensure consistency with current internal and external conditions.





Vision

Westwind Forest Stewardship will be a collaborative and adaptive company that will efficiently and cost effectively deliver sustainable forest stewardship while enhancing partnerships and engaging local communities in its activities.

Mission

Forest stewardship for our communities.





Pine seedlings waiting to be planted to restore conifer in the forest.

Values

The following values guide Westwind and are shared by the Board and staff:

- **Transparent** – Be transparent in the management of and communication about Westwind Forest Stewardship. Any information that is not deemed proprietary can be shared.
- **Inclusive** – Consider all users of the forests and all perspectives. Value collaboration with Indigenous peoples, Partners, interested parties and communities.
- **Respectful** – Respect that users of the forest have various opinions on how the forest should be managed and consider them fully when making decisions.
- **Resourceful** – Use our resources and networking opportunities effectively to improve stewardship of the forest.
- **Progressive** – Continue to be leading-edge in the sector; seek and embrace new ideas and methodologies.
- **Continuous Learning** – Staff and Board members are encouraged to regularly seek new knowledge and skills in a variety of ways.
- **Credible and Accountable** – Build our reputation and earn the respect of all interested parties by accomplishing our goals, in a responsible manner.

Goals and Strategies

The following are the primary goals and strategies that Westwind Forest Stewardship will follow to achieve our Vision:

Goal 1: Sustainable Forest Management

To plan and implement forest management activities in the French-Severn Forest to provide for sustainability of Ontario's Crown forest.

Strategy 1a: Continue to implement the 2019-2029 Forest Management Plan for the FSF in accordance with the government approved Long-term Management Direction, and Determination of Sustainability.

Strategy 1b: Prepare for the FSF 2029-2039 Forest Management Plan in advance of the formal initiation of plan development.

Strategy 1c: Address major findings or recommendations in Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Independent Forest Audits (IFA) through monitoring and continuous improvement in planning, and implementation of forestry activities.

Strategy 1d: Maximize quantity and quality of forest product volumes, while balancing economic, social and environmental objectives

Strategy 1e: Encourage research and development of innovative practices to advance sustainable forestry practices on the FSF.

Goal 2: Improve WFS Knowledge of the Forest

To enhance WFS knowledge of the current forest condition and forest values.

Strategy 2a: Continue the Enhanced Forest Resource Inventory (EFRI) Pilot project with Lidar taken on FSF in preparation for a revised Forest Resources Inventory.

Strategy 2b: Confirm inventory volumes through comparison of actual versus planned harvest volumes.

Strategy 2c: Continue to engage the public, Indigenous communities and interested parties to identify forest values in the FSF.

Strategy 2d: Maintain stable employment for valued WFS staff who, through time, develop extensive local knowledge of the FSF.





Forestry roads, forest management planning and education are part of Westwind's activities.



Goal 3: Indigenous Engagement

To strengthen relations with Indigenous peoples with interests and values in the FSF.

Strategy 3a: Engage Indigenous communities, recognizing and respecting Treaty relations and traditional land use when planning forest operations.

Strategy 3b: Encourage engagement with Indigenous communities to share traditional knowledge while providing opportunities to enhance their economic, employment and educational opportunities in the FSF through partnering in forestry-related projects.

Goal 4: Improve Health of Forest

To improve quality of wood volume in growing stands to increase long-term forest health.

Strategy 4a: Implement sustainable forest management in the FSF to maintain healthy, resilient forests that are best able to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change impacts.

Strategy 4b: Conduct tree improvement activities to enhance the health of the FSF and future product quality.





Top Right: Minister Graydon Smith presents General Manager Barry Davidson (L) and Board Chair Rob Keen (R) with certificate recognizing Westwind's 25th anniversary.

Right: Westwind's Board recognizing Barry Davidson's 25 years with the company.



Goal 5: Expand WFS Profile

To increase profile of Westwind Forest Stewardship and the innovative sustainable forestry practices occurring in the FSF.

Strategy 5a: Expand WFS profile through appropriate local media platforms and engagement with other stakeholders and communities.

Strategy 5b: Highlight and promote the significance of WFS's activities to local stakeholders and elected officials.

Goal 6: Ensure Organizational Capacity and Resources

To supply human, financial and other resources necessary to achieve WFS strategic goals now and for the future.

Strategy 6a: Enable a diversified and sustainable flow of funding and resources to ensure long-term sustainability of WFS.

Strategy 6b: Develop an organizational culture, compensation and benefits that will attract and retain the best and brightest employees.

Strategy 6c: Recruit skilled and dedicated Board members with diverse community and forest sector perspectives.





Conclusion

This Strategic Plan will be renewed by March 31, 2026 and progress towards achievement of goals will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This Strategic Plan was approved by the WFS Board, and supported by the WFS General Manager.

Westwind Forest Stewardship:

Board of Directors:

Rob Keen, R.P.F. (Chair)

Tom Clark

Malcolm Cockwell, R.P.F.

Jim Coleman

Susan Jarvis, R.P.F.

Joe Johnson

John McNutt, R.P.F.

Adam Pawis

General Manager:

Barry Davidson, R.P.F.





