

**CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY
SOUTHERN ONTARIO SECTION
NEWSLETTER**

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 2
SECTION CHAIRMAN Bruce Ferguson, R.P.F.

FALL 2004
EDITOR Mack Williams, R.P.F.

Some quotes found on internet & elsewhere:

From Buckminster Fuller: You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something build a new reality that makes the existing model obsolete.

Albert Einstein: A society which does not insist on respect for all life must necessarily decay.

Brian Swimme: One way to think about the sun, every time you see it at dawn, is to think of it as a cosmic act of generosity.

Trees: silent partners in earth's survival.

From Leonardo de Vinci, quoted in Suzuki's "The Sacred Balance": we know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot.

From Aldo Leopold's "A Sand County Almanac" quoted in "The Sacred Balance": Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. By land is meant all the things on, over or in the Earth. Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left. That is to say, you cannot love game and hate predators; you cannot conserve the waters and waste the ranges; you cannot build the forest and mine the farm. The land is one organism.

Guy Dauncey: Sustainability is a condition of existence which enables present humans and other species to enjoy social wellbeing, a vibrant economy, and a healthy environment, and to experience fulfilment, beauty and joy, without compromising the ability of future generations of humans and other species to enjoy the same."

Guy Dauncey, quoting Martin Luther King Jr. "Change is never inevitable; change is always carried in on the shoulders of those who bring change with them."

A speaker at a recent conference noted our concern with the destructiveness of exotic invasive plant or animal species, then added that humanity is the most destructive, exotic, invasive

of all species. How can we constructively change that image.

Each generation takes the earth as trustees. We ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted & consumed. J. Sterling Morton Quoted in UFN Newsletter.

A Nature Conservancy of Canada poster: Every time a piece of nature disappears a part of us goes with it.

FORESTRY EDUCATION

In www.fao.org/forestry are the contents of Unasylva #216: reinventing forestry education. Articles can be seen by going to "contents". The subheading on the editorial page reads

With rapidly accelerating social, economic and technological changes, educational concepts and institutions that have been in place since the industrial revolution could become obsolete.

EMERALD ASH BORER

Last issue I noted that Bill Roesel, City Forester for Windsor, had addressed our AGM on the emerald ash borer. The Toronto Star's environment page, August 28, provides further information.

Things are so serious in Michigan that there is serious talk of having an ash-free firebreak 10 times as long and 8 times as wide as that created earlier across Kent and Essex Counties, 30 km. long and 10 km wide. The one considered for Michigan would be 300 km. long and 50-80 km. wide in an arc extending from Saginaw Bay to western Lake Erie.

At the moment it relies on voluntary land owner compliance. And the protection such a belt offers is vulnerable to the fact that people can carry firewood (e.g. from home to the cottage or campsite) across any quarantine zone. People may be unaware of the seriousness of the problem or just choose to ignore it.

On Walpole Island, ash is a large component (a third) of the deciduous forest, and the threat is imminent; the infestation has spread in Michigan to an area across the river from the island.

Meanwhile, there are thousands of dead ash trees across the Essex County landscape.

THE CANADIAN BOREAL

On June 9 at U of T I heard a 3-hour debate among 6 people deeply interested in the Boreal (chaired by a seventh), and my vision cleared a bit. So this is based on what I think I heard.

Debaters were from: one of the involved NGO's, one of the involved companies, two aboriginal organizations, an international organization that believes there may be better sources of fibre, one environmental activist MP. They were chaired by Gordon Miller, Environmental Commissioner for Ontario, and, I'd say, a pro at bringing differing viewpoints to the same table.

I dwell on this in the belief that some of the resource, environmental, social and economic issues are far-reaching, as are the potential for doing the right or wrong things, and the consequences of so doing. It seems like an issue important to all of us forestry practitioners, wherever we are and whatever we do.

That evening I saw a handout that reminded me that the boreal has undergone intensive debate since 1992 in Europe, where they formed TRN, Taiga Rescue Network (www.taigarescue.org), based in Sweden. To what extent this network influenced formation of the Canadian Boreal Initiative, or its US counterpart I don't know.

My impression of the Boreal, is one of: vastness (about half Canada's land mass), one of the few relatively untouched large natural systems left in the world; a network of lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands; a vast range of wildlife habitat; home to a number of boreal wildlife species (many seasonal) forming an intact predator-prey system; an essential component of continent-wide habitat for countless migratory waterfowl; essential component of home to many small migratory songbirds. It is also home to hundreds of aboriginal communities, most plagued with social problems; it offers potential for one of the greatest conservation efforts in human history,

and as a buffer against global climate change, and the whole threatened by changing times.

Even the trillions of mosquitoes and blackflies are an essential part of the Boreal ecosystem.

Threats come at least partly from a combination of the reality or likelihood of timber allocations, increasing numbers of roads, and exploration for oil and gas. Things are changing rapidly; there is limited time to form a vision of what we want, and to put conservation and protection into place, in a way that is the best for the landscape and for the communities. There is lots of logging in the south part of the boreal and there is time to improve on how it is done.

Several companies, NGO's, aboriginal communities, concerned with the negative possibilities and excited by the potential, and perhaps inspired by the older European effort, have come together to demonstrate that things can be done better, propose strategies for various sectors, and to assist government and the rest of society in making it happen.

The effort has had its sceptics. Two question the group's right to speak for the boreal's owners, the people of Canada, or for several hundred directly affected aboriginal communities. One wonders if biodiversity or wildlife are adequately protected, or whether future pressure to open the area to resource extraction can be resisted in the face of growing world demand.

Aboriginal spokespersons believe conservation is a must, that their communities must be fully consulted about it, that guarantees of rights to the forest must be respected and upheld.

There is a belief that conservation done properly could help meet the severe social challenges found in many communities, especially among their young people.

A spokesperson for a firm that does sustainable agriculture development abroad noted that to fill the demand for fibre for paper, it may be feasible to use certain types of grasses, thereby easing the demand pressure on the boreal forest.

I left feeling that a good start had been made, that progress must be made soon, for the opportunity may not be there forever. There is much to do, among other things to educate all Canadians, especially those of us who do not

experience the boreal directly as to what this is all about. There is much to do to draw both the aboriginal communities and the industry into full participation. Support and participation is needed from all levels of government. Those with enough passion for the boreal to have started this debate to hang in, to think and act positively toward one another. Already we do a lot of things better than we did in the past, and must keep getting better. I dream of this effort becoming a major contribution to the future of the world, and an inspiration to all.

As a possible indication of what can be done, I repeat a couple of paragraphs from last issue.

In Toronto Star, May 1, was a letter to the editor from Mr. Peter Peneshue, President, Innu Nation of Labrador. Among other things, he notes that the Innu Nation is working to “reclaim our land, reaffirm our rights and restore health and vitality in our communities.” They are developing a vision of a sustainable future, and working across many differences with governments, industry, environmentalists, and local people.

The Innu and the Provincial government have developed an ecosystem-based management plan for an area of boreal forest twice the area of Vancouver Island. He believes that what they have achieved is reflected in the spirit and intent of the boreal framework.

He sees the framework in a very positive sense as a chance to work together to recognize the global importance of the boreal forest, and to ensure that the forest is used sustainably by aboriginal people, the industry, ordinary Canadians and others.

FROM EOMF NEWSLETTER, May-June/04.

In this newsletter: Jim Cayford describes his visit to Chiloe Model Forest in Chiloe Island of Chile, an island 180 km. long by 50 km wide, roughly 2/3 forested, and 1/4 under small (i.e. mostly under 8 ha) agricultural holdings. The forest is under several threats, including wood cutting mostly for fuelwood, land clearing for farming, and a lack of livelihoods other than agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The model forest features a variety of projects such as forestry development, biodiversity,

sustainable ecotourism, environmental management and education.

SOUTHERN ONTARIO GREENWAY

Back to our own territory. Ontario Nature, formerly Federation of Ontario Naturalists, recently sent a fundraising and support raising letter to members. On the envelope it says:

Ontario’s population is expected to rise by 2.5 million in the next 20 years (Bet it will be mainly in the south!)

Five percent of Canada’s land base is prime farmland and half of that is in (Southern) Ontario, under threat of urban sprawl.

Southern Ontario has lost 75% of its pre-settlement wetlands and 80% of its forest.

A box at the top of the letter says: IMAGINE: Ontario’s “green islands”—parks, natural areas, scenic landscapes and communities—laced together by ribbons of green. Add green space and trails through our urban settlements, providing opportunities to enjoy nature close to home. Include wetlands and woodlands that protect clean water and air, providing habitat for nature in all its forms. Add paths and bikeways that (connect) communities, longer trails that join (communities), and forests and natural cover that provide habitat for wildlife. Imagine communities, governments, foundations, colleges, universities, community residents and landowners, working cooperatively to protect and connect their greenlands to those in the next community and create e healthy landscapes.

Together, these pieces of the puzzle contribute to a network that is stronger and more beautiful than the sum of its parts.

The letter, signed by Executive Director Jim Faught, a forester, begins: We must imagine this because it does not exist today. The provincial government is taking steps in the right direction, for example, committing to protect an additional 600,000 acres in a Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt. Ontario Nature has an even bolder goal to establish a protected and connected greenway system across ALL of Southern Ontario. The time is right to implement our Southern Ontario Greenway Strategy which will create a robust network of natural core areas and corridors.

(Natural cores are large areas of forests, wetlands or other natural habitat. Natural corridors are bands of green space, including natural habitat, that connect the cores).

The letter goes on to enlist reader support, and then to explain Ontario Nature's Southern Ontario Greenway Strategy. Using solid conservation science, it is a practical, scientifically sound, efficient way to establish new greenways—core areas and corridors—across Southern Ontario. It is believed to be an essential element of “smart growth” for the region. It makes connections between:

-Existing greenways like Niagara Escarpment, Oak Ridges Moraine, Lake Ontario waterfront and others, to enhance their value.

-Protection for ground water and surface water at their source, and the greenlands that can provide that protection.

-Greenlands in each municipality and those in neighbouring municipalities.

-A healthy connected system of natural areas and the practical program that will make it happen.

He adds that all of the pieces can be connected. Woodlands, wetlands and watersheds cross municipal boundaries; municipal plans need to set boundaries to (recognize and) protect these.

The combination of protected cores and corridors preserves wildlife habitat, retains forest cover that (among other things) helps combat global warming, keeps drinking water clean, and provides green spaces for people to enjoy.

(I would add the potential of those forested areas to support a major wood-using industry without compromising but rather enhancing social and environmental values. This potential might influence where future forests are located—e.g. more forest located on productive sites close to wood-using industries).

Jim notes that the proposed Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt has merit and should be implemented.

As I reflect on all this, a tiny example comes to mind. I heard a Toronto city councillor describe in her ward a tiny watershed which naturally drains into the Don River. She describes a

proposal or dream: an artificial wetland to cleanse runoff water of much of the pollutants it collects from the time each raindrop hits a rooftop, driveway, paved play area, or whatever, and would otherwise go straight into the river and thence into Lake Ontario. Implementing that idea would help cleanse the Don and the lake.

Another small example perhaps is provided by two outdoor education centres familiar to me (Forest Valley and Hillside), owned by the Toronto School Board, both in forested ravine lands and both part of a slender thread by which Toronto schools can offer young students a small taste of nature. These are within Toronto's ravine system which forms valuable cores and corridors within the urban setting..

Ontario Nature's material sees the future as part of a huge jigsaw puzzle; the above are a few of the pieces. Some pieces shown in a card to be sent to the province, urging action, are:

-urban areas: we need to grow our cities and towns smarter, with firm urban boundaries to avoid sprawl and compact urban development and redevelopment.

-transportation corridors: we need transportation systems that combine public transit and roads, with emphasis on more and better transit.

-nature: across (Southern?) Ontario we need protected greenways, consisting of “core” natural areas linked by natural corridors.

-agriculture: we need both laws and incentives to protect prime farmlands and to ensure the economic viability of agriculture.

There is other information from Ontario Nature on topics like: urban sprawl and smart growth; how can nature fit; as well as a series of 6 woodland fact sheets, obtainable from Ontario Nature and including:

Cores and Corridors: Importance of a Green System in Southern Ontario.

Introducing Old Growth: the Ultimate Forest.

Ten Ways to Save Your Local Woods (and Water!)

Forest Fragmentation

Urban Forests: An Important Part of Our Natural Heritage

Making the Connection between Woodlands and Water.

Ontario Nature's (i.e. FON's) Southern Ontario Greenway Strategy can be obtained from FON.

THE LIVING CITY

Our region is increasingly urbanized, and the Conservation Foundation of Greater Toronto, the fund-raising affiliate of Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) has developed the vision of the Living City, a new kind of community where human settlement can flourish forever as part of nature's beauty and diversity.

The Foundation's 2003 Annual Report notes that worldwide there are 300 city regions each with a million or more people. They are growing rapidly and becoming places of wasteful consumption of energy, water and land.

The Living City seeks to change that direction, to a vision of how a city region should look and function, to become one of the most sustainable, liveable city regions in the world, and to share with other city regions what they are learning. They have four main objectives: healthy rivers and shorelines, regional biodiversity, sustainable communities, and business excellence. They have listed a number of accomplishments by TRCA under each of these objectives.

It is noted that TRCA has a major tree-planting program, having planted nearly a million trees in the past 7 years. Given the habitat, water and air cleansing, temperature modification offered by trees, as well as space for recreation and spiritual renewal, forests are integral to making the city liveable. That is why there is a commitment to increasing the amount of forest in the region from 17% to 30%, a level believed necessary for a healthy landscape.

TREE PROTECTION BY-LAW IN TORONTO

An article "Urban Forest Deserves Protection" by Toronto City Councillor and Tree Advocate Joe Pantalone, preceded by a few days consideration by Toronto's four community councils of an extension of the existing trees by-law to cover the entire amalgamated city.

He cites many of the known benefits of trees and forest in the city, and the aging state of Toronto's forest, and its vulnerability to loss from development, disease and insects, and the need,

noted above to significantly increase tree cover in the city. .

The proposed by-law has been passed by Toronto City Council, effective at once. .

ST WILLIAMS CROWN LANDS

An MNR June 4 news release noted that the Crown lands at St. Williams are to be designated a conservation reserve. The stated purpose is to safeguard the area's important natural heritage features, while allowing for recreation activity that fits with MNR's protection goals, and to increase the amount of green space. .

The St. Williams Conservation Reserve is 1,100 hectares of mainly forested Crown owned land, internationally known for its Carolinian forest features and rare species of plants and animals, including some species at risk. The area is also popular for activities like bird-watching, hiking and hunting.

Designating the area as conservation reserve follows extensive public consultation and the recommendations of an independent advisory group. Conservation reserves complement provincial parks in a system that protects distinctive natural areas and special landscapes.

TREE OF LIFE

Around 1989 the CIF established the "Tree of Life" Award, to allow each section to recognize outstanding contributions from certain members, without having to refer to the National Office, National Executive or Board of Directors. It has since been used by many sections, including ours, to recognize the accomplishments of a number of members. I recall there being some discussion of biblical reference to the tree of life.

On August 14, Cameron Smith, in his column in the Toronto Star's environment page, wrote about the tree of life and its significance to a number of the world's religions and cultures.

He refers to the tree of life as an archetype—a symbol found in most of the world's religions. It is a reminder that nature, creation, the web of life, God's handiwork, the universe, whichever one wants to call it, is everywhere, from the infinite to the infinitesimal. We are part of that

handiwork, a part of the web of life, and not apart from it. It is everything, including us.

Cameron notes that increasingly we seal off our homes (also places where we work, play, shop, or study, even our climate-controlled cars). We do this to have the right degree of comfort. We have modern ways to get light, heat, running water, sound, the news, and communication with others anywhere in the world and beyond. We can move a delicious dinner from freezer to microwave and in minutes dinner is served.

The more we seal ourselves off, the more we may disconnect from the tree of life, and especially if we live in a highly populated area. Cameron sees the tree of life on the outside, pressing against our windows. So to many of us, the tree of life is like a photo mounted on the wall, not the real thing. And for some of us, the photo is much dimmer than for others. We forget (at our peril) that we are part of the web of life.

As this detachment continues or intensifies, there is a risk. More and more people forget what the real thing is like. Is it any wonder so many Canadians are so unaware that we are a forest nation, that the Canadian forest is a precious economic, ecological and societal asset to us and to the whole world. Yet it is so much a part of our being that studies have shown that, for example, hospital patients get better faster and with less treatment if they can see trees than if they can't.

Jane Jacobs' recent book "Dark Age Ahead" has a warning. It looks at the history of many cultures, including aboriginal the world over, and traces their collapse and descent into dark ages. A mass amnesia may then follow, so that the memory of what is lost is also lost, i.e. we can't remember what it is that we lost.

Cameron, in discussion with Dennis O'Hara of the U of T's Elliott Allen Institute of Theology and Ecology, notes that in addition to sacred scripture, we learn from "the other great book of Christianity, the book of creation. "A book, he notes, not written in words, but in everything in nature, every molecule, every mountain, every plant, planet and particle of life.

Dennis O'Hara says that "the earth is our teacher, healer, economist, lawgiver. It's the casebook on ecology, art, sociology, ethics." It is the deep well of both sacred and profane

mystery. Of polluters, he says that if you mess with the intelligibility of the universe, you are messing with God.

Dennis notes of environment that we can't deal with ecological crises by rationality alone. We need to have something that speaks to the marrow of our bones, to our imaginations, our hearts.

LOGGING AT MY PROPERTY

It was a special summer for me, as plantations on my 100-acre property on the Oro Moraine north of Barrie were logged, the red pine for the 4th time. It was a field trip stop for our Section's 2003 Annual Meeting. When I got it in 1946, it had 22 acres of maple forest, an area that was regenerating naturally, and 70 acres of fields, which were reforested over the next 10 years.

Most of the plantations have developed a dense maple undergrowth, and are showing signs of becoming young maple forest in the next 25-50 years, as the pine is gradually removed. Significant is not so much what it's like now, but how it's changed since 1946. Significant to me is to see trees planted by myself or my brother and sister-in-law, or parents, being taken, as part of a thinning, in an impressive mix of poles up to 50 feet long, logs up to 10 feet long, and material destined for special purposes, e.g. log houses.

Sophisticated modern machinery used to do the logging is so different in convenience and I'm sure cost from, say, 1949 when my third year forestry class took its compulsory logging trip up north. Or what it must have been like when the fathers of Ontario reforestation got around the region by bicycle or horse and buggy.

I (acted my age, 80, and) spent some time just watching the work, camera in hand. Then I opened my folding chair in spots where I have never done so before, like in my hardwood forest, and sat for a while with my cooler, with my back to the car, a book or just my thoughts. One thought: the utter peacefulness—a forest product we rarely think about—even though the sounds of the logging or the nearby highway were quite audible.

Another thought: Creation, in the form of the web of life, and in all its complexity, seems far more real here than elsewhere. What strands and

nodes in the web of life have changed during the transition from open fields to plantations well on their way to becoming young hardwood stands. How many trillion little critters of how many different kinds are in or just below the leaf or needle litter. How many trillions of chlorophyll cells are between me and the sky, making my place, among other things, into my very own oxygen factory. If I could see the night sky, how many millions of heavenly bodies might I see? How many more would I see were it not for light pollution?

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

As I sat in my maple forest I pondered on the value of a person having such experiences? If it is important, how will the vast majority of our young people ever get even a taste of that experience, much less become comfortable with it? (How many city kids would feel comfortable at being left alone out there for 10 minutes?)

Depending on one's answer, does it make sense that opportunities for outdoor education have been so starved in recent years? Does it make sense, for example, that the Frost Centre, which among other things has provided many young people with that experience, is shut so abruptly?

Robert Linney, a spokesman for outdoor educators, in an August 10 Toronto Star article, reflects in intimate and glowing terms on some of the deep impacts on young people of outdoor education. They get a close-up glimpse of the complexity of nature, among them a deep awareness of the need for conservation, and the development of critical thinking skills. He says "You (as a teacher) witness the beginnings of an environmental literacy that will actively support progressive initiatives." He sees residential centres as just one of the ways to provide this opportunity, the Frost Centre being a good example, and laments its loss.

He suggests that had outdoor educators better promoted the lasting benefits of which they are vividly aware, outdoor education might not have suffered loss of support as it is doing.

I sit in a newly-thinned plantations, some with all that dense maple undergrowth, and wonder. What part has forestry in providing awareness of our natural surroundings. For all the sustained efforts of bodies like Ontario Forestry

Association, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and others, how many Canadians really understand that Canada is a forest nation? How many understand the part the Canadian forest plays in the economy and ecology—and soul—of Canada and of the world, or for that matter, the part of forests in Creation.

We should revere and respect our trees and forests for their place in Creation. I said revere and respect, I did not say don't cut them.

REMINDER OF THE OLD DAYS

Something I noticed: in the 1940's, when my property and surrounding areas were open, there was often dust blowing. Before the concession road was paved, lots of dust drifted from the road into the property. Since the road was paved, that has ceased.

This summer, the logging disturbed my roads and trails a bit. At times during dry weather, there was considerable dust, dark in colour, having a fairly high organic content. That dust pervaded everything, in the car, (even when driven at a walk), in one's clothing. How awful it must have been decades ago when the wind blew the dust across the landscape, and, as my sister once reminded me, into the house, the closed cupboards and the closed food dishes in the cupboard---gritty butter! .

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE MAPLE BUSH

Reflecting on the maple bush on my place.

1. A factory manufacturing high quality wood.
2. A source of high grade energy—e.g. fuelwood
3. A sugar factory (Harvey Anderson has written about Nature's Candy Factory). The last person to farm the property produced maple syrup for family use.
4. An oxygen factory. Seeing it last spring, just before and just after the leaves opened, impressed on me the immersion in a blanket of chlorophyll perhaps 90 feet deep.
5. A water conserver, that ensures that moisture not needed for transpiration and photosynthesis is not wasted in soil erosion, but filters down through the deep sandy soil of the Oro Moraine into the ground water and into the intricate system of spring fed streams and wetlands that line the edge of the moraine.

6. An air filter, for the green foliage has the potential to absorb many pollutants.
7. Out of sight out of mind? Just below the surface the upper soil horizons, that mix of air, mineral, organic material in all stages of physical and biological breakdown, the mind-boggling numbers and variety of soil organisms, from those that are visible to those unseen by most of us. The place where so much of life goes on.

TREE INTERCROPPING

I keep using these pages to raise the question of what kind of future Southern Ontario we want, how much forest of what kinds, and where, will best fit into that landscape and best serve the people who will live here. I have suggested that this forest might be quite different from anything we have ever experienced, with perhaps a lot more agroforestry, intensive forest management, permaculture and forest gardening. .

Andy Gordon sent me a reprint of an article by Naresh Thevathasan and himself: Ecology of tree intercropping systems in the North temperate region: Experiences from Southern Ontario. It is in *Agroforestry Systems* 61: 257-268, 2004. It describes their research at University of Guelph since 1987, especially on a 30 hectare intercropping project (which our Section has visited several times in recent years).

In that research, 10 tree species were used, interspersed yearly with a number of agricultural crops. Typically the trees are in single rows, separated by "crop alleys" 12.5 or 15 metres apart, with trees 3-6 m. apart in the rows. Interactions, or the effects of one part of the mix on the other components or on the whole system are noted.

Agroforestry such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, silvipasture, riparian forest, forest farming, and tree-crop intercropping have been practiced in North America, but not a large enough scale to realize the vast potential for economic and environmental benefits, and not as much as has been the case in tropical regions.

The abstract notes that agroforestry practices have unique advantages over conventional land uses in terms of water quality enhancement, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation.

It is noted that agricultural crop yields are not significantly greater with intercropping. But there is appreciably less fertilizer need, and more efficient nitrogen cycling, suggesting that ground water pollution is reduced. There are also features like more earthworms, more bird life, and increased carbon sequestration potential.

The research at Guelph is studying plant-to-plant interactions in terms of soil carbon and nitrogen, light, and moisture. It is studying biological interactions such as soil fauna, bird life and insect pests, as well as environmental interactions like carbon sequestration and nitrous oxide emissions.

In the research, several management strategies are being investigated, like: use of fast growing tree species with others, pruning of lateral tree roots within the zone where there will be crop roots, monitoring root distribution of intercropped trees, and evaluation of costs and benefits, both short and long term.

WOODLOT OWNERSHIP AND LIABILITY

The Summer-Fall issue of the Ontario Woodlot Association newsletter features an article on the woodlot and liability. Liability, not just from losing timber, but also the risk of civil liability to anyone injured while on the property.

Reasonable care is needed so anyone on the property is reasonably safe. The level of care will vary with circumstances, e.g. an invited or paying guest, or someone allowed to use trails, or a trespasser. The owner must not deliberately or recklessly create a danger to someone on the property.

While sound legal advice is recommended, a good insurance policy should protect the owner from most liability problems. For owners who do not live on the property a rider on our home insurance policies should cover the woodlot.

Inspection should be done from time to time to identify and remove or post signs warning of a hazard.

Gates limiting access should be visible from a distance, especially if they are of the chain or cable kind. Visibility can be enhanced with fluorescent paint or markers.

Visitors to the property should be informed of any potentially dangerous areas like large holes, cliffs, ponds and streams.

Visitors to the property can be asked to sign waivers. Sample waiver forms are available, for example, from Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

There is an insurance program for portable mill owners that covers their equipment for physical damage and provides coverage for commercial general liability.

The Occupier's Liability Act does not require no trespassing signs to be posted. Under the Trespass to Property Act allows red markings or signs, which must be clearly visible in daylight and be located at all ordinary access points to the property.

TREE MARKING

In the Ontario Woodlot Association's summer-fall newsletter is an article "An Introduction to Tree Marking." It notes that cutting trees is an important management tool, and that to be effective it must be done in a way that is consistent with good forestry practices, and is best done through a tree-marking plan and tree marking.

It explains that good forestry practices means proper harvest, renewal and maintenance activities known to be appropriate to the forest and the environmental conditions, has minimal detriment to forest values, including important ecosystems, fish and wildlife habitat, soil and water quality and quantity, forest productivity and health, and aesthetics and recreational opportunities.

A prescription is a series of actions to be taken to meet the management objectives of the forest. (It notes that in Ontario making or approving a prescription is the responsibility of a professional forester or associate OPFA member.

For any partial cutting, tree marking by a properly qualified tree marker is the selection of trees to be cut in a harvest. The marker will consider variables like regeneration, tree health, site conditions, wildlife habitat, diversity and overall forest objectives.

Marking can be done in a way that maintains the forest's vitality and at the same time ensures that a new forest of desirable species is established.

Trees are marked in a way that ensures a healthy vigorous forest. The tree marker must be able to judge whether the small trees are small because they are young or because they are not vigorous.

A tree marker can identify trees that should be retained as wildlife habitat, or to retain stand diversity.

Marking based on good forestry principles can optimise economic return and future timber quality and quantity, and woodlot sustainability.

The article suggests that the help of a qualified marker is valuable to most owners. But for some that do not choose to have such a person, some simple steps are suggested for partial cutting.

1. Remove the worst first—those showing evidence of disease (cankers or fungi), or severe damage, or poor form, or low vigour.
2. Maximize future growth by removing the right numbers of trees.
3. Retain a good distribution of diameter classes.
4. Maintain diversity.
5. Maintain trees for a wide variety of wildlife needs: cavity trees, mast trees, conifers, preferably in clumps,

ST. WILLIAMS FOREST STATION

Dolf Wynia informs us that have improved greatly at St. Williams Forest Station. A former MNR employee taken over as CEO of Forest Care, a big player in production of containerised planting stock in the boreal forest of several Provinces and even into the U.S..

John de Witt has many forestry community connections, starting as the horticulturist who got the black spruce vegetative propagation program going at Orono, then moved to Thunder Bay to help set up several container greenhouse operations. He then moved to the private sector.

John has been trying to restart bare root production at St. Williams but until there is more definite demand, this will be slow to regain its full capacity.

An interesting part of the old St. Williams was a small museum that had been developed by

former office staff. Most visiting L&F or OMNR employees would find something of interest there; be it old photos, tools, or tree samples.

The Port Rowan and South Walsingham Heritage Association is also interested in the artifacts and photos (many taken by Dr. Zavitz). Thanks to their enthusiasm and hard work Forest Care and the Heritage Association recently received a \$57,000 Trillium Grant to renovate the building and open it as an interpretive centre. The message will be the repair of the wind erosion damage in Norfolk County.

Much of the museum collection has been saved, though many items are missing. The centre will focus on early nursery practices and tree planting in Southern Ontario and the people involved. At some future time the modern technology will be highlighted by Forest Care. There are many photographs of "early days".

Most of us have collected work-related items that became redundant, and in which family members have little interest. It just could be that the interpretive centre might be a good home for some of them. Items on display will become property of the Heritage Association unless specifically otherwise designated.

We are working with a professional display artist who I am sure will have his ideas as to what is or is not suitable. Meanwhile it would be good to know what is out there that might fit. This letter is an invitation to anyone having some of those early "re-forestation division" items and seeking a good home for them to contact Dolf, who is on the organizing committee. He is at 519 875 3350 or preferably wynia@kwic.com.

Meanwhile the building itself is worth a visit with its beautiful pine interior siding and chestnut panelled ceilings. It will probably open in the summer of 2005

HURONIA WOODLAND OWNERS ASS'N

About 25 members and guests braved one of the few rainy days in a long while to attend the Huronia Woodland Owners' Association annual field day on the property of Brian and Helen Malloy. Brian is a HWOA Board member. The property is mainly wooded, with some open partly planted areas, and it is being managed as wildlife habitat. They enjoy the property by way

of a network of trails that criss-cross their 45 acre property.

Helen is registered as a person competent to rescue small animals, keep them in captivity in a way that they get to know her but do not develop a bond, and release them into the wild at the appropriate time in the fall so they can become accustomed to their new surroundings before winter sets in.

Her work is similar to that of organizations like the Toronto Wildlife Centre which rescues nuisance animals, those that have been injured, birds that have been injured, e.g. by flying into windows, and those that have been left parentless by, e.g. the adult having become road kill. They work with a wide range of animals. They feed them a nutritious diet, one objective being to fatten them up to help withstand the winter when released. For animals like raccoons, their treatment includes rabies immunization.

Helen works with much fewer animal species, mainly raccoons, skunks, squirrels, chipmunks, and flying squirrels. While they do not form a bond with her, she has found her work gives her a rare chance to get to know them and to observe the intimate details of their behaviour. She tells, though, of being sprayed by an entire family of skunks when she had to do something at night that differed significantly from her normal routine with them (e.g. coming in late one night at an hour they were not accustomed to seeing her). She also noted that getting the scent out of one's clothing and off one's person is not as difficult as we might have imagined.

HERITAGE TREES.

A workshop held in Toronto by Ontario Urban Forest Council on heritage trees reflects growing interest in these trees and their recognition and protection.

Paul Aird's definition: A heritage tree is an outstanding specimen because of its size, form, shape, age, colour, rarity, genetic constitution, or other distinctive community landmark; a specimen associated with a historic person, place, event or period; representative of a crop grown by ancestors and their successors, that is at risk of disappearing from cultivation; a specimen recognized by members of a community as deserving heritage recognition.