



NEWS RELEASE – Annual Meeting of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers

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Location: St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF FOREST MINISTERS ADVANCE MARKET ACCESS AND FOREST STEWARDSHIP

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, June 17, 2025 –

Federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) forest ministers and representatives met in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador today to discuss shared priorities, challenges, and emerging opportunities for Canada's forest sector. The forum was hosted by current Chair of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM), **the Honourable Lisa Dempster**, Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, Minister of Labrador Affairs for Newfoundland and Labrador, who kicked off the event with acknowledgement of the CCFM's 40th anniversary. She noted the CCFM's remarkable history of cooperative efforts that have collectively strengthened the country's forest sector.

Ministers discussed the wildfires occurring across Canada and expressed deep concern for impacted families, local and Indigenous communities and those who work in the forest industry. They extended their sincere appreciation to the fire fighters and first responders who are tirelessly serving Canadians, citing numerous instances of inter-provincial and international support. Strengthening Canada's wildfire preparedness and response—from building frontline response capacity to advancing science and forecasting—is crucial to the safety, health and economic well-being of Canadians. Priority discussions included review of forecasting for the 2025 wildfire season, an update on implementation of the **Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy**¹ to support preparation and response activities, and discussion of opportunities to advance measures that improve the long-term resilience of our communities and infrastructure, including increasing adoption of Fire Smart principles and practices.

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing **forest sector competitiveness**, including the positive environmental reputation of sustainable forest management and discussed challenges posed by global trade dynamics, the long-standing Softwood Lumber dispute and non-tariff barriers. Ministers noted the importance of strengthening the sector's resilience and the important role that Canadian wood products – including lumber and mass timber – will play in building affordable housing.

Federal, provincial and territorial ministers also strongly condemned the U.S. duties on Softwood Lumber which are set to increase later this year, and expressed their shared determination to mitigate the resulting economic impacts to Canadian forest workers, families, and businesses. The group agreed

¹ Québec intends to ensure that its exclusive jurisdiction over forest management on its territory is respected. Consequently, Québec is accountable to its population in its exclusive areas of jurisdiction and does not participate in pan-Canadian initiatives that have the effect of limiting its autonomy in forestry matters within its territory. Québec is not bound by the targets, objectives and commitments of the Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy.



to continue their outreach to American officials at federal, state, and local levels to raise awareness about the negative impacts of tariffs on both sides of the border – particularly to good, well-paying jobs – and the benefits of preserving our mutually beneficial partnership. It was noted that **bilateral trade in forest products** is critically important to the stability of both economies, and that Canada continues to be a reliable supplier offering world-leading sustainability standards.

As the meeting's final order of business, annual rotation of the Chair jurisdiction was confirmed with Minister Dempster formally passing the role to **British Columbia** for 2025-26.

"It's never been more important for provinces and territories to work together to strengthen Canada's forestry sector and support the people who depend on it. Whether it's finding new ways to grow good-paying jobs, tackling U.S. tariffs or preparing communities for wildfires, we are committed to collaborating for the benefit of everyone in Canada. As I step into the role of the incoming chair of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers for next year, I'm dedicated to building on the Council's legacy of delivering results that keep our forests strong, economy competitive, and communities safe."

The Honourable Ravi Parmar
Minister of Forests

"As Chair of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, it has been an honour to work alongside my federal, provincial, and territorial colleagues in advancing the priorities that matter to Canada's forest sector and the people who rely on it. I want to sincerely thank all partners for their collaboration, insight, and shared commitment to sustainable forestry and strong communities. British Columbia is well-positioned to lead this important work in the year ahead, and I wish them every success as the incoming Chair. Together, we will continue to ensure the resilience, competitiveness, and prosperity of Canada's forests for generations to come."

The Honourable Lisa Dempster
Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture,
Minister of Labrador Affairs



Other Engagement

A separate event hosted by Newfoundland and Labrador, the **Forum on Forests**, took place just prior to the Ministerial meeting on June 16, 2025 in St. John's. Invitees – including national Indigenous representatives, leaders of regional Indigenous organizations, experts and industry partners – discussed a range of advancements and opportunities such as:

- Indigenous Engagement
- Worker Attraction and Forestry's Environmental Reputation
- Wildland Fire Management and Mitigation
- Current Industry Challenges

Available Ministers were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with various Indigenous leadership groups on the margins of the Forum on Forests to better understand their perspectives and priorities on the forest sector and areas of CCFM influence and activity.

About the CCFM

The CCFM was established in 1985 to provide a platform for federal, provincial and territorial governments to work together on common concerns relating to forests. The CCFM provides leadership on national and international issues and sets direction for the stewardship and sustainable management of forests across Canada (www.ccfm.org).

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