

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

November 6, 2025

RUC 3/25

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Call to Order

The Chair welcomed all present and called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

MEMBER PRESENT: Bob Gallagher, Chair
Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Matt Mair, Ontario Nature
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario
Rick Trumper, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club
Alex Schmidt, Ontario Cycling Association
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
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: Shawn Marshall, Cross Country Ski Ontario
Amber Panchyshyn, Orienteering Ontario

ALSO ABSENT: Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 13/25

MOVED BY:

Carolyn Richards

SECONDED BY:

Matt Mair

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the September 4, 2025 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 14/25

MOVED BY:

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Maureen McDonald

THAT the agenda be adopted with a Point of Information added to New Business as item D.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

None

6. Presentations

None

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

Ed Van Osch provided the RUC with a verbal review of the comments received by RUC members and their respective user groups and community regarding Ganaraska Forest parking infrastructure. It was noted that many of the submitted comments align with that of the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority's (GRCA) knowledge of the infrastructure issues, challenges, and opportunities. Ed Van Osch stated that the RUC comments will be taken into consideration during property management decisions.

RUC 15/25

MOVED BY:

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Maureen McDonald

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the verbal report of RUC representative submitted parking lot comments presented by Ed Van Osch for information.

CARRIED.

8. Correspondence

An email letter was submitted to GRCA in gratitude for authorizing and facilitating a recent Special Event known as The Ganny Enduro.

RUC 16/25

MOVED BY:

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Matt Mair

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee note and file correspondence item #1.

CARRIED.

9. New Business

a) Central Forest Trail Infrastructure Improvements

Steve Brownell inquired if GRCA had implemented GPS coordinates or What3Words on newly installed trail markers within the Central Forest. Ed Van Osch informed the RUC that new signage is intended to be utilized as wayfinding signage and has been installed at standard 50 or 75 metre intervals along trails within the Central Forest.

Steve Brownell inquired to the possibility of RUC members or volunteers being authorized to assist with blaze signage installation. Pam Lancaster stated that volunteer opportunities do exist, and signage installation can be included as a volunteer opportunity. Further to that, Pam Lancaster stated that staff has nearly completed the signage installation for this project and no further signage is to be installed at this time.

Alex Schmidt asked to see an example of the blaze signage. Pam Lancaster presented signage examples to the RUC. Bob Gallagher questioned what material the signs are made of and how are they installed. Jim Pearson asked if the signs could withstand UV light. Pam Lancaster informed the RUC that the signage is constructed of PVC and that although it will deteriorate over the years, that the material is a cost-effective way of supporting navigation in the Forest. Signage has been installed on trees using aluminum nails or mounted on T-bars in areas without suitable trees and that aluminum nails were chosen to limit the risk of future safety hazards during logging or maintenance procedures.

Alex Schmidt asked if GRCA has plans to incorporate map signage within the trail system. Pam Lancaster stated, "decision making" signage will be added to the trail system to assist users with navigation and that GRCA is taking inspiration from other organizations with successful trail systems.

Alex Schmidt requested clarification on the hazardous hills and curve sections mentioned in the Staff report. Ed Van Osch explained that the hazards mentioned were in relation to the safety of cross-country skiers and staff during grooming operations.

RUC 17/25

MOVED BY:

Jim Pearson

SECONDED BY:

Maureen McDonald

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Central Forest Trail Infrastructure Improvements Staff report for information.

CARRIED.

b) Pre-Winter Trail Maintenance

Jim Pearson inquired as to the amount of funds provided by Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) towards trail grading. Rick Trumper stated that OFSC provides \$4000 to \$5000 annually to the GRCA to be utilized for trail grading projects that benefit OFSC use of the Ganaraska Forest.

Bob Gallagher requested clarification on the nature of reporting trail surface degradation. Ed Van Osch stated that RUC representative should report any trail surface issues submitted to them by users to the Forest Recreation Technician. This data is collected and utilized to make maintenance decisions.

Jim Pearson inquired as to the ability of GRCA to address hazards on unmaintained municipal roads. Rick Trumper stated that OFSC communicates with the municipality to arrange maintenance where the OFSC trail uses municipal lands. Pam Lancaster stated that GRCA does not perform any maintenance on municipal owned lands, but GRCA does communicate issues reported to GRCA to municipal partners. A conversation began related to municipal right of ways, which is outside of the GRCA's jurisdictional authority.

RUC 18/25

MOVED BY:

Rick Trumper

SECONDED BY:

Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee routinely approach respective users and groups to obtain information regarding the location and nature of trail surface concerns within the Ganaraska Forest;

FURTHER THAT The RUC routinely share collected user group information regarding trail surface concerns with the Forest Recreation Technician via email; and

FURTHER THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Pre-Winter Trail Maintenance Staff report for information.

CARRIED.

c) Ganaraska Forest RUC on the GRCA Website

Pam Lancaster stated that GRCA has taken steps to develop a place on www.grca.on.ca dedicated to RUC, including minutes, notifications, delegations, and RUC representative names additionally, if RUC representatives feel comfortable, RUC member contact info will be included.

Bob Gallagher thanked Pam Lancaster for GRCA's decision to act promptly by addressing this issue and requested clarification regarding security and notification protocol. Pam Lancaster stated, if requested, GRCA Staff can respond on behalf of an RUC member, additionally, staff will send a confirmation email to RUC members requesting permission to post RUC member emails on the website.

RUC 19/25**MOVED BY:**

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Karen Graham

THAT, if desired, the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee provide a different email to be used for the email form on the GRCA website to the Forest Recreation Technician Ed Van Osch by November 14, 2025;

FURTHER THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the Ganaraska Forest RUC on the GRCA Website Staff report for information.

CARRIED.

d) Changes to Conservation Authorities

Steve Brownell requested an update regarding the provincial announcement of a proposed amalgamation of Conservation Authorities. Pam Lancaster informed the RUC members that on October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario issued a Press Release to announce its plans to introduce changes to conservation authorities across the province. Currently, staff are not privy to any further information other than what has come from the official Ontario announcement, which can be found online on Provincial websites.

This inquiry has been recorded as a Point of Information.

10. Adjourn**RUC 20/25****MOVED BY:**

Jim Pearson

SECONDED BY:

Rick Trumper

THAT the meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.

CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

Chair

Forest Recreation Technician