

Wood Measurement Modernization Plan

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Ontario 



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Minister's message



The forest industry is a vital part of Ontario's economy, contributing \$5.5 billion to the province's gross domestic product in 2022. The forests which our wood products come from are globally recognized for being responsibly and sustainably managed. We are also recognized as innovators and leaders in the global industry.

Our roadmap for prosperity in the forest industry, [**Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy**](#), was released in August 2020. The roadmap lays out dozens of initiatives to grow the industry and guarantee responsible forestry practices.

Since the strategy's release, we have been busy implementing those initiatives and honouring our commitments to the sector and its workers. This includes modernizing wood measurement: the measurement, valuing and tracking of Crown forest resources harvested in Ontario, essential to forest sector productivity, the collection of Crown revenue and sustainable forest management planning.

I am pleased to introduce our *Wood Measurement Modernization Plan* to reduce regulatory burden, grow talent in the forest sector and encourage the adoption of new technologies – the culmination of extensive collaboration with ministry staff and forest industry partners.

This document contains 8 wood measurement modernization goals, each with a set of actions to pursue: understanding stakeholder needs, improving existing technologies, identifying emerging technologies and concepts, identifying opportunities and setting priorities, reducing burden, collaborating with stakeholders, growing talent and enhancing data and information management.

By implementing the *Wood Measurement Modernization Plan*, we will continually modernize wood measurement in Ontario and support the success of our forest sector.

The Honourable Kevin Holland

Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products

Introduction

Building on the commitments laid out in *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, and corporate priorities including [Open for Business](#), [Ontario's Digital and Data Strategy](#), *Digital MNRF*, [Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act](#) and [Ontario Onwards](#), this *Wood Measurement Modernization Plan* lays out actions that Ontario will undertake to modernize wood measurement.

This plan was developed in collaboration with the Scaling Manual Advisory Group, a joint ministry and forest industry group that advises on wood measurement.

The ministry conducted a survey of forest industry and ministry stakeholders in November 2022 to gather data and information about modernizing wood measurement in Ontario. The survey results have been used to inform the development of this plan.

This document contains 8 wood measurement modernization goals, each with a set of actions to pursue.



Wood measurement in Ontario

Scaling is the measurement of harvested Crown forest resources (or standing trees) to determine their volume and quality. This measurement provides the means through which Ontario invoices forestry companies for Crown charges and collects revenue. Accurate measurement of Crown forest resources is an essential part of this ongoing recovery of Crown charges (revenue) as required under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA).

Most Crown forest resources harvested in Ontario are mass measured using weigh scales at the final destination. Manual (stick scaled) measurement is still used in the forest, at final destinations and in wood storage yards. All the methods of wood measurement used in Ontario are Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved.

Information about volumes of Crown forest resources harvested is critical for forest management planning and renewal of the forest. Ontario's forest industry also uses wood measurement information to:

- meet the ministry's monthly reporting requirements for harvested Crown forest resources
- pay contractors
- track wood as required by forest certification bodies to ensure "chain of custody"



The Scaling Manual

The *Scaling Manual* (authorized under Section 68(1) of the CFSA):

- contains instructions and standards for the measurement of Crown forest resources
- provides instructions for the authorized movement of Crown forest resources
- sets out the requirements for conducting scaling audits
- defines standards for training, licensing and approval of scalers and scaling auditors
- sets out the obligations for record keeping and submission of measurement data



Key Responsibilities

The ministry is responsible for directing and controlling the measurement and movement of Crown forest resources in the province of Ontario.

The key wood measurement responsibilities in Ontario are:

- setting and implementing standards and procedures for measuring, valuing, and tracking Crown forest resources harvested in Ontario
- conducting scaling audits to provide assurance that the Crown's interests, financial and other, are adequately protected with respect to the movement, measurement, recording and reporting of harvested Crown forest resources
- sampling to establish scaling factors necessary to calculate net volumes for billing of mass measured Crown forest resources
- managing delivery of the Provincial Weigh Scale Program (renewal, maintenance, and disposal of ministry owned weigh scales)
- setting standards and undertaking training, testing and licensing of Ontario's professional scalers
- maintaining and populating the information systems necessary to support revenue collection, forest management planning, monitoring and reporting, wood flow analysis, issues management and trade negotiations



Opportunities for modernization

Since the movement to mass measurement, Ontario's wood measurement program has evolved slowly with continual improvements to a system that is already working. Recent changes include streamlining of approvals, modernization of training, licensing and certification programs, review and update of the scaling audit program and updates to policies and procedures. Future opportunities for modernizing the wood measurement program in Ontario could include further refinement to the existing system and/or investment in emerging or future technology.

The ministry has engaged forest industry on modernization concepts, which garnered interest from a few industry partners, while feedback from the survey indicates that current weigh scaling technology provides an accurate, cost-effective and timely method of measurement.

Recent advances in technology, such as electronic Bills of Lading, voice-directed data collectors and electronic linear measurement tools, offer potential short-term opportunities for improving current processes.

Existing technology such as laser log scanners, LiDAR scanners/applications and photo optical measurement instruments, could potentially be used for measurement in certain situations.

Emerging concepts, such as Area Based Volume Accounting or Sales (Forest Inventory) and Blockchain technology for tracking supply chains may offer opportunity for change in the long term. Changes to the wood measurement program at this level may require complimentary changes to tenure, licensing, inventory systems, weigh scale infrastructure, policy, etc.

It should be noted that any new measuring device must meet legal trade standards required by Measurement Canada. The CSA Technical Standard for Measuring Primary Forest Products (Standard) requires that any new measuring device to quantify volume must be calibrated and deemed legal for trade and then be made available for use in all jurisdictions. Then it must be tested and added to the Standard and jurisdictional manuals and standards to be accepted to generate volume for Crown dues.

Vision

To continually modernize wood measurement in Ontario.



Goals and actions

To achieve the vision, 8 goals have been identified, each with a set of actions to pursue.

In the short-term, the ministry aims to better understand stakeholder needs, identify new and emerging technologies and determine potential modernization opportunities for wood measurement.

Over the medium and long-term, this understanding will assist in testing, approving and implementing

new technologies and concepts to support change and improve the business and policy environments for wood measurement for both ministry and industry stakeholders.

As the actions in this plan are implemented, Ontario will actively engage a broad range of partners and stakeholders to overcome barriers and help realize new and innovative approaches for measuring Crown forest resources.

Goal 1: Understand stakeholder expectations and needs

Understanding the expectations and needs of stakeholders is essential to the success of wood measurement modernization. As stakeholder expectations and needs are constantly changing, it is important to gather and understand stakeholder input and maintain engagement through the life cycle of this strategic plan.

Action 1.1: Conduct periodic surveys to assess the expectations and needs of stakeholders (government, industry, other) and summarize results to inform modernization priorities.

Action 1.2: Engage with stakeholders to seek clarification of their expectations, needs and challenges.

Goal 2: Identify and implement improvements to existing technologies

Identifying and implementing improvements to existing technologies is an important part of wood measurement modernization as it maintains continuity in business processes and allows for technological upgrades to be employed.

Action 2.1: Explore opportunities for improving existing technologies (such as conversion from analog to digital weigh scales, enhanced data collection and processing).



Goal 3: Identify new and emerging technologies and concepts

Identifying new and emerging technologies and concepts is critical for maintaining long-term continuity in business processes and modernizing wood measurement.

Action 3.1: Complete a jurisdictional scan to inform new and emerging wood measurement technologies and concepts.

Action 3.2: Prepare a report that summarizes the range of wood measurement technologies and feasibility of technologies in the Ontario context.

Action 3.3: Monitor new developments in technology on a continual basis.

Goal 4: Identify short, medium and long-term opportunities and set priorities

Identifying short, medium and long-term opportunities and setting priorities will provide direction on the implementation of the strategic wood measurement modernization plan and inform investment and project planning.

Action 4.1: Engage with forestry industry and government stakeholders to identify short, medium and long-term opportunities for improvement and modernization.

Action 4.2: Conduct an impact assessment on identified opportunities.

Action 4.3: Prioritize short, medium and long-term opportunities to inform plan implementation.

Action 4.4: Monitor and report annually on achievement of short, medium and long-term opportunities and priorities.

Goal 5: Reduce burden

Identifying opportunities for burden reduction and providing timely, cost-effective programs, services and experiences that meet or exceed expectations is an important aspect of wood measurement modernization. Actions under this goal will provide for further red tape reduction and regulatory burden relief for the forest sector and/or government.

Action 5.1: Review and update Ontario's existing wood measurement policies, manuals, forms, and programs, while engaging with stakeholders, to ensure operational barriers to wood measurement, movement and reporting are minimized while protecting the Crown's interests.

Action 5.2: Create a framework to allow for pilot projects to occur during the policy development process.

Goal 6: Collaborate with stakeholders on wood measurement modernization opportunities

Collaborating with industry, Indigenous partners, communities, federal agencies, technology providers, educational institutions, innovation and research institutions and other stakeholders is key to the success of wood measurement modernization.

Action 6.1: Maintain open dialogue, collaboration and cooperation with industry, Indigenous partners, communities and other stakeholders.

Action 6.2: Work with industry, Indigenous partners, technology providers, educational institutions, innovation and research institutions and others as identified to investigate and test new technology or concepts.

Action 6.3: Facilitate discussions between federal agencies, technology providers and forest sector partners on use of new technology for legal trade.

Action 6.4: Engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure alignment between regional, provincial and federal initiatives.

Action 6.5: Update ministry policy to implement new and approved technology and concepts.

Goal 7: Attract, retain and train qualified employees to carry out wood measurement

Attracting, retaining and training qualified wood measurement workers is critical to the success of the wood measurement program. This goal aligns with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development's Workforce Development & Training Review supporting forest sector skills training. It also aligns with the MNR's *Strategic Plan 2020-25: Naturally Resourceful* goal of service delivery excellence by providing timely, cost-effective programs, services and experiences that meet or exceed expectations.

Action 7.1: Promote forestry and wood measurement career opportunities at Ontario's forestry colleges and secondary schools.

Action 7.2: Continually improve access and delivery of provincial and regional scaler licensing courses.



Goal 8: Maintain and improve data exchange, data integrity and wood measurement information management programs

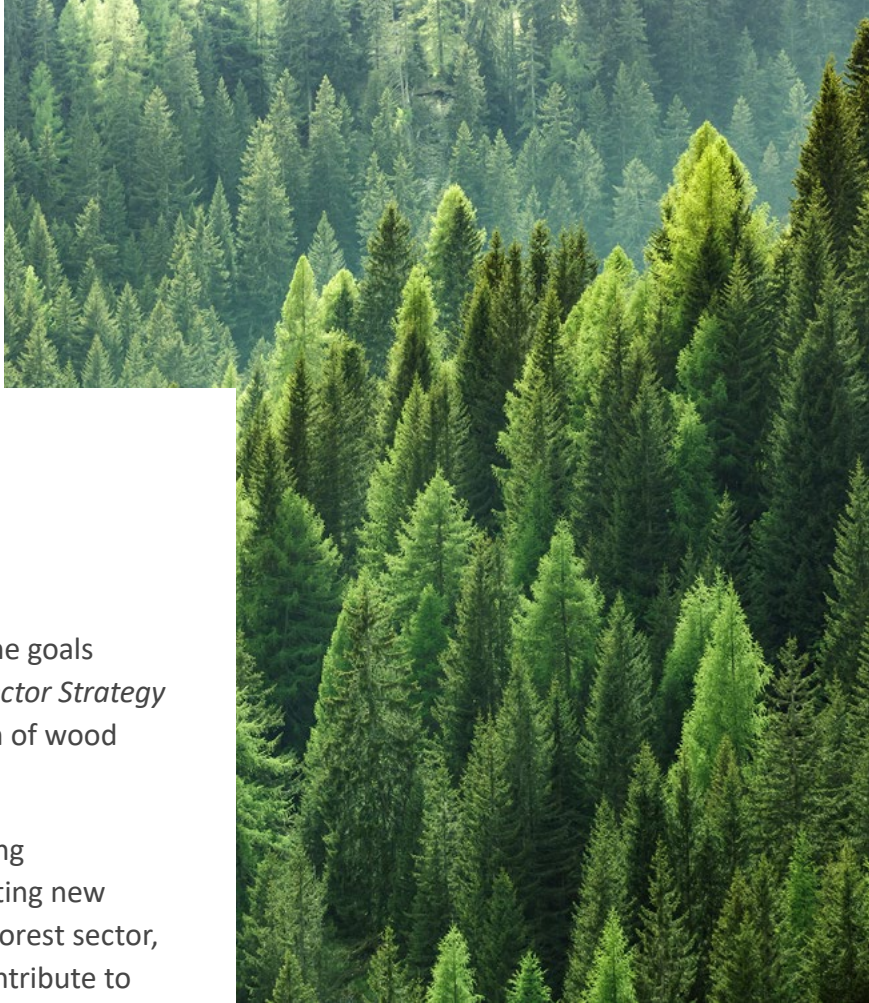
Ensuring that data exchange, data integrity and information management programs are maintained to support wood measurement business functions is a fundamental part of wood measurement modernization.

Action 8.1: Maintain an iTREES user guide.

Action 8.2: Maintain open dialogue, collaboration and cooperation with iTREES and TREES users.

Action 8.3: Maintain, improve and enhance data exchange, data integrity and wood measurement information management programs to support business functions.





The road ahead

This plan is an important component of achieving the goals identified in *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy* and sets out the direction to support modernization of wood measurement.

By supporting our government's priorities of reducing administrative burden, promoting innovation, adopting new technologies, digital first and growing talent in the forest sector, the *Wood Measurement Modernization Plan* will contribute to our government's vision of a resilient forest sector that fosters innovation and talent.

The Appendix provides a summary of the actions and their estimated timeframes. Progress and completion of actions in this plan will be tracked and reported on annually. To achieve the goals in this plan, the Forest Industry Division looks forward to the continued contribution and advice provided by the Scaling Manual Advisory Group.

To achieve the goals in this plan we will need to work with forest industry, Indigenous communities, municipalities and the federal government, as well as research, innovation and education institutions.

Appendix

Actions to be completed by 2026

Action 3.1: Complete a jurisdictional scan to inform new and emerging wood measurement technologies and concepts.

Action 3.2: Prepare a report that summarizes the range of wood measurement technologies and feasibility of technologies in the Ontario context.

Action 4.1: Engage with forestry industry and government stakeholders to identify short, medium and long-term opportunities for improvement and modernization.

Action 4.2: Conduct an impact assessment on identified opportunities.

Action 4.3: Prioritize short, medium and long-term opportunities to inform plan implementation.

Actions to be sustained

- Action 1.1:** Conduct periodic surveys to assess the expectations and needs of stakeholders (government, industry, other) and summarize results to inform modernization priorities.
- Action 1.2:** Engage with stakeholders to seek clarification of their expectations, needs and challenges.
- Action 2.1:** Explore opportunities for improving existing technologies.
- Action 3.3:** Monitor new developments in technology on a continual basis.
- Action 4.4:** Monitor and report annually on achievement of short, medium and long-term opportunities and priorities.
- Action 5.1:** Review and update Ontario's existing wood measurement policies, manuals, forms and programs, while engaging with stakeholders, to ensure operational barriers to wood measurement, movement and reporting are minimized while protecting the Crown's interests.
- Action 5.2:** Create a framework to allow for pilot projects to occur during the policy development process.
- Action 6.1:** Maintain open dialogue, collaboration and cooperation with industry, Indigenous partners, communities and other stakeholders.
- Action 6.2:** Work with industry, technology providers, educational, innovation and research institutions and others as identified to investigate and test new technology or concepts.
- Action 6.3:** Facilitate discussions between federal agencies, technology providers and forest sector partners on use of new technology for legal trade.
- Action 6.4:** Engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure alignment between regional, provincial and federal initiatives.
- Action 6.5:** Update ministry policy to implement new and approved technology and concepts.
- Action 7.1:** Promote forestry and wood measurement career opportunities at Ontario's forestry colleges and secondary schools.
- Action 7.2:** Continually improve access and delivery of provincial and regional scaler licensing courses.
- Action 8.1:** Maintain iTREES user guide.
- Action 8.2:** Maintain open dialogue, collaboration and cooperation with iTREES and TREES users.
- Action 8.3:** Maintain, improve and enhance wood measurement information management programs to support normal business functions.

References

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[Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy](https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-forest-sector-strategy)

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-forest-sector-strategy>

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[Open for business](https://www.ontario.ca/page/open-business)

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/open-business>

[Ontario's Digital and Data Strategy](https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-digital-ontario)

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-digital-ontario>

[Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/19s07)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/19s07>

[Ontario Onwards](https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-onwards)

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