



# NOTICE OF MEETING

**DATE:** April 7, 2022

**TIME:** 7:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Zoom Meeting

## AGENDA

**MEETING:**

**GANARASKA FOREST  
RECREATIONAL USERS  
COMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS:**

Mark Gardiner, Dave Grant, Cam  
Lowe, Larry Melnychuk, Garry Niece,  
Carolyn Richards, Randy  
Cunningham, Mark Cousins, Marven  
Whidden, Anne Vavra, Jennifer  
Jackman, Lauren Tonelli, Jim  
Crosscombe, Amber Panchyshyn,  
Tracy Richardson

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
3. Minutes of Last Meeting – November 4, 2021 - **attached**
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Delegations:  
None
6. Presentation:  
None

7. Business Arising from Minutes:
  - a) Special Events Application Update – **staff report attached**
  
8. Correspondence:

None
  
9. New Business:
  - a) Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference – **staff report attached**
  - b) Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoe Season Update – **staff report attached**
  - c) Ganaraska Forest Membership/Day Pass Fee Review – **staff report attached**
  - d) Volunteer Forest Patrol Program – **staff report attached**
  
10. Adjourn

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

**November 4, 2021**

**RUC 4/21**

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**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm. The Chair of the committee welcomed the members, Pam Lancaster, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Conservation Lands Coordinator and announced the resignation of Jim Crosscombe of the Ontario Cycling Association.

**MEMBER PRESENT:** Mark Gardiner, Chair  
Dave Grant, Ontario Trail Riders Association  
Cam Lowe, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders  
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario  
Randy Cunningham, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs  
Marven Whidden, Municipality of Clarington  
Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature  
Lauren Tonelli, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters  
Tracy Richardson, GRCA Board Representative

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

**ABSENT WITH REGRETS:** Carolyn Richards, Kawartha ATV Association  
Mark Cousins, Township of Cavan Monaghan  
Anne Vavra, Municipality of Port Hope

**ALSO ABSENT:** Larry Melynchuk, City of Kawartha Lakes  
Amber Panchyshyn, Ontario Orienteering (Temporary Rep)  
Cross Country Ontario Representative (Position unfilled)  
Ontario Cycling Association (position unfilled)

**2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**RUC 24/21**

**MOVED BY:** Randy Cunningham

**SECONDED BY:** Dave Grant

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the September 2, 2021 meeting.  
**CARRIED.**

4. Adoption of Agenda

**RUC 25/21**

**MOVED BY:** Dave Grant

**SECONDED BY:** Cam Lowe

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee approve the agenda with the addition of items c) Special Events Permit Application and d) Canadian Ski Marathon under the category of Business Arising from the Minutes.  
**CARRIED.**

5. Delegations

None

6. Presentations Business Arising from Minutes

**History of the Ganaraska Forest**

Pam Lancaster, GRCA Conservation Lands Coordinator, provided the RUC members with a presentation on why the Ganaraska Forest was established and the evolution of management/recreational uses.

**RUC 26/21**

**MOVED BY:** Jennifer Jackman

**SECONDED BY:** Cam Lowe

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the History of the Ganaraska Forest presentation for information.  
**CARRIED.**

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

**a) Non-Compliance of Ganaraska Forest Parking Rules**

The Municipality of Clarington and the City of Kawartha Lakes are taking the GRCA request of parking bylaw enforcement powers to their respective council meetings in November 2021.

**RUC 27/21**

**MOVED BY:** Dave Grant

**SECONDED BY:** Marven Whidden

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Non-Compliance of Ganaraska Forest Parking Rules staff report for information.  
**CARRIED.**

**b) Electric Vehicle Use in the Ganaraska Forest**

The GRCA Board of Directors accepted the RUC recommendation that E-bikes are no longer permitted within the boundaries of the non-motorized sections of the Ganaraska Forest. Ganaraska Forest rules will be updated to reflect this change.

**RUC 28/21**

**MOVED BY:** Cam Lowe  
**SECONDED BY:** Randy Cunningham

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Electric Vehicle Use in the Ganaraska Forest staff report as information.

**CARRIED.**

**c) Special Events Permit Application**

A discussion about the permit application process occurred and Cam Lowe will submit RUC comments and suggestions to GRCA staff.

**d) Canadian Ski Marathon Agreement**

GRCA staff informed the RUC that the Canadian Ski Marathon has declined the agreement with the GRCA at this time. GRCA staff and CSM hope to revisit the agreement in the 2022.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. New Business**a) Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club (OFSC) Trails**

Staff report presented for discussion.

**RUC 29/21**

**MOVED BY:** Cam Lowe  
**SECONDED BY:** Randy Cunningham

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs Trail staff report for information.

**CARRIED.**

**b) Trail Maintenance Update**

Staff report presented for discussion.

**RUC 30/21**

**MOVED BY:** Dave Grant  
**SECONDED BY:** Cam Lowe

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Trail Maintenance Update staff report for information.

**CARRIED.**

**c) Forest Membership Update**

Staff report presented for discussion.

**RUC 31/21**

**MOVED BY:** Randy Cunningham

**SECONDED BY:** Jennifer Jackman

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Forest Membership Update staff report for information.

**CARRIED**

10. Other Business

None.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.

**RUC 32/21**

**MOVED BY:** Randy Cunningham

**SECONDED BY:** Marven Whidden

**THAT** the meeting adjourn.

**CARRIED.**

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



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**Chair**

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**Forest Recreation Technician**

## STAFF REPORT – April 7, 2022

**TO: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee**

**RE: Special Event Application Update**

GRCA staff received RUC comments regarding the revised Special Event Application. Staff reviewed the RUC concerns and Special Events Application and determined that:

- The requirement for event participants, spectators, organizers, and volunteers to have a valid Ganaraska Forest day pass or membership means that individuals gathering for the event meet the requirements of the *Conservation Authorities Act* to have authorized access the Ganaraska Forest. Those that are gathering for the event would require a day pass or membership that reflects the type of use they are involved in during that event (e.g., motorized participant requires motorized pass versus a non-motorized spectator requires a hiking pass). Requirements for authorization include:
  - having a valid Ganaraska Forest day pass or membership on your person and presenting said pass when requested by a GRCA Provincial Offences Officer or police;
  - displaying a valid Ganaraska Forest parking pass on a highway vehicle that is parked at in designated parking areas of the Ganaraska Forest;
  - possessing a valid Ontario Outdoors Card and appropriate hunting licence as per the Ontario Hunting Regulation summary;
  - meeting provincial age requirements for undertaking authorized uses;
  - having a licence plate affixed to a motorized vehicle as per Provincial legislation;
  - carrying proof of liability insurance, and;
  - carrying proof of ownership/registration.
- Concerns were expressed over special event volunteers paying for a Ganaraska Forest day pass or membership. Private organizations/groups host special events on GRCA owned lands and people volunteering their time at the events are working for the special events organizer not the GRCA. Due to this fact, all special events volunteers are required to be in possession of a valid Ganaraska Forest day pass or membership as per the *Conservation Authorities Act*.
- If an event is utilizing municipal or private properties, confirmation of municipal or private landowner approval must be provided at the time of the application. Wording on the Application will be updated to reflect this requirement. The requirement to notify neighbouring landowners is being removed from the Application. Consideration of the event's relationship to neighbouring properties will be part of the application review process.

- Timelines associated with the installation and removal of signage/ribbon trail route markers will have flexibility according to the event's needs. 24 hours is a suggested timeline.
- Additional fees reflect compensation for spaces, outside rental fees, uses that require GRCA staff involvement, impact on location, or provides exclusive use within the Ganaraska Forest. These additional items are optional and specific to the event needs.
- Consideration to the requirement of having a list of pre-registered participants has been given, and this requirement is being removed from the Application. In lieu, event organizers are required to record participant names and Ganaraska Forest day pass/membership numbers during registration. This documentation must be provided to GRCA staff on the day of the event.
- The requirement to hire GRCA staff/representatives for events with more than 75 participants/spectators has been removed. The requirement for hiring GRCA staff/representatives is now mandatory when a staging area is required. This will ensure that the event does not experience conflict/impact with non-event individuals and vice versa. It will also ensure that event attendees are in compliance with event permit requirements and Ganaraska Forest rules. This support is for the benefit of those involved in the event, the GRCA, and other Ganaraska Forest users.
- When a Staging Area is requested, outhouse rental(s) are now required.
- Revisions to Special Events numbers are now as follows: 25 to 100 maximum people attending the event (participants, spectators, organizers, and volunteers).
- The Special Event Application will be reviewed annually.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Special Event Permit Application Update staff report as information.

**Prepared by:**



Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician



Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Event:  Yes  No # of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Start Date:	Start Time: _____	am/pm	Event Area(s) Required:
Event End Date:	End Time: _____	am/pm	<input type="checkbox"/> West Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Central Forest <input type="checkbox"/> East Forest <input type="checkbox"/> GFC Grounds

Description of Event: **Please provide details of your event in the designated area on the back of this application.**

### SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- **Check Availability** @ [GRCA Event Calendar](#) or contact Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) ☎ (905) 885-8173 or ✉ [info@grca.on.ca](mailto:info@grca.on.ca)
- **Allowable # of Attendees for Special Events** – For events between 25 to 100 people (participants, volunteers, organizers and spectators).
- **Submit a Special Event Application** – Include the following 4 items with your Special Event Application: (Applications **MUST** be submitted to ✉ [info@grca.on.ca](mailto:info@grca.on.ca) at least 3 months in advance of the event. Last minute applications may be considered.)
  1. **Event Fee (\$125.00)** \*PLEASE NOTE: HST is applicable and fees are subject to change without notice.
  2. **Security Deposit (\$200.00)** (Returned following the event if Security Deposit Refund Protocol is adhered to.)
  3. **Insurance Certificate** – min. \$5,000,000 liability (GRCA **MUST** be listed as additional insured.)
  4. **Detailed Route Map** indicating the area of the Ganaraska Forest to be used.
- **Additional Fees** (if applicable to your event) \* PLEASE NOTE: HST is applicable and fees are subject to change without notice
  - Staging Areas: Groups requiring exclusive use staging areas will be required to hire the GRCA team to supervise @ \$80/hr per person (staff numbers required determined by GRCA)
  - Use of GFC facilities require a facilities booking permit.
  - BBQ use requires special permission from GRCA.
  - Outhouse/Porta-potty Rentals – Required when staging area requested
    - 1 Outhouse (\$200) up to 50 persons
    - 2 Outhouses (\$340) for 100 persons
- **Ganaraska Forest Membership or Day Pass Requirement** - All people (participants, volunteers, organizers and spectators) accessing the GFC/Ganaraska Forest for a special event are required to have either a Membership or a Day Pass. \*\*\* (Memberships or day passes must be presented to GRCA representatives or enforcement officers upon request and parking passes must be displayed on the dash or windshield of all parked vehicles.)\*\*\*
- **Pre-registration of Participants** – participants must register with the host organization. Event coordinators are responsible for checking in and collecting Ganaraska Forest Membership or Day Pass information. This information must be presented to GRCA representatives the day of the event.
- **Municipal or Private Property** - If municipal or private property including unmaintained roads are being used as part of the planned Special Event, organizers must provide confirmation of municipal or private landowner approval at the time of application.
- **Medical Emergency** - GRCA may require an organization to arrange for First Aid and certified medical first response services.
- **Primary Contact for the event must be in attendance** for the duration of the event and have permit on person.
- **Security Deposit Refund Protocol**
  - ✓ Adherence to permit regulations.
  - ✓ No permanent signage/markers or permanent markings (e.g., spray paint, blazes on trees, etc.).
  - ✓ Installation of signage/ ribbons no more than 24 hr prior to event.
  - ✓ Removal of signage/ribbons trail route markers within 24 hours of completion of event.
  - ✓ No litter left on trails or GFC grounds and removal of all trash and recycling immediately following event.
  - ✓ No damage to trail system, forest vegetation, soil, habitat, wildlife, GRCA infrastructure.
  - ✓ No damage to outhouses/porta-potties.
  - ✓ No negative interactions with GRCA staff, security, police, or representatives.
- **Cancellations** - No refunds of the Event Fee will be issued. Inclement weather cancellations may be moved to a future date with approval from GRCA. If the event is affected by a pandemic, the GRCA will move fees and security deposit to a future date or provide a refund.
- **Application Approval** - a signed Special Event Permit issued by GRCA means approval for event is granted. (If the event application is not approved, all fees and security deposit will be returned. Please **DO NOT** advertise events until a signed Special Event Permit has been received.)

Primary Contact's Name (Please Print)

Primary Contact's Signature

Date

**Use the space below to describe your planned Special Event, please provide a description of the host organization and list any sponsors that are supporting this Special Event.**

<b>Description of Event:</b>  (Indicate routine, if trail markers are to be used, how flow of traffic will be handled etc.)	

<b>FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY</b>				
Date Application Received (mm/dd/yy)	Received by _____	\$ _____ Security Deposit	\$ _____ Event Fee	Authorization to Issue Permit Signature _____
<input type="checkbox"/> # of Participants Confirmed <input type="checkbox"/> Route Map <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Event Fee <input type="checkbox"/> Security Deposit Received				

## STAFF REPORT – April 7, 2022

**TO: Chair and Members of Recreational User Committee**

**RE: Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference**

GRCA Staff have reviewed the current Recreational Users Committee (RUC) Terms of Reference, (TOR) approved in January 2018.

During this review, staff identified inconsistencies in Recreational User group organization representation (Section 2.1 Voting Members). In order to address inconsistencies and align organizations with Ganaraska Forest authorized uses, revisions to section 2.1 of the Terms of Reference include wording to reflect the need of members to be appointed from recreational organizations that represent the majority of Ontarians.

Terms of Reference, section 2.1 Voting Members updates include the following revisions to the governing body:

***Removal:***

- Canadian Cross Country Ski Association
- Kawartha ATV Association

***Addition:***

- Cross Country Ontario
- Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
- Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists

These changes ensure that the RUC continue to encompass the people of Ontario and the scope of all Ganaraska Forest user groups, however it still allows for local representation if the governing body wishes. Representatives from updated governing body will be invited to attend the June 2, 2022 RUC meeting.

Additional edits were made to the Terms of Reference such as identification of the GRCA Board of Directors from the previous wording of Full Authority Board.

The revised RUC Terms of Reference was approved by the GRCA Board of Directors on March 17, 2022.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Recreational Users Committee receive the Recreational Users Committee, Terms of Reference staff report as information.

**Prepared by:**



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Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician

**Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority**  
**Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee**  
**Terms of Reference**  
**March 2022**

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**1.0 Purpose**

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

1. Development of standards and guidelines for each recreational use occurring in the Ganaraska Forest,
2. User conflicts within the Ganaraska Forest,
3. User conflicts with landowners of property abutting the Ganaraska Forest,
4. Approval of recreational use types in the Ganaraska Forest in an effort to reduce conflicts, ensuring safe use and reducing liability, and,
5. New regulations or policies that pertain to recreational use.

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee will also assist with:

1. Identification of property boundaries,
2. Informing users of their responsibilities and the regulations regarding their recreational use,
3. Promotion of co-operation amongst the various users of the Ganaraska Forest,
4. Development of recreation programs and/or events in the Ganaraska Forest subject to approval of the Conservation Authority,
5. Trail maintenance including relocation of trails, signage, volunteer programs and site restoration projects, and,
6. Liaising between respective governing bodies, municipalities and the Conservation Authority regarding proposals which will benefit all parties involved.

**2.0 Committee Structure**

Each governing body/municipality listed below is responsible to appoint a representative from that organization 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 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 will 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 include:

- 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 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 report to the governing body, organization, or municipality at least once per year.
- 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.

## **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. In the absence of the Chair, the Recording Secretary role will be assumed by the Chair.

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

## **2.5 Amendments to Committee Structure and/or Terms of Reference**

The Committee structure and the terms of reference will be reviewed annually at the first RUC meeting of the year, with recommendations being made to the GRCA Board of Directors regarding changes.

## **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 Gananaska 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 Gananaska Region Conservation Authority. 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.

## **STAFF REPORT – April 7, 2022**

**TO: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee**

**RE: Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Season Update**

The Ganaraska Forest experienced its first significant snowfall during a storm that dropped up to 18 inches of snow in the Forest on January 17, 2022. This amount of snow in one day was a challenge for GRCA and priority was put on safety. Clearing parking lots and sidewalks and removing hazardous trees from trails took priority. Consequently, GRCA fully opened the groomed and track-set ski trails 4 days after the snowstorm. Fortunately, staff had prepared the ski trails by packing smaller snowfalls to ensure a good trail base was ready to receive skiable snow. Once the ski trails were opened, they remained open right until the end of the season.

In order to provide a safe ski trail system and in response to planned logging activities, GRCA made an operational decision to close the Blue Trail until further notice. Staff did not perform any maintenance on the Blue Trail during the 2022 ski season. In addition, to address a significant safety hazard caused by a steep, twisting eroded hill, GRCA staff closed a small a portion of the Orange Trail (south of CF15) and installed a temporary trail to bypass this hazardous section of trail. This portion of the Orange Trail will remain closed. GRCA staff will develop a mitigation plan to address the Orange Trail hill hazard during 2022.

GRCA staff are very pleased with the functionality of the new snowmobile and cross country ski groomer. GRCA has received high praise from Forest visitors in regard to the quality of the ski trails this season; including the addition of the Beginners Trail.

Skiing and snowshoeing are gaining in popularity at Ganaraska Forest. In general, visitor rates have more than doubled. GRCA staff believe increased numbers of visitors maybe a result of a combination of snowfall, pandemic restrictions and sustained ideal trail conditions.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Season Update staff report as information.

**Prepared by:**



Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician



## **STAFF REPORT – April 7, 2022**

**TO: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee**

**RE: Ganaraska Forest Membership/Day Pass Fee Review**

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) has recently moved the Forest Membership and Day Pass Program sales system to a digital platform as a result of the pandemic. This has resulted in eliminating the plastic membership card system that was previously in place for the past several years and moving towards a QR code system. Forest users are now responsible for carrying a copy of their Forest Pass QR code on their person to present to enforcement officers when requested to do so. In addition, GRCA is developing a similar QR code system to for the Ganaraska Forest parking pass. Additionally, the membership levels or categories have been revised as there is no longer the colour coded card system.

As GRCA developed the new platform, a subsequent review of the membership and day pass fees took place. The current fee schedule has been in place since May 1, 2016. Over the past 6 years there have been some significant increases in expenses which include some major equipment purchases. These types of costs and transactions need to be considered when reviewing the fee schedule. Staff also took into consideration the added costs of the new digital platform which restricts purchases to credit cards which, as a result incurs merchant fees. Previously, these merchant fees were passed on to the purchaser through a service charge. Feedback from the users has lead to the inclusion of this transaction charge in the new fees.

In order to ensure that recreational activities adhere to Provincial regulations, GRCA is revising the Youth Category of the Fee Schedule. The revision included restructuring of the Youth classification, which consequently changed the Under 16 Youth category age limit and now the age limit is representative of peoples Under 12 (11 years old and younger). This age limit mirrors that of the *Off-Road Vehicle Act*, the Ontario Hunter Apprenticeship Program and the Ministry of Transportation's Smart Ride Safe Ride publication.

To ensure that Forest Users are aware of their responsibilities prior to purchasing a Forest Membership or Day Pass, a reference to all provincial and property rules and regulations will be linked to the GRCA website that Forest Users will have agree to prior to making an on-line purchase.

Attached is the new fee schedule for both day use and the membership program. The new fees take into account the service charge as well as an increase in costs in delivering the recreational program. Staff are recommending implementation of the new fees effective May 1, 2022. This fee structure will be subject to an annual increase of 2% which is similar to other programs within the GRCA.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee recommend to the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors the attached fee schedule to be implemented May 1, 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Van Osch', written over a horizontal line.

**Prepared by:**

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician



## Ganaraska Forest Membership and Day Pass Fee Structure 2022

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### Proposed Changes:

- Revise Youth classification to represent peoples under the age of 12.
- Standardized Youth Rates to be 50% of Adult fee, except for hiking and snowshoeing which remain at \$0.00.
- For ease of use, prices have been standardized to align fee structure.
- Proposed prices include service charges and inflation increase.

<b>MEMBERSHIP FEES</b>				
<b>RECREATIONAL USE</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>		<b>CURRENT</b>	
	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Youth (Under 12)</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Youth (Under 16)</b>
Hiking/Snowshoeing	\$32	\$0	\$30	\$0
Non-Motorized (Hunting, Horseback Riding, Mountain Biking)	\$80	\$40	\$75	\$30
Motorized Passenger	\$80	\$40	\$75	\$30
Motorized Operator	\$190	\$95	\$175	\$60
Cross Country Skiing/Snowshoeing & Hiking	\$80	\$40	\$70	\$25

\*\*Please Note: Memberships include option to do any activities below each type, except for skiing

<b>DAY PASS FEES</b>				
<b>RECREATIONAL USE</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>		<b>CURRENT</b>	
	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Youth (Under 12)</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Youth (Under 16)</b>
Hiking	\$7	\$0	\$6	\$0
Snowshoeing	\$7	\$0	\$6	\$0
Cross Country Skiing	\$16	\$8	\$15	\$6
Mountain Biking	\$16	\$8	\$12	\$6
Horseback Riding	\$16	\$8	\$12	\$6
Hunting	\$16	\$8	\$12	\$6
Motorized Passenger	\$16	\$8	\$30	\$10
Motorized Operator	\$32	\$16	\$12	\$6

## **STAFF REPORT – April 7, 2022**

**To: Chair and Members of the Recreational Users Committee**

### **RE: Volunteer Forest Patrol Program**

In order to operate the Ganaraska Forest as a multi-use property, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) has implemented various property rules and regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act* and *Trespass to Property Act*. To ensure compliance with property rules and regulations, GRCA incorporates various management techniques including public relations, information publications and active enforcement. As part of the enforcement program GRCA utilize Provincial Offences Officers, Police services and Volunteer Forest Patrollers.

Traditionally, the Volunteer Forest Patrol Program asks volunteers to engage with Forest Users where they request proof of Forest Pass, check for parking passes, issue Notifications of Trespass and provide education on property rules, trail etiquette and general Ganaraska Forest facts. To become a Volunteer Forest Patroller, individuals must be a Forest member, submit a volunteer application, pass an interview and submit a vulnerable sectors police check prior to receiving authorization to patrol the Ganaraska Forest as official GRCA representatives.

Since the inception of the Volunteer Forest Patrol Program, the culture of Forest use has evolved drastically. GRCA now needs to consider safety above all other factors. Provincial Offences Officers and Police have professional enforcement training and a full network of support staff to assist during times of emergency. Volunteer Patrollers are not required to have professional enforcement training nor does the GRCA have the resources to connect volunteers to a readily available network of support staff to assist volunteers during times of emergency.

As a reflection of the change in the culture of Forest use, and to address potential safety concerns for the Volunteer Patrollers, staff feel the Volunteer Forest Patrol Program should be discontinued. GRCA staff trained as Provincial Offences Officers will continue to carry out these responsibilities as well as utilizing the services of Universal Protection Agency Provincial Offences Officers. GRCA will contact all Volunteer Patrollers to inform them of this change and to thank them for their years of dedicated service with the Volunteer Forest Patrol Program.

Staff will begin to develop a network of volunteers that will focus on assisting with trail inspection, restoration projects, organized clean-up initiatives and GRCA events within the Ganaraska Forest. These type of volunteer opportunities will assist GRCA staff while not exposing the volunteers to any potential adverse situations.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee received the Volunteer Patroller Program staff report for information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Van Osch', written over a horizontal line.

**Prepared by:**

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician