



NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: April 6, 2023

TIME: 7:00 pm

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

MEETING: GANARASKA FOREST
RECREATIONAL USERS
COMMITTEE

MEMBERS: Mark Gardiner, Mark Ryckman, Jim Pearson, Jennifer Jackman, Garry Niece, Randy Cunningham, Cam Lowe, Amber Panchyshyn, Pam Julian, Carolyn Richards, Peter Wood, Steve Brownell, Marven Whidden, Lance Nachoff

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Call to Order

Land Acknowledgement

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we gather is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississauga's and Chippewa's of the Anishinabek, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contribution to the area. We are thankful for the opportunity to live, learn and share with mutual respect and appreciation.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
3. Minutes of Last Meeting – November 3, 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) RUC Member Introduction
 - b) Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference – **staff report attached**
 - c) Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy Terms of Reference – **staff report attached**
 - d) Environmental Concerns – **staff report attached**
 - e) Ganaraska Forest Reopening – **Staff report attached**
10. Adjourn

**MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST
RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE**

November 3, 2022

RUC 4/22

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair called the Ganaraska Recreational Users Committee meeting to order at 7:03 pm, welcomed those present, and introduced the new Ontario Cycling representative Pam Julian.

MEMBER PRESENT: Mark Gardiner, Chair
Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario
Randy Cunningham, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
Cam Lowe, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Pam Julian, Ontario Cycling
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4X4 Clubs
Marven Whidden, Municipality of Clarington
Tracy Richardson, GRCA Board of Director

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

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Mark Ryckman, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Amber Panchyshyn, Ontario Orienteering

ALSO ABSENT: Mike Ainsworth, Ontario Federation of ATV Club
Cross Country Ski Ontario (position unfilled)
Municipality of Port Hope (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)
Township of Cavan Monaghan (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 21/22

MOVED BY: Marven Whidden

SECONDED BY: Cam Lowe

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the Sept 1, 2022 meeting.
CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 22/22

MOVED BY: Pam Julian
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) Winter Trails and Forestry Update

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

RUC 23/22

MOVED BY: Marven Whidden
SECONDED BY: Garry Niece

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Winter Trails and Forestry Update for information.
CARRIED.

b) Review of Ganaraska Forest Trail System

Ed Van Osch and Pam Lancaster provided clarification to RUC questions regarding procedures of how to table items in RUC meetings and how GRCA will obtain and utilize public consultation in regards to future Ganaraska Forest planning.

RUC 24/22

MOVED BY: Pam Julian
SECONDED BY: Jennifer Jackman

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Ganaraska Forest Trail System staff report for information.
CARRIED.

c) Hemlock Woolly Adeldig

Staff report presented for discussion.

RUC 25/22

MOVED BY: Garry Niece
SECONDED BY: Jennifer Jackman

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Helmock Wooly Adeldig staff report for information.
CARRIED.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

RUC 26/22

MOVED BY: Pam Julian
SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the meeting adjourn.
CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 7:00 pm.



Chair

Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – April 6, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference

Each year the Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference (attached) is reviewed and updated when required. At the March 16, 2023 Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Board of Director's meeting, the Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference was approved with revisions.

The Terms of Reference has been updated to include a Code of Conduct.

Additional updates were made to provide clarity to the purpose of the Recreational Users Committee and improvements/corrections to administrative tasks. Updates include:

- Improvements to wording in Section 1.0 to ensure purposes are action oriented and related to recreational uses.
- Added reference to the code of conduct in section 2.2
- Added a role of communicating back to the respective organization or municipality in section 2.2
- Added a statement in section 2.3 to allow for a designate for the role Chair in their absence.
- Changes to the Terms of Reference review process in section 2.5
- Improvements in wording in section 3.3 to describe notice of motions.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Recreational Users Committee receive the Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference for information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority
Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee
Terms of Reference
March 2023

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) is to provide advice to the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Board of Directors on:

1. Etiquette, standards and guidelines for recreational uses occurring in the Ganaraska Forest;
2. Recreational user conflicts within the Ganaraska Forest;
3. Change in trends and technology related to recreational use types in the Ganaraska Forest to mitigate future conflicts, retain recreational interest in the Ganaraska Forest, and ensure safe trail use while reducing liability;
4. Changes to or new Provincial legislation or Ganaraska Forest documents that that pertain to recreational use; and,
5. The multi-use recreational trail system, and how recreational opportunities can be improved upon, while at the same time mitigating risk to the user and the ecology of the Ganaraska Forest.

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee will also carry out work to:

1. Ensure rules, etiquette and regulations pertaining to recreational use in the Ganaraska Forest are communicated to their organization or municipality membership/population;
2. Promote co-operation among the various recreational user groups;
3. Develop recreational programs and/or events in the Ganaraska Forest subject to approval of the Conservation Authority;
4. Undertake trail maintenance including relocation of trails, sign inspections, and site restoration projects; and,
5. Communicate with the respective recreational organization or municipality opportunities to participate in Conservation Authority programs or initiatives that are mutually benefiting and in the best interest of the Ganaraska Forest and recreational opportunities.

2.0 Committee Structure

Each governing body/municipality listed below is responsible to appoint a representative from that organization or municipality to sit on the RUC.

Municipal Appointees will be a member of the public residing in that Municipality and will be appointed by Council. Each representative will sit on the RUC as a voting member for a four (4) year term. The RUC will decide a succession plan to ensure the rotation of the members will provide experience on the Committee at all times. Municipal appointees will be appointed every four (4) years or as per the Municipality's policy on appointments.

A GRCA Board of Director will sit on the Committee as an ex-officio non-voting member and will be appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Board of Directors.

2.1 Voting Members

Members will be appointed for a four (4) year term. When a new member is appointed to the RUC, an orientation session may be provided, along with the terms of reference of the Committee.

Members of the RUC will be appointed by a governing body which represents the majority of Ontarians. The governing body shall represent one of the uses authorized within the Ganaraska Forest. The governing body includes:

- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- Ontario Trail Riders Association (equestrian)
- Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
- Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
- Ontario Federation of Trail Riders (off-road motorcycles)
- Ontario Federation of 4Wheel Drive Enthusiasts
- Ontario Nature
- Hike Ontario
- Cross Country Ski Ontario
- Orienteering Ontario
- Ontario Cycling Association

In addition, a member from each municipality whose boundaries fall within the Ganaraska Forest will be appointed to the RUC by the municipality to represent the municipality as outlined in Section 2.0

- Municipality of Port Hope
- City of Kawartha Lakes
- Township of Cavan/Monaghan
- Municipality of Clarington

2.2 Responsibilities of Members

- Members must follow the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).
- Members must report to the governing body, organization, or municipality at least once per year.
- Members need to have an open line of communication with the user or municipality that they represent.
- Members are to bring user or municipal population concerns to the Recreational Users Committee.
- Members must attend 3 of the 4 regularly scheduled meetings.
- Members must work cooperatively and collaboratively with other members of the Committee.
- Members must make decisions in the spirit of what is best for the Ganaraska Forest rather than best for the individual user group.
- Members are encouraged to do their best to solve conflicts/issues brought forward prior to the involvement of staff from the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority.
- Members are encouraged to volunteer in the Ganaraska Forest and help organize volunteer days.

2.3 Chair

The Chair is appointed by the Conservation Authority and is a non-voting member of the Committee. In the absence of the Chair, a non-voting Committee member will assume the role of Chair.

2.4 Recording Secretary

A staff member of the Conservation Authority will be appointed by the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer and is a non-voting member of the Committee.

The agenda and minutes of each meeting will be posted on the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority website.

The minutes are sent to the following GRCA Board of Director meeting as information.

2.5 Amendments to Committee Structure and/or Terms of Reference

The Committee structure and the terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the GRCA Board of Directors, and any updates will be provided before the first RUC meeting of the year.

3.0 Rules of Order

All meetings will be conducted in a normal businesslike manner.

3.1 Public Participation (Delegation Policy)

The general public is welcome to attend all meetings, however, to make representation to the Committee, a request must be made in writing to the Chair at least 10 calendar days prior to the meeting. Such requests should include a brief summary of the nature of the presentation and the name of the person(s) making it. Presentations shall be limited to 10 minutes. Presenters should be prepared to answer questions from Committee members.

3.2 Correspondence

All correspondence pertaining to Committee business should be addressed to the appropriate member in care of the GRCA. Correspondence will normally be dealt with at the next meeting following receipt. Correspondence originating from the GRCA will be copied to the member(s) of the Committee, as appropriate.

3.3 Conduct of Business

At the discretion of the Chair, new business will be introduced by a notice of motion introduced at the meeting prior to when the business will be dealt with. This will permit members to solicit input prior to voting. Notices of motion require a mover and a seconder.

All motions require a mover and a seconder. Discussions on motions will be limited to 10 minutes with extensions beyond this time at the discretion of the Chair. Members may speak twice on any motion.

All motions will be decided by majority vote. A tie vote means that the motion is defeated.

One half (50%) of the Committee's voting membership shall form a quorum for the transaction of business.

4.0 Meetings

Meetings of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee shall normally be held on the first Thursday of the month for the months of April, June, September and November at the Administrative Office of the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority or virtually. Additional meetings will occur at the call of the Chair.

5.0 Reporting Function

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Chair or designate, other than staff, shall report to the GRCA Board of Directors on its activities over the previous year by December 1 of each year.

Appendix 1 - Code of Conduct

1. Background

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) demands a high level of integrity and ethical conduct from its Committee Members. The Authority's reputation has relied upon the good judgement of individual Members. A written Code of Conduct helps to ensure that all Members share a common basis for acceptable conduct. Formalized standards help to provide a reference guide and a supplement to legislative parameters within which Members must operate. Further, they enhance public confidence that Members operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy.

The Code of Conduct is a general standard. It augments the laws which govern the behaviour of Members, and it is not intended to replace personal ethics.

This Code of Conduct will also assist Members in dealing with confronting situations not adequately addressed or that may be ambiguous in Authority resolutions, regulations, or policies and procedures.

2. General

All Members, whether appointed representatives of an organization or municipality, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Authority.

All Members shall serve in a conscientious and diligent manner. No Member shall use the influence of their position for any purpose other than for the exercise of their official duties.

It is expected that Members adhere to a code of conduct that:

- i. upholds the mandate, vision and mission of the Authority;
- ii. considers the recreational use of the Ganaraska Forest in its entirety, including their appointing organization or municipality;
- iii. respects confidentiality;
- iv. approaches all Ganaraska Forest issues with an open mind, with consideration for the Ganaraska Forest as a whole;
- v. respects the democratic process and respects decisions of the Recreational Users Committee, GRCA Board of Directors, GRCA staff, as well as Executive Committee, Advisory Boards and other committees, if and when applicable;
- vi. declares any direct or indirect pecuniary interest or conflict of interest when one exists or may exist; and
- vii. conducts oneself in a manner which reflects respect and professional courtesy and does not use offensive language in or against the Authority or against any Member or any Authority staff.

3. Gifts and Benefits

Members shall not accept fees, gifts, hospitality or personal benefits that are connected directly or indirectly with the performance of duties.

4. Confidentiality

The Members shall be governed at all times by the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Members shall not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, either in verbal or written form, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position, except when required by law to do so.

Members shall not permit any persons, other than those who are entitled thereto, to have access to information which is confidential.

In the instance where a Member vacates their position on the Recreational Users Committee they will continue to be bound by *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act* requirements.

Particular care should be exercised in protecting personal data from an individual who has brought forward information to the Recreational Users Committee.

5. Use of Authority Property

No Member shall use for personal purposes any Authority property, equipment, supplies, or services of consequence other than for purposes connected with the discharge of Authority duties or associated community activities of which the Authority has been advised.

6. Work of a Political Nature

No Member shall use Authority facilities, services or property for his/her election or re-election campaign to any position or office within the Authority or otherwise.

7. Conduct at Recreational Users Committee Meetings

During meetings of the Recreational Users Committee, Members shall conduct themselves with decorum. Respect for delegations, staff and for fellow Members requires that all Members show courtesy and not distract from the business of the Authority during presentations and when others have the floor.

8. Influence on Staff

Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the Authority as a whole and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective, without undue influence.

9. Business Relations

No Member shall borrow money from any individual who regularly does business with the Authority unless such individual is an institution or company whose shares are publicly traded and who is regularly in the business of lending money.

No Member shall act as a paid agent before the Authority, the GRCA Board of Directors, Executive Committee or an advisory board or committee of the Authority, except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

10. Encouragement of Respect for the Authority and its Regulations

Members shall represent the Authority in a respectful way and encourage public respect for the Authority and its Regulations.

11. Harassment

It is the policy of the Authority that all persons be treated fairly in the workplace in an environment free of discrimination and of personal and sexual harassment. Harassment of another Member, staff or any member of the public is misconduct. Members shall follow the Authority's Harassment Policy as approved from time-to-time.

Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to an individual's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disabilities, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. The Authority will also not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images; practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit and any other prohibited grounds under the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

12. Breach of Code of Conduct

Should a Member breach the Code of Conduct, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Code of Conduct shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.

STAFF REPORT – April 6, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy Terms of Reference

In 2023 a Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trail Strategy is being developed. To support the process, a Terms of Reference has been written (attached). The Terms of Reference outlines the purpose of the Strategy, roles and responsibilities, proposed components and project timelines.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy Terms of Reference for information

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Van Osch', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

Terms of Reference Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trail Strategy



March 2023



1.0 Background

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) owns 4,576 hectares (11,308 acres) of land, of which 4,377 hectares (10,818 acres) is comprised of the Ganaraska Forest. All lands owned by the GRCA consist of natural hazards (i.e., floodplains, erosive soils, valleys) and protect natural heritage features and functions (forests, wetlands, riparian areas etc.). The protection provided by the Ganaraska Forest extends beyond local watersheds to include the Oak Ridges Moraine, which is part of Ontario's Greenbelt.

Many of the lands owned by the GRCA contribute to the local community and the region, by offering a place to explore nature and undertake recreational activities. These recreational land holdings include 9 conservation areas and the Ganaraska Forest. The Ganaraska Forest provides year-round, multi-use opportunities including non-motorized and motorized activities on hundreds of kilometers of trails.

2.0 Purpose of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy

The purpose of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy is to outline standards, guidelines and programs that provide for a recreational trail system that:

- Supports a diversity of motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities
- Provides for year-round recreational opportunities
- Is safe for users, volunteers and GRCA staff
- Does not negatively impact the surrounding natural environment
- Can be maintained by GRCA staff, partners and volunteers
- Does not create negative interactions with neighbouring properties
- Enhances local and regional tourism and recreational opportunities

3.0 Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy in Context

When developing a Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy, a number of resource need to be considered such GRCA plans and strategies, Provincial and Federal legislation, and municipal by-laws and plans. These include, but are not limited to:

- Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority's Strategic Plan: 2015-2020 A Roadmap for the Future
- Ganaraska Forest Management Plan 2018-2038
- Ganaraska River Watershed Plan
- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*
- *Conservation Authorities Act*
- *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*
- Greenbelt Plan
- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- *Off Road Vehicle Act*

3.1 Relationship to Ganaraska Forest Management Plan

The Ganaraska Forest Management Plan 2018-2038 was written to provide guidance and recommendations for the sustainable use and conservation of the Ganaraska Forest. Further, the Plan satisfies requirements of the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP).

An important aspect of the Ganaraska Forest is recreation. Many of the recommendations provided through the extensive consultation on the Forest Management Plan that was undertaken in 2016-17, were regarding recreational use. The Synopsis Report provided a summary of the consultation and input on the multi-use nature and value of the Ganaraska Forest. It also provided suggestions on how the protection of forest ecology should be one of the Forest Management Plan's most important strategies for the future. Although the Ganaraska Forest Management Plan was not able to fully address all recreational use opportunities and concerns brought forward through consultation, it was recommended in the Plan that GRCA staff continue to work towards a resolution of matters brought forward during public consultation.

The creation of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy is intended to be complementary to the Ganaraska Forest Management Plan, and together work to support recreational use in the Ganaraska Forest that is considerate of the Forest ecology.

4.0 Planning Process

A Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy is one element in the ongoing responsible management of the Ganaraska Forest and the recreational trail system. Publicly accessible forests within southern Ontario are facing increasing pressures, ranging from invasive species, increased use, and climate change. As a result, there is an ever-increasing need to actively manage recreational trail systems in an appropriate manner to ensure that environmental impacts are avoided or mitigated, and that trails and recreational opportunities provide for a safe and enjoyable multi-use experience.

In order to address growing pressures on recreational trails, the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy must create a structured framework for planning and decision making that is adaptive and locally relevant. Generally, management planning follows an adaptive and cyclical approach that is comprised of four steps (Figure 1).

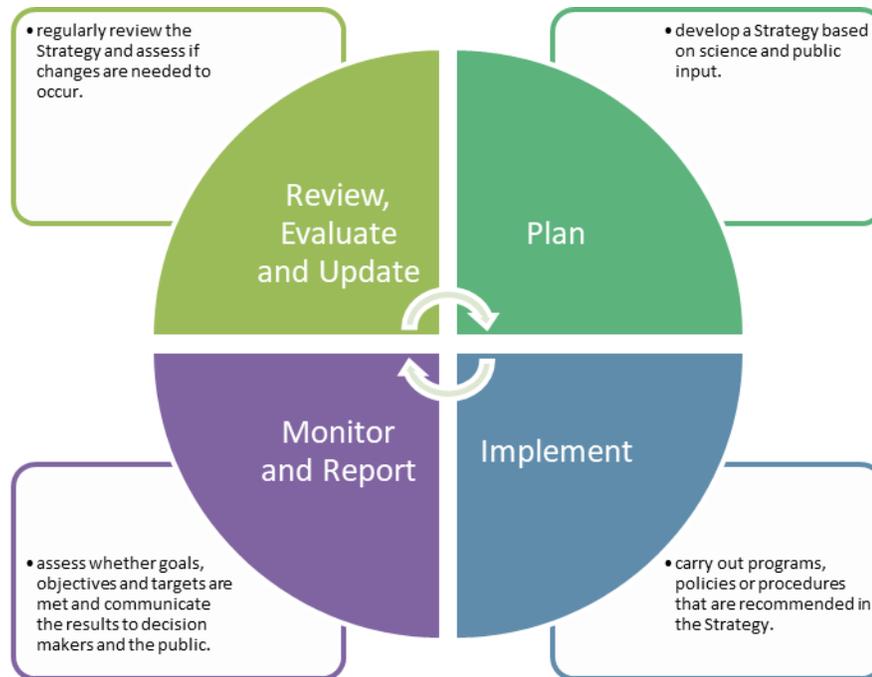


Figure 1: Adaptive management process

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The history of recreation in the Ganaraska Forest has evolved over decades, which has resulted in a diversity of trails that support multi-use activities. The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, as the owner of the lands, ultimately must manage the trail system and recreational opportunities to ensure environmental damage is avoided or mitigated, manage risk and liability, and that there are safe and enjoyable trails available for use by those who purchase a Forest membership or day pass.

Recreational organizations who partner with the GRCA and individual volunteers who help to support trail maintenance play an important role in maintaining the trail system. Equally important, the individual Forest user also has a role in ensuring that through their own actions, the use of the trail system is a safe and enjoyable experience. Therefore, the effective involvement of all organizations or individuals throughout the planning process is important to the Strategy’s success.

6.0 Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy Components

Table 1 lists the proposed components to be included in the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy, along with the purpose and a brief description. The Strategy will outline implementations timelines associated with each proposed component, as well as a timeline for the Strategy to be reviewed and updated.

Various background documents will be reviewed and incorporated into the Strategy where appropriate, including but not limited to:

- Ganaraska Forest Study, 1978. Prepared for [the] Ganaraska Forest Study Committee by James A. Tedford, Supervisor of Planning and Forest Study Coordinator, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority.
- Ganaraska Forest Study Review Report, 1987. Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority.
- Ganaraska Forest Trails Project, 1997. Prepared for the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority by John Marsh and Janice Warfield. Trail Studies Unit, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario.
- Powell, Lawrence, 2017. Ganaraska Forest Management Plan 2018-2038. Prepared for the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority. Prepared by Madawaska Forestry Inc., Cherry Valley, Ontario.
- Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority. 2010. Ganaraska River Watershed Plan. Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority. Port Hope, Ontario.

Table 1 – General Description of Proposed Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy Components

Proposed Components	Purpose	Description
Trail Standards	Create trail standards that can be used in designing new trails, relocating or restoring existing trails, and closing of trails, to increase the quality and safety of recreation.	The creation of trail standards would define acceptable parameters and characteristics that will maximize safety and recreational experiences, minimize user conflict and protect Forest ecology. Trail standards would also be used to inform a Trail Monitoring Program. Accessibility standards will also be considered.
Trail Monitoring Program	Create a program that supports data collection related to trail conditions and trail usage.	The re-development of a Trail Monitoring Program would support data collection and assessment pertaining to the condition of features such as trail surface, trail width, trail height and tread width. Data collection methods would also consider trail usage. In the 1980s and 1990s trail monitoring was conducted at various locations across the Ganaraska Forest trail network.
Trail Access Assessment	Create a program that supports data collection related to the evaluation of trail access points.	Developing a process that sets guidelines for trail access points.
Trail Crossing Assessment	Create a program that supports data collection related to trail crossings at trail intersection, parking lot entrances and municipal rights-of-way.	Developing a process that sets guidelines for trail crossings at trail intersection, parking lot entrances and municipal rights-of-ways is beneficial to ensure that the crossing is appropriate and safe for use.

Proposed Components	Purpose	Description
Trail Network Configuration	Create a process to evaluate and consider the trail network as a whole, including access points, crossings and linkages between Ganaraska Forest parcels.	Evaluating and improving the configuration of the trail network would support the flow of recreational traffic in ways that maximizes user experience, minimizes user conflict, and minimizes disturbances to neighbouring properties. This evaluation will also consider regional trail linkages.
Trail Signage	Create trail signage placement guidelines for the purpose of wayfinding, emergency location, and recreational traffic flow.	In coordination with the GRCA Property Signage Policy, guidelines will be determined that recommends placement of trail signage from the trail surface and along a trail, and inspection requirements.
Trail Status	Create guidelines that defines under what conditions and for what length of time a trail status is allowed to change.	The creation guidelines will provide for definitions of trail status. Trail status can be temporary, seasonal, or permanent. Trail status will consider impacts to recreational enjoyment while mitigating risk to users, volunteers, GRCA staff and contractors. Trail status will also consider ecological needs and impacts to the trail surface.
Trail Network Mapping	Create guidelines and standards that are used to map the trail network.	The creation of trail mapping guidelines and standards will support data collection and visualization of the trail network to maximize recreational enjoyment and safety of users.
Recreational Infrastructure	Create a recreational infrastructure guideline that outlines potential infrastructure that enhances recreational experiences.	The creation of a recreational infrastructure guideline will support the addition of features that would enhance the trail network and recreational use experiences. These features would be located next to the trail system or access points.

7.0 Proposed milestones and timelines when developing the Ganaraska Trail Recreation Strategy

Task	2023											
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Terms of Reference developed												
Present Terms of Reference to the GRCA Board of Directors												
Present Terms of Reference to the Recreational Users Committee												
Write Draft Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy												
Present Draft Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy to the GRCA Board of Directors												
Present Draft Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy to the Recreational Users Committee for comment/input												
Post Draft Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy on the GRCA website												
Hold Public Open Houses												
Public commenting period (online and written)												
Review comments and update Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy where appropriate												
Present Final Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy to Recreational Users Committee for endorsement with a summary of comments and how they were considered												
Present Final Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy to GRCA Board of Directors for consideration with a summary of comments and how they were considered												
Post Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy on the GRCA website												

STAFF REPORT – April 6, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Environmental Concerns

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) appreciate that Forest users and partner organizations observe trail and forest conditions while within Ganaraska Forest. Staff routinely respond to user reports of environmental/ health and safety concerns that may affect the health of the Forest ecosystem or the welfare of Forest users.

Feedback from user groups is extremely important and is utilized in future Forest and trail management plans. As representatives of specific user groups, the GRCA is looking to the Recreational Users Committee to act as the voice of the Forest users and present environmental or health and safety concerns to the GRCA.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Environmental Concerns staff report for information and,

FURTHER THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee discuss known and potential environmental concerns with trail use in the Ganaraska Forest.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – April 6, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Ganaraska Forest Reopening

On May 1, 2023, the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) is reopening the majority of authorized trails within the Ganaraska Forest. It is expected that 95% of the trail system will be reopened. Trails that lead to environmentally sensitive areas (Lookout Hill, Thorpe Hill, or other areas currently closed in the Forest) or that conflict with neighbouring private lands will not be maintained nor represented on GRCA mapping. GRCA is utilizing GIS, Quick Capture and traditional GRCA mapping to identify trails, trail issues, and trails that require recovery. Forest Users are required to utilize [Ganaraska Forest Recreation Trails | GRCA](#) interactive mapping as the official resource for all Ganaraska Forest trails.

Contractors, staff and volunteers are actively clearing trails in the Ganaraska Forest. GRCA is asking that individuals and user groups report all blocked trails to GRCA. Staff encourage anyone interested in volunteering at Ganaraska Forest to apply for a volunteer position. Information regarding volunteer opportunities are found at [Volunteering | GRCA](#).

GRCA will be offering Online Membership/ Day Pass sales prior to May 1, 2023. Day Passes are still offered at the Ganaraska Forest Centre Kiosk, located at 10585 Cold Springs Camp Road. As a reminder, all people accessing the Ganaraska Forest are required to carry and present a valid Ganaraska Forest Membership or Day Pass to a GRCA staff member or Police officer when requested. Additionally, all highway vehicles parked at Ganaraska Forest are required to display a valid parking pass on the dash of the vehicle.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Ganaraska Forest Reopening staff report for information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician