



**EMAIL REPLY**

MNR6446MC-2017-1720

November 24, 2017

Mr. Eric Thompson  
Executive Director  
Ontario Woodlot Association  
[eric.thompson@ontariowoodlot.com](mailto:eric.thompson@ontariowoodlot.com)

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Ontario Tree Seed Plant (OTSP). I appreciate hearing about your concerns regarding the closure of the facility and would like to provide you with a response.

While the ministry recognizes that the OTSP has processed and stored seeds since 1923, processing at the plant has decreased significantly as Ontario's forest industry has evolved. Additionally, the purpose of the plant was to assist in Ontario's efforts to re-forest Crown land harvested by the forest industry, not genetic testing or seed tracking.

Since 1996, there has been growth in private sector capacity and we feel comfortable that there is seed extraction capacity available to support the needs of our clients. We have heard through our discussions with a variety of stakeholders that there is a desire among a number of different private sector operators to expand their current roles in seed extraction and storage, including through the potential acquisition of surplus OTSP equipment.

With the closure of the plant, we will be focusing our efforts on establishing the new native genetic seed archive. The archive will support Ontario's biodiversity and climate change research programs. We are also working directly with Forests Ontario to support the continued successful implementation of the 50 Million Tree Program.

In addition to the 50 Million Tree Program, my ministry provides tax incentive programs to assist private land owners in supporting good stewardship on their lands. The Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program encourages sustainable management of forests on private lands and increases forest cover and connectivity, while the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program promotes the conservation of provincially significant natural heritage values, including significant woodlands. Both of these programs, in addition to the planning and good work conducted by municipalities and conservation authorities, are helping to ensure healthy natural forests in Ontario.

As we move forward with this decision, we understand that there are concerns with transition. I assure you that my ministry will continue to work with our clients in connecting them with seed extraction and storage suppliers throughout 2018 to ensure a seamless transition of these services for our clients.

If you have any further questions, please contact Ken Durst, Regional Services Manager, Southern Region, at [\(705\) 755-3234](tel:7057553234) or [ken.durst@ontario.ca](mailto:ken.durst@ontario.ca).

Thank you again for writing.

Best,

Kathryn McGarry  
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

c: Ken Durst