



NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: September 7, 2023

TIME: 7:00 pm

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

MEETING: GANARASKA FOREST
RECREATIONAL USERS
COMMITTEE

MEMBERS: Mark Gardiner, Matthew Robbins,
Jim Pearson, Jennifer Jackman,
Garry Niece, Randy Cunningham,
Lisa Thompson, Amber Panchyshyn,
Pam Julian, Carolyn Richards, Peter
Wood, Steve Brownell, Maureen
McDonald, 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 – June 1, 2023 - **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) Snowshoe and Cross Country Ski Trail Update – **Staff report attached**
 - b) Volunteer Program Update – **Staff report attached**
 - c) Environmental Concerns – **Staff report attached**
10. Adjourn

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

June 1, 2023

RUC 2/23

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Lance Nachoff, acting as Committee Chair, called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:12 pm and welcomed all present.

MEMBER PRESENT: Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Randy Cunningham, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4X4 Clubs
Steve Brownell, Municipality of Port Hope
Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan
Marven Whidden, Municipality of Clarington
Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board of Director

ALSO PRESENT: Ed Van Osch, GRCA Forest Recreation Technician
Member of the public

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature
Pam Julian, Ontario Cycling
Amber Panchyshyn, Orienteering Ontario

ALSO ABSENT: Mark Gardiner, Chair
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Cross Country Ski Ontario (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 8/23

MOVED BY: Maureen McDonald

SECONDED BY: Garry Niece

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 9/23

MOVED BY: Carolyn Richards

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) Volunteer Program

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician updated the committee on the success of GRCA's first group of forest volunteers and indicated there is a strong interest in the second call. Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board Member, expressed his appreciation of volunteer efforts.

RUC 10/23

MOVED BY: Carolyn Richards

SECONDED BY: Maureen McDonald

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Volunteer Program Staff Report for information.

CARRIED.

b) Environmental Concerns

Ed Van Osch, Recreation Technician asked RUC members to speak on user-groups environmental concerns. Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs offered to provide GRCA with "Great Trails: Providing Quality OHV Trails and Experiences" books which provide guidelines to address trail erosion. Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan noted that environmental concerns will likely come forward as trail usage increases.

RUC 11/23

MOVED BY: Peter Wood
SECONDED BY: Lisa Thompson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Environmental Concerns Staff Report for information.

CARRIED.

FURTHERMORE GRCA is requesting that Recreational Users Committee continue to gather and share Users environmental concerns with GRCA Recreation Technician.

c) Central Forest Trail System

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician, explained the need to separate trail types in the Central Forest to accommodate winter operations and further indicated that a draft of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Trails Strategy will be circulated upon its completion.

RUC 12/23

MOVED BY: Garry Niece
SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Central Forest Trail System Staff Report for information.

CARRIED.

10. Other Business

None

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.

RUC 13/23

MOVED BY: Peter Wood
SECONDED BY: Randy Cunningham

THAT the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED.

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

Chair



Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – September 7, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Snowshoe and Cross Country Ski Trail Update

Over previous winter operating seasons, customer feedback and operational challenges helped staff identify several areas of improvements with the snowshoe and cross country ski trail systems. The improvements address concerns including trail difficulty, conflict between winter uses, safety, and operational restrictions. To address the identified concerns, and to make trail improvements, the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) implemented several changes to the Central Forest trail system during the summer of 2023.

Greenbelt Foundation funding was used to hire an excavation contractor to clear and construct three trail re-routes. These trail sections include a snowshoe trailhead, and A Loop and Orange Trail/snowshoe trail bypasses.

Section 1: The snowshoe trailhead was re-routed to bypass the steep hill at the start of the snowshoe trail network. Additionally, it allows the GRCA to route Forest users away from the Tree Top Trekking course. GRCA will launch the re-routed snowshoe trailhead for winter 2024.

Section 2: A re-route was incorporated into the 8km snowshoe trail. This trail reroute allows the snowshoe trail to bypass the A Loop where the two trails intersected. This change will separate winter uses (cross country skiing and multi-use snowshoe trail) and allow Staff to maintain a quality winter trail bed while optimizing the trail user experience.

Section 3: During 2022, GRCA rerouted part of the Orange Trail to avoid a problematic hill. Winter operations revealed challenges and indicated that a minor reroute was required to allow for optimal winter grooming operations. During the summer of 2023, GRCA incorporated a short bypass along the Orange Trail to address this challenge. Staff have indicated that an additional snowshoe trail is required to fully address the concerns in this area, and GRCA will continue to pursue these changes in future season.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Snowshoe and Cross Country Ski Trail Update staff report for information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – September 7, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Volunteer Program Update

The Ganaraska Forest Trail Maintenance volunteer program has now moved into Stage Two. Stage Two incorporates the Central Forest trail system. Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) has authorized Volunteers to perform light trail maintenance tasks on pre-determined trail sections. The Ganaraska Forest interactive mapping platform now includes a volunteer layer which indicates the trails that the GRCA has authorized for volunteer's work efforts. Some of the trails on the volunteer layer are currently not open to the public and will only be opened to the public once the trail has passed GRCA inspection. Stage Two authorizes volunteer work on cross country ski and snowshoe trails and on a portion of the pre-existing single track trail systems.

There has been significant interest in the Volunteer Program. To date, 72 people have applied to be volunteers, and 44 have completed the required training. To support the Volunteer Program, Staff are hosting two Volunteer Days this fall. The first Volunteer Day is scheduled for September 16, 2023 and the second October 13, 2023. Please refer to media channels for details when they become available.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Volunteer Program Update staff report for information.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

STAFF REPORT – September 7, 2023

To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee

RE: Environmental Concerns

During the Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting held on June 1, 2023, concerns were raised that an increase in trail user numbers would ultimately be detrimental to the health of the Ganaraska Forest and its existing trail network. To establish a base level, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority will monitor and collect data representing trail use. Data collected will focus on, time of use, activity type and amount of traffic in specific areas. Additionally, staff will monitor the effects of trail use on the trail system and localized environmental features.

Methods of data collection used will include but are not limited to: user feedback, traffic counts and staff observations. This data will be utilized to guide the development of future strategies.

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 continue to provide Forest Recreation Technician Ed Van Osch with environmental concerns from their user groups.



Prepared by:

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician