



Forest Plan Advisory Team Meeting Open Public Meeting June 17, 2014

Auditorium, Mel Lloyd Centre, Shelburne

Regrets: Zenon Slipenkyj, Larry Miller, Igor Hoogendoorn, Drew Gulyas, Sarah Earley, Lisa Timpf, Bruce Newman, David Grummett

Note: Arthur Ash sat in for David Grummett and Johnny Yeaman sat in for Igor Hoogendoorn

The following is as close to verbatim notes of what was said as I could record. John Oosterhof asked everyone to introduce themselves and say where they were from but I was not always able to catch all the information and towards the end some people didn't bother introducing themselves.

Elaine Capes, Mono-Adjala Townline, Women Horse Owners Association (WHOA)

- presented highlights of a 19 page paper in response to draft plan
 - passive horseback riding use; not in support of motorized vehicles on Dufferin forest trails
 - does not refer to snowmobile use specifically
- ACTION:** Elaine will provide electronic copy – distribute to FPAT members once received

Catherine D, 4th Line Mulmur, Simmons & Main Tracts mostly

- showed photos of Brentwood Tract – trail damage, erosion
- motorcycles in Simcoe County as organized group since 2006; use for many decades before that
- lack of policing in Simcoe County since some tracts allow motorized vehicles and others don't
- OFTR members not a problem – very courteous etc.
- doesn't see a solution to potential trail damage due to sandy soils

Arthur Ash, OFTR Rep (sitting in for Dave Grummett)

- proposal includes a stewardship element
- those currently using the forest are irresponsible because they're in there illegally
- difficult to steward Simcoe County because it's a large area for a small number of volunteers, but they are doing their best
- allowing bikes to increase stewardship
- difficult for police to catch those using the forest illegally

Brian Knechtel, OFTR, Dual Sport Club, not from the area

- club contributes to policing costs in areas such as Ganaraska, would be willing to do that in Dufferin as well

Bill Chambers, Caledon East

-heavy damage at Brentwood Tract in photos is by ATVs and trucks, not dirt bikes

Terry Wagner (?), Mono

-assertion that dirt bikes have less impact than horses because they weigh less is false
-dirt bikes banned in Zion Park, other parks
-dirt bikes not appropriate use for this forest
-once motorized vehicles are allowed, people will come from everywhere to destroy the environment, can't separate responsible and irresponsible users
-County could/should provide an area exclusively for dirt biking eg. a gravel pit
-could cite numerous studies of impacts of dirt bikes on the environment

Brian Hudak (?), Collingwood, SORRA

-in Simcoe for 10+ years; good relationship with Simcoe Forest Manager
-sent comments in already
-there will always be conflicts between users eg. mountain bikers and horseback riders
-not looking for exclusive use, looking for a way to responsibly share trails
-masses of people on dirt bikes have not invaded Simcoe County Forest
-family activity, their way of enjoying the forest
-Simcoe County a good fair model for access for multiple user groups
-advised talking to Earl

Dwight ?, Halton, OFTR, HORRA

-HORRA ridden in the County Forest in the past
-many of the DCF trails created by group that preceded HORRA
-Brentwood – ATVs, skidder damage (rutting) – main problem

Ron Mills, Planner, Mulmur Township

-Mulmur is conflicted – protection/preservation of County Forest, but also want to capitalize on economic/recreational opportunities
-“rural character” – don't mess with it
-Official Plan – policies related to Open Space designation; recreational policies – within the scope of these documents the County is just like any other landowner
-break up Main Tract into different areas – natural, less natural – segregation of uses – Mulmur Council will be considering a report by Ron Mills at its July 2 Council meeting – Ron asked for Mulmur residents to contact him with their ideas/opinions
-private people looking at recreational development abutting public land
-add a “flexibility clause” – plan subject to review as conditions/opinions change

? Dwight, Dundalk, Toronto North York Hunt Club

-formal and informal rides, individual use as well
-mostly use OCTRA trails
-don't believe that ORMs are compatible with other uses and the environment
-will send in a letter

Gary Brown, Mono, Hurontario St.

- wonderful place to hike
- three weeks ago almost got run over by an ORM – this happened when it was illegal, these people don't care
- only good thing is that sometimes you can hear them coming
- no horses in winter, snowmobiles pack down the trails, snowmobiles are hardly ever there in the morning
- separation of groups important

Jennifer Purdy, Simcoe County side of Main Tract

- Simcoe tracts that allow dirt bikers are not suitable for other uses
- Simcoe separates users into different tracts

Allan Eagle, 20th Sideroad, Mulmur

- trail adjacent to his property closed
- block trails in some way to restrict access by different groups

Janice Clegg, Simcoe County side of Main Tract, OTRA

- specific individuals are the problem
- would prefer multi-use trails, rather than trail segregation
- educate all the users about how to keep trails clean, trail use under different conditions, what to do when you meet other users
- can help with education, signage
- www.otra.ca
- offered her help
- Tosorontio Tract does not have motorized use
- noise scares wildlife

Arthur Ash

- not asking for free rein of everything; education of users on how to deal with each other; seasonal use; try to keep members working with other groups

Elaine Weisner, Simcoe County close to Main Tract

- new landowner
- advocate of multi-use; rides her horse at Ganaraska
- already is seeing ATVs and dirt bikes going down her road to the Main Tract
- compared size of Main Tract and Ganaraska – maybe not appropriate for Main Tract
- maybe shouldn't be on the road either
- education needed for both dirt bikes and horseback riders
- noise is better because the horses can hear it – dirt bikes, mountain bikes
- yield signs

Lee Hill, Mulmur Township

- separation of uses by weekday and weekend use – two year trial period
- losing trail is not a good idea
- trying to rebuild trails after the forest has been harvested with skidders

Orangeville Resident, relies on rec for his business

- keep diversity, local businesses being supported by rec
- multi-use
- positive energy

Tom D, Mulmur Township

- has 22 motorcycles and 2 dirt bikes
- rides only on his own property due to soil conditions in the forest being sandy
- segregating a tract is a good idea
- nobody is keeping them out of Simcoe or repairing the damage there – damage repair should not be borne by Mulmur taxpayers

Arthur Ash

- OFTR pays for policing by OPP; more help with policing than what we get now

Lisa Garber, Mulmur Township

- OFTR rep should not be rebutting everyone's comments, it takes too much time

Shirley Boxem, Mulmur Township, HCIA Project Lead

- why do people use forests? – for her it is the smells and sounds and the natural environment, this does not happen if motorized vehicles are present
- other hat is vice-chair of NDACT – use of unrestored pits and quarries for motorized vehicle use

Keith Lowry, Mulmur, Chair of Mulmur Planning Advisory Committee

- separable area that would provide for use by motorized vehicles
- County can have a by-law stipulating uses under the Municipal Act
- segmenting responsible riders and irresponsible riders
- separating uses
- effective enforcement

Kevin Smith, Amaranth

- ORMs and horseback riders
- spend a lot of money and time at Ganaraska where everyone works together
- check for memberships, plates, insurance
- membership fees could go to pay for enforcement
- most horses will hear the motorcycle before you do
- multi-use does work
- control and educate people

Steve Fowler, ?

- mountain biker and motorcyclist
- trail conditions in Dufferin and Simcoe are basically the same
- North Carolina (Sally National Park) – open to all users - alternate days to reduce conflicts

Karen Briggs, 3rd Con, Everett

- horse owner relocated to area because DCF is non-motorized from Roseneath north of Cobourg
- Northumberland Forest is a multi-use forest – basically no segregation of uses, it is the “wild, wild west” – unusable for horseback riders due to ATVs and dirt bikes
- Ganaraska is a better model; perhaps a little overpoliced
- once it is open to dirt bikes, ATVs will start using it too
- find the Main Tract is a “sanctuary” except for the occasional yahoo
- nearly impossible to see wildlife or hear birds when there are motorized vehicles
- dirt bikers have plenty of places to ride in Simcoe – would like to see DCF remain non-motorized

Jill ?, Caledon

- motorized vehicle use has been restricted in Northumberland – without the dirt bikers the trails go unmaintained and grow in and are no longer useable
- she is both a horseback rider and a motorized vehicle user
- would like to have an area close to home to ride
- do go to Ganaraska to ride on occasion

Bernie VanderMeer, Alliston

- solution is to segregate trails for reasons of safety and trail maintenance/stewardship
- no reason in the world why we can't all work together
- equestrians about 40 km, mountain biking about 20 km
- would be nice for everyone to use the same trails, but it's not practical – the mountain bikers need the hard pack to ride which is ruined by the horses
- sharing the forest does not mean sharing the trails

Lynn Hilchey, Councillor, Mulmur Township

- enjoys low impact use of the Forest
- motorized vehicles don't belong in the forest, it was never the intention, and there is no reason why it should change now

Terry Wagner, Mono

- bullrushes are dying off, monarchs are dying off
- the damage to the environment by dirt bikes is not immediately apparent
- significant economic benefit from use by ATVs and dirt bikes
- tract of land that has already been damaged/destroyed to let the dirt bikers use – do we have one? not that is owned by the County
- damage inflicted by dirt bikers – irreparable
- “pristine” ecological forest in a UNESCO biosphere reserve

Stuart Hill, Mulmur

- likes to ride mountain bikes in Main Tract; horses riding on “mountain bike trails” and leaving behind feces

? Foost ?, 3rd Line Mulmur

- snowshoeing, mtn biking, ORMs
- would like to recreate with his ORM in Mulmur
- shouldn't turn back on youth who want to participate in sports
- we all leave an impact on this earth
- pressure to recreate near our homes is only going to increase
- we have good group reps and we should try and work together

Alan Buck, Amaranth

- what is considered "socially acceptable noise" – lawnmowers, chainsaws, whipper snippers
- appreciates what Dufferin County Forest has to offer, not a "conservation area"
- OFTR has put forward three ideas for use of the Forest responsibly
- disagrees that it is difficult to police – only several main entrances and one parking lot
- if OFTR is allowed to use, there would be a significant increase in responsible use
- education of riff raff motocross riders – go to other areas for that
- favours multi-use
- all activities leave a footprint
- snowmobiles pack down snow and in the spring there is ice that takes longer to melt creating mud holes
- thinks we can all get along

Peter McLaughlin, New Lowell

- Simcoe County Forest on Centre Line Road has been damaged by motor bikes
- why the focus on Main Tract? what about some of the other tracts?
- the hikers/birders aren't getting a hearing here

John Franklin, Mulmur

- "invest in real estate, they're not making it anymore"
- main focus on recreational use of DCF
- foci in the media: environment and education
- environment will seriously impact our lifestyle
- cultural entity in one of the tracts many years ago – proposal from a local group
- no opportunities for youth in Dufferin for employment or higher level education
- a challenge: the population is growing, greater need for post-secondary education facilities; think about going to the various universities/colleges to have an offsite campus at the Main Tract that would exentuate environmental issues
- "University of Dufferin"
- educating kids locally to fight for a better environment for all of us to live in
- "oh this I beheld, or dreamed in a dream"

Paul Hines, Mulmur

- dirt biker and horseback rider
- logging rips up the ground more than anyone else
- alternate days, times
- separation temporally, geographically

Alan Buck

-OFTR happy to work with/around other user groups to prove that they are responsible

Johnny Yeaman, mountain bikers (sitting in for Igor Hoogendoorn)

- one day event permit for dirt bikers – what trails are designated for this event
- Terra Nova Enduro/Hair Scramble? goes through his front yard
- users are very responsible and don't ever come back
- rogue riders are already there anyway
- gives an opportunity to prove themselves

Janice Clegg, OTRA

- signage and education would help a lot
- misconception that there are “mountain bike trails” and “horseback trails”; more clear signs indicating that they are multi-use trails

Arthur Ash, OFTR

- would like any access; event or time of day
- willing to do almost anything to get some access. working with the various groups
- most events have a riders' meeting at 9, event starts at 10 and usually finishes around 4 at the latest
- more as a family riding area
- buying a permit to control access to only responsible OFTR members
- Terra Nova is an organized trail ride (16 -70+ years old)

gentleman who didn't introduce himself

- models of multi-use in Ganaraska and Simcoe and LaRose
- trial period for motorized vehicle use
- single track trails keep down speed and noise
- sound testing at all organized events – also insurance
- increasing trail density actually reduces trail damage because it spreads the use over more trail
- numerous people have asked for a multi-use solution
- soils that are sandy and drain very well are good for multi-use because mud holes don't get created
- properly designed trails minimize erosion and trail degradation

Doreen Murphy, adjacent to Mono Tract

- put up a fence to stop ORMs crossing her property into the Forest
- Mono Tract is surrounded by horse farms, some of which are commercial
- are the ORMs interested in smaller tracts?
answered by the guy who I don't know: trail for 2-3 hours of recreation is what they want (about 40 km)

Sue Downing, OTRA, OCTRA

- concerned with devastation the loggers are creating
- worst it's ever been

gentleman who didn't introduce himself

- one weekend a month for OFTR

Anne Marie Roussy, Upper Credit Field Naturalists

- no motor vehicles in April, May, June due to breeding bird season

Stuart, Adjala

- horseback rider
- parking issues
- how is parking lot expansion going to be paid for?
- horse spooked by logging equipment
- trail wardens similar to OFSC
- and a well

Rob Little, Mono

- vote by the taxpayers of Dufferin County is the solution

gentleman who didn't introduce himself

- bringing the groups together to have a concrete proposal
- FPAT's role

At the end of the meeting there was some general discussion about how the process will move forward which was outlined for the audience.