

**Agriculture Forest Cover Committee  
Draft Meeting Minutes**

January 26, 2017 @ 1:10 pm  
South Nation Conservation, Watershed Room

**Present:**

Jacqueline Pemberton, Committee Chair  
André Brisson  
Michel Dignard  
Alan Kruszel  
Terry Otto  
Brian Powell  
Reg Presley  
Ed Schoujen  
Bernie Van Der Zweep  
Paul Vogel  
Tony Vogel  
Danielle Lefebvre, OFA Service Member Representative

**Administration and Technical Support:**

Ronda Boutz, South Nation Conservation  
Elise Lefebvre, South Nation Conservation

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

On behalf of South Nation Conservation Chair, Doug Thompson, welcome all that were present. Chair Thompson explained that a special levy from all townships in our watershed had been requested by South Nation Board of Directors to try to come up with suggestions or solutions for clear cutting. SNC and their municipalities has been getting call, emails from concern citizen regarding this subject. Chair Thompson is hoping that by reaching out to the farming community, ideas on how to resolve the issue will be proposed by this committee. Chair Thompson did not attend the meeting.

Jacqueline Pemberton led a roundtable of introductions.

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

Jackie Pemberton led a roundtable discussion on reasons why forests/trees are being cut and driving forces required to maintain forest cover. Attached in Appendix A are summary points from the roundtable discussion.

Committee recessed at 2:25 pm. Meeting resumed at 2:35 pm.

**COMMITTEE MANDATE**

Ronda Boutz summarized the mandate of the Committee and explained the Forest Conservation Special Levy that was approved in SNC's 2017 Budget.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PLAN**

Committee agreed that a draft Terms of Reference and Work Plan would be drafted by Jackie Pemberton with support from Ronda Boutz. Both draft documents to be circulated to the Committee prior to the next meeting for review. Both documents to be finalized at the next Committee meeting.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Committee discussed membership and what organizations would be invited to join. Committee directed Danielle Lefebvre and Ronda Boutz to extend invitations to the following groups to join the Committee:

- National Farmers Union
- Christian Farmers Federation
- Union des cultivateurs franco ontariens
- Louis Prevost, United Counties of Prescott and Russell
- Alison McDonald, United Counties of Stormont Dundas & Glengarry
- Archie Mellan, Director, South Nation Conservation
- Marc Bercier, local farmer
- Marcus Haerle, local farmer
- Scott Fife, local farmer
- Raisin Region Conservation Authority (as an observer, not a voting Committee member)

#### **FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Committee set the deadline for the final report with recommendations to the Board of Directors for the end of April 2017.

#### **COMMITTEE NAME**

Committee members discussed a name for the Committee and recommend "Agricultural Forest Cover Committee".

#### **MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Committee agreed to issue a press release following the second meeting, once Terms of Reference and Committee membership was finalized.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

- Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 1:00 pm. All meeting will take place at SNC office.
- Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 1:00 pm.

All meeting will take place at SNC office.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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Jaqueline Kelly-Pemberton, Committee Chair.

## Appendix A – Summary of Roundtable Discussion Points

### Why are farmers and other landowners cutting forests/trees?

#### 1. LAND VALUE

- Lands are needed – land is scarce
- Change in commodities
- Tax incentive – Not any different that bush
- Iterance rate
- World price for land – New to Ontario
- Outside investment
- Consolidation
- No incentive to keep bush
- Urban growth
- Community price
- Convenience of location
- Development
- Equipment – easier to clear with state of the art equipment
- Economic

#### 2. LAND OWNERS RIGHTS

- Property rights
- Fear of new laws

#### 3. PRODUCTION AND PROGRESS

- Cost of production
- More land decrease
- Global influence
- Fewer farms
- Natural management – land use

#### 4. MARGINAL LAND

- Ability available
- Tile draining – Easy access to equipment
- Different farming – mushroom, green house

#### 5. OTHER DEVELOPMENT

- Solar and wind
- Regulation in other provinces
- Population growth
- City growth
- Green space
- Speculation of development and planning

#### 6. COMMODATY PRICE

- World policy
- Land value falling

7. **INCOME**

Increase crops

8. **REGULATIONS**

News articles

Public awareness

Environmentalist

Wild life

Bio-diversity

Habitat

**What are the driving forces needed to maintain forest cover?**

1. **INCENTIVE**

Most farmers will clear good land

Clearing marginal land

Choosing not to clear

Technology has improved marginal land to clear land

2. **MUNICIPAL**

Significant wetland is not taxed

Public land acquisition – if government are worried they should purchase land so clear cut is not allowed

New carbon tax/cap and trade