

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST

RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

June 4, 2026

RUC 2/26

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Call to Order

The Chair welcomed all present and introduced Peter Innes and Paul Kravis as new members of the Recreational Users Committee. The Chair called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

MEMBER PRESENT: Bob Gallagher, Chair
Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Matt Mair, Ontario Nature
Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Shawn Marshall, Cross Country Ontario
Peter Innes, Orienteering Ontario
Alex Schmidt, Ontario Cycling
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists
Paul Kravis, Municipality of Clarington
Steve Brownell, Municipality of Port Hope
Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan
Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board of Directors

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

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Rick Trumper, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club

ALSO ABSENT: Hike Ontario (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 1/26

MOVED BY: Alex Schmitt

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the November 6, 2025 meeting and receive the minutes of the April 2, 2026 meeting for information.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 2/26

MOVED BY:

Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY:

Jim Pearson

THAT the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

None

6. Presentations

None

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

8. Correspondence

An email letter was submitted to GRCA in gratitude for authorizing and facilitating a Special Event held in October 2025 known as The Ganny Enduro.

An email letter was submitted to the GRCA expressing concerns trail maintenance in the Central Ganaraska Forest and the Horse Trailer Parking Lot.

Paul Kravis inquired if Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) responds to received correspondence. Pam Lancaster that the GRCA acknowledges receipt of a correspondence and forwards it the GRCA Board of Directors where further actions can occur.

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee noted and filed the correspondence items 01/26 and 02/16.

9. New Business

a) Recreational Users Committee Terms of Reference Updates

Ed Van Osch explained the purpose of reviewing the Terms of Reference (TOR) annually. Pam Lancaster, stated that several updates were made to the TOR, including clerical and organization name corrections; content about RUC members communicating with the public

via the website contact forms and the requirement that RUC members have a Ganaraska Forest Membership. Additionally, Pam Lancaster stated that RUC feedback will be presented to the GRCA Board of Directors in June.

Peter Wood questioned the requirement and objective of requiring RUC members to hold a valid Ganaraska Forest Membership to fill a seat on the RUC. Steve Brownell agreed with Peter Wood and stated that some RUC groups are not local and are provincial bodies. Bob Gallagher questioned the committee, asking if it would make sense to suggest alternative wording for the TOR. Matt Robbins agreed with Peter Wood and recommended language suggesting that RUC members holding valid Ganaraska Forest Membership is not mandatory. Peter Wood suggested that requirement of valid membership wording be removed from the TOR. Lisa Thompson agreed with Peter Woods suggestion to remove the wording in question and stated that Ontario Federation of Trail Riders represents the provincial sector. Jim Pearson stated that RUC members should actively use the Ganaraska Forest and encourages RUC members to hold a valid membership. Shawn Marshall supported the statement that valid membership is required. Steve Brownell stated that GRCA wants organizations that represent the population of Ontario and a valid Ganaraska Forest membership should not be required.

RUC 3/26

MOTION: Jim Pearson
SECONDED BY: Shawn Marshal

THAT the wording in Terms of Reference, under section 2.0 Committee Structure be altered to read that “the appointee is encouraged to have a Ganaraska Forest Membership.”

CARRIED

RUC 4/26

MOVED BY: Jim Pearson
SECONDED BY: Matt Robbins

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee comments be passed on to the GRCA Board of Directors.

CARRIED.

b) Winter Season Recreational Use Update

Maureen McDonald that when she went out this winter that conditions were glorious. She also stated that the users she encountered on the ski trail system provided many great comments regarding the ski trail grooming efforts and significant snow conditions.

Paul Kravis questioned GRCA’s decision not to provide ski grooming over the Christmas holiday season and expressed that there is public interest in having the trails groomed during Christmas holidays. Ed Van Osch informed the RUC that GRCA shuts down during the Christmas holiday and both the GRCA office and Ganaraska Forest Centre are closed, and staff are not scheduled during this period. To ensure logistic challenges, safety concerns

and liabilities are mitigated, multiple GRCA lands staff must be scheduled and onsite during grooming operations.

RUC 5/26

MOVED BY: Peter Wood
SECONDED BY: Alex Schmidt

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee share the following messaging with their respective user groups: that cross-country ski trails are exclusive to skiing during the winter season, the Central Forest is off limits to all forms of motorized use, adhere to all posted signage and please remain on trails indicated as open on the [Ganaraska Forest Trails Map](#).

FURTHER that the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Winter Season Recreational Use Update staff report for information.

CARRIED.

c) 2026 Trail Maintenance, Infrastructure and Program Improvements

Ed Van Osch provided an update on the construction of the new Forest Road Trail linking the existing Ganaraska West Forest trail system with Parking Lot P6.

Ed Van Osch provided a brief explanation of the duties and requirements of the Assistant Trail Developer Volunteer position.

Paul Kravis enquired if GRCA has a media package outlining the volunteer program. Pam Lancaster stated that GRCA uses several social media and local media platforms to advertise volunteer program opportunities.

Lisa Thompson enquired if single-track trail development is being considered for the West Forest. Ed Van Osch expressed that GRCA is open to receiving feedback and comments regarding West, Central and East Forest trail concerns and/or potential for trail upgrades. Steve Brownell enquired why GRCA does not partner with Ontario Federation of Trail Riders (OFTR) and Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs (OFATV) to pursue grants? Ed Van Osch explained that both OFTR and OFATV offer their own independent trail pass system and their funding efforts focus on their own programs and infrastructure. Carolyn Richards identified that GRCA is unique in the Conservation Authority (CA) system, in that it permits Off-Road vehicle use on CA owned lands. Pam Lancaster stated that partnership between GRCA and RUC organizations are always considered. Steve Brownell stated that GRCA should be partnering with user groups and not relying on municipal funding. Alex Schmidt stated that GRCA use to pursue local volunteer efforts and funding to build more trails.

Alex Schmidt expressed disapproval of the use of the wording “to ensure Ganaraska Forest remains a world class recreation destination” in the staff report. Alex Schmidt stated the Ganaraska Forest is not World Class and supported the disapproval by stated that people

are getting lost in the Ganaraska Forest, stated that trails are not open and people from Peterborough do not know that the Ganaraska Forest exists.

RUC 6/26

MOVED BY: Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee inform their respective user groups to regularly review and adhere to all posted Ganaraska Forest signage while visiting Ganaraska Forest.

FURTHER that the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receives the Trail Infrastructure Maintenance and Program Improvements staff report for information.

CARRIED.

10. Adjourn

RUC 7/26

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, September 3, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

Chair



Forest Recreation Technician