



NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: November 3, 2022

TIME: 7:00 pm

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

MEETING:

**GANARASKA FOREST
RECREATIONAL USERS
COMMITTEE**

MEMBERS:

Mark Gardiner, Mark Ryckman,
Jennifer Jackman, Garry Niece,
Randy Cunningham, Cam Lowe,
Amber Panchyshyn, Pam Julian,
Mike Ainsworth, Peter Wood,
Marven Whidden, Tracy Richardson

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
3. Minutes of Last Meeting – September 1, 2022 - **attached**
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Delegations:
None
6. Presentation:
None
7. Business Arising from Minutes:

None

8. Correspondence:
None

9. New Business:
a) Winter Trails and Forestry Update – **staff report attached**
b) Review of Ganaraska Forest Trail System – **staff report attached**
c) Hemlock Woolly Adeldig – **Staff report attached**

10. Adjourn

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST

RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

September 1, 2022

RUC 3/22

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair called the Ganaraska Recreational Users Committee meeting to order at 7:25pm and welcomed those present.

MEMBER PRESENT: Mark Gardiner, Chair
Dave Grant, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature
Randy Cunningham, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
Cam Lowe, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Amber Panchyshyn, Ontario Orienteering
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4X4 Clubs
Marven Whidden, Municipality of Clarington

ALSO PRESENT: Ed Van Osch, GRCA Forest Recreation Technician
Pam Lancaster, GRCA Conservation Lands Coordinator

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Tracy Richardson, GRCA Board Representative
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario

ALSO ABSENT: Mark Ryckman, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Mike Ainsworth, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Mark Cousins, Township of Cavan Monaghan
Cross Country Ski Ontario (position unfilled)
Ontario Cycling Association (position unfilled)
Municipality of Port Hope (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 16/22

MOVED BY: Dave Grant

SECONDED BY: Cam Lowe

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the June 2, 2022 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 17/22

MOVED BY: Cam Lowe
SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

None

6. Presentations

None.

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. New Business

a) Forestry and Trail Update Pertaining to the Derecho Storm

Staff report presented for discussion. Ed Van Osch, GRCA Forest Recreation Technician provided a Forestry and Trail update.

RUC 18/22

MOVED BY: Cam Lowe
SECONDED BY: Jennifer Jackman

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Forestry and Trail Update pertaining to the Derecho Storm report for information.

CARRIED.

b) Ganaraska Forest Operational Recovery Plan of Recreational Trails

Operational Recovery Plan and Staff report presented for discussion. RUC members expressed concerns regarding; updates to the trail system including restricting access and removing problematic trails, non-compliance of property rules and access to the Ganaraska Forest.

RUC 19/22

MOVED BY: Marven Whidden

SECONDED BY: Cam Lowe

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Ganaraska Forest Operational Recovery Plan of Recreational Trails staff report for information.

CARRIED.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:01pm.

RUC 20/22

MOVED BY: Randy Cunningham

SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, November 3, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed K...", is positioned above the signature line for the Forest Recreation Technician.

Chair

Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – November 3, 2022

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Winter Trails and Forestry Update

In response to the Derecho Storm, contracted logging crews have been working to clear areas containing major tree blow downs within the West and Central Forests. Due to safety concerns and unusual blowdown hazards, trail-clearing progress has been slower than previously anticipated. In the meantime, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Staff have been working diligently to clear all GRCA owned forest roads leading up to logging work sites. As logging crew's clear areas of hazards, GRCA is opening previously cleared forest roads to make trail connections. In addition, Staff are clearing GRCA authorized dual track trails to provide a greater trail network connection to cleared forest roads. GRCA is re-opening trails as logging crews complete work in one area and move to the next.

The Derecho Storm has left many trees in the Forest with undiagnosed structural stressors. Consequently, staff are often encountering healthy trees that have failed and fallen across previously cleared trails. These unusual tree failures have forced Staff to revisit cleared trails repeatedly to ensure trails are clear. This repeated maintenance is adding to the slow moving pace of the trail re-opening.

GRCA anticipates providing a limited cross-country skiing and snowshoe trail system this winter. Salvage and annual logging is occurring within the vicinity of these trail systems. Staff are hopeful that logging operations will have progressed to the point that allows for limited trail opening. The Blue ski trail will remain closed throughout the winter of 2023.

GRCA is working with the Ganaraska Snowmobile Club (GSC) and Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) in order to provide a high quality trail system for the 2023 winter season. GSC volunteers are busy preparing GRCA trails to facilitate snowmobile traffic.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Winter Trails and Forestry Update as information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – November 3, 2022

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Review of the Ganaraska Forest Trail System

The Derecho Storm of May 21, 2022 has provided the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) with an opportunity to study the functionality and feasibility of the current trail network offered at the Ganaraska Forest. During preliminary surveys, staff identified several areas of concern with the current trail network. Utilizing the Operational Recovery Plan as a guideline, GRCA plans to address challenging areas in order to provide a safe and inclusive trail system.

The following is a non-inclusive list of problematic areas Staff have identified:

- Existence of unofficial trails within the GRCA owned Ganaraska Forest. The official origin of most of these trails is undocumented.
- GRCA does not maintain or authorize the use of these unofficial trails.
- Safety hazards caused by extreme erosion on GRCA sanctioned trails
- Unofficial trails may lead users into environmentally sensitive areas and/or no-trespassing areas or onto neighbouring lands.
- GRCA is unable to provide site specific trail maintenance on a large portion of the unofficial trail network
- There is an over abundance of unofficial and unauthorized access points into the Ganaraska Forest
- Several Parking areas and trails infringe on municipal road use rules

GRCA plans to address these and other trail concerns through consultation with the Recreational User Committee (RUC). GRCA is developing a plan to implement trail restructuring with the intent of enhancing the Forest user experience. Implementation of this redevelopment is under the Ganaraska Forest Operational Recovery Plan (ORP). Over the coming months, the GRCA will look to the RUC and representatives from authorized user categories to provide feedback on specific areas of concern. In advance of consultation, GRCA is taking immediate action to curtail significant challenges. The following is a list of actions requiring immediate action.

Immediate response to trail concerns:

- All trails infringing on GRCA neighbours, do not meet GRCA standards or are unauthorized by municipal rules will be blocked and/ or signed as closed.
- GRCA has removed all unofficial trails from current GRCA mapping this mapping is found at [Ganaraska Forest Recreation Trails | GRCA \(ganaraskaforestcentre.ca\)](https://www.ganaraskaforestcentre.ca)
- GRCA is restricting parking areas to help control access.
- GRCA is increasing the overall capacity of Parking Lot P2 in order to offer authorized access to the trail network.
- Staff are addressing immediate winter trail safety and operational concerns

Restoring and protecting the ecological integrity of the Ganaraska Forest is of utmost priority to the GRCA. In order to ensure the Ganaraska Forest remains a healthy ecosystem for future generations, the GRCA and RUC need to act now and provide a sustainable Recreational Trail system plan that meets the needs of tomorrows multi-use trail requirements.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Redevelopment of the Ganaraska Forest Trail System report as information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – November 3, 2022

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

The recent discovery of a Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) infestation in Grafton has resulted in southern Ontario forests being on high alert, including here at the Ganaraska Forest. HWA preys upon the Eastern Hemlock, one of the most important species in our mature forests, and is capable of impacting Hemlock trees on the same devastating scale that Emerald Ash Borer has done to our Ash trees.

HWA, a miniscule aphid-like insect, is capable of killing Hemlock trees within 4-10 years. It attacks and kills Hemlock trees by feeding on nutrient and water storage cells at the base of needles. The tiny HWA is easily spread by wind, animals (birds especially), and accidental human movement. It has a very complex life cycle however it is best identified from November to May by its white, woolly sacs which are visible on the underside of branches at the base of needles.

The immediate threat to the Ganaraska Forest is relatively low as Eastern Hemlock is currently present in limited amounts and locations. However it is a species whose growth is actively encouraged through forest management, particularly in the shady Maple stands where it is most commonly found. As such, the introduction of HWA to the Ganaraska Forest could have detrimental impacts on future stands.

HWA has been on the radar for GRCA staff and visual surveys have been conducted during forest inventory surveys for the past few years. In addition, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA – the group responsible for preventing HWA's introduction in Canada), has also conducted surveys in light of the Grafton discovery. No sightings of HWA have been confirmed in the Ganaraska Forest to date.

Early detection of this species will be critical to protect our forests. Members of the public are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Eastern Hemlock and to keep an eye out for the woolly, white egg sacs of the HWA when out in forested environments. For more information on HWA or to report a potential sighting, please visit <https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-insects/hemlock-woolly-adelgid/>

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid report as information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ed Hall', written in a cursive style.

Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician