

Save our forests from clear cutting

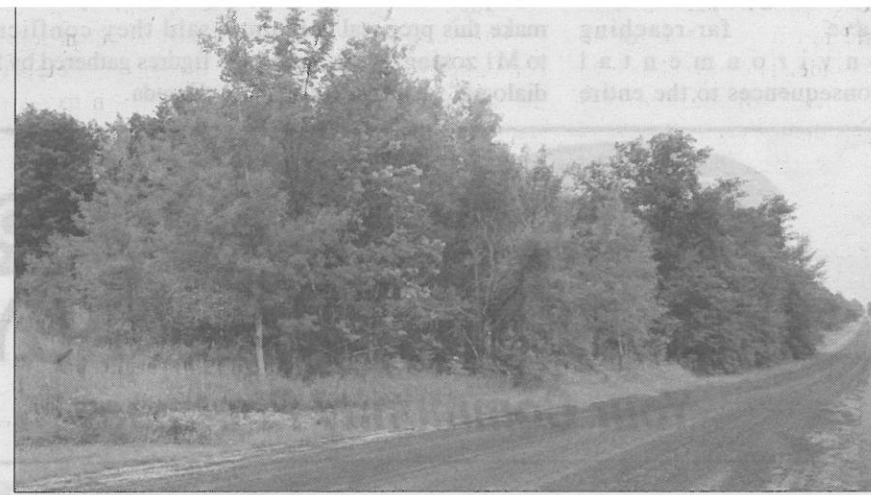
The Editor:

Just as in North Dundas, deforestation has hit the Township of North Stormont and forests are coming down. Four years ago, my house outside of Finch was surrounded by forests. Today only one remains. It was terribly upsetting this month to see the pretty little forest on Concession 3-4 Road near Goldfield come down, slash-and-burn style, without even harvesting the timber. It was a perfect wildlife corridor for migrating animals.

In 2006, the estimated forest cover was 13% for North Dundas and 27% for North Stormont. They both fall below the recommended criterion of 30%. I assume that these figures have further declined in the last seven years and will continue to decline.

Could North Dundas and North Stormont councils work with the agricultural community to ensure a long-term vision that includes a healthy conservation of forest cover? Strangely, we need a permit for making changes to our house or for building a new deck, yet no permit is required to rearrange components in the environment and alter the face of the earth.

Maybe the two counties could set up a committee to look into the matter. The percentage and precise location of forest coverage would be regularly updated in order to avoid deforestation in at risk areas. This would help maintain sustainable



Letter writer Catherine MacLaine took these before and after photos of the bush on her road.

wildlife corridors at regular intervals and keep the watershed's capacity at safe levels. A partnership with the South Nation Conservation Authority could be established for this purpose as it already has a woodlot advisory service in place. Furthermore, a set of guidelines for woodlot owners should be established and posted on the North Dundas and North Stormont websites

so that it is readily available to landowners.

My hope is that the counties can protect the forested areas so that our children and grandchildren can live in a healthy and thriving place.

Catherine MacLaine
Finch, North Stormont