

Hello Lambton Wildlife Members:

Currently there are **two controversial issues** affecting the Port Franks area. Lambton Wildlife has communicated objections to current activities as they conflict with our goals outlined in our charter i.e. "to encourage and promote the conservation, preservation and protection of the natural environment."

Issue 1

The **Lambton County Heritage Forest** is owned by the County of Lambton and is an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) with many species at risk. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has contracted out **logging activity** in the southwest corner of the property along Outer Drive. This activity is currently paused until January 2021 for further discussion and review. Lambton Wildlife and many nature organizations and area birders have objected to this disruption of mature red and white oak forest as it will negatively impact the sensitive wildlife habitat and does not seem to be consistent with the intent of the Lambton County Heritage Forest management plan. The specific area is reported to have **habitat for the endangered Acadian Flycatcher and threatened Cerulean Warbler**, birds which prefer closed canopy forest. It is thought that this forest has the highest concentration of Acadian Flycatcher in all of Ontario. The Species at Risk branch of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks has been informed.



The SCRCA Manager of Forestry, Tim Payne, insists that the woodland is overstocked and the removal of trees that are leaning, have defects or are too closed together will allow the remaining trees to increase in volume and crown size. This concept is consistent with woodlot management when the sale of timber is a desired outcome.

The management plan can be found here:

<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/visit-and-explore/resources/Documents/LandManagementPlans/Lambton-County-Heritage-Forest-Land-Management-Plan.pdf>

Part of Lambton Wildlife's objection to the logging activity stems from the apparent lack of application of the management plan objectives. The plan acknowledges that is not possible to manage for all species at risk at one time on the same section of property. It notes that detailed inventories will be required in the year before management activities are undertaken (page 16) but we are now being asked to provide "complete and professional data" presumably prior to when logging activities resume in January. The management plan states that no more than one third of the forest in any management area (outside savannah) should receive canopy opening management (page 57). The current area marked for tree removal encompasses an entire management area. The one species at risk that is used as justification to open the forest canopy is dwarf hackberry. The management plan states the numbers of dwarf hackberry are sufficient and it is not necessary to create any management practices specifically for dwarf hackberry. (pages iv and 57)



The Dec, 7 reply from SCRCA to initial objections (includes map of area with some bird data) will accompany this report.

Objections to the logging activity are continuing on social media. Lambton Wildlife has contacted Tim Payne (Manager of Forestry) 519 245-3710 ext. 224 tpayne@scrca.on.ca and Jason Cole (GM or Infrastructure and Development of Services, County of Lambton) 519 845-5413 and are awaiting a final decision.

Pictures taken November 29, 2020: Heavy equipment used to log causes extensive damage to dunes and remaining woodland.



*Apparently this is the second year that logging has occurred. Here is a sample of the impact from the **previous logging activity**:*



Issue 2

Lambton Shores council has decided to spray municipal land to control **gypsy moths** but not spray private land. Lambton Wildlife has communicated to council, Lambton County and a private resident's group that we are **opposed to the spray**. The Btk control will kill all butterflies and moths that are in the same life stage as the gypsy moth when the spray is applied. This could negatively impact our efforts to save endangered butterflies and potentially threaten the success of the Mottled Duskywing reintroduction project. In 2020, LWI has contributed \$25,000 to this project and hope the results will benefit the habitat and butterfly species at our Karner Blue Sanctuary property. In addition, nesting birds feed their babies caterpillars. The elimination of all caterpillars will have a negative impact on baby bird survival rates.

An opinion from Dr. Gard Otis, entomologist: <https://www.theobserver.ca/opinion/leave-the-gypsy-moths-alone-says-entomologist?r>



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