

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic planning provides organizations continuity and structure in making responsible decisions in the delivery of programs and services. This strategic plan was developed through the electronic collection of data as well as online, interactive sessions. The plan addresses the 2021-2026 operational period.

OPFA staff and Council were all provided the opportunity to provide input and feedback on all aspects of the plan and consensus was reached on the final written report.

The vision of the organization is: Trusted to serve the public interest by regulating Ontario professional foresters at the highest standard of ethical conduct and professional forestry practice.

The mission is to regulate and advance the professional practice of forestry in the public interest.

The strategic goals of OPFA are:

- internal stakeholders' competencies are continuously advanced,
- governance documents and practices are relevant, reflect best practices and mitigate organizational risk,
- operations are implemented effectively and continuously monitored,
- awareness is improved of the regulated profession among internal and external stakeholders, and
- regulatory programs are managed fairly to protect the public interest.

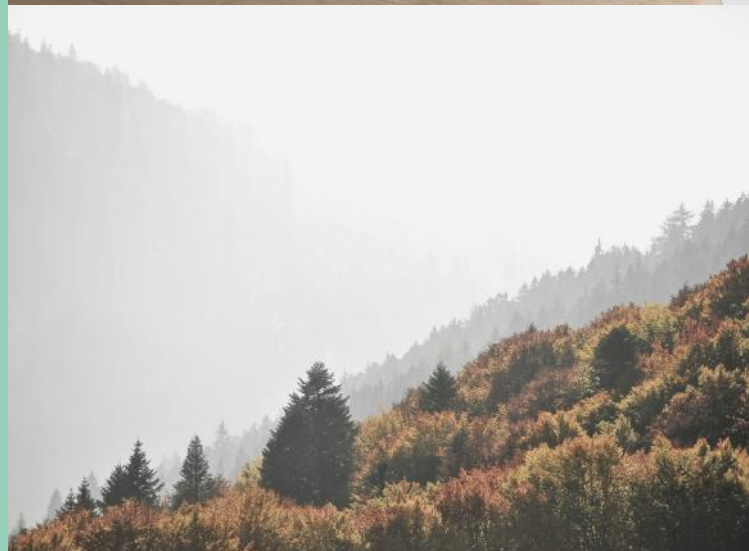
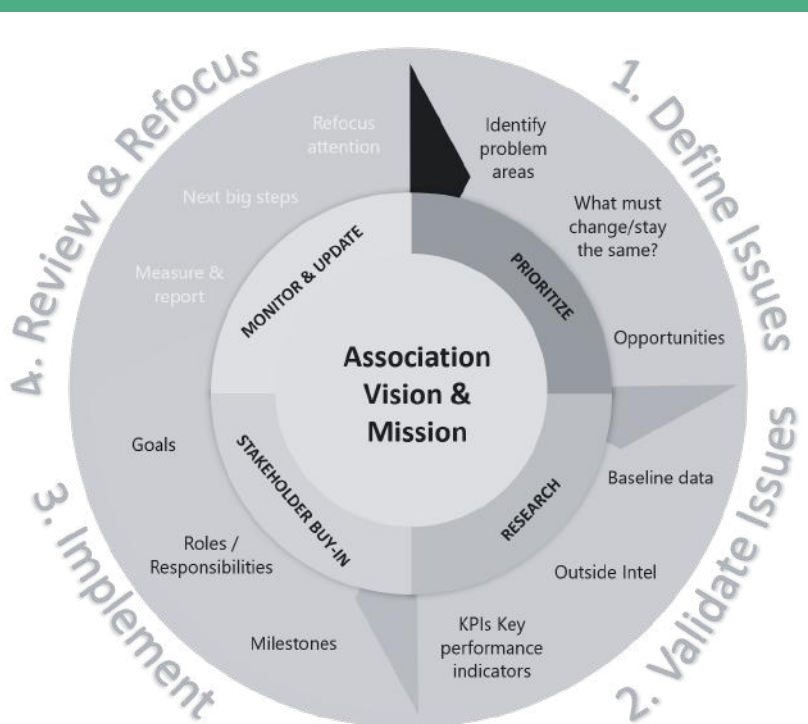


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WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?



The strategic planning lifecycle is cyclic in nature as it is continuously engaged in the planning and oversight of the organization.

One of the challenges faced by non-profit organizations is when staff and board of directors change. Individuals new to the organization must be engaged in the planning process so they feel like they are a part of something and able to contribute. The other challenge is that with each change, there is potential for a shift in direction to the organization which can cause frustration and disengagement by staff and Council members. The cyclical nature of the strategic planning process creates an opportunity for engagement of new Council members and staff and

Strategic planning is a systematic process that an organization undertakes to define the strategies and priorities for a set period. The process results in a formal plan or roadmap which is a tool that the governing Council and staff use to guide and align organizational activities to achieve defined goals. The key elements of strategic planning are to determine the values, vision, mission and strategic and tactical goals.

establishes continuity in the organization. Strategic planning is a process; it does not happen over one conversation and end there. It is the responsibility of the Council to put the plan into action by engaging committees and staff to complete activities to achieve the large strategic and tactical goals. Throughout the annual cycle, the Council must continuously review the strategic plan. Council meetings should be structured to strictly reflect areas of the plan and governance of the organization.

BACKGROUND

Role of Professional Regulatory Organizations

Professional regulation can be thought of as a form of consumer protection. Self-regulation is based on the concept of an occupational group entering into an agreement with the government to formally regulate the activities of its members. As a condition of delegation of such regulatory powers, the governing or regulatory body is required to apply such powers in a manner that is guided by the public interest.

The essential characteristics of self-regulating professions were established as featuring:

- A unique combination of knowledge and skills;
- A commitment to duty above self-interest or personal gain;
- Independence from external interference in the affairs of the profession (self-government).

The concept of profession carries with it the recognition and understanding of the following fundamental principles and responsibilities:

- A profession's knowledge, skill and judgement are accepted by the public on trust;
- A profession has an obligation to the public to render services in the public interest;

- A profession and its registrants are bound by a minimum code of ethics, behaviour and standards of practice that governs relationships with the public, clients and registrants;
- A profession is entrusted with the responsibility to regulate its own members and the services they provide; and
- Professionals are accountable for their own actions, the actions of those they supervise and the practice of the profession in general.



BACKGROUND



Self-regulating status comprises two essential aspects: the authority to register individuals to practice a profession and use a designated title and the ability to discipline registrants. As such, it is the role and responsibility of the self-governing profession to ensure that:

- Admittance into the profession is guarded by strict standards of qualification; and
- Registrants, once admitted, are governed by high standards of

competence and conduct, including, the establishment of a program of continuing professional education to ensure members maintain a high level of technical competence and professional conduct.

Four groups have an interest in the ability of a self-governing profession to govern itself fairly and effectively: the public, the regulatory body, the registrants of a profession and the clients.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A historical summary of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association

The Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA) was originally formed in 1957 when forest practitioners recognized there was a need for an organization to oversee the ethics and practice of the profession of forestry in the province of Ontario. The Professional Foresters Association Act (1957) which formed the organization did not include mandatory licensing to practice the profession; it only enabled the Association to become a registration body. The legislation also designated that only members of OPFA could use the title “Registered Professional Forester.”

The Professional Foresters Act was passed in the Ontario Legislature in October 2000 and proclaimed in 2001. The legislation redefined OPFA as a licensing body for professional foresters in Ontario with the primary purpose being that of protecting the public interest.

It is clear in discussions with Council and staff that this legislated transition to the function of the organization has not been clearly understood or recognized by registrants or stakeholders.



ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS ASSOCIATION OBJECTS

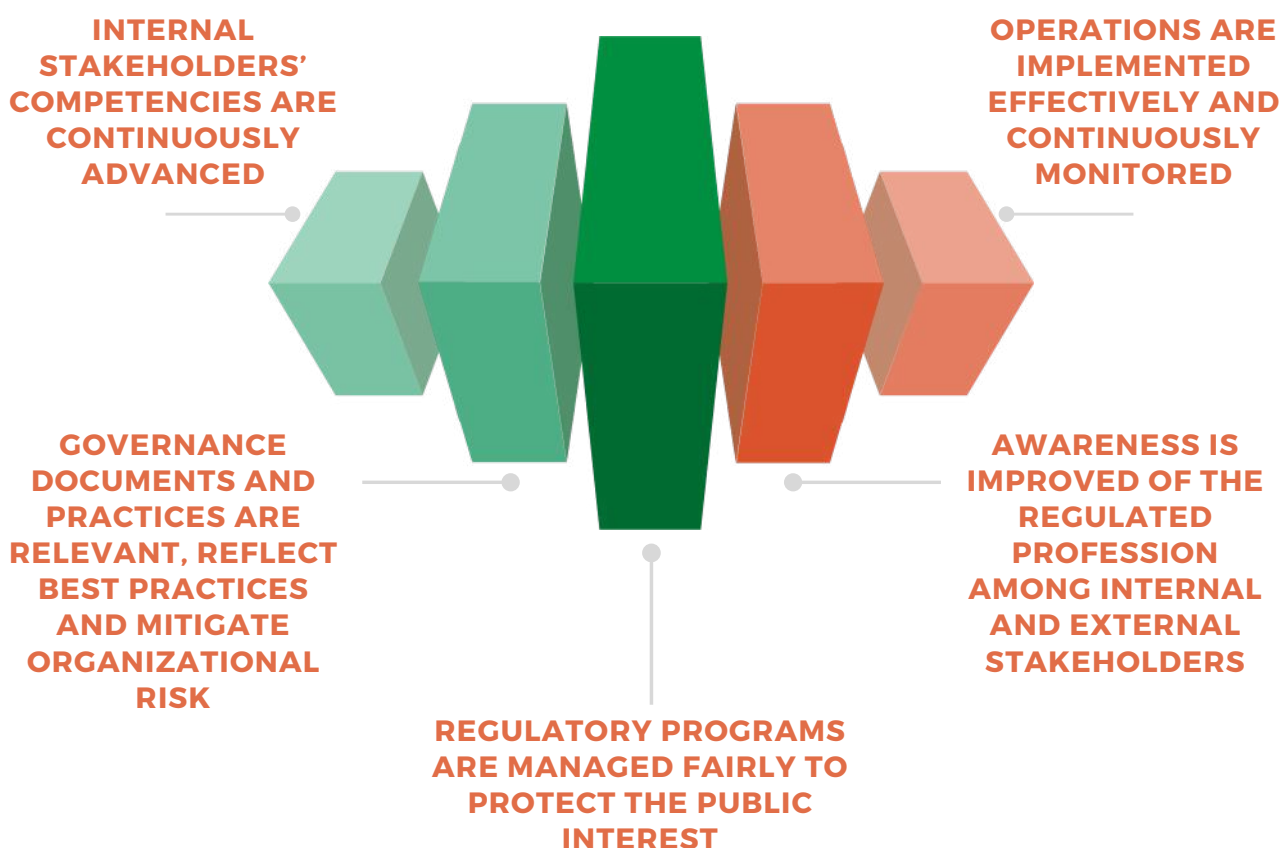
As defined in the Professional Foresters Act (2000), the principal object of the OPFA is to “regulate the practice of professional forestry and to govern its members in accordance with this Act, the regulations and the by-laws in order that the public interest may be served and protected.”

For the purpose of carrying out its principal object, the Association has the following additional objects:

1. To promote and increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency of its members in all things relating to forestry.
2. To establish, maintain and develop standards of knowledge and skill for members.
3. To establish, maintain, develop and enforce standards of qualification and standards of practice for the practice of professional forestry.
4. To issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate certificates of qualification and registration.
5. To establish, maintain, develop and enforce standards of professional ethics for members.
6. To receive and investigate complaints and allegations against members and to deal with issues regarding discipline, incapacity and unskilled practice.
7. To promote public awareness of the role of the Association and to communicate with the public on behalf of its members.
8. To provide vocational guidance to persons wishing to enter the forestry profession.
9. To perform any other duties and exercise any other powers as are imposed or conferred upon the Association under any Act.
10. To perform such additional functions relating to the practice of professional forestry that the Council considers desirable and that do not conflict with the intent or purpose of this Act, the regulations, or the by-laws.

In accordance with the legislation, all activities undertaken by the Association must align with the defined objects.

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY



VISION

Trusted to serve the public interest by regulating Ontario professional foresters at the highest standard of ethical conduct and professional forestry practice.

MISSION

To regulate and advance the professional practice of forestry in the public interest.

VALUES

**ACCOUNTABLE
COMMITTED
TRUSTWORTHY
TEAM FOCUS**

**COMPETENT
COMPASSIONATE
PROACTIVE**

VALUES



Values are unique to every organization and create a sense of identity. Values are the standards of behaviour and ways of doing things that an organization prefers in the way individuals interact and work with the organization. When actions and decisions align with values others see organizations and individuals as having integrity.

OPFA's values are defined as being:

Accountable
Committed
Compassionate
Competent
Proactive
Team Focused
Trustworthy

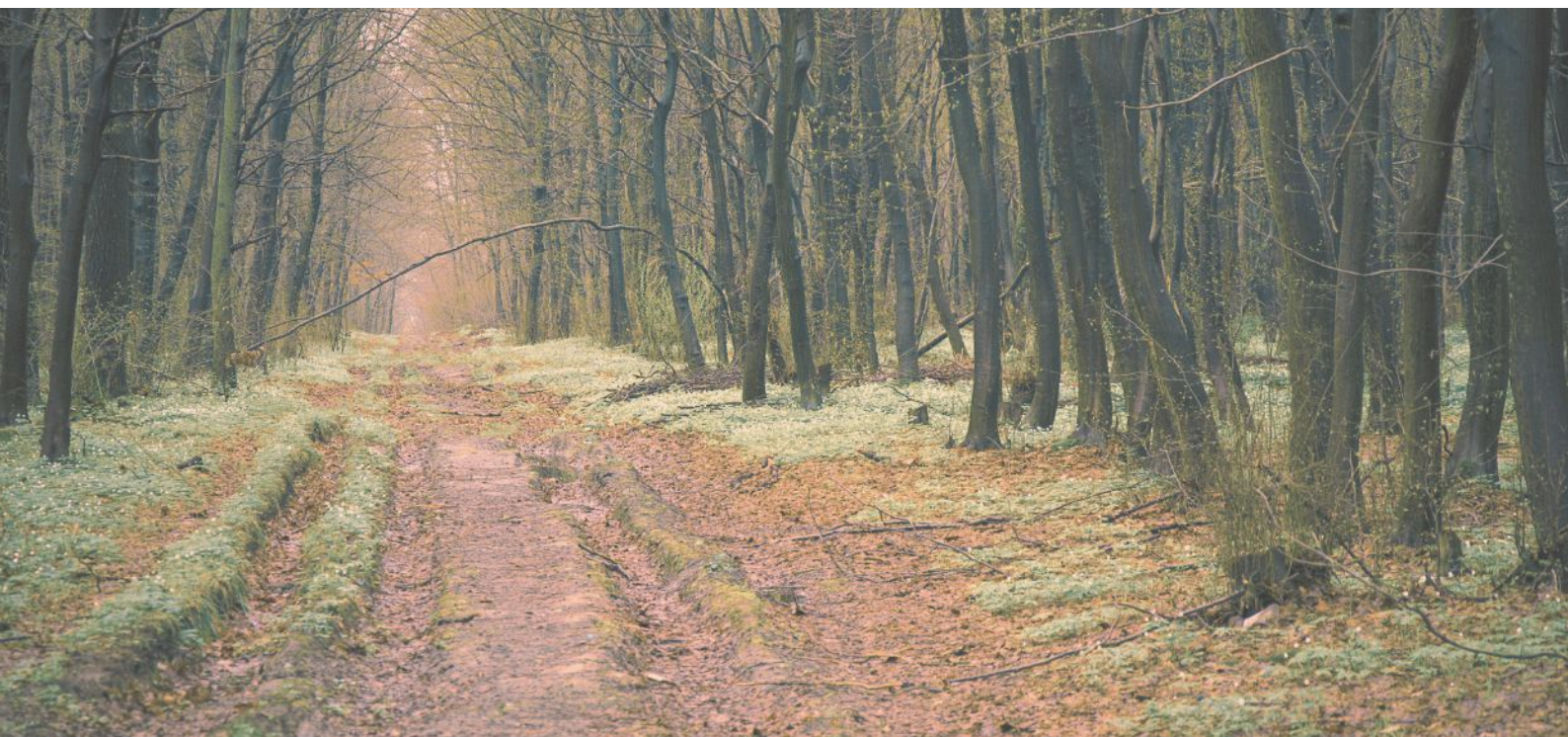
VISION & MISSION

VISION

The vision statement describes an aspirational future state of what an organization wants to achieve in the mid to long-term. A vision statement is an organization's guide for choosing current and future courses of action, indicating both what the organization wants to become and guiding transformational initiatives by setting a defined direction for growth.

THE VISION OF OPFA IS:

Trusted to serve the public interest by regulating Ontario professional foresters at the highest standard of ethical conduct and professional forestry practice.



MISSION

A mission is an organization's core purpose and the reason for existing, provide a path, and guide decision-making. The mission serves as a filter to determine what kind of work will be done and this focus normally remains relatively unchanged over time. A mission is concise and simple, outlining the organization's purpose and is related to the specific sector an organization operates in. The mission is communicated to all stakeholders.

THE MISSION OF OPFA IS:

To regulate and advance the professional practice of forestry in the public interest.

GOALS



STRATEGIC GOALS

Overall long-term objectives bridging across the organization and involve more than one program. These goals should be reflective of the current and projected environment and future success of the organization. An organization strives to accomplish strategic goals within the term of the strategic plan, and this will move an organization to its desired future state.

TACTICAL GOALS

Short to mid-term objectives with specific initiatives that aim at achieving the strategic goals. Means to achieve tactical goals are further defined within the annual business plan.

ACTIVITIES & TASKS

Specific actions to be accomplished by the organization through daily operations.

STRATEGIC & TACTICAL INITIATIVES

To achieve the OPFA vision, several strategic and tactical goals have been defined. By 2026, OPFA will ensure:

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS' COMPETENCIES ARE CONTINUOUSLY ADVANCED.

STRATEGIC GOAL

Internal stakeholders' (Council, committees, staff and registrants) cultural awareness is elevated.

Council, committee and working group members and staff are sufficiently trained and have the resources to fulfil their roles.

TACTICAL GOALS

- Policy and standards pertaining to organizational cultural awareness are defined and implemented.
- Equity, diversity and inclusion training for internal stakeholders is defined and implemented as feasible.
- The Indigenous competency standard and associated training is implemented for new and existing registrants.
- Change management plan(s) are developed to inform current and potential registrants of any new training requirements.

- Policy is developed and implemented pertaining to:
 - skills required by Council and committee members,
 - recruitment of Council members and appointment processes for committee members.
- A competency/skills matrix is defined for Council and committee members.
- An onboarding training process is developed and implemented for Council and committee members.
- Annual training is defined and delivered for Council and committee members that meets the evolving needs of the organization.
- Annual staff assessments completed, training plans defined and implemented.
- Sufficient funds are budgeted to implement annual training plans for Council, committees and staff.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS' COMPETENCIES ARE CONTINUOUSLY ADVANCED CONT.

STRATEGIC GOAL

OPFA supports registrants in their professional practice.

Registrants are provided relevant / appropriate professional development opportunities to advance their professional competency.

TACTICAL GOALS

- Practice guidance documents for professional practice are developed and maintained.
- An assessment of registrants is completed to determine what supports are required from OPFA in their professional practice.
- Supports requested by registrants which fall within the legislated objects of OPFA are designed and implemented.
- Educational opportunities are provided to registrants, including the Annual General Meeting and conference, focusing on increasing the understanding of what it means to be part of a regulated profession and obligations of practicing professionals.
- Technology options are investigated and implemented for delivering training to registrants.

GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS AND PRACTICES ARE RELEVANT, REFLECT BEST PRACTICES AND MITIGATE ORGANIZATIONAL RISK.

STRATEGIC GOAL

TACTICAL GOALS

OPFA regulates in a manner that reflects modern best practices for professional regulators.

- A review is conducted of best practices for regulatory bodies and recommendations are implemented.
- Organizational name change is investigated.
- An organizational risk management plan is defined and actively monitored by Council and senior management.

Organizational governance documents and practices reflect modern best practices for regulatory bodies.

- Governance documents (bylaws, policy and registration standards) are reviewed and updated to reflect modern best practices, eliminate bias and discrimination and align with any new legislation.
- Council and committee members reflect diversity in composition and perspectives.
- Council operates in a transparent manner to maintain the public trust.

OFPA is actively engaged in the modernization and implementation of the Professional Foresters Act.

- Constructive input is provided by OPFA and its stakeholders to MNRF on the modernization of the Professional Foresters Act and Regulation.
- Plans are developed to implement the revised Act and Regulation including change and risk management, allocated resources and procedures.

OPERATIONS ARE IMPLEMENTED EFFECTIVELY AND CONTINUOUSLY MONITORED.

STRATEGIC GOAL	TACTICAL GOALS
OPFA ensures effective and efficient delivery of programs and initiatives that will maintain the public trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial analyses are conducted, controls implemented and projections developed. • Fees structures and penalties are assessed and adjusted to reflect actual operational costs. • Evaluation conducted and assessment implemented on the need for maintaining a physical office space.
OPFA programs are sufficiently staffed for proficient delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing requirements are reviewed, monitored and adjusted to effectively deliver OPFA programs. • Employee competencies and job descriptions are clearly defined. • Salary comparisons are conducted on a routine basis.
Risk of data loss or breach is monitored and mitigated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber security audit is conducted of all data storage and collection systems currently in place, a data management plan developed and implemented.
OPFA actively supports and encourages diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable opportunity is provided for individuals to actively participate on committees. • A diverse group of volunteers is actively engaged so OPFA programs are relevant and reflective of society and industry views.

AWARENESS IS IMPROVED OF THE REGULATED PROFESSION AMONG INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS.

STRATEGIC GOAL

Public awareness is enhanced on the roles and responsibilities of OPFA and its registrants.

Stakeholders are engaged to promote the professional practice of foresters and the profession.

Registrants are informed on the obligations of regulated professionals and OPFA as a regulator.

TACTICAL GOALS

- A clearly defined communication strategy and implementation plan involving OPFA registrants and forest NGOs and universities to deliver and raise the profile of professional foresters will guide communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- Messaging will be clearly defined regarding the regulation of professional practice, the value of hiring professionals and the professional practice of foresters.
- Promotional materials are produced and disseminated through a variety of mediums.
- Employers and landowners are aware that the profession is regulated and identify that there is value in hiring professionals.

- Partnerships are built with compatible organizations to deliver on specific projects.
- Staff, council and members are encouraged to engage with students to develop an expanded awareness of foresters as a diverse and sustainable profession.

- Messaging is developed and communicated to registrants on the obligations of regulated professions.
- Messaging is developed and communicated to registrants on the role and responsibility of OPFA as a regulator.
- Terminology used in communications is clear and reflects modern best practices.
- Communication with registrants is open, transparent, educational and engaging.

REGULATORY PROGRAMS ARE MANAGED FAIRLY TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

STRATEGIC GOAL

Registration and discipline and complaints programs are fair, unbiased, transparent and efficient.

TACTICAL GOALS

- Accreditation and credential assessment processes are reviewed, recommendations developed and implemented to ensure the programs are fair, unbiased, transparent, effective and efficient.
- Applicant barriers to entry are identified and prioritized and a plan developed and implemented to resolve barriers within control of the organization.
- Disciplinary processes and procedures are reviewed and recommendations developed and implemented to ensure the program is fair, unbiased, transparent, aligning with modern best practices and efficient in its communications and implementation.
- Policy and processes for all regulatory programs will be clearly defined and made available to the public and registrants.
- Regulatory programs are well communicated to internal and external stakeholders.

New registrants are identified and supported on the journey to becoming an RPF.

- Work with stakeholders to identify potential applicants to increase registration numbers.
- Mentor program is reviewed and recommendations of improvement implemented.
- Provisional members and applicants through the credential assessment are supported throughout the process.

PEST ANALYSIS

A PEST analysis is a strategic tool that helps analyze the Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Technological changes in the organizational environment.



This increases the understanding of the broader picture of internal and external forces of change that the organization is exposed to, and, from this knowledge, can allow an organization to take advantage of the opportunities presented.

PEST analysis is useful for four main reasons:

1. It helps organizations to spot opportunities and provides advanced warning of significant threats.
2. It reveals the direction of change within the business environment. This helps shape what the organization is doing and to work with change, rather than against it.
3. It helps to avoid starting projects that are likely to fail, for reasons that are beyond the control of the organization.
4. It can help break unconscious assumptions when entering a new avenue of operations; because it helps develop an objective view of the new environment.

The complete PEST analysis can be found as Appendix A to this document.

NOISE ANALYSIS



The NOISE analysis is a planning technique that examines what is working for an organization and determines areas to improve upon. The exploration has a positive focus, examining **Needs, Opportunities, Improvements, Strengths and Exceptions** the organization may know about or be missing. When the NOISE conditions are understood, a path towards the future can be created that allows the organization to flourish.

The complete NOISE analysis can be found as Appendix B to this document.

APPENDIX A

PEST Analysis

Political

- Existing provincial government is interested in reducing the size of government - may lead to reduction in workforce.
- Federal government is interested in supporting climate change mitigation strategies and things like tree planting.
- Provincial government is open to changes in OPFA related legislation.
- The government position on restricting the role of regulators.
- This may have taken back seat to Covid-19, but it will reappear.
- The impact of recommended changes to The Act and their impact on the forestry professional, and below back from groups impacted by changes. (NOTE I put this in as a cautionary note as I am not totally aware of recommended changes but am aware of the political blow back that can happen from impacted groups.)
- Will the current Ontario government make the changes to the Professional Foresters Act, 2000 as they plan? There is always the possibility of a cabinet shuffle and Minister of MNR will change and no longer support the changes.
- Will there be push-back to the changes from OPFA stakeholders or politicians? How will that affect the OPFA?
- Will the government make other changes to the Act that could adversely affect us?
- If they government were to change in the future would they change the legislation back or make other changes?
- Change to RPR Act and its influence on RPF's, exemptions to act.
- Current government's move to reduce red tape and legislation – transfer of work to OPFA.
- Election – unknown changes that may occur (Ont and Fed).
- Influence of environmental lobby.
- Current government seems amenable to work with the OPFA and make changes to the legislation, as long as can be framed as positive and "reducing red tape".
- Likely that the next government will not be conservative, and may not look favorably on the OPFA working with the previous government; this is a risk.
- OPFA must remain a neutral body with the public's best interest at heart, regardless of which political party is in charge.
- Currently a favorable government that still has 1.5 years remaining in its 4-year mandate.
- Appear committed to making changes to the PFA.
- Global trend is getting away from self-regulated professions and must be prepared for this.
- Most recent crown land policy has a strong focus on professional reliance.
- There is scrutiny on regulators, and we need to be more transparent. A good place to start is with our own registrants.
- Anticipated change in the Professional Foresters Act 2000 & its regulations, particularly related to excluded professions.

- Potential change in MNRF's policy to fill RPF designated positions with non-RPFs.
- MNRF's decision to reduce financial support to the OPFA (e.g; no financial support for annual conference / AGM).
- Provincial government - stable & with majority.
- We have a current Minister of Natural Resources (and policy staff) who are from regions of Ontario with strong forestry familiarity for the first time in quite a number of years. The 'red-tape' reduction emphasis of this government is a positive in the sense of potential alignment with the regulatory reform OPFA is seeking. That said, environmental legislative changes made to date by Ontario have alienated Indigenous, environmental and other stakeholders with whom RPFs must actively engage. Litigations in forestry are actively on-going. RPFs may gain greater "status" and therefore come under greater scrutiny.
- The civil service component of MNRF is less inclined (or less familiar) to be supportive of OPFA.
- Modifications to environmental requirements and 'red tape' reduction exercises may result in less foresters being required in some contexts (public land, both industry and government) vs more.
- Changing of the Professional Foresters Act.
- MNRF getting behind professional designation, requiring RPF status, and opening the door to other natural resource positions becoming regulated.
- Increasing visibility, knowledge of the role of, and credibility of RPFs to gain trust of the public.

- Support by current Minister of NR&F to remove unregulated occupations. This would align the Prof Foresters Act with other regulatory laws in Ont and enable the OPFA to better govern prof forestry as OPFA members can be held accountable for their plans and actions and reduce the number of unregulated occupations as forest regulations are changed to allow more flexibility.
- Greater transparency of actions of regulators due to changing public demands, court decisions, commissions and laws.
- Fair registration practices has been the law in Ontario, many members are oblivious to its requirements - There is a need to ensure members of other provisional regulators and long time OPFA volunteers are following the law.

Economical

- Anticipate that we will have reduced employment in some forest sector (or forest dependent) businesses in the short term post COVID-19.
- Anticipate will have decreased spending in short to medium term as businesses recover from effects of COVID-19.
- Some members may have financial challenges post COVID-19 and may see delays in submission of membership fees for the 2021 year.
- Economic situation and financial challenges may result in reduced participation in future AGM and conferences (eg 2021 AGM/conference).
- In the front end of this 5 year plan Covid 19 will have effect on the economy.
- While this will have to be managed the OPFA must plan for a new normal.
- Financial support from the government for training and developing R.P.F.'s.

- COVID-19 is having an great adverse affect impact on the economy and members could lose their jobs. This will affect membership as these members resign.
- If membership declines so does our revenue. If membership fees are raised others may decide to resign because of it as some employees don't require membership in the OPFA and/or don't pay membership fees.
- Membership could decline due to the OPFA large amount of members who are at or near retirement age. There are other categories of membership (Inactive, Life), however, many may wish to resign.
- Are enough people enrolling in post-secondary forestry programs to provide foresters in the future?
- On the reverse side, costs of holding face-to-face meeting such as Council are reduced significantly as Zoom is used.
- Influence of US tariffs on forest industry In Canada.
- Lumber prices high – more interest now in harvesting private land? What happens when it drops?
- Will OPFA members be willing to pay a higher fee if needed?
- COVID and ability for work to happen within offices and in field.
- Price of Canadian dollar and its affect on forest industry.
- Membership projections are fairly stable; financially the OPFA is doing OK.
- Economy likely impacted by COVID-19 but unsure how will affect the forestry industry.
- The current economy has been altered by the pandemic, yet forestry remains a cornerstone for materials used in construction or for PPE.
- The governments have acknowledged that forestry operations are a essential and have not been affected by the lockdown to the same degree as other businesses.
- Membership numbers had been rising, unsure how the pandemic will affect this trend, but I wouldn't be surprised by a drop in both total registrants as well as new applications.
- The Association is currently in a good financial position, but it wouldn't take much to destabilize this. I'm unsure where economic pressures may come from but it is always a possibility that something occurs internally or externally to the OPFA.
- Economic uncertainty due to COVID
- COVID related business losses & potential job layoffs.
- Lesser job opportunities for newcomers (new members).
- Increasing trend of student & provisional category memberships over the last few years.
- Increasing trend of e-economy
- Growth in forestry is in the service sector. Forest inventory, auditing (environmental and other). Indigenous forestry and Indigenous communities as potential employers of RPFs is on the horizon as capacity efforts yield results in the medium term.
- Markets for forest products are very product specific. Building materials use trends are positive long term with limited opportunities for substitution. In fact, increasing timber use is projected with increasing awareness of carbon sequestration benefits of wood. Newsprint is in sustained decline since 2000, accelerated by COVID. Packaging material is on the rise while printing

and writing papers are flat to declining. Softwood lumber duties remain a burden. Veneer products and OSB demand is strong. Limited opportunity for wood pellets and biomass use growth. Overall - the investing conditions for new facilities in Ontario are not strong in a global context so turbulent times (as the past 3 years) with overall modest growth of the sector is expected. Labour shortages and inadequate markets for some forest products are regional challenges.

- Membership numbers being maintained or increased to be able to maintain status quo, or the impacts/opportunities of a drop/increase in membership.
- If the Act is changed, having the financial capability to move the OPFA in the direction it will need to go - who pays?
- Finally determining what a minimum balance in the reserve should be, achieving it and moving on with being able to invest extra income into the organization.
- Developing a long-term financial plan to allow for more strategic planning and projects to occur. Have a fee discussion and communicate this to members.
- Review staffing structure, consider expanding roles or if more staff power is needed to grow the OPFA.
- 99% of OPFA's funds are through membership fees. General desire to keep fees low, but this can compromise the governance of OPFA members.
- Lots of Prov members since 2013, but need to review process to certify applicants from non CFAB programs.
- CFAB process needs to be reviewed so that it meets the needs for faster

changes driven by employers and universities.

- Many OPFA members are small businesses, their needs should be determined. Small businesses offering prof forestry services is a growth area.

Socio-cultural

- There is increasing awareness of the value of forests.
- There is increased awareness of climate change and the role forests will play in mitigating the effects.
- Public has continuing need to know forests are well managed and managed sustainably.
- The need to ensure that any systemic discrimination (real or perceived) is removed from policies, procedures, and by-laws.
- In dealing with complaints or registration any bias (real or perceived) is recognized and addressed.
- Indigenous acknowledgement, partnership and inclusion in management of the resources.
- OPFA membership, as the population as a whole, is aging. A great many are at or near retirement age.
- Aging population – are there enough foresters in the wing? Will aging population have the same values concerning the forests?
- Non Government Organizations – can either support or inhibit forest planning and operations.
- Move from City to Country – as people move from urban to country locations with the forests be more protected or still available for sustainable harvesting? Urban vs country values.
- We have run member age statistics/projections. We have a large number of older members who will be

retiring soon, but also a large number of younger Provisional Members who are joining.

- As part of the new Equity and Inclusion Task Team we are putting together statistics regarding the age and gender (and potentially other categories) trends of our membership from 10 years ago, 5 years ago and our current membership.
- I have noticed a lot of graduates from the MFC having a hard time trying to find work in Toronto area; seems to be interest in urban forestry.
- Immigrants in particular seem to struggle finding positions.
- COVID-19 has reduced entry level jobs.
- Lack of awareness of professional forestry and the bad impression of forestry remains an issue.
- The current suite of OPFA registrants is not reflective of the diversity of the population of Ontario.
- Women are still underrepresented along with many other minority groups.
- There is a very low number of Indigenous registrants.
- There is a continued focus on the environment and climate change.
- Foresters are still perceived as loggers that clear-cut everything.
- Registrants often complain about value for money for their dues and what are they getting out of the Association.
- It's been challenging to inform and educate the registrants as to the role and importance of the Association.
- influx of provisional members from non-accredited Canadian programs & internationally trained.
- Realization of RPF in urban forestry.
- Interest in Associate membership.

- Emphasis on professional reliance in provincial forest policy directions.
- Awareness: regulator vs association.
- There is a lot of quite interesting activity happening within the forestry community in Ontario when it is examined from SE to SW and NE to NW. Forestry education institutions are key locations for our profession to be present and to engage future members.
- There is some truth to the perception of an old boys club, but as a boy who joined OPFA as a 21 year old some 30 + years ago, it feels much less that way now than back then. While our organization feels inclusive and diverse, we only benefit from the members who are inspired to join forestry at their local level. Therefore, we need to think more about being a partner in youth engagement in communities (particularly Indigenous communities) to create the understanding of a career in forestry, rather than just focusing on the audience that colleges and universities have attracted.
- Increase diversity of OPFA members, Council, committees, etc.
- Address and consider major age gap in membership and how that will impact fee revenue and ability to for new members to be successful with less mentorship opportunities.
- Most Canadians are unaware that there are many jobs in prof forestry and that forestry is regulated. This issue cannot be resolved by a few one time or short terms strategies.
- Many long-term members are unaware of the meaning of a regulated professional.
- Lack of Indigenous and racial minorities studying forestry.

- Not clear if this is self screen or universities have biased entry requirements.
- More immigrants entering the profession, employer bias may limit their entry and success.

Technological

- The use and reliance on technology tools for business will increase and OPFA capabilities must evolve accordingly.
- More widespread use of social media and remote connectivity tools will be significant in maintaining connection with membership working in all sectors and geographic locations.
- Availability of reliable internet connectivity/networks in remote locations may limit accessibility in some locations for members.
- Increased reliance and use of technology tools for businesses will drive efficiencies and cost savings.
- Younger demographic of members is anticipated and they may have high expectation for a technology savvy organization.
- Risk management of potential cyber attacks and insurance to protect the OPFA.
- COVID 19 has stopped all internal face-to-face meetings. This could affect the ability of some to attend meetings.
- Rapid changes – will everyone be able to keep up with the science and how forestry operations are implemented (loggers).
- Move to digitized data in OPFA – where is it stored, how is it protected and who is doing that, how is it updated and kept current?
- With increased technology is there a need for bricks and mortar. PO Box?
- How will the OPFA use technology to enhance communications (internal and external).
- OPFA has invested in technology over the last 3 years in terms of upgrading the website, switching to GSuite, hosting our own webinars and using Zoom meetings.
- 2021 Annual conference will be virtual; possibility to take this forward in the future as alternative for those unable to attend.
- Will be implementing online testing for the new Indigenous Peoples, Lands & Forests Standard in 2021. This new software could be utilized in other ways in the future.
- The OPFA has a lot to learn about available software/technology which is changing all the time (more rapidly at the moment). There are lots of improvements to be made and staff is working hard to adapt, learn and come up with ideas for new ways of operating to improve the member experience.
- There is a threat to personal information that needs to be explored. We still have a significant amount of paper records and then all our digital files.
- We need to review our digital storage and filing which includes standard naming conventions.
- The most recent need and use of Zoom was forced onto the Association and Louise has thankfully been able to help us transition there and make the best use of this tool.
- With all these virtual meetings we can extend our reach by including registrants at the council meetings to attend as spectators. This would improve our transparency to the

membership beyond making our minutes available to them.

- There is a need to harness the Technology to offer more training and information sessions on the role of the association and what it offers. These can be recorded for wider consumption and then count as continuing education credits for all those who attend/view.
- More reliance & use of e-communication, virtual gatherings/ meetings.
- Digital documentation.
- Increasing trend of remote working.
- It feels like there is too much electronic information in general. The opportunity to do the opposite of mainstream can be wise at times. So much effort goes into our newsletter and I believe we should evaluate the idea of moving back to printed copies and mail outs at least some of the time. I'm sure we know RPFs who can donate the paper!
- Could we facilitate member competency records by setting up individual member 'dashboard'? Would such a model allow us to communicate with members more easily? Linked to member accounts, each member would receive notices of training opportunities. Information could be entered on an on-going basis vs annually and tracked, like one's Frequent Flyer status.
- Evaluate the need for a physical office space and make a plan going forward to increase efficiency and reduce costs with all the new technology opportunities that exist.
- Evaluate the need to have a physical conference annually, given the recent innovation and advancement in online events, which may be more inclusive for more members (e.g. perhaps a physical

conference bi-annually could help save money and reach a different audience).

- Recognize the power of technology (maintaining an updated, user friendly and engaging website, optimizing use of social media, working remotely, and useful platforms that enable e-meetings) and consider the benefit of paying for these services instead of doing in-house or by volunteers.
- Virtual archive of OPFA files: need to ensure appropriate security.
- Staff and volunteers need to be trained in cyber security.
- Use of virtual meetings and conferences need to be integrated where appropriate with in person meetings.
- Work from home and storage of physical records need to determine.

APPENDIX B

NOISE Analysis

Needs

- Need to leverage technology as much as possible to drive efficiency and cost savings.
- Need to translate student and provisional members into full or associate members otherwise growth of the organization will be severely limited or non-existent.
- Need to get high school level students interested in Forestry as a profession.
- Need to ensure all organizational policies, practices and procedures are free from any systemic discrimination.
- due to a small staff, human resources to complete tasks/projects are stretched. More staff may be needed if expectations of current staff continue to rise.
- Currently there are financial restraints.
- Better internal and external communications.
- Workload distribution – delegation. What do act and regs really allow? Is it needed? Is there appetite for it? Does OPFA have enough staff for it?
- Rationalization of fees. How does the OPFA compare to similar regulated professions? Need to compare similar salaried positions and professions with similar number of members. Do we need to increase fees?
- Operational effectiveness – finance (ratio of staff to members), data, efficiencies.
- Member training.
- Effective working groups and committees who function well as a unit. If staff are heavily involved in too many working groups as well as the day-to-day running of the organization this can be rewarding, but is time consuming for staff.
- To improve the quality of the webinars and recordings, all staff should have good quality cameras and microphones. (To be fair I have not requested this yet).
- Priscilla needs an intern (or similar) to help with digitising the office as she does not have time to do it herself. Opportunities for this are currently being explored by Fred and Council.
- Being able to hire someone to produce good quality leaflets or short promotional type information videos would be excellent. Staff have been learning video editing and other software, and are more than willing to learn, but time to do so is very limited and the final product may be more professional/better quality with someone who does that as their actual job.
- Better support for the existing registrants since a lot of staff time is dedicated to helping increase the number of registrants.
- Be open to making changes to our bylaw and policies to reflect the global changes in regulators – more transparency, renaming of president to chair and members to registrants.
- More structured meetings with stronger recommendations from staff for decisions would enable better use of Council meeting time. We get too in the weeds sometimes.

- Need strategies to get "Action Items" off the table sooner.
- It appears that time may be the limiting factor, but we have not discussed this.
- Therefore, are finances a limitation if \$ is prohibiting us from having more staff time?
- More frequent, high level communication between meetings with direct messaging would help. Council/Executive Committee remain engaged. However, there should be ground rules for what to send/not send so that people actually read and engage with the emails.
- Council needs to be better informed at a higher level and stick to strategic discussions rather than be so involved in and spend time at operational levels. Staff should be empowered to do this without consulting the Council.
- It feels like we're doing too much (as a board and as volunteers), especially during the same working hours as our day jobs. And COVID makes it easy to add more calls and create more committees, yet it feels we're at risk of overload.
- There is a need for an additional staff member in communications/member liaison/external relations. While I'm relatively new to the board, I hear much about how we feel mis-understood by or unknown by the public, and undervalued by our own members.
- The strategic plan should launch us towards a communications plan. We need realistic, measurable goals that help us track our progress aligned with the impact we wish to have.
- Equity, diversity, inclusion training from third party specialists.
- Active effort to recruit more diverse council members (team should be

representative of membership composition).

- Better financial forecasting
- Maintain & improve membership numbers.
- Maintain public trust.
- Educate membership about the role of OPFA as regulatory body.
- Ensure professional & ethical standards in the membership (develop, maintain & update practice guidance documents)
- Trainings for members of various committees.
- Human & financial resources to potential increase in membership as a result of anticipated changes in the Professional Foresters Act 2000.
- Resources for membership training on upcoming Indigenous competency standard; go digital while ensuring security & safety of business documents.
- Human resources need to be reviewed to ensure the OPFA is able to care and feed its legislative committees and Council as well as undertake the work of a regulator.
- Considerable additional human resources will be needed to support and implement any changes to the Prof For Act and its Regulations.
- Digital security review and policies.
- Most members of the public and students studying professional forestry are unaware that forestry practices on Crown land are regulated and that professional forestry as a profession is regulated.
- The name of the regulator is confusing to members and potential members: the word association implies an advocate for foresters.
- Employers such as municipalities need to be informed on the benefits they

obtain from employing regulated professionals.

- Senior management at MNRF need to be informed why professional forestry is regulated and the benefits the province obtains. Attempts to inform them have not been accepted in the past.

Opportunities

- Student and provisional memberships provide strong growth opportunity for the organization. Need to continue to raise awareness among new students in the forest-related post-secondary programs.
- Technology solutions for businesses (including cloud solutions) provide increasing opportunities for virtual office and remote/teleworking. Continuing need for bricks and mortar office should be evaluated.
- Other organizations are capturing information about the diversity of their organization to ensure they either reflect the communities they serve or to ensure they are considering the needs of their workforce and taking advantage of strengths a diversified workforce offers. As a regulator, there should be similar opportunity for OPFA to take stock of its members/license holders to be able to (for example) understand if everyone is given equal opportunity to serve on committees/council, have their voices heard, or to ensure promotional or communication materials (photos, etc.) that are distributed truly reflect the diversity of the profession.
- There is an opportunity to increase those coming into the profession by making it better known that forestry is a great profession. Have seen great promotional videos on forestry as a

profession, appealing to those who love being out in the field. This could be used on the website for anyone considering this profession.

- Speaking or sending a message to students in accredited and unaccredited university programs alike. Those from unaccredited programs are great candidates for Associate Membership.
- Making the credential assessment process less onerous without reducing the standard.
- Reinstate the Career Awareness Working Group perhaps, however, as Council disbanded the WG many are reluctant to rejoin the WG. Others may be willing to step in.
- Learn from other regulators – along all alignments (management, registration, complaints etc.).
- Complete strategic plan with commitment to implement.
- Changes to Registered Professional Foresters Act.
- Professional and knowledgeable members, council and staff.
- More involvement by members – how?
- Digitising the office files- have been talking about it for years and are currently exploring viable options to get it done.
- Utilising new software/technology to make sure we are getting the best potential out of what we are paying for.
- Producing short but good quality materials (flyers, videos etc.) that can be distributed that explain that professional forestry is regulated/what a professional forester does/what the OPFA does/where someone can find a professional forester for hire etc.
- For example, BC has good quality videos that they put on TV. I am unsure if we are able to do that kind of thing, but we

could produce some for the website/social media.

- Make the best use of our social media to showcase the diversity of profession.
- Create a file and folder naming convention and spend some time structuring the records within Google Drive.
- Engage with the registrants to improve their knowledge of the OPFA.
- Bring forest technicians into the fold.
- I think Louise has been doing some really cool things to make the OPFA more progressive in a digital world - can she be given more time or room to run with this?
- Glad to see discussions about hiring interns or short-term contracts, too bad it didn't work out, would like to see more of this.
- If we start bringing more Associate members on board through the new scopes of practice, I think the fee schedule should be re-evaluated - from scratch. Is it fair for Associates to pay the same as full members? We have talked about this so much but I know my opinion and reasoning does not match what has been provided as rational for the current structure.
- We have excellent membership engagement. Yet we can do more. If we invite more members one-on-one to participate, especially newer, younger members and retirees we could increase our capacity.
- OPFA legal counsel resource person is excellent as a communicator and wealth of knowledge. The benefit of having such a resource person speak to members as both an insider and an outsider is huge to raising the awareness of what it means to be a regulated professional in 2020.

- Establish a "Professional Foresters' Week" annually. Think about ways in which RPFs could engage students and the public during that period i.e., forest open houses' etc.
- Make membership accessible to Francophone foresters.
- Indigenous elected public council.
- Learn from the experience of other regulators.
- Proactive response to developments in regulatory framework at provincial & national level
- Potential increase in membership as a result of anticipated changes in the Act
- Increase inclusivity - compare how other non-health regulators admit registrants.
- Consider certification of courses rather than only accreditation of whole programs.
- Create resources to inform high school students of professional forestry,
- Encourage employers to hire prof foresters and ensure that there is a reasonable process to accept people from allied occupations to become registrants.
- Inform forest NGOs to undertake advocacy. This has been done but there has been no action.
- Understand why students in accredited programs are not seeking registration. Provide a measure as to what are the number of potential candidates (ie students graduating each year from the various accredited programs in Ontario), and what is the percentage that become OPFA registered. What is the number of students pursuing the CAP option, and what programs are they from? Attempt to address the reasons why students are not interested in becoming OPFA members.

- Team up with ECO Canada, they have their own certification program for environmental certification. Perhaps something can be done here, as they have federal funds for student experience.

Improvements

- Perception that OPFA is focused on traditional production forest practitioners and not necessarily on practitioners working in other areas such as research and development, urban landscapes, etc.
- We may not be providing value added service that members may need. Example: As a regulator we want members to be well trained and knowledgeable, but are we providing timely information and connecting members with diverse training opportunities?
- Public awareness. Partnering perhaps with the CIF or Forests Ontario to do some commercials to educate the public on what forestry is, that it is regulated and to practice you must be a member which some employers most likely still do not realize.
- Work with the MNRF to ensure those they employ are members (if required) including district managers etc.
- Look at the cost of Life Membership which inhibits some and because of it some have resigned.
- Continue to educate members what it means to be part of a regulated profession.
- Some have commented that the application process on the website is not easily navigated. Note: improvements have begun in this regard.
- HR practices – first must decide how much effort for 5 staff. Are basic legislative requirements being met?
- Internal Communications - more how than what.
- External Communications – what is a regulated profession and what does it mean and not mean. Need to balance message without seeming to advocate.
- Understanding what it means to be a regulated profession (more members than public).
- Succession planning – decide if its needed (council and staff).
- Engaging more members in the preparation of guidance and standards materials.
- Communicating with members so they understand what it means to be a regulated professional and that the OPFA is not a club. For example, still get complaints about the fees and people asking "what they get for their money". Needs to be an attitude shift. I do see an attitude shift in the younger generation however and we have been focusing efforts into educating members on this subject; this needs to continue.
- Communicating with the public; raising awareness that professional forestry is regulated.
- Communicating with students who may be potential foresters; could be done by reaching out and arranging more webinars, visits from staff and/or members (COVID allowing of course).
- Website is frequently being updated but there is a lot of content and there is plenty of room for improvement in the messaging and formatting. Staff is working on this but will be ongoing.
- A consistent complaint is how complicated & time consuming the

competency assessment (CAP or Associate) process is. Hopefully the new CAP system improves this, but we should continue to look for ways to make it more efficient.

- Make full use of the technology that is available to the Association, especially GSuite.
- Be conscious of Council members and volunteers' time and use for the most appropriate tasks/actions.
- Members want more visible value from the OPFA, but perhaps this is achieved through simpler, more concise communication about what the OPFA is and does.
- There seems to be a lot of unknown among the public and members about what warrants a complaint. Should we think about communicating better on this, providing examples?
- Understand better the line between advocacy and engagement. Clearly understand our target audiences and key messages.
- Do we have a role in addressing general criticisms related to the practice of forest management or only when a complaint is received? Must we be reactive vs proactive?
- The need to create more positive energy around continuous education.
- Messaging on the role of OPFA as regulatory body.
- Registration process for applicants from non-accredited programs & international institutes.
- Understanding & messaging on professional reliance.
- Security of business documents.
- Mentorship program for provisional members.
- Outreach to high school students needs to be increased. Most high school

students do not know that the profession exists.

- Info to university students in CFAB accredited programs needs to be integrated into more courses.
- University profs teaching CFAB accredited programs need to be informed on what is a regulated profession.
- More training for members on what it means to be regulated and how to improve their professional practice.
- Review the CFAB accreditation process so that it meets our current and future needs.
- Need resources to ensure both registrants and public are aware of the complaints process.
- Not sure how well known the CAP option is to students coming from non-accredited programs or graduate students. What is the strategy to get the information out there?

Strengths

- OPFA is the only professional practice regulator in the sector.
- Environmental awareness and climate change concerns seem to be at an all-time high and there is a link between well-managed, healthy forests and a healthy environment (i.e., with respect to air quality, water quality, species diversity, etc.).
- Council, Committees and working groups are engaged and are very much hands-on.
- Members are volunteering to help the work of the OPFA and progress the profession.
- Members, particularly younger members, seem to be very keen to promote and maintain the profession.

- Technically knowledgeable and professional members, councillors and staff.
- Strong legal support.
- Good cooperation among staff and councillors.
- Good technical material available to public and members – get them to read it!
- Willingness to adapt.
- I think the webinars and recorded material is working well and allowing us to reach out to the membership and provide information in more interesting ways.
- Have had good feedback so far.
- Registration process: there is room for improvement still but we have seen an increase in practicing membership which suggests the current process is working.
- Responding to member enquiries. I believe we have a fairly efficient turnaround for enquiries and received good staff feedback in our 2018-ember satisfaction survey.
- The fairness of our processes; the Office of the Fairness Commissioner reviews our processes and provides feedback which is usually positive or minor changes/recommendations.
- Registration process, especially the support given to those going through the CAP.
- Financially sound.
- An increase in the number of total practicing registrants over the past couple of years.
- Successfully adapted to the challenges of the pandemic.
- Delivered a virtual AGM.
- Use of Google Drive has been a big improvement from old way of reviewing/contributing but there should be guidelines (e.g we're looking for... kind of review, cut off date is...).
- The OPFA excels at getting willing participants through the application process - well done! Members are very happy with the service they have been receiving from Louise.
- The new scopes of practice for different types of practitioners is very exciting and I look forward to seeing where this could go.
- There is significant energy being exerted to Board activities by board members.
- Staff have adapted very well to COVID context and mastered document sharing and web communication technology.
- We have members spread across every corner of Ontario, many of whom are active in their communities and are ambassadors for the profession.
- We have a good balance sheet.
- We learned the hard lesson of losing a significant (and costly) court case. With that comes the wisdom of seeking to further prioritize education and information to achieve member competency.
- We have diversity, of age, sex, race, geography, employment context and experience to reach out to a diverse audience in Ontario.
- Dedicated staff & executive.
- Progressive council with willingness to learn & improve.
- Good working relationship between council & office.
- Enthusiastic public members on the Council.
- Social media presence.
- Engagement with membership through seminars on topics like what does it mean to be a Regulated Profession.

- Up-to-date website.
- Financial book balancing.
- Indigenous representation through public council member.
- High numbers of students at CFAB accredited programs signing up as members, though this has stalled due to the programs being delivered via the internet.
- High numbers of people from non CFA accredited programs applying for Provisional membership.
- High intake of provisional members since 2014.

Exceptions

- Awareness is being raised among students in post secondary programs by the Exec. Dir.
- Executive Director visits U of T and Lakehead University to talk to students in the accredited programs about joining the OPFA.
- ED has conducted seminars on being a registrant in a regulated body.
- Training does occur – need more member engagement.
- Communications does occur – need to find ways to make it better
- Using software/technology has increased in the last 3 years.
- Communication with the membership has increased and improved.
- Registration process has been adapted to be more inclusive.
- Looking to hire help to digitise files.
- Currently there is limited engagement with some committee members on training but not at the level of all the registrants.
- Adapting to digital communications means well! Do we still need an office space?

- Good to see this strategic plan underway.
- Legal training is excellent and diversity committee is a welcome development.
- Adaptation of Indigenous competency standard.
- Messaging on the role of a regulatory body.
- Practice guidance documents.
- Formulation of Equity & Inclusion task team.
- Info sheets describing how municipalities, Conservation Authorities, etc. benefit from using regulated prof distributed to some.
- Few members speak to high schools.
- Support from current MMNF Minister.