

ESA Management Committee Meeting Minutes
March 25th, 2015
Noon – 2:30 PM, UTRCA Boardroom

Present

City - Linda McDougall
UTRCA - Alex Shivas, Cathy Quinlan, Christine Creighton
ESA Team - Dan Jones, Brandon Williamson, Matt McCutcheon, Cole Volkaert, Jeff Summers
Regrets - James McKay, Andrew Macpherson, Sara Rowland, Ivan Listar, Dianna Clark,
Kurtis Greb (ESA Team)

1) Welcome.

- Introductions were made of the new ESA Team staff on contract:
Cole Volkaert, Jeff Summers, Kurtis Greb (off sick today)

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting, December 4th, 2014

- It was noted that the following tasks were completed after the last meeting: 4b Quarterly Report, 4a invasive species chart attached to the minutes, and 5a structure replacement spreadsheet.
- No changes to the minutes were noted.

3) Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA) -- Conservation Master Plans and General Updates

3a. Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA (Southern Portion)

- Revised Phase 1 Report and letter addressing EEPAC's comments back to EEPAC January 15, 2015; Dillon's ecologist will return to EEPAC April 16, 2015.
- Phase 1 report to Planning and Environment Committee July 2015 / Council
- Begin Phase 2 and Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to be formed in fall 2015
- Invasive species work including work to protect Species at Risk continues in 2015
- City will be creating factsheets on ESAs to raise awareness of City led habitat protection, restoration and stewardship initiatives, and a Medway VHF ESA update will be distributed at events and posted on the City and UTRCA websites.

3b. The Coves ESA

- Conservation Master Plan adopted by Council November 4, 2014;
- Community Implementation Committee met Feb 4, 2015 and reviewed priorities for 2015 for East Pond
- Added 15 ha public land to UTRCA management contract in 2015
- Staff proposal for a \$45,000 grant from EAP/NTC (Economic Action Plan /National Trails Coalition) was successful for East Pond boardwalk, trails, and a canoe launch.
 - July 6th work starts by Piccoli to put in trails (some accessible)
 - Letter to residents to be sent prior to work; questions to be directed to Linda McDougall

3c. Meadowlily Woods ESA

- Staff currently reviewing Phase 1 Conservation Master Plan by Natural Resource Solutions Inc.
- Park Farm building is being restored in keeping with its heritage designation
- Public Meeting for Phase 1 report estimated for 2015 with Secondary Plan
- Revised Phase 1 report based on comments to PEC/Council 2015

- Begin Phase 2 and Local Advisory Committee in 2016
- A section of trail near the steel bridge is steep and eroding, potential to move it onto the adjoining farm field to be reviewed in Phase 2 of CMP. Keep on agenda for next meeting.

3d. Westminster Ponds/Pond Mills ESA

- Community Connections on track as CN has provided application process for level crossing
- WMP North South Environmental Reports being revised based on EEPAC comments and staff review - winter 2015
- Reviewing potential restoration options for the wet area with dead ash and buckthorn near tourism building. Linda McDougall met with Mary Gartshore and Dave Wake on site to look at possible innovative restoration techniques. Linda to share the minutes of the initial onsite meeting with UTRCA.

3e. Sifton Bog ESA

- Hydrology report on monitoring fall 2014
- Trail review in 2015/2016 based on Management Zones. Next meeting discuss options for planning future boardwalk and platform repair/replacement.
- Sifton Bog Terrestrial Study in 2015

3f. Kains Woods ESA

- Staff reviewed comments from Trails Advisory Group (TAG) visits, EEPAC, NL and TVTA
- Many of the 16 TAG recommendations have been installed by UTRCA; NL pleased
- City has now acquired the land to relocate trail at point 13 (west) and ESA team will relocate trail and recycle boardwalk/bridge to new location in spring 2015
- Bridge/boardwalk TAG solution not possible near Shore Road at point 16 (east)

3g. Warbler Woods ESA

- UTRCA installed a new boardwalk in 2014
- Working with Sifton to connect existing Level 1 trail to new Riverbend South community
- Continue closures of unofficial trails in 2015

3h. Kilally Meadows ESA

- ESA Team is monitoring the beaver dam and water levels at the bridge at the Sweetbriar access
- Continue closures of unofficial trails in 2015
- There is an active Adopt an ESA group here
- Brandon Williamson spoke with a TVTA member about hike leaders and use of official trails and the fact that the ESA Team is responsible for templating the trails. ESA Team will put up directional arrows at intersections of managed and unmanaged trails. The new team members have templated many managed trails.

3i All ESAs – Invasive Species Management

- Ivan Listar would like an Asian longhorn Beetle strategy for ESAs. Ivan to lead.
- Not present in ESAs but ESA team will keep an eye out for it.

4) **ESA Team Operations Report**

a) **Power Point (Dec 2014 to March 2015 activities)**

- Staff training and refresher courses has been undertaken (WHIMIS, Pesticide license course for invasive species management, etc.)
- **WMP:** structures inspected and stairs repaired
- **Kilally:** trail washout again at Wakefield access, area cordoned off, to be fixed tomorrow by Piccoli
- **Medway North:** barb wire fence installed at Gdanski property, a hazard; City bylaw enforcement looking into it
- **Medway North:** an old broken bridge over a ravine was taken down near Valleyrun Blvd
- **Medway North:** invasive Scots Pine was mitigated ,invasive exotic species sign was installed; White Pine to be planted next month
- **Kilally:** exotic invasive Scots Pine to be mitigated, Dog Strangling Vine management will happen in same area in summer/fall
- **WMP:** Phragmites was cut in winter and ready to be sprayed if water levels go down in summer;
- **Kilally:** years ago wire mesh was wrapped around some trees - now removed before they grow into trees; beavers have moved off
- **Medway:** wire mesh put on by public to protect trees from beavers years ago were removed as mesh now too small and cutting into trees
- **Kilally:** responded to a call from neighbor with an injured deer laying in their garden; it hobbled away and not found
- **Medway:** deer carcass on trail was removed
- **WMP:** fort taken down and garbage removed
- **Coves:** encroachment of sheds found and discussed with owner; ESA Team prepared to take it apart; refer public to the Conservation Master Plan on city website for more information re concepts for trails and priorities etc.
- **Coves:** Butternut tree sample was sent to Ontario Forest Research Institute (MNR) in Sault Ste. Marie for hybridity testing and came back as a hybrid,.
- **Coves:** graffiti on trees painted out

18 – Capital projects for 2015 reviewed:

- Medway goutweed/knotweed/SAR – work with Dillon to resurvey
- Medway Phragmites, north and south, cut and spray this year if possible
- Medway north buckthorn; Community buckthorn busting event on June 25 at 6pm precise location TBD.
- Westminster buckthorn; expanding on 2014 Spettigues Pond NR priority areas
- Westminster purple loosestrife; Ontario Beetle contacted about release this year
- Westminster aquatic invasives to be pulled by hand if found
- Sifton buckthorn and native tree restoration planting consistent w CMP
- Warbler buckthorn and barberry near Baseline Rd
- Warbler unmanaged trail closures and private property signs install
- Kilally DSV start this year at Wakefield bridge
- Kains trail realignment and boardwalk style bridge relocation in summer
- Kains Blue Ash injection EAB prevention, about 20 trees in May/June, will estimate seed forecast for seed collection
- Coves buckthorn management at east pond starting in NR areas

b) **Annual Report** for 2014

- Alex sent the final document to Linda; will track progress after 1st quarter

5) **Other**

- a) **Brochures.** The 2011 ESA brochures and maps are ready for an update, even though final Coves trail layout not finalized. Maps will be one year behind. QR codes on ESA signage and links may need updating/coordination. Cathy Quinlan to assist in review.
- b) **Milkweed Seeds.** Reviewing potential for Adopt-an-ESA groups to distribute native Common Milkweed seeds in meadow areas in ESAs in fall 2015 for enhanced local Monarch habitat.

6) **Next Meeting** - early July 2015