



Committee Minutes

Forest Management Plan Advisory Committee December 16, 2020 – 9:00 AM

The Forest Management Plan Advisory Committee met on the above date by ZOOM with the following members in attendance:

Present: Warden Selwyn Hicks, Councillor Brian Gamble, Jesse Henrich, Rebecca Ferguson, Donna Lacey, Kevin Predon and Karen Buratynski

Regrets: Councillor Brian Milne, Rob Beirnes, John Ford, Mark Mariash and Brian Goodings

Staff

Present: Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Scott Taylor, Senior Planner; Sarah Johnson, Intermediate Planner/Forestry-Trails Coordinator; Lee Thurston, By-law Enforcement Officer and Forest Manager; Heather Aljoe, Zoom Co-Ordinator and Monica Scribner, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There was none

Reports

Sarah Johnson presented Report PDR-FM-06-21.

The Mountain Lake Forest property has been transferred to Saugeen Ojibway Nation as part of a settlement of a long-standing claim and will be removed from the Forest Management Plan.

Updated names for some of our forest properties will be taken to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Re-naming, in many cases, would provide assistance for emergency management services.

During the review process, there were three main questions raised for consideration by this committee:

Is there merit in allowing enterprises in forest properties, through an agreement, like bee keeping or tapping for maple syrup?

Considerations for maple syrup tapping:

- Can affect the quality and possibly the market value of the wood
- Could help increase revenue with invasive species if we went through bushes and determine which ones could be tapped
- Disease on tapped trees is possible, but limited
- Kevin Predon, Forestry Technician for Bruce County suggested:
 - He will send an example of a licence tap rental agreement (usually 25 to 50 cents per tap)
 - Consider the size of the sugar bush to determine if it would be financially worth tapping
 - Consideration of whether or not to permit associated uses with the tapping such as boiling, etc. onsite
 - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) supports tapping and therefore should not impact forest certification
 - Some flooring and furniture are made from the specific stained butt log wood causing by tapping
 - Important to discuss with expert Jim Hendry (Eastern Ontario Model Forest, who we have FSC Certification under)
 - Pre-determine which properties would allow for tapping

In addition to tapping, beekeeping was also discussed. There could be other similar uses, but no others have been raised at this time. There are areas in Grey County that could be used for tapping. To minimize risk, it was suggested that before tendering, the specific property areas would need to be pre-determined and inspected by qualified staff. Wording will be included in the Plan to consider these uses, on a case by case basis.

Does the County want to permit foraging in County forest properties?

Some counties allow for foraging and others do not. Forests are designed to be used as multi use properties, which can include foraging for personal use, bird watching, etc.

Concerns raised with opening up our forests to enterprises:

- Could be onerous on staff i.e. quantity of agreements, monitoring permitted areas and the costs involved
- Would need very strict guidelines for what is allowed i.e. would be similar to our snowmobile agreements
- Concern that people will go off the trails, deeper into the forest and therefore higher liability risks
- Concern that species at risk could be negatively impacted
- Placing restrictions on specific items could “highlight” their location i.e. ginseng which is illegal to harvest

After discussions, the committee agreed to put wording in the plan to allow foraging permission for personal consumption only. This would create an avenue for staff to be able to proceed with charges for anyone violating the forest use by-law.

Should the Forest Management Plan include a land acknowledgment for the Metis and First Nations?

To make sure we encompass and align any acknowledgement into a broader, corporate, county wide policy or plan, the group determined the best step moving forward is to discuss this matter further with Kim Wingrove, Grey County CAO.

Next Steps

- Lee will provide updated numbers with Mountain Lake removed (January 2021)
- Sarah will finalize the draft Forest Management Plan (January 2021)
- Committee members will review final draft (January 2021)
- Short FMPAC meeting to pass a motion for council to consider adopting final draft Forest Management Plan (February 2021)
- Forest Management Plan to be presented to Council for adoption (February 2021)

Other Business

There was none

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be at the call of the chair.

On motion by Chair Selwyn Hicks, the meeting adjourned at 9:46 am.

Selwyn Hicks, Chair