

Hearst Forest

April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2025 Independent Forest Audit

Management Unit Action Plan

Hearst Forest 2019-2025 Independent Forest Audit Action Plan
Action Plan Submission Signature Page

Prepared by:



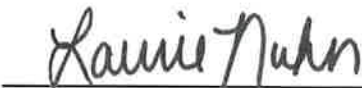
Dale Goodfellow, R.P.F.
Forester
Hearst Forest Management Inc.

Date: Feb 19/2026



Mackenzie Jemmett
A/ Management Forester
MNR Hearst Kapuskasing Cochrane District

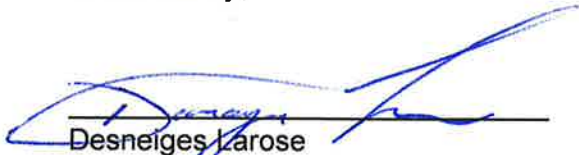
Date: 20-02-2026



Laurie Nuhn, R.P.F.
Forest Operations Specialist
MNR Northeast Region

Date: February 19, 2026

Reviewed by:



Desneiges Larose
General Manager
Hearst Forest Management Inc.

Date: 19-02-2026

Submitted by:



Nicole Woolnough
District Manager
MNR Hearst Kapuskasing Cochrane District

Date: February 26, 2026

Hearst Forest 2019-2025 Independent Forest Audit Action Plan
Action Plan Approval Signature Page

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sylvain Levesque', written in black ink.

Sylvain Levesque, R.P.F.
Regional Director
MNR Northeast Region

Date: February 26, 2026

Cette publication hautement spécialisée (Independent Forest Audit Report – Hearst Forest 2019-2025) n'est disponible qu'en anglais conformément au Règlement 671/92, selon lequel il n'est pas obligatoire de la traduire en vertu de la Loi sur les services en français. Pour obtenir des renseignements en français, veuillez communiquer avec le Ministère des Richesses naturelles au NRISC@ontario.ca

Introduction

In July 2025 an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Hearst Forest for the period of April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2025. Auditees were notified of the Divisional Support Branch's acceptance of the report as being final on November 24, 2025. A Management Unit Action Plan is due February 24, 2026.

The final audit report for the Hearst Forest included six findings which will be addressed in this action plan. As the same evidence and discussion was provided for findings 5 and 6, and they are both related to the same process, they will be addressed in one action.

For each management unit audit findings, the action plan outlines the actions required, responsibility, timelines and method of tracking progress of said actions.

Finding #1: Two objectives of the 2019-2029 FMP (FMP-10) are unlikely to be achieved.

1. Objective 18.1: To minimize the loss of productive land through the creation of forestry roads and landings.
2. Objective 21.1: To use fire as a silvicultural tool on the Hearst Forest

Action Required:

1. HFMI to ensure that all roads built during the FMP follow the road use management strategy prescribed in the FMP and receive decommissioning on a schedule that follows both the dynamic caribou habitat schedule and/or silvicultural operations. This will be done by tracking roads built and decommissioned in each AR, and assessing the microsites of operational roads within harvest blocks to receive artificial regeneration treatments, returning them to the productive land base.
2. HFMI to contact Hearst Aviation Forest Fire and Emergency Services (AFFES) to get assistance in choosing an ideal site for a potential prescribed burn, considering site suitability (debris management, future forest condition) and natural fire breaks (rivers, waterways).

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Hearst Forest Management Inc., Forester
2. Hearst Forest Management Inc., Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 15th Annually
2. November 15th Annually

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Summary map of operational roads decommissioned and/or artificially regenerated will be included with the Annual Report
2. Annual Report

Finding #2: Compliance monitoring on the Hearst Forest is inconsistent with manuals and policies.

Action Required:

1. District to update their Annual Compliance Operating Plan (ACOP) for 2026-2027 with compliance targets reflecting District priorities for the operating year. The District will then update this document annually to reflect compliance priorities based on risk and current direction.
2. District to review all pending inspections in FOIP and action appropriately.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNR, District Supervisor
2. MNR, District Supervisor

Deadline Date:

1. March 31, 2026, and then annually
2. August 3, 2026

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annually within the ACOP document
2. Issues updated and closed in FOIP.

Finding #3: A significant area has not been assessed for free-to-grow or establishment status, as planned in the Forest Management Plan.

Action Required:

1. Identify these outstanding areas and develop a practical and achievable plan to have these areas assessed including with the yearly free to grow program where practical. Assessment may include free to grow surveys, drone surveys, existing imagery, Lidar, the next Hearst Forest, Forest Resource Inventory

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Hearst Forest Management Inc., Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 15th, 2035 – Year Six Annual Report for the 2029 Hearst FMP

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Progress towards assessing these areas as free to grow will be reported annually in the Annual Report.

Finding #4: The actions in the 2019 Independent Forest Audit were not effective in addressing two of the audit findings.

1. IFA Finding #2: The slash management program requires improvement and monitoring.
2. IFA Finding #3: Timely and effective tending treatments are not consistently implemented.

Action Required:

1. HFMI to ensure that funds are allocated to the slash management program annually during silvicultural budgeting, and to ensure that areas where slash management occurs are reported on in the annual report as per the FIM Technical Specifications
2. HFMI to continue to conduct an annual tending program, conducting both pre and post spray surveys to observe successes and failures, to assist with adaptive management of the tending program.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Hearst Forest Management Inc., Forester
2. Hearst Forest Management Inc., Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 15th Annually
2. November 15th Annually

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Areas treated, Annual Report
2. Areas successfully treated, Annual Report

Finding #5: Ontario's wood payment system does not allow for timely tracking of wood deliveries.

Finding #6: The forest renewal trust minimum balance has not been met each March 31st as required by the Sustainable Forest Licence

Action Required:

1. HFMI to continue to work with MNR Region to maintain and implement documented plan for achieving minimum balance, while maintaining an annual renewal program.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Hearst Forest Management Inc., General Manager, MNR, Forest Operations Specialist

Deadline Date:

1. March 31st, 2026, and ongoing

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Complete Annual Forest Renewal Setting Process