

GLFC 70th Anniversary Dinner

Thursday October 29, 2015 – Bushplane Museum

[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]

Good evening everyone. My wife Kyleigh and I are very glad to be joining you tonight as we celebrate seventy years of the Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Sault Ste. Marie.

I'd like thank our previous speaker, Kathleen McFadden, Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for joining us as well.

Earlier this year, I enjoyed having the opportunity to tour GLFC with a number of our councillors. I left very impressed by the staff, their expertise, and by the scope of the work and research going on at the lab.

Despite the fact that many Saultites drive by GLFC multiple times a day, I think that your centre is in many ways a bit of a hidden gem in our community.

Many of our citizens don't realize that we have internationally-recognized experts and leading-edge research taking place in our midst.

But if your work is a little mysterious to some of the public, it is definitely well-known in the forest science sector. As the largest federal forest research centre in Canada, you have helped make Sault Ste. Marie a recognized part of the national and international science communities.

Today's Great Lakes Forestry Centre can trace its origins to 1945, when a forest research laboratory was opened in Sault Ste. Marie to combat an outbreak of spruce budworm.

In 1950, the national Laboratory for Insect Pathology was opened at the centre's present site. Though I know you are always quick to point out that there is far more to GLFC than "bugs," insect research and pathology continues to be a big focus of the centre's work. Today, insect research has expanded from native forest pests to exotic invasive species as well, such as Asian Longhorned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer.

In the 1960's, forest fire research was added to the centre's portfolio. Scientists working at GLFC contributed to the development of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System—the most widely-used fire danger rating system in the world.

Another signature project for GLFC arrived with the launch of the Turkey Lakes Watershed research area in 1979. For over 35 years, Turkey Lakes has been providing empirical data that has been used to study the effects of acid rain and climate change.

After seventy years, the Great Lakes Forestry Centre's reputation for innovation and excellence is both well-deserved and still growing. From forest pests to forest fires, silviculture to biodiversity, the Centre is continuing to contribute to the body of scientific knowledge and to the health and sustainability of Canada's forests and natural resources.

But the Great Lakes Forestry Centre has also contributed to the vibrancy of Sault Ste. Marie. Your work has put us on the map for forest research. You've also brought expertise from all over the world to our community and have added to our diversity.

We're glad to have the Great Lakes Forestry Centre as part of our community. Your centre has a storied past, an exciting present, and a promising future that still lies ahead.

So on behalf of the Office of Mayor and Sault Ste. Marie City Council, congratulations again to everyone at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre on this milestone occasion. Thank you for inviting me to join you and please enjoy the remainder of the evening.