

## News From MTI

Hello Mass Timber Colleagues!

### Vanessa Nhan Evaluates Available Wood Supply for Mass Timber in Ontario

Vanessa Nhan, a recent Master of Forest Conservation graduate, and an MTI intern, completed her capstone project this fall. She researched the question “Is there an available and sustainable wood supply for mass timber in Ontario?” The question gains relevance today as mass timber is increasingly presented as a sustainable alternative to concrete and steel construction, putting the material in high demand. The research was carried out with support from Glen Foley, Forest Modeling Specialist at the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Emmett Snyder, previously MTI Project Manager.

To identify the extent of wood available in Ontario’s Crown forests to support a new mass timber sector, the research project took a two-step approach. First, a general examination of Forest Management Plans across Ontario’s Crown forests found that there was an annual volume of 5.1 million cubic meters of unutilized wood – wood that is not allocated to shareholders or mills under wood supply commitments. Next, Nhan selected two Forest Management Units within the Crown Forest in the Sault Ste. Marie district (Figure 1) to investigate further, building a strategic forest management model to establish the available wood for mass timber in that region. These units have a large proportion of mixedwood stands, of which very little are historically harvested. Mixedwood stands typically have low harvest volumes because of their low commercial value species. Nhan found that within these stands, there was an annual volume of about 19,000 cubic metres of SPF alone from mixedwood stands (Figure 2) – enough to theoretically support a small CLT factory of 10,000 cubic meters.

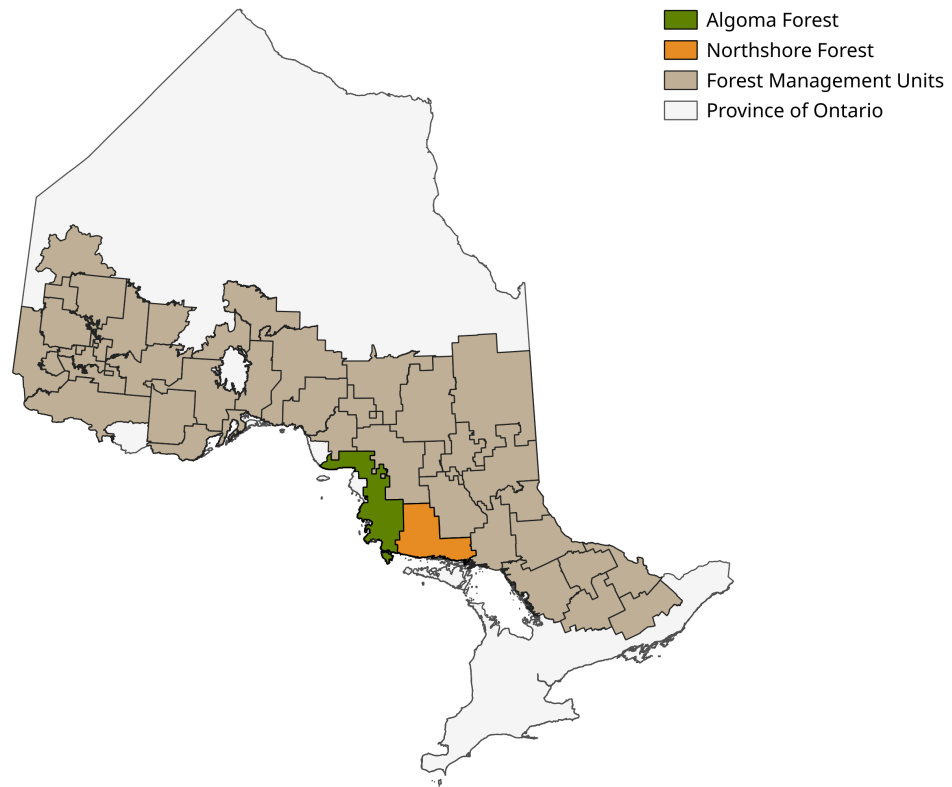


Fig. 1. Selected FMUs in Sault St. Marie. Image Credit: Vanessa Nhan

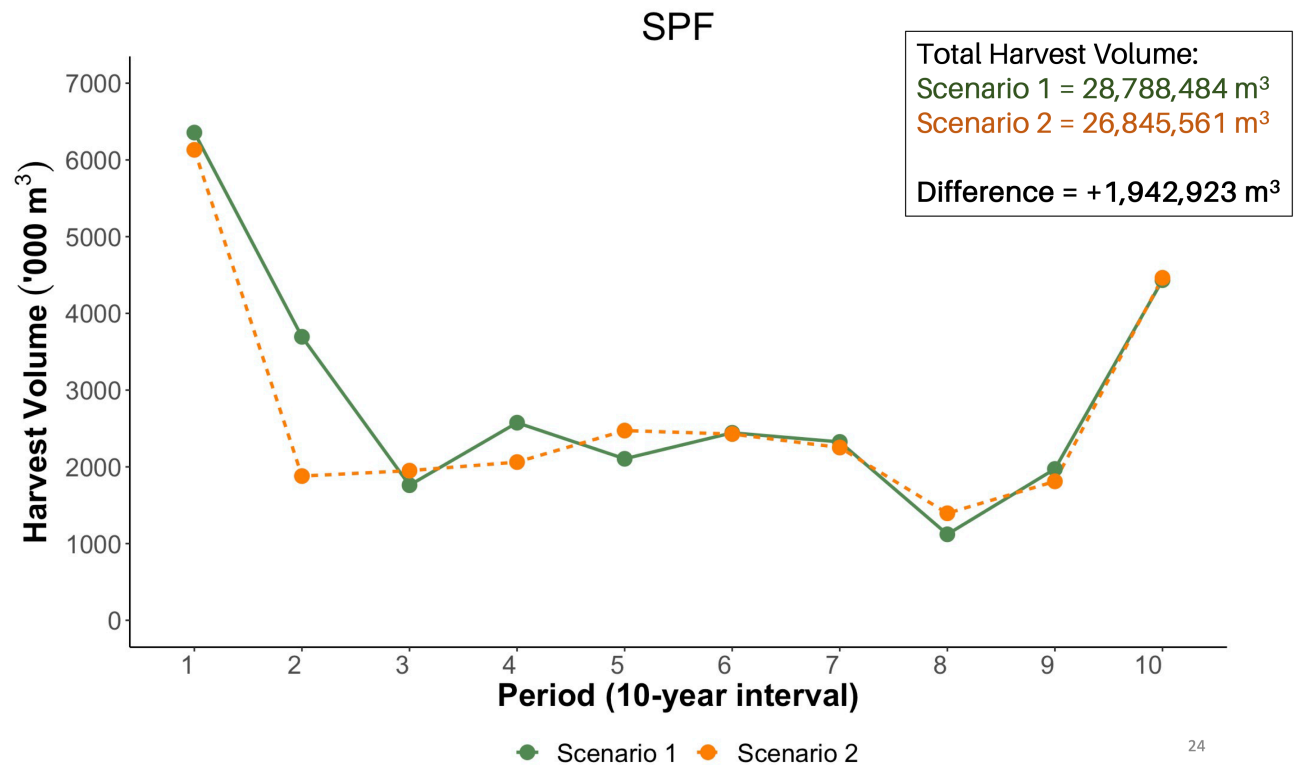


Fig. 2. Scenario 1: Baseline available harvest volume and Scenario 2: constrained harvest volume to be no greater than historic mixedwood harvest volume. A 100-year volume of 1.9 million cubic metres, or an annual volume of 19,000 cubic meters, of SPF is theoretically available for harvest in these mixedwood

*stands*. Image Credit: Vanessa Nhan

These findings suggest that within other forest management units in Ontario, there is potential for a substantial amount of wood that is unutilized and potentially available for mass timber.

Remaining topics to investigate include identifying other and competing sustainability values that are important to model for their effect on wood supply, looking at forest types outside of mixedwood stands, and identifying barriers in developing a market for low-value species in Ontario.



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