

PROTECTED AREAS POLICY AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO

There are currently several mechanisms that can trigger the development of new protected areas in Ontario. These include:

Room to Grow

New protected areas are triggered by increases in wood supply to the forest industry. The Room to Grow Policy has three objectives:

- To identify the gaps in Ontario's parks and protected areas system;
- To benchmark and secure the long-term supply of wood necessary for industrial processing; and,
- To share permanent increases in wood supplies between commercial harvesting uses and protected areas.

Land Use Planning (Northern Boreal Initiative)

- The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) established the *Northern Boreal Initiative* (NBI) to address the expressed interest of several northern First Nation communities and the province, in new, sustainable commercial forestry opportunities.
- According to MNR, moving forward with NBI requires the identification of protected areas, and resulting recommendations for parks, prior to decisions on development or access.

Forest Stewardship Council Certification

- The MNR is requiring all forest licence holders in Ontario to be certified under a third-party system by 2007.
- Forest certification under the FSC system requires companies to complete protected areas "gap analysis" and where necessary, move toward completing a representative protected areas system on their license areas.