



National Forest Strategy Coalition Report from the first Annual Meeting - March 22- 23, 2004

By Jack Radecki

To date 55 organizations including the Ontario Urban Forest Council have signed an accord to set a vision and strategy for the nation's forest. The theme of the current strategy from 2003 - 2008 is "A Sustainable Forest The Canadian Commitment".

This initial meeting was held to identify existing members and their interest towards a strategic theme.

This being done, the next step was to develop an implementation approach. The objectives within this approach included:

1. approval of the overall approach
2. agreement to implement approach and add quality
3. strengthen partnerships and progress through cooperation
4. provide consistency and efficiency in action

Each thematic team would have a champion and 2 other persons that would sit on communication and evaluation committees. The Ontario Urban Forest Council, Tree Canada Foundation, Canadian Forestry Association and the Canadian Institute of Forestry - Southern Ontario Section, represented theme 6, "The Urban Forest and Public Engagement in Sustainability".

This initial meeting was represented by only 55% of the membership. To add to this there were many gaps in membership identified including:

- tourism and recreation
- municipal sector
- forest labour sector
- youth
- energy sector

Participants formed different breakout groups over the 2 days in order to develop the notional framework. The framework included a template for a final workplan, which will be used by the thematic groups in subsequent meetings. Even though this was basically a structural meeting, I was very impressed by the intelligence and commitment by the members to move forward. From here we must identify and fill the membership gaps to provide strong thematic teams.

For more information please visit: <http://nfsc.forest.ca>