

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST

RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

September 5, 2024

RUC 3/24

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Bob Gallagher welcomed all present and introduced himself as the new Chair of the Recreational Users Committee. The Chair called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:01 pm, followed by a brief introduction of committee members and Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) representatives that were present.

MEMBER PRESENT: Bob Gallagher, Chair
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario
Randy Cunningham, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club
Amber Panchyshyn, Orienteering Ontario
Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Alex Schmidt, Ontario Cycling Association
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Steve Brownell, Municipality of Port Hope
Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board of Directors

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

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan

ALSO ABSENT: Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists
Cross Country Ski Ontario (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Alex Schmidt inquired about the results of a statement made by during the June 6, 2024 minutes in Section 10, Other Business, referring to the Chair Lance Nachoff offering for members to send their three biggest concerns about the Forest to him or Pam Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator.

Lance Nachoff, stated that in light of the chair position being vacant at the time, the submitted comments were held until the Chair position had been filled.

RUC 07/24

MOVED BY: Alex Schmidt
SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the June 6, 2024 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Alex Schmidt requested to add a notice of motion under new business regarding the allowance of Class 1 E-mountain bike use within the Central Forest. Additionally, Steve Brownell requested to add a notice of motion under new business regarding the discussion of 2.1 of the RUC Terms of Reference and the membership of the RUC. The Chair accepted the two notice of motions under new business.

RUC 08/24

MOVED BY: Garry Niece
SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the agenda be adopted with the addition of two new business items.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

None

6. Presentations

DSV-101 Managing the Pest in the Ganaraska Forest was presented by Gus Saurer, GRCA Forester.

Jim Pearson inquired as to pesticide applications currently occurring in the Ganaraska Forest. Gus Saurer informed the RUC that GRCA did receive funding grants for invasive species control during both 2023 and 2024. Pesticides application is part of this funding. GRCA is not currently applying pesticides within the Ganaraska Forest but has done some pesticide controls in the demonstration tall grass prairie plot near to the Ganaraska Forest Centre.

Jennifer Jackman inquired as to the effectiveness of the Hypena moth. Gus Sauer informed the RUC that trials in York Region have shown positive results, and current information indicates positive winter survival numbers.

RUC 09/24

MOVED BY: Carolyn Richards
SECONDED BY: Steve Brownell

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Dog Strangling Vine Information presentation for information.

CARRIED.

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

8. Correspondence

None

9. New Business

a) Trailhead Signage Update

Steve Brownell inquired as to why GRCA removed OFTR signage from the Ganaraska Forest. Pam Lancaster informed the RUC that the proposed Conservation Lands Strategy will support and direct signing procedures within the Ganaraska Forest, and that GRCA has paused removal of all signage until the Conservation Lands Strategy is approved by the Board of Directors.

Jim Pearson requested that the RUC be provided with a chance to review the Ganaraska Forest signage design. Pam Lancaster informed the RUC that Conservation Lands Strategy will support a consistent message to the Forest Users.

Pam Lancaster clarified the locations of new signage and informed the RUC of the plan to implement the first trail signage applications on the Central Forest yellow trail beginning in 2025.

RUC 10/24

MOVED BY: Carolyn Richards

SECONDED BY: Lisa Thompson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Trailhead Signage Update Staff report for information.

CARRIED.

b) Trail Maintenance Update

Alex Schmidt inquired, what are the guidelines for trail maintenance within the Ganaraska Forest. Pam Lancaster informed the RUC that Staff are developing trail maintenance guidelines through the Conservation Lands Strategy.

Alex Schmidt stated that both Albion Hills and Kelso Conservation Areas have excellent trail systems that GRCA could look to as an example.

RUC 11/24

MOVED BY: Jennifer Jackman

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Trail Maintenance Update Staff report for information.

CARRIED.

c) Recreational User Group Discussion

A discussion occurred where each RUC representative was asked to share what their respective User group valued at Ganaraska Forest. Some comments include but are not limited to:

- Ganaraska Forest offered a variety of high-quality trails in the Central Forest.
- Access for families and generational use.
- Valuable conservation area providing habitat space that provides various ecological functions.
- Opportunities for volunteering and funding opportunities.
- User Group has a good working relationship with GRCA
- Trail design meets the needs of User group
- Ganaraska Forest is the only Conservation Area within Ontario that offers a motorized trail system
- Desire exists for increased communication capability between user groups and GRCA
- User Groups are interested in various options for recreational use

RUC members also discussed issues, some of which surrounded lack of signage, the need for more trail maintenance, the need for increased volunteerism, a cap of 100 participants for special events, lack of cellular signals in the Forest and users of the Forest that do not follow federal, provincial, municipal or GRCA rules including the need for day passes or memberships.

RUC 12/24

MOVED BY: Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Recreational Users Group Discussion staff report for information; and,

FURTHER THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee continue to provide Forest Recreation Technician with User Group specific information, updates and concerns.

CARRIED.

d) New Business: Notice of Motion to Allow Class 1 E-Mountain Bike Use Within the Central Forest

Alex Schmidt provided a notice of motion for the November 7, 2024 RUC meeting. The motion is: "To Allow Class 1 E-Mountain Bike Use Within the Central Forest".

RUC 13/24

MOVED BY: Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT a notice of motion to allow Class 1 E-mountain bike use within the Central Forest be added to the November 7, 2024 RUC meeting.
CARRIED.

e) New Business: Notice of Motion for a Discussion on 2.1 of the RUC Terms of Reference to Provide Possible Recommendations to the Board of Directors

Steve Brownell provided a notice of motion for the November 7, 2024 RUC meeting. The motion is: “A Discussion on 2.1 of the RUC Terms of Reference to Provide Possible Recommendations to the Board of Directors”.

RUC 14/24

MOVED BY: Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT a notice of motion for a Discussion on 2.1 of the RUC Terms of Reference to Provide Possible Recommendations to the Board of Directors be added to the November 7, 2024 RUC meeting.
CARRIED.

10. Other Business

None

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

RUC 15/24

MOVED BY: Jim Pearson

SECONDED BY: Alex Schmidt

THAT the meeting adjourn.
CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

Chair



Conservation Lands Coordinator