

Member
Municipalities

Township of
Adelaide-Metcalf

Municipality of
Brooke-Alvinston

Municipality of
Chatham-Kent

Township of
Dawn-Euphemia

Township of
Enniskillen

Municipality of
Lambton Shores

Municipality of
Middlesex Centre

Village of
Newbury

Village of
Oil Springs

Town of
Petrolia

Town of
Plympton-Wyoming

Village of
Point Edward

City of
Sarnia

Municipality of
Southwest Middlesex

Township of
St. Clair

Municipality of
Strathroy-Caradoc

Township of
Warwick

December 7, 2020

Regarding: County of Lambton Owned - Lambton County Heritage Forest

It has been brought to the attention of staff at the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) and Lambton County by you and/or your membership that there are concerns with the proposed Forest Management to be completed this year.

The County of Lambton and the SCRCA are pleased to own properties that we allow the public to enjoy and recreate in. Under the Lambton County approved 2009 Management Plan for the property, active forest management is part of the plan. This includes rotational harvesting of areas through good forest practices.

It is understood that there are differences of opinion regarding the harvesting of trees. As the managers of the Lambton County Heritage Forest we are working within the current approved plan and managing another section of the Forest this year.

There have been a number of concerns expressed to staff at the SCRCA and County of Lambton as well as on social media specifically for the Acadian Flycatcher. Based on some of these conversations, there is also misleading information being relayed. This letter is to provide an overview of the actual steps that are planned for the management at the Lambton County Heritage Forest.

Lambton County Heritage Forest is habitat for many species at risk, including the Acadian Flycatcher. A single species approach was not taken in the development of the property management plan or the current harvesting plan. The intent of the plan is to achieve management that will accommodate species at risk, public access and safety, property management objectives, and all other considerations for the best management of the site. This forest, as well as, the adjacent partners' lands provide an opportunity to create habitat for a variety of species and provide for the interest of various recreation groups.

There is approximately 325 acres of forest that is not currently planned for management through harvesting.

Staff have done their due diligence for the management of the current location (Map provided below) by reviewing the most up to date information available and known to staff. The County of Lambton and SCRCA encourage partner agencies to perform various studies and research on these lands. In turn, these researchers provide the data collected that is then used by staff when determining management. I would encourage people and organizations to submit their complete and professional data to us to be used. If there is information that you or members can provide over and above the information that is being used, I would encourage them to submit it for consideration. We encourage anyone recording information regarding the health of the property or its inhabitants to provide this information to the property owner and manager for its use in best management of the site.

As well the approved 10 year Management Plan is expiring and a new plan will be started in 2021. Once a draft of the new plan is completed it will be going out for consultation.

If you would like to discuss the current management activity further, I can make myself available via phone, in person, or via zoom.

Thank you,



Tim Payne R.P.F.
Manager of Forestry

Forest Management

The section proposed for timber management is located in the southwest corner of the property. By conducting harvesting in this area we are trying to achieve the following;

- Promote the regeneration of tree species
 - Currently the under-storey is dominated by witch hazel, and has viburnum spp. choke cherry, sparse tree species of Sugar maple, Green ash and Red oak
- Promote species diversity
 - The entire forest is dominated by oak species, which is consistent with the area, however, a mix of species is always better. By harvesting trees this will allow for other species to germinate and form the forest, Black Cherry, Black walnut, Tulip tree, Ironwood, Sugar maple to name a few.
- Climate Change
 - To promote species diversity and seed produced by parent trees that are vigorous, straight, and good form, free from insect and disease. Resulting growth of high quality trees will be able to withstand, stresses from climate change like, insects and disease, high winds, and drought.
- Stand Quality
 - Currently this section of the woodland is overstocked, based on the basal areas ranging from 20m³ to 34m³.
 - As well it was noted that the trees are tall with narrow or small crowns - the diameters and crowns should be larger.
 - By removing some of the leaning, diseased, trees with defects, as well as some trees that are too close together, this will allow the remaining trees to increase in volume and increase crown size. The canopy is uniform in height, with the only super-canopy trees being the odd tulip tree.
- Species at Risk
 - Based on the Birds Canada field work in the Forest from 2019 and 2020 Acadian Flycatcher was noted in the area but appears to utilizing the better suited locations within the forest.
 - The proposed location has minimal interior forest habitat as it is along the edge of the forest.
 - Hog nose snake will benefit by not having to bask on the trail or agriculture fields, basking can happen within the forest.
 - Dwarf hackberry will also benefit from additional sunlight and heat.
- Harvesting Activities
 - It is recognized that some areas will be temporarily impacted aesthetically.
 - The tops will be left on the ground to create habitat and downed woody debris.
 - Harvesting is done after October 25th and will be done before March 31st.
 - Logging damage will be kept to a minimum, but some will occur.
 - Ground disturbance in the way of skid trails will grow in with a variety of plants and woody species.
 - Leaning trees can be directionally felled to avoid desired species, that could be hit if the trees are left to fall naturally.
 - Harvesting will occur within 195 meters or less from the edge of the forest which will have minimal effect to the interior forest habitat. The harvesting is not clearing and therefore, will not decrease the interior forest habitat.
 - Harvesting is being done consistent with the Ontario Tree Marking Guide.

Pre-Harvest:

30% White oak, 25% Red oak, 10% Sugar maple, 10% Basswood, 5% Tulip tree, 15% Other species
 Black cherry, Black walnut, Eastern Hemlock, Red maple, Ironwood, American beech, White pine and
 Eastern cottonwood

| | Polewood | Sawtimber | | | | Total |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Diameter Class | Pole 10-24cm | Small 26-36cm | Medium 38-48cm | Large 50-60cm | X-Large 62+cm | ALL 10+ cm |
| B.A. TOTAL | 4.5 | 7.0 | 8.7 | 4.7 | 1.7 | 26.5 |

Post-Harvest:

25% Red oak, 20% White oak, 15% Sugar maple, 10% Basswood, 10% Tulip tree, 5% Red maple,
 10% Other species Black cherry, Black walnut, Eastern hemlock, Red maple, Ironwood, American
 beech, White pine and Eastern cottonwood

| | Polewood | Sawtimber | | | | Total |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Diameter Class | Pole 10-24cm | Small 26-36cm | Medium 38-48cm | Large 50-60cm | X-Large 62+cm | ALL 10+ cm |
| B.A. TOTAL | 4.5 | 6.3 | 4.5 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 17.3 |

Lambton County Heritage Forest

Bird Sightings 2019 and 2020

- 2019 Sighting
- 2020 Sighting

Trails

- High Ridge Trail (2.8km) - Difficult - steep terrain, narrow trails
- Savannah Trail (2.1km) - Moderate - some steep hills
- Tulip Trail (3.1km) - Easy - Moderate - mostly flat with rolling sections
- Property Boundary (approx)
- Watercourses
- Proposed Harvest Area

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Photo: Spring 2006

