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A guide to planning and **implementing restoration-focused** tree planting projects with public funding from the 2 Billion Trees (2BT) program in Atlantic Canada and the Wabanaki Forest.

Developed Collaboratively by:

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)
Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) Atlantic Region
Community Forests Canada
Community Forests International



Habitat Restoration Tree Planting

2025

Quick Facts

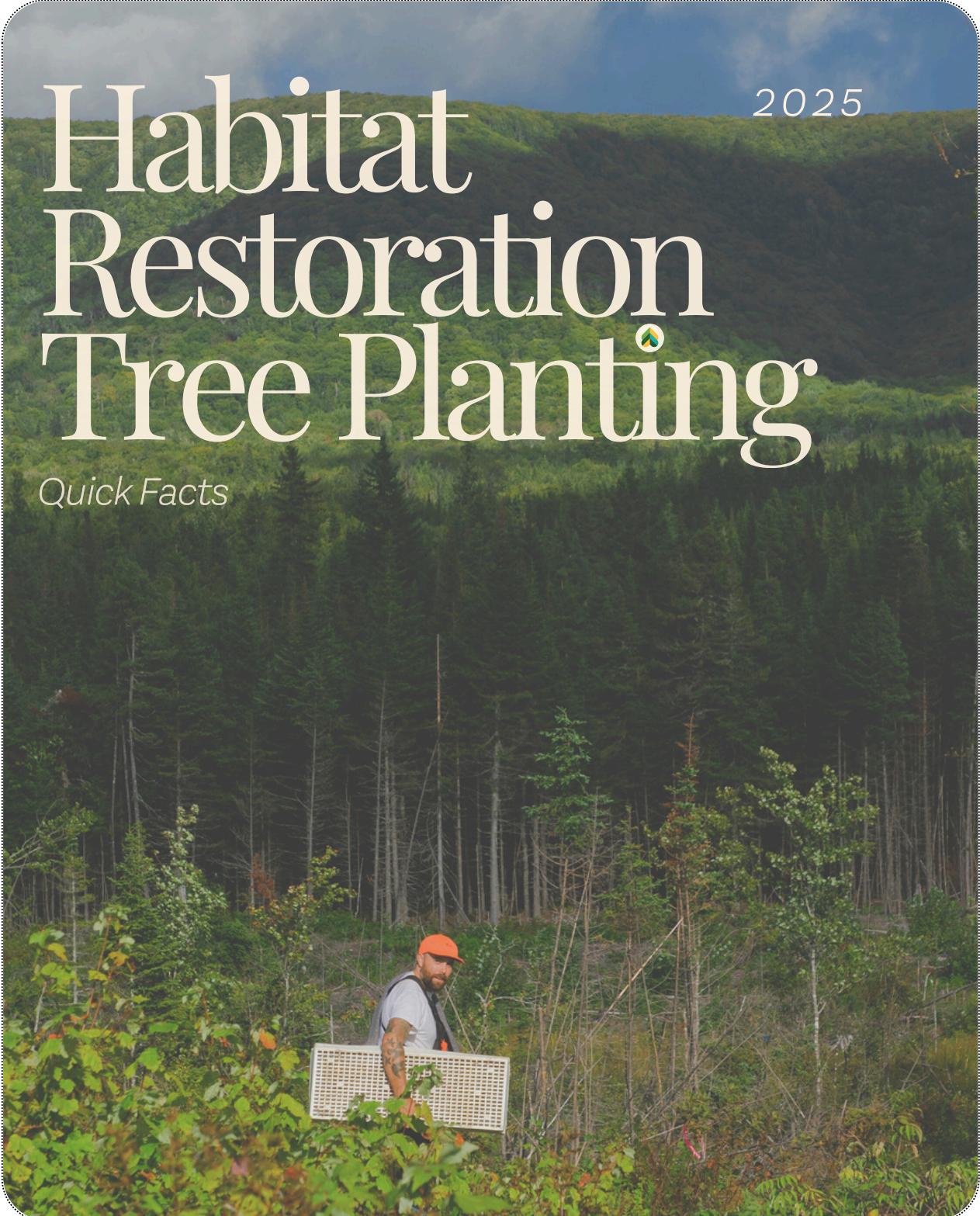




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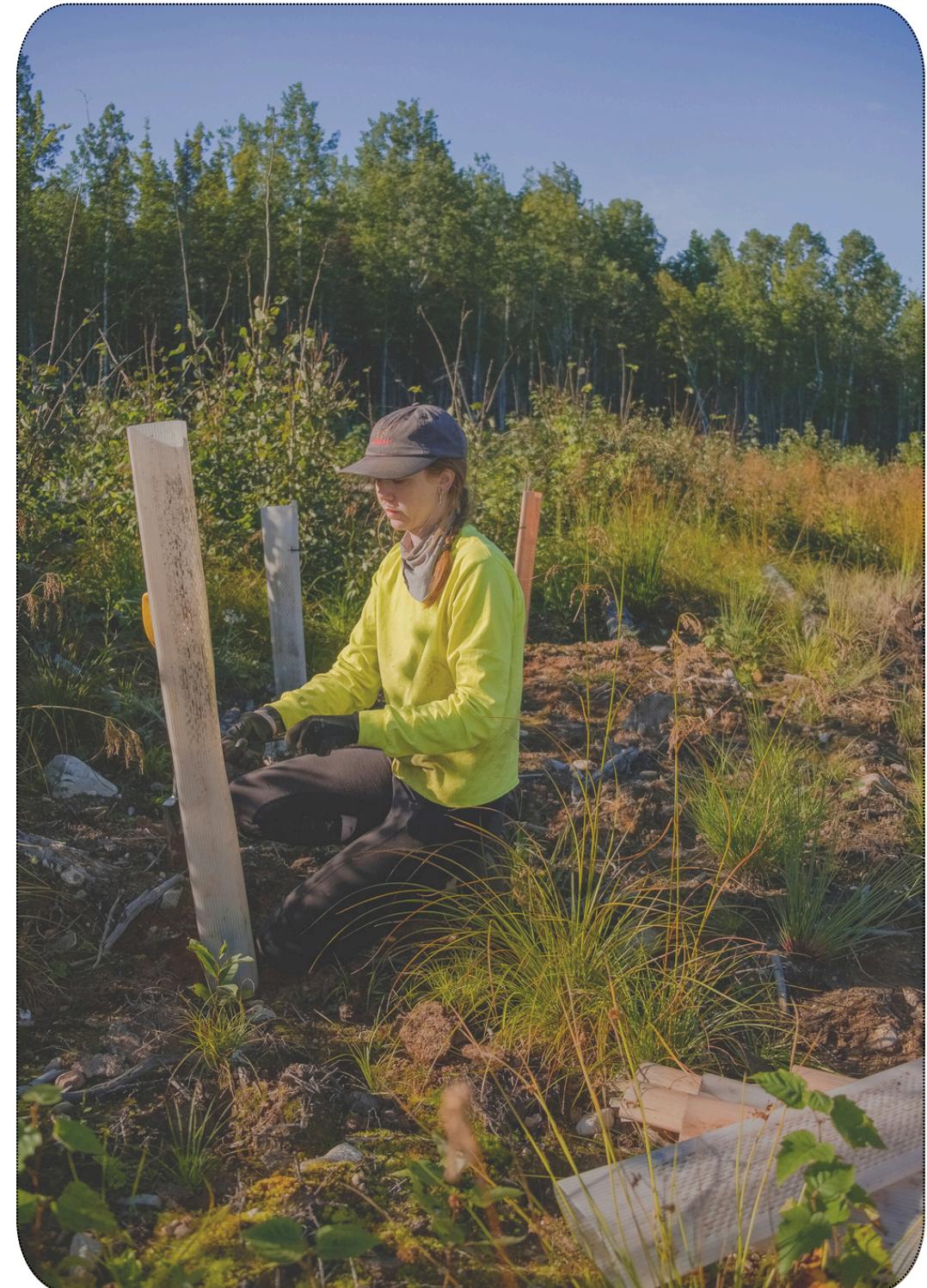
2 Billion Trees At a Glance

Tree planting projects supported by the Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) 2BT program fall into three streams:

1. Prepare to Plant Stream (capacity building for Indigenous organizations)
2. Small-Scale Planting Stream (average 50,000 - 499,999 trees/year)
3. Mass Planting Stream (average 500,000 or more trees/year)

For more information or to apply, visit the official 2 Billion Trees website here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/2-billion-trees.html>



To successfully implement a project of any size the main considerations are:

Trees, Planters, Site, and Reporting



Trees

- Sourcing / Ordering
- Transportation
- Protection
- Care Plan



Planters

- Contractors
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Training



Reporting

- Budget
- Quarterly Reports
- Communications



Site

- Purchase or Permissions
- Site Evaluation/Plan
- Future Stewardship



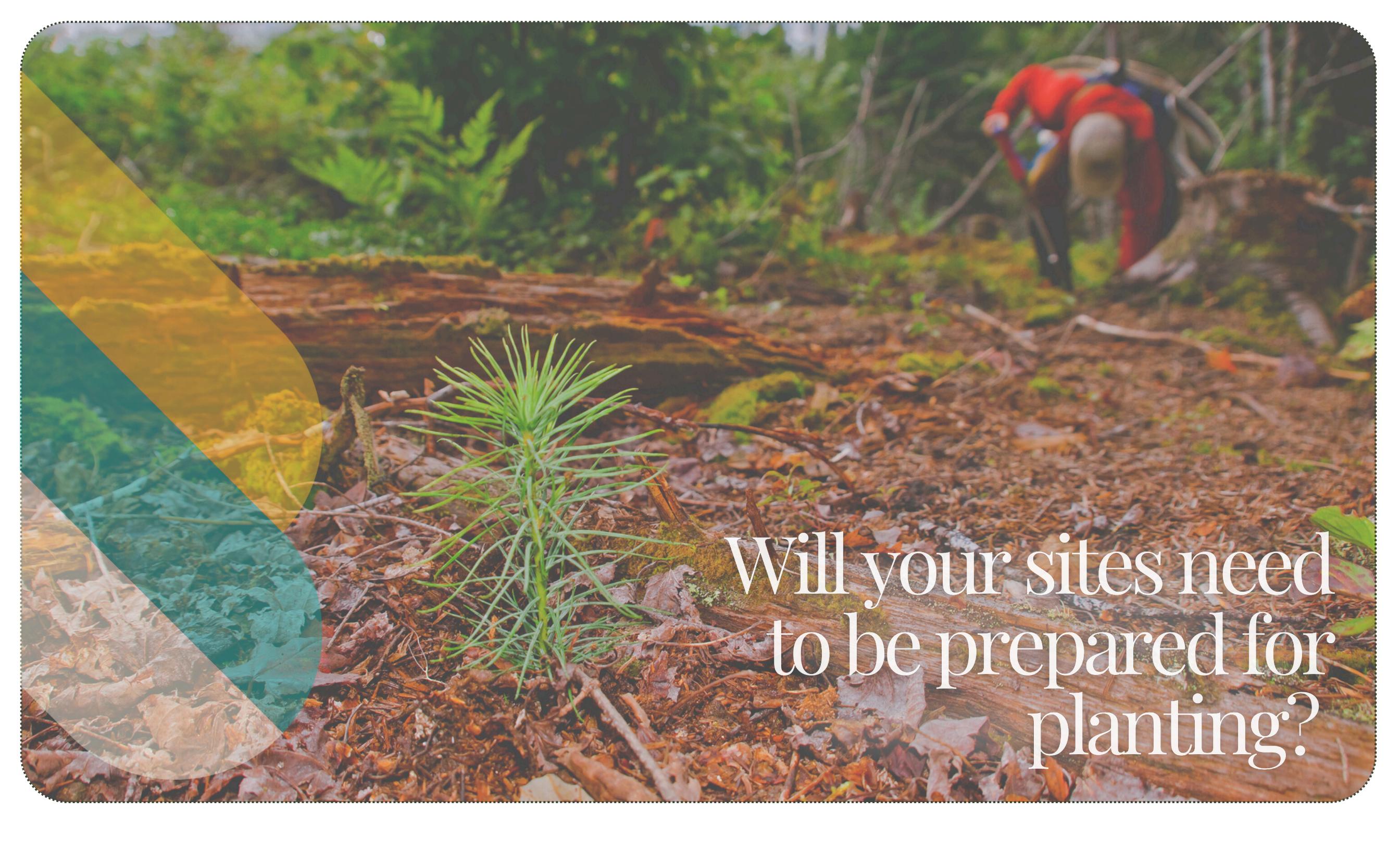
Site Specifics

What Are You Looking To Restore?

Sites should be selected based on suitability and need for restoration. Types of lands include:

- Afforestation in areas that have previously had tree cover, but have been managed for agriculture, mining or other intensive uses are priority for the 2BT program.
- Riparian restoration, such as adding or enhancing watercourse buffer zones.
- Naturally-disturbed areas impacted by fire, wind/hurricanes or insects.
- Clearcuts that have not regenerated adequately (or lack diverse species) and that are no longer within an intensive forest management cycle.

Once you have the type(s) of sites identified, think about how you are going to secure them. Are there long-term agreements with private landowners, or will your organization purchase the property outright? Remember that the 2BT program is not able to fund land acquisition at this time.



Will your sites need
to be prepared for
planting?

Preparatory work (site preparation) involving machinery is an eligible expense under 2BT; however, this should be done on an as-needed basis only. There is a wide variety of techniques and each should be evaluated carefully based on the desired outcomes within a particular project site.

Possible site preparation techniques include:



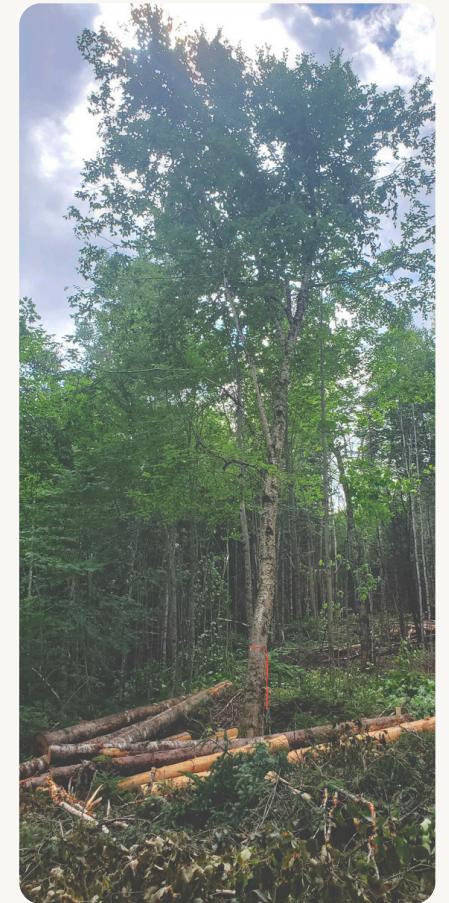
1.

Mechanical site preparation such as dragging or trenching to create desirable microsite conditions for planting.



2.

Vegetation removal, including forms of competition control (e.g. mowing).



3.

Restorative silviculture in degraded forests to open up spaces for enrichment planting.

Habitat Restoration Proposals

In habitat restoration proposals, site preparation should be minimized and only used when necessary to promote a diversity of species and/or reduce competition (e.g. invasive species control). All site preparation should be clearly laid out in 2BT proposals, and any changes to the initial plans, should be discussed with Natural Resource Canada program officers.

2BT funding will also support soil amendments and intermediate species planting depending on the restoration project, should also be discussed with your NRCan program officer.



How do I select species?

The 2BT program is focused on planting the right tree in the right place – but what does this mean exactly?

- Selecting tree species that are ecologically-appropriate for the planting site.
- Selecting tree species that are resilient based on climate change projections.
- Selecting tree species that will provide environmental & biodiversity co-benefits.

How about shrubs?

- The 2BT program recognizes that shrubs are an essential part of habitat restoration, and can support tree survival and health.
- Shrubs are eligible to be included in project costs as long as they don't exceed 15% of the total project value or the total number of trees planted.



What do I need to do when preparing my tree order?



Growing seedlings can take up to several years. Ensure that the timely delivery of your project agrees with the timelines of your nursery(s) and planting contractor. Order EARLY!



Ask your tree supplier questions to be clear about what style of nursery pot the seedlings will be in. Make sure your planting contractor is aware as well because it will influence how they're handled.



Unloading and storing trees can be labour, water, and energy intensive. Stay in frequent communication with your nursery representative and contractor to make sure that trees are spending the least amount of time between leaving the nursery and being planted. Delivery timelines must correspond with stock handling considerations (below).



Develop a comprehensive plan for delivery from nursery, transport to the site(s), and storage until planted. Enclosed trailers are ideal as wind will shock and dry out these seedlings.



Whenever possible store trees on-site in the shade. If needed, create a shade shelter using special Sylvicool tarps which allow airflow to seedlings. NEVER store trees directly under a regular tarp without airflow as this will kill the seedlings. Water daily, or more if required (wind and heat will increase the need for watering).



Hardwoods should not be placed in planting bags but should be planted directly out of the tray/container. Limit the number of trees in planting bags at one time, where possible, to avoid damage from crushing. Ensure trees are handled gently and (ideally) from the rootball rather than the sensitive tops.

Paperwork for Planting

Landowner Agreements:

There is no “one size fits all” landowner agreement. Develop a template which can be tailored to the goals of the project, and later modified to reflect the needs of the individual landowner(s).

Things to consider when developing landowner agreements:

Did you know?

In Nova Scotia
the Forest Safety
Society offers
courses and advice
for operations?

[visit FSS](#) 



- **Access:** who is responsible for any damage to the road/infrastructure? Is access through someone else's property? Do they need to be asked as well?
- **Liability:** who is responsible for any incidents onsite. If using a planting contractor, ask for proof of liability insurance. If working with volunteers or staff ensure you have your own policies in place.
- **Tree Care:** Is the landowner expected to care for trees in any way (before or after planting), and for what duration?
- **Monitoring:** How is monitoring and future work going to be communicated? Will further contracts need to be made?

Contractor Agreements

Look to other organizations that have run similar projects, or ask local forestry professionals and groups (“Wood Marketing Boards” in NB, “Woodlot Owner Groups” in NS) when seeking out planting contractors and developing agreements.

Direct experience with restoration-focused tree planting in particular, or additional training, will be necessary.

Remember that conventional tree planting operations are optimized for high volumes and speed of planting, and this can sometimes conflict with your restoration operations. A contractor inexperienced with restoration-focused tree planting may still be a great option, so long as they understand that “business as usual” is inadequate and they demonstrate enthusiasm and competence by asking the right questions about your specific needs.

- **Determining a fair price.** To determine a fair price, the contractor will need you to help them determine the specific tree varieties and sizes, stock handling considerations, transportation and storage logistics, site details, and other key aspects of your project. A per-tree price, though standard in industrial forestry, should only be expected for large projects and only once the contractor has been fully briefed on all project details. Keep in mind that every project is different. There is no “going rate” for this type of work.
- **Legal agreements.** Local forestry professionals and groups often have contract templates available to use if you or your contractor don’t already have those available. Ask for proof of liability insurance and worker’s compensation if appropriate. Make sure to have a contract in place in advance of your planting season and continue to communicate frequently through its delivery as logistics and timing can shift quickly. Establish who the key contact people will be to ensure open and clear communication. Remember that a planting contractor shouldn’t be expected to provide training or host staff or volunteers unless that’s specifically agreed on beforehand and outlined in the contract (because it creates additional work for them to manage).

Follow Up and Long Term Monitoring

Planted trees should be monitored for survival rates and health at least for the duration of the 2BT program (up to March 31, 2031). Costs associated with monitoring during this time are eligible for reimbursement. Although costs associated with monitoring beyond the 2BT program end date are not eligible for funding, participants are encouraged to develop effective longer term monitoring strategies to ensure the trees they plant grow into healthy forests over time.

What about tending and fill-planting?

In-fill or enrichment planting (adding new trees around existing ones to increase diversity or tree density) and tending planted seedlings are valuable activities that can add considerable ecological integrity to degraded sites. All in-fill activities must have the primary objective to support enduring climate resilience, restoration, or biodiversity. In-fill planting should not be used to carry out business as usual forest management or be part of legal obligations to regenerate forests.

A selection of tree seedling sources:



T&D Nursery (Debbie Reeves: 902-689-2737)

T&D Nursery is located in New Ross, NS. They carry tree seedlings, potted trees, other plants and gardening products.



[Little Tree Farm](#)

Little Tree Farm has selected a number of plants that grow in various zones in North America. Their nursery is located in Wentzell Lake, Nova Scotia. They start trees and pass them onto you, for your garden, property or project.



[Springfield Trees](#) (Jamie Floyd)

Springfield Trees is committed to providing only the highest quality trees. We carefully select and nurture each tree to ensure its health and longevity. Located in New Brunswick.



[Liberty Tree Nursery](#) (Jesse Saindon)

Liberty Tree Nursery is located on a five acre property in the forests of southern New Brunswick, Canada and specializes in cold hardy trees, shrubs, and other plants. Propagating beautiful life-giving plants is our way of creating the world we want to live in.



[Scott and Stewart Forestry](#)

Our Nursery has produced over 100 Million Tree Seedlings in our 25 years of growing. With our 3 Heated Greenhouses and 22 Cold Frames we are able supply trees for local reforestation projects, Christmas Tree Growers, Land and Aquatic Restoration Groups, Climate Change Initiatives, and local landscaping partners.



[Charlie the Tree Guy](#)

At Charlie The Tree Guy, we are committed to helping you find the perfect trees and shrubs for your home or business. Our knowledgeable staff can guide you through the selection process and answer any questions you may have.



[Arbor Nursery](#)

Arbor Nursery is committed to meeting the demand for hardy native and ornamental trees and shrubs that will thrive in Atlantic Canada, including in challenging sea-side and windy locations, with special focus on larger caliper trees. Arbor nursery is located in PEI and is growing trees on over 40 acres of land & opened their doors in 2010.



[Kingsclear Tree Nursery \(Government\)](#)

Kingsclear Tree Nursery, located in Island View NB, currently grows and ships approximately 15 million tree seedlings annually, for reforestation planting programs on both Crown land and private woodlots.



[J. Frank Gaudet Tree Nursery \(Government\)](#)

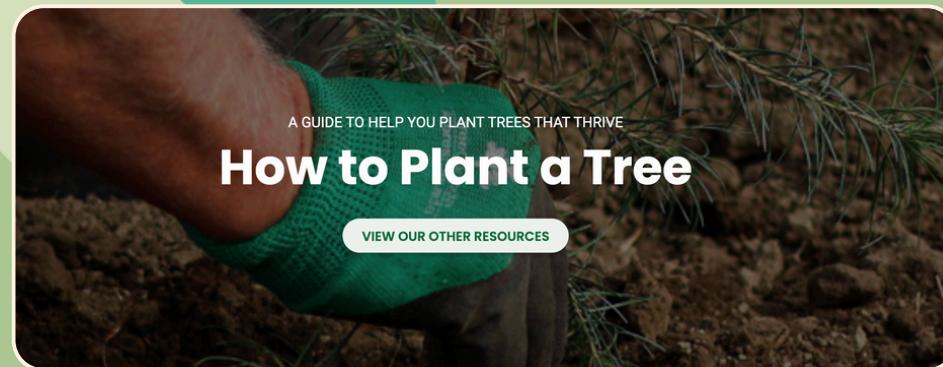
The J. Frank Gaudet Tree Nursery is Prince Edward Island's largest tree seedling production facility. Named after the Province's first forester, the nursery produces tree and shrub seedlings for reforestation projects on private and public forest land.



[Strathlorne Forest Nursery \(Government\)](#)

The Strathlorne Forest Nursery traditionally produces conifer seedlings through a one crop per growing season schedule, trees are typically ordered 14 months before they are required for planting.

Understanding planting as a method of restoration:



2 BILLION TREES

13/13

Community Forests International's '[Our Changing Forest Video Series](#)'



Understanding planting as a method of restoration:

Community Forests International [restoration planting infographic](#)

Nature Conservancy Canada's [New England-Acadian Forest Restoration: A Landowner's Guide to Theory.](#)



New England-Acadian Forest Restoration
A Landowner's Guide to Theory and Practice
By Josh Noseworthy