



# Forest Conservation in the Canadian Boreal

In the heart of Canada's boreal, Nature United is working with First Nations on a nine-million hectare commercial forest tenure to help build a resilient future where people and nature thrive.

## Canada's boreal: a critical conservation opportunity

Canada's boreal is one of the world's last intact forests and offers a vast array of benefits to nature and people.

Home to more than 600 Indigenous communities that depend on the boreal for their livelihoods and cultural wellbeing, it is also:

- part of Earth's largest terrestrial carbon storehouse, playing a key role in regulating climate change;
- a reservoir of freshwater with thousands of lakes, rivers, and wetlands;
- a nursery for billions of migrating birds; and
- home to moose, wolves and woodland caribou.

Canada shares a history common to many places around the world of Indigenous peoples being denied the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, decisions that impact their lands and livelihoods. In the boreal, this history of colonization and unilateral resource development poses critical challenges to community wellbeing and healthy ecosystems.

## A new way forward

With deeply rooted connections to the land, Indigenous communities have stewarded the boreal for millennia. Nature United is committed to supporting the voices, choices, and actions of the nine First Nations within the Manitoba Project area as they determine how best to manage natural resources in their territories.

Nature United – the Canadian affiliate of The Nature Conservancy – will lead this multi-year project to create a new model of shared resource management between Indigenous people, industry, and government that supports healthy forests and communities across millions of hectares of Manitoba's boreal forest.

### Project vision

A resilient future for the people and nature of Canada's boreal forest where conservation supports economic and community wellbeing.



## The Project in Manitoba

The Project covers North America's largest commercial forest tenure - the nine-million hectare Forest Management License #2 (FML-2). The territories of many First Nations overlap the FML-2 forest tenure.



## Indigenous stewardship

Indigenous peoples have a vital role to play as the forest's most valuable conservation leaders. Through this Project, Nature United will support the leadership of First Nations as they reclaim their place as stewards of their territories by:

- **Creating land use plans** that articulate their vision for the lands, waters, and wildlife, including moose and caribou, on their territories.
- **Building capacity** in monitoring and management by investing in resource management personnel as well as Indigenous Guardian and youth-on-the-land programs.
- **Developing shared management agreements** where opportunities exist with government and industry that reflect community priorities and values.

The Project supports these community-driven initiatives by providing expertise, training, and financial support. Nature United also convenes gatherings and workshops to support First Nations, government, and industry partners in developing a new vision for the Project area.

Throughout the course of the Project, Nature United will continue to build new relationships and facilitate community-based planning by sharing best practices among Indigenous stewards and providing resources to support the First Nations in realizing their goals.

## Economy and climate

The forests and soils of the boreal are valuable natural climate solutions that maximize nature's potential to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. The Project area has the potential to store millions of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over time and its sustainable management can make a lasting contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change.

Conservation and economic development must go hand in hand to ensure lasting conservation results. Bringing together industry and Indigenous leaders, the Project will explore sustainable economic development opportunities through the adoption of improved forest management practices, and the evaluation of participation in forest carbon markets.

The Project will develop long-term economic strategies that seek to capitalize on the value of all forest products and services, including fiber, carbon and tourism that benefits local communities and aligns with conservation and climate outcomes.

## Advancing the future of conservation

Enhancing the environmental, cultural, and socio-economic resilience of Indigenous peoples' lands is a key focus of the BHP Foundation's Environmental Resilience Global Signature Program. Support of projects such as this brings together key partners behind a common goal to achieve lasting change.

For more information on the BHP Foundation and the Environmental Resilience Global Signature Program, visit [bhp.com/foundation](https://bhp.com/foundation).