

Friends of the Dufferin County Forest

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The Friends of the Dufferin County Forest, herein referred to as the Friends, is a volunteer group comprised of individuals who are committed to supporting approved activities within the properties collectively known as the Dufferin County Forest. The Friends volunteers will play a crucial hands-on role with a multitude of activities within the County Forest, with a focus on recreational needs related to trails. Tasks for the group will include, but not be limited to, trail construction, trail safety and signage, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, promotion and education about the County Forest, removal of litter, etc., as directed by the County Forest Manager.

Dufferin County Forest Goal

Each member of the Friends will understand and support the objectives of the approved Dufferin County Forest Management Plan, the goal of which is as follows:

To protect the quality and integrity of ecosystems in the Dufferin County Forest, including air, water, land and biota; and, where quality and integrity have been diminished, to encourage restoration or remediation to healthy conditions; while providing a variety of social and economic benefits to the public.

Key Points of Understanding

- Safety is paramount;
- Protecting the ecosystems and natural state of the Dufferin County Forest is considered a top priority while offering approved recreational pursuits;
- The Dufferin County Forest is not parkland, preserve or intended for single- use, however, some areas may not be suitable for all activities and;
- The Dufferin County Forest is owned and managed by the Corporation of the County of Dufferin, and is not Crown Land.

Member Eligibility

Any individual over the age of 16 who subscribes to, supports, and adheres to the intent of the Dufferin County Forest Management Plan and the associated policy(ies) and by-law(s), as well as the purpose of the Friends as described within this document.

Operating Structure

As described above, the Friends will work closely with, and under the direction of, the County Forest Manager. Tasks for the group will include, but not be limited to, trail construction, trail safety and signage, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, promotion and education about the County Forest, removal of litter, etc.

All activities performed by the Friends will be per the direction of the County Forest Manager. It is understood that in certain circumstances, consultation, guidance, support or approval beyond the Forest Manager may be required. This will be obtained by the Forest Manager from either the Director of Public Works, the Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team, the Infrastructure and Environmental Services Committee, or Dufferin County Council as determined on a case-by-case basis.

The operating structure of the Friends may be modified from time to time as deemed necessary by the County Forest Manager. In the event that a more formal operating or alternative structure for the Friends is deemed to be necessary by the County, the changes will be communicated to the Friends members to ensure full understanding. In support of continual improvement, members of the Friends are welcome to provide feedback and/or suggestions towards the operating structure.

Members of the Friends will be required to annually sign a waiver in order to maintain membership. The current waiver form is attached and may be modified from time to time as necessary. Members of the Friends will receive insurance coverage through the County's insurance while performing volunteer duties for the County. As several activities performed by the Friends may require the use of power equipment and tools (chainsaws, etc.), certification and/or training may be required from time to time. Proof of such certification and/or training must be provided to the County Forest Manager prior to any member proceeding with such activities.