

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST

RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

November 7, 2024

RUC 4/24

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair welcomed all present and introduced two new members of the Recreational Users Committee, Rick Trumper and Karen Graham. The Chair called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

MEMBER PRESENT: Bob Gallagher, Chair
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario
Rick Trumper, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club
Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Alex Schmidt, Ontario Cycling Association
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists
Steve Brownell, Municipality of Port Hope
Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan
Karen Graham, Municipality of Clarington
Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board of Directors

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

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature

ALSO ABSENT: Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Amber Panchyshyn, Orienteering Ontario
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 16/24

MOVED BY: Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the September 5, 2024 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 17/24

MOVED BY:

Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY:

Maureen McDonald

THAT the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

On behalf of cycling community, Alex Schmidt presented the desire to include Peterborough Trail Builders and Pauls Dirty Enduro Trails into the GRCA's Central Forest management process.

A discussion followed the delegation. Jim Pearson stated that Users require more and better-quality trails in the Ganaraska Forest. Maureen McDonald requested that Alex clarify the information on the maps presented during the delegation. Alex explained that the GRCA map shows trails that are currently offered to the Users and the second map from a non-GRCA source identifies trails that Peterborough Trail Builders maintained under GRCA agreements and several other defunct trails that were abandoned when other group agreements dissolved.

Lance Nachoff questioned what the next actionable items or resolution is with the topic of trails in the Central Forest. The Chair informed the RUC that Staff are meeting with Alex Schmidt to discuss Cycling desires for the Central Forest.

RUC 18/24

MOVED BY:

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the delegation for information.

CARRIED.

6. Presentations

None

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

8. Correspondence

None

9. New Business

a) To Consider Class 1 E-Bicycle for Use Within the Central Forest (Staff Report) and To Allow Class 1 E-Bicycle for Use Within the Central Forest (Notice of Motion)

At the September 5, 2024 RUC meeting a Notice of Motion to allow Class 1 E-mountain bike use within the Central Forest was moved by Alex Schmidt and seconded by Jim Pearson, which was Carried.

Alex Schmidt discussed the rationale for the Notice of Motion. Rationale included the Trek Bicycle Class 1 E-bicycle decibel study showed Class 1 E-bicycles to emit 40-55 decibels and that the international Mountain Bike Association (IBMA) trail study showed no significant trail impact difference between pedal mountain bike and Class 1 E-Bicycle and indicated that Class 1 E-Bicycles allow the rider to ride longer and climb hills faster than traditional pedal bicycles. Additionally, Alex expressed the potential for revenue generation options through Class 1 E-bicycle rental options provided by GRCA.

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician, spoke to the staff report and reiterated that the Province of Ontario has a definition of E-Bicycle, which does not identify Class 1 E-Bicycles as a separate designation.

Peter Wood proposed a “Friendly Amendment” to the Motion, to use the Ontario E-Bicycle definition and rules in order to be inclusive to all Ganaraska Forest users. Alex Schmidt agreed to the “Friendly Amendment”. The Motion was amended to read: *To Consider Ontario Classified E-Bicycles for Use Within the Central Forest*. A discussion was had around adding the term “throttle” to the motion but after a long discussion it was decided not to do so.

Jim Pearson expressed concerns over increased traffic in the Central Forest and stated that the Horse Community does not support the use of E-Bicycles in the Central Forest. Lisa Thompson stated that EV-Dirt Bikes are virtually silent, and they are the way of the future. Alex Schmidt added that trail sharing, etiquette and construction are crucial to safe use and expressed that long sight lines are required to reduce conflict. Steve Brownell mentioned that with increasing populations there will inevitably be more users of the Ganaraska Forest and that more trails and signage is required to accommodate increased use. Jim Pearson stated that time money and effort will be required to provide more trails.

RUC 19/24

MOVED BY:

Carolyn Richards

SECONDED BY:

Gary Neice

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Defer the Motion.
CARRIED.

b) Discussion on the 2.1 of the Terms of Reference to Provide Possible Recommendation to the Board of Directors

Steve Brownell, as a preamble to the Notice of Motion, stated local clubs have approached him declaring they do not have a voice on the RUC and their taxes fund the Ganaraska Forest and they are requesting a formal mechanism to obtain a seat as representatives on the RUC.

Pam Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator, provided background information on the current (March 2023) RUC Terms of Reference (TOR). Pam highlighted that the TOR identifies an organization that represent the majority of Ontarians for each allowable use type in the Ganaraska Forest. Each representative organizations can appoint any person, regardless of organization affiliation, as their representative on the RUC. Further, each RUC member represents that particular use of the Ganaraska Forest, and Forest users do not have to belong to any organization in order to be represented.

Steve Brownell stated that local clubs should be allowed to hold a seat on the RUC. Lisa Thompson inquired to the definition of a local club and how would GRCA determine that designation. Steve Brownell stated that since the RUC is an advisory committee that there should be no limits on the number of clubs that can hold a seat on the RUC and that more voices will provide more input.

Carolyn Richards stated that she is not a member of Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs (OFATV), but that organization appointed her to represent and report back to the OFATV. Additionally, Carolyn stated that more than one use representative would complicate the RUC system and confuse Forest users. Carolyn identified that Forest Users are not just made up of local tax payers, but also people that travel from all over Ontario, Canada and USA to access the Ganaraska Forest.

Rick Trumper identified that Forest users residing within in one of the 4 municipalities that exist the Ganaraska Forest have a direct RUC representative through the Municipal appointed representatives.

After discussion, Steve Brownell amended the Motion to be: *Formal process for application for membership on the Recreational Users Committee, not limited to Provincial organizations nor limited to one user group.*

RUC 20/24

MOVED BY: Peter Wood
SECONDED BY: Carolyn Richards

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Defer the Motion.
DEFEATED.

RUC 21/24

MOVED BY: Steve Brownell
SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee recommend to the Board of Directors that the formal process for application for membership on the Recreational Users Committee be not limited to Provincial organizations nor limited to one user group.

DEFEATED.

10. Adjourn

Due to the good of the discussion on the agenda items and the time of night the Chair called for the adjournment of the meeting with other items to be carried to the next meeting.

RUC 22/24

MOVED BY:

Rick Trumper

SECONDED BY:

Jim Pearson

THAT the meeting adjourn at 9:32 pm.

CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Chair



Conservation Lands Coordinator