

Agricultural Forest Cover Committee

Planning Workshop

March 17, 2017
Finch, Ontario



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Executive Summary

On March 17, 2017 the members of the Agricultural Forest Cover Committee met at the South Nation Conservation Authority office in Finch for a highly interactive workshop facilitated by Bryan Boyle. The purpose of the session was to continue to formulate a plan with recommendations to ensure a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in the geographical area represented by the committee that provides value for both the agricultural and non-agricultural members of our communities.

Participants worked to build on the information that they had developed at the March 24th workshop. Highlights of the areas of focus listed from their highest to lowest priority are:

- 1st: Best Management Practices
- 2nd: Education and Promotion
- 3rd: Stakeholder Engagement
- 4th: Programs
- 5th: Taxation
- 6th: Economic Alternatives

Participants suggested specific actions that will have a positive impact on the future of sustainable forest cover in the geographical area. These actions were designed to build on the merits, reduce or eliminate the challenges, avoid the consequences of inaction, while keeping the desired outcomes in mind. They also took an opportunity to add value to the work of other members of their group.

Participants utilized the following approach to guide their outline of the actions within each key area of focus:

What?	Clearly defined action to help ensure strong and viable sustainable forest cover in the future in the geographical area represented by the committee
Why?	The positive impact this action would have on sustainable forest cover in the geographic area
Who?	The lead person or group
Where?	Area or location where activity would be focused
When?	Reasonable and attainable timelines
How?	Recommended steps in the specific action
Resources?	Resources required (e.g. funds, materials, payment-in-kind) and who will supply these resources
Success?	Metrics or criteria used to evaluate success of this action

Participants were encouraged to “put on a new hat” to provide a different perspective on the suggested actions on-the-wall. Additional perspectives included those of:

Elected Municipal Officials
Conservation Authorities
Environmental Activists
Non-Farm Rural Residents

Bryan Boyle reminded the participants of an age-old adage: “If it is to be, it is up to me”. He suggested to the participants that they are all in a position to help ensure a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in the geographical area. As a result, many individual personal commitments were shared by participants.

The Agricultural Forest Cover Committee planning workshop was a productive event, where the participants were very engaged. Through their valued input, participants took an important step in their quest for a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in their geographical area in the future.

Agricultural Forest Cover Committee

Planning Workshop

South Nation Conservation Authority, Finch, Ontario

March 17, 2017 Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Purpose of the Session

To develop an action plan to ensure a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in the geographical area represented by the committee that provides value for both the agricultural and non-agricultural members of our communities

Welcome

Chairman Jackie Pemberton welcomed all members of the Agricultural Forest Cover Committee to the workshop. She conducted a short administrative business session and introduced Bryan Boyle as facilitator for the day.

Areas of Focus

There are many actions that could help ensure a strong and viable future for sustainable forest cover in the geographical area. These actions were created by the participants at the February 24th meeting to build on the merits, reduce or eliminate the challenges as well as reach the desired outcomes.

At the February 24th meeting, the participants identified many potential actions. They clustered and prioritized these actions into areas of focus using the following method:

Each participant was given 100 points. They were asked to allocate their points to a number of areas of focus to show their relative importance. They based their allocation on where action would have the most positive impact on the future of sustainable forest cover in the geographical area.

Rank	Area of Focus	Total Score
1 st	Best Management Practices	500
2 nd	Education and Promotion	480
3 rd	Stakeholder Engagement	380
4 th	Programs	290
5 th	Taxation	105
6 th	Economic Alternatives	45

Participants' Suggested Actions

Participants were encouraged to choose specific actions from the Areas of Focus that had not been addressed on February 24th and create some additional detail for Areas of Focus of the highest priority using the suggested guidelines shown below.

What?	Clearly defined action to help ensure a strong and viable future for sustainable forest cover in the geographical area represented by the committee
Why?	The positive impact this action would have on sustainable forest cover in the geographical area Please note how your recommended action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds on a strength • reduces or eliminates a weakness • aims for a desired outcome
Who?	The lead person or group
Where?	Area or location where activity would be focused
When?	Reasonable and attainable timelines
How?	Recommended steps in the specific action
Resources?	Resources required (e.g. funds, materials, payment-in-kind and who will supply these resources)
Success?	Metrics or criteria that will be used to evaluate success of this action

Participants were given opportunities to add value to the work of other groups. The specific actions within each Area of Focus were prioritized using a points system. The suggested key Areas of Focus are provided in the same order as the ranking in the Areas of Focus table above. Within each Area of Focus, the action plans are listed in order of priority.

1. Best Management Practices

1.1	Priority Score: 24
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a definition for marginal lands • Identify marginal lands with online maps
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To show lands better used for forestry than agriculture
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County, MNRF, OMAFRA, Crop Consultants
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot program locally
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible, this year
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data • Create GIS maps • Update data as needed through Canada Land Inventory

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentives to improve uptake
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities, Municipalities, Province, farmers, crop consultants
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps exist and are well used • Strong website counts for use • More trees on marginal lands

1.2	Priority Score: 22
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Best Management Practice for Forestry
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage landowners to do what is best • Allow tree removal on Class 1, 2 and 3 land • Facilitate proper tree cutting with chipping and mulching within the three year time period • Offset the impact of invasive species such as Emerald ash borer, Dutch elm, Asian long-horned beetle, pine beetle, etc. • Counter impact of wildlife damage, e.g. beaver, deer, etc. • Strike a balance between wildlife habitat and crop losses • In lieu of bylaws • Incorporate visual buffer strips of trees
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders engaged • OMAFRA could publish and promote a BMP that we could endorse
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each municipality in the geographic area
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within one year
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together experts • Farmers engaged in BMP development • Engage in landowner education to do what is best • Establish Best Management Practice booklet and distribute online • Provide Best Management Practice training • Motivate and encourage farmers to follow BMPs • Promote their use to the public through advertising • Utilize agricultural University • Encourage use of forestry BMPs for all, e.g. developments, single-family dwellings, industry • Update soil maps • Consider soil type and classification • Create a checklist to verify or ensure that clearing trees is the right decision • Evaluate final use of trees, e.g. burn, chip, buried, transported, etc.

Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMAFRA for production of material • Conservation Authority • Local townships • Province • Ducks Unlimited
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When applications come forward • Practices that all stakeholders agree upon are implemented

1.3	Priority Score: 16
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant windbreaks
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop erosion • Improved public perception
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage Superintendents and Peer Review Committee
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each municipality and area evaluation
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On demand
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage windbreak developments • Utilize Best Management Practices
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation Conservation Authority
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of trees planted or maintained as windbreaks

1.4	Priority Score: 16
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Canada Land Inventory
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify marginal lands for planning purposes
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial and Federal officials
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescott and Russell • Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry • Already accomplished in Ottawa
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby the Province, particularly Conservation Ontario • Allocate funding • Plan the review
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds through Growing Forward 2
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New mapping that is publicly available

1.5	Priority Score: 4
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add forestry to Environmental Farm Plan

Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness • Demonstrate farmers' commitment
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association • Conservation Ontario • Conservation Authorities • Agricultural Committees
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincially with a local pilot project in South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new module in 2017 • Full implementation 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Federations of Agriculture meet with Soil and Crop Improvement Association • Soil and Crop Improvement Association brings the proposal to the Federal and Provincial officials • Implement locally and provincially
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincially funded • Time commitment of local representatives
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry module added provincially to Environment Farm Plan

2. Education and Promotion

2.1	Priority Score: 29
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that agriculture is the highest priority
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture is the number one industry in Eastern Ontario • View the issue from both perspectives (agriculture and forestry) • Ensure harmony through cooperation
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm organizations • South Nation Conservation Authority
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescott and Russell • Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry • Parts of Leeds and Grenville
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin in April 2017 • Ongoing
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Forestry Conservation Committee would create an initiative
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper and lower tier Municipalities
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive change in public perception

2.2	Priority Score: 25
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and promotion
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of land management • Improve farm practices • Better stakeholder engagement • Improve image of agriculture • Engage the public in the industry as a whole
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers • General public • Ministry of Education Curriculum Department • Upper and lower tier municipalities • Conservation Authorities • Agricultural industry
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed based in the South Nation Conservation Authority area • Promoted to neighbouring Conservation Authorities
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start within six months • Ongoing
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or enhance partnerships with local schools, municipalities, farm groups, farm organizations, etc. • Set educational parameters including what we do, why we do it and the benefits for all • Promote our message “through the media” not “by the media” • Include a social media initiative • Increased involvement with “Agriculture in the Classroom” • Special programs in schools and at professional development days to educate teachers • Farm tours • Incorporated into Soil and Crop Improvement Association programs • Increase local OMAFRA staff • Increase agriculture personnel at Conservation Authorities
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province through Ministry of Education and Ministry of Natural Resources • Taxes for agricultural education
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture in the educational curriculum • Reduced bad publicity • Better educated public • Movement toward common goals

3. Stakeholder Engagement

3.1	Priority Score: 21
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Cover Committee
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move this group's idea forward through upper tier and Province
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions from this community plus Conservation Authority, County, public members
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soon, as early as May 2017
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose key members • Invite the public, County and Province • Set the Terms of Reference
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authority
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of committee

3.2	Priority Score: 19
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage coordinated approach of stakeholder engagement
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone becomes part of the process • Pride of involvement • A sense of ownership • Gains buy-in as part of the solution • Promotes education
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers • Conservation Authorities • Municipalities • Ontario Woodlot Association
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit support from municipalities, agriculture groups and media • Establish a government buy-in, e.g. MOECC, Ministry of Education, MNRF, Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs • Make presentations to interested groups • Ensure that our messaging is consistent when getting farmers' point of view out through the media • Find common ground between divergent viewpoints • Develop financial incentives to compliment program • Initiate a retroactive credit to reward producers for activities already done well

Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture industry would provide funding in-kind • Conservation Authority would provide funding in-kind • Human resources would be identified to ensure we have the right people involved • Municipal funding • Use money from the carbon credit fund • All funding would come from the Province
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are involved and engaged • Positive publicity is common

3.3	Priority Score: 18
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare farmland losses to forestry compared to losses to urban sprawl
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry offsets urban sprawl • Provide comparative analysis
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local committee with additional resources
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province-wide
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize project with goals and timelines • Engage support and secure resources • Identify sources of data
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative analysis available

3.4	Priority Score: 13
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Peer Review Committee
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share opinions and educate • Monitor and promote proper cutting • Satisfy public concerns
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Member Committee • Local Ontario Federation of Agriculture • South Nation Conservation Authority • Municipal planner • Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 and 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form the committee

Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authority
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee established and effective

3.5	Priority Score: 8
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate cutting permit and regulation
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more options • Ensure that Best Management Practices are available • Help educate stakeholders • Satisfy public concerns
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish municipal buy-in • Develop a process • Define the minimum size required, e.g. greater than 5 acres • Solicit a recommendation from the Peer Review Committee • Implement a pilot program
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting permit and regulation is implemented and operating effectively

3.6	Priority Score: 6
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the benefits of forestry to the agricultural community
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To regain trust • Reduce soil erosion • Windbreaks provide snow protection of alfalfa and grains • Yield drag with windbreaks shelter
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm groups
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across the watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage use of windbreaks and other forestry by tax breaks
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm organizations
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type and amount of promotional effort

3.7	Priority Score: 4
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an option for counties and municipalities to purchase forest land
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain forest cover • Acceptable compromise for all stakeholders
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities and South Nation Conservation Authority
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 and beyond
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the marginal land • Tax credits for planting more woodlots
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities and South Nation Conservation Authority
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acreage of land purchased to be maintained as forest

3.8	Priority Score: 2
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage stakeholders with divergent views
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce complaints • Limited negative press • Opponents would feel part of the solution • Tell our story • Emphasize economic drivers
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural groups • Local municipalities • Peer Review Committee • South Nation Conservation Authority forest technicians • Provincial representatives
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localized initiatives within our watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin now and ongoing
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations to Councils • Encourage Best Management Practices
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation Conservation Authority • Provincial • Municipal • Time
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder buy-in • Funding provided • Trust generated

4. Programs

4.1	Priority Score: 17
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop carbon credit protocols
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit the environment • Long-term solution • Build on existing credit to landowner • Improve forest management • Achieve government objectives • Maintain an ecosystem for wildlife
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities • General farm organizations • Agricultural industry • Public • Federal and provincial governments
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start as soon as possible; ongoing • Prior to 2018 is a provincial government deadline before the election
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather existing program information globally • Engage stakeholders • Lobby government or appropriate industry • Clarify who is getting credits for what
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax base for carbon tax
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols in place to protect the government • Peace of mind • Public engagement on climate change

4.2	Priority Score: 14
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more incentive programs
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage good land stewardship in the watershed • Diminishing funding now at local, provincial and federal levels • Recognition for engagement • Achieves the objective • Meets public and peer expectations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide revenue source from forest land to remain in forest • Generate public support • Environmental benefits • Urban sprawl development
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities • Public involvement • Soil and Crop • General farm organizations • Governments • Public • Peer committee • Contractors
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Nation watershed basis as a pilot project • Spread Province-wide
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before 2018 • Ongoing
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure easy applications • Encourage participation • Expand on existing review and improve, like Clean Water Program • Ensure unencumbered funding • Generate innovative ideas • Compensation for windbreaks • Forest land taxes refund • Consult with agricultural groups, concerned parties and through the educational system
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal, provincial and public • Carbon tax • Special interest groups • "Go Fund Me"
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of funding • Amount of projects completed • Changed landscape • Positive change in public perception

4.3	Priority Score: 7
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate or support research and development
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify various species and disease resistance
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized researchers
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across Ontario

When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejuvenate past research programs • Meet the current needs relating to forestry
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario government and Conservation Authorities
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research project successes

4.4	Priority Score: 0
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate Land Swap Credit Program
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect agricultural lands Class 1, 2 and 3
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal governments take the lead
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Ontario
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop soil maps to upgrade land classifications • Initiate a forest trust fund • Land donations should be limited • Develop a policy relating to land use
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario government
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultations held to provide a land-use policy throughout Eastern Ontario

5. Taxation

5.1	Priority Score: 24
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial and federal tax credit for forest and lands
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides financial incentive that encourages management of forests
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities • Agricultural groups • Municipalities • MPP's
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario-wide
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and initiate the program • Farmers pay the 25% rate; they get a credit back and must commit to protect and manage forests
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities • Municipalities

Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program exists
5.2	Priority Score: 18
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect forest and municipal tax sale portfolio
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land being sold privately should be protected
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local municipality
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeds Grenville • Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry • Prescott Russell
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policy; encourage the municipality to accept the policy
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local public lands increase

6. Economic Alternatives

6.1	Priority Score: 19
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop economic alternatives to clear cutting for agriculture
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential sustainable economic returns • Preserves good forest for future generations • Potential for carbon credit funding
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Authorities • Local municipalities
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class 4 and 5 land in the South Nation Watershed
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the following as examples: maple syrup, tourism, recreation, green fuel, etc. • Generate public buy-in • Develop government support • Ensure farmer support
Resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial funding • Conservation Authorities • Municipal support
Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive public opinion • Farmers buy-in and are supportive • Agriculture and public are on the same page • Government policy is practical • No tree cutting bylaw is in place

Perspectives of Other Stakeholders

Participants were encouraged to “put on a new hat” to give that group’s perspective on the suggested actions on-the-wall.

Table 1: Elected Municipal Officials

Table 2: Conservation Authorities

Table 3: Environmental Activists

Table 4: Non-Farm Rural Residents

These perspectives are shown below. Single numbers in the left-hand column of the table below indicates a general impression of an area of focus. Numbers in the left-hand column with decimals (e.g. 4.1) indicate that this comment relates to a specific action.

1	Best Management Practices
	Elected Municipal Officials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need to do enforcement of a tree cutting bylaw • Less public pressure • Save resources • Work with Conservation Authorities • Get involved in education
	Environmental Activists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Environmental Farm Plans for all farmers
	Non-Farm Rural Residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a BMP...a car? • Reduces the smoke • Why are the trees in piles? • We are concerned with crops versus environmental aesthetics

2	Education and Promotion
	Elected Municipal Officials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged with agriculture and Conservation Authorities • How does Council educate the public?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do the dollars come from for your recommendations? • Is there a need for us to act on this issue?
	Environmental Activists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to get mandatory environmental education and promotion in schools • Agricultural sector members are environmental terrorists • Agriculture is destroying wildlife habitat, waterways and groundwater sources • Cropping contributes to greenhouse gas and climate change • Heritage forests will not be available for further generations • There is a need for tree cutting bylaws • We need to go back to the natural setting from pre-European settlement • The barren rural landscape currently looks like a war zone
	Non-Farm Rural Residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate to me what you are doing that is positive • Asking for or promoting mulching piles of trees

3	Stakeholder Engagement
	Elected Municipal Officials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not our role • What is in it for us? • This takes resources and staff time • No time for this • Is there a champion on Council? • This is not seen as a priority
	Conservation Authorities
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to manage this program
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would rather see stewardship staff attend
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider environmental offset permit options
	Environmental Activists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public opinion • You never ask people from the city for permission or opinions • Farmers should require public permission to make major changes on their forest lands • We demand that Municipal Councils retain an environmental advisor to inform

	their decisions
	Non-Farm Rural Residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I stop land clearing? • Will promoting reforestation cost me? • Can we maintain the existing forest cover through various means? • Can I Google for answers to this forestry issue?

4	Programs
	Elected Municipal Officials
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't understand this land swap concept

5	Taxation
	Elected Municipal Officials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no funds available • How I pay for it without a tax increase?
	Environmental Activists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be no tax incentives for farmers who are just doing the right thing

6	Economic Alternatives
	Elected Municipal Officials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value-added categories could increase our tax base • Increased tourism • Increased employment
	Environmental Activists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be no tax incentives for farmers just doing the right thing

Personal Commitments: “If it is to be, it is up to me!”

Bryan Boyle reminded the participants of an age-old adage: “If it is to be, it is up to me”. He suggested to the participants in the room that they are all in a position to help ensure a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in the geographical area. As a result, the following individual personal commitments were shared by participants.

I will:

- encourage and help defend our local municipal leaders to work toward a workable solution of encouraging windbreaks and allowing farmers to work Class 1, 2 and 3 land to produce food
- volunteer to sit on the local Forest Cover or Peer Review Committee
- communicate to my farmer members smart choices in what they do with the forest areas that they own
- help farmers remember that they are part of society and need to work with everyone for the greater good
- remain involved in bringing this proposal to my municipality so that they understand the impact regulations can have as they would understand it more from a local farmer
- continuing in my duties of involvement in a farmers’ organization as we move forward
- be proactive because the activists will not give up
- bring five of our best ideas that we have come up with to my local township council
- add online maps for marginal lands to our project list and ensure that it gets done
- engage our County partners to make online maps accessible
- disseminate information as best I can without prejudice to my fellow farmers and friends to try and encourage their thoughts on forest cover
- lobby the provincial government (mainly MOECC) to use carbon tax money for incentive programs
- lobby Minister Murray of MOECC and his staff on this issue
- encourage my farm organization provincially to lobby the government
- become more involved in the decision process since by being involved you may influence the results
- make sure that I explain the good side of why we do land clearing noting it is not just for the money but we do take care of the environment because it is our livelihood
- speak to our local farm organization regarding the exchange of ideas on this committee
- chat about forest cover with any open-minded youth in my life and travels
- bring to light why farmers clear land for expansion and growth
- talk to urban residents with regard to the amount of prime farmland that is being lost to urban sprawl without public comment
- initiate an agricultural working group within my the area that can work with our committee to keep things moving on sustainable forest cover

- encourage people to value agriculture through education to the general public
- produce an editorial in my local newspaper relating to this issue
- help educate all about what we do relating to forest cover
- engage my local politicians to continue our committee work
- present the recommendations made by our committee to the South Nation Conservation Authority and the member municipalities to encourage action to address the top priorities of our committee, including timelines
- educate the public on what our committee has accomplished and the recommendations we have made
- work with agricultural organization to educate farmers

Summary

The Agricultural Forest Cover Committee planning workshop on March 17 was a productive event, where the participants were very engaged. Through their valued input, participants took an important step in their quest for a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in their geographical area in the future.