

ESA Management Committee Meeting Minutes
February 4th, 2016
UTRCA Boardroom

Present

City - Linda McDougall, James McKay, Andrew Macpherson, Jackie Ramsay (representing Urban Forestry)
UTRCA - Alex Shivas, Cathy Quinlan, Christine Creighton
ESA Team - Dan Jones, Brandon Williamson, Cole Volkaert, Richard Brewer
Regrets - Dianna Clark

1) Welcome

- Jackie Ramsay, Forestry Technician, with the City was introduced and welcomed.
- Kat Hodgins, Forestry Technician is also new staff with Urban Forestry.

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting, September 10th, 2015.

- No changes.

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

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

- Phase 2 is on hold until Planning & Design Standards for Trails in ESAs update is completed June 2016
- Invasive species work, including work to protect Species at Risk, continues in 2016
- TAG walk Feb 11/2016 at 2 PM for review of possible solutions to the Metamora staircase
- False Rue Anemone – SAR report by Dillon was shared with EEPAC; outlined invasive species work done by ESA Team to protect and enhance the SAR population

3b. The Coves ESA

- East Pond trail work and restoration completed in 2015 as per CMP and LIC
- Trail work in Elmwood Gateway, Silver Creek Ravine and Euston Meadows as per CMP and LIC on track for 2016/2017
- Kiosk sign(s) update - Heritage side (text/graphics) went to LACH for comment in Dec 2015 with response back now
- Friends of Coves awarded \$50k grant from “Canada 150” for the Elmwood Gateway CMP project
- Waiting to hear about a grant from Trillium Foundation for Elmwood Gateway and Euston Meadows trail improvements as per CMP.

3c. Meadowlily Woods ESA

- Phase 1 Conservation Master Plan by Natural Resource Solutions Inc. on hold until Planning & Design Standards for Trails in ESAs update complete June 2016
- A section of trail near the steel bridge is steep and eroding, potential to shift it onto the adjoining farm field (people already using it):
 - was to be reviewed in Phase 2 of CMP, however, fairly urgent and the ESA Management Committee agreed it is best to formalize this now.
 - Need about 5 m from the farm field for trail. Border it with trees and/or stakes before the farmer works the land.

- City realty department to contact farmer about this change.
- City to send an FYI to Friends of Meadowlily about trail management here.
- ESA Team to construct a small barricade closure on each side, with diversion signs and plant/seed over the old trail to naturalize as per Trail Standards.

3d. Westminster Ponds/Pond Mills ESA

- Community Connections from Parliament to Commissioners over the former landfill, adjacent to rail line approved by TAG and Council, implementation including un-managed trail closures on track for 2016.
- WMP North South Environmental Reports are now finalized and on City website.
- Restoration for the wet area with dead ash and buckthorn near tourism building and trail improvements for 2017 implementation. Andrew M. successful in getting \$100k grant from Feds (Canada 150) for new boardwalk / improved trails to Saunders Cabin and Dearness Home (as per CMP Recommendation 68) along with a restoration project to address the Buckthorn and dead Ash issues.

3e. Sifton Bog ESA

- Hydrology report on monitoring - to be done by James M.
- Trail review in 2016
 - Options for planning future boardwalk and platform repair/replacement noting area is currently zoned NR.
 - Trails Focus Group may review this example of NR and use of SFO.
 - Will need to close trail to do repairs at some point; should the boardwalk be shortened?
- Sifton Bog Terrestrial Study by Stantec to be completed shortly. James is looking for the Bradwill Consulting vegetation report done with the 2009 CMP.

3f. Kains Woods ESA

- Implementing TAG recommendations for locations 1, 2 and 10.
- Want to move trail off of easement land in southeast end of Kains ESA and onto City land. Linda, Jeff and ESA Team to meet onsite to discuss options as reviewed w TAG in 2012 noting trail will remain open and continue to connect to Oxford West.

3g. Warbler Woods ESA

- Working with Sifton to connect existing Level 1 trail to new Riverbend South community.
- Boardwalk improvements needed to #1, 2 and 3 boardwalks. Only about 20 m. Capital project.
- Many citizen concerned about trails closed through Sifton's portion of the ESA (private property soon to be purchased by city). Larry Mottram is the Planner on the development file.

3h. Kilally Meadows ESA

- Beaver dam and water level monitoring at the bridge at the Sweetbriar access. Beaver had moved dam further south - not a big issue.
- There is an active Adopt-an-ESA group here doing great job on DSV and Garlic Mustard
- Trail templating and directional arrows at intersections look good.

3i All ESAs – Invasive Species Management

- Ivan Listar to initiate an Asian longhorn Beetle strategy for ESAs. No update
- TreeAzin injections for roughly 160 ash trees in 2016 planned.
 - This will be round 3. Proposed in capital projects.
 - Sara Rowland wants seed collection but seed years have been poor of late. ESA Team tried collected Blue Ash seed but could not access. Will try this year.
 - Need to confirm if plan is to store here, send off and bring back one day. EAB Budget. ESA Team to estimate their cost.
 - Plan is to continue treeazine into 10 yrs. Keep program as is.
- List of approved 2016 Capital Projects circulated to EEPAC/UTRCA (see attached).
- City Wide Invasive Species Strategy – James M. trying to get to June PEC with draft to EEPAC by March. He will get ESA Team input. OIPC presentation given. Shared with other municipalities the City-UTRCA partnership noting London's work in the ESAs is generally exceeding what is currently done in other municipalities.

4) ESA Team Operations Report

- a) **Power Point (Operations September - December 31st., 2015) was viewed**
- b) **Quarterly Report and/or 2015 Year End Report.**
Sent to Linda earlier.

5) Other

- a) **Brochure Updates**
 - All maps printed and up to date. Eleanor is editing now. It will go to Linda M. for review in February. Cove map done but no text yet.
 - QR codes on ESA signage and links may need updating/coordination.
- b) **Prescribed Burns Discussion**
 - Westminster Ponds ESA prairie plots behind Tourism Centre (designed by Jeff Bruin), are ready for a burn. UTRCA Burn Team is prepared to burn it this April and will manage project and public notice etc. as per meeting with Fire Dept. in May 2013. Costs can be matched UTRCA/City. Cathy Quinlan to send Linda budget.
- c) **HSP Grant for Butternut work**
 - Brandon submitted a Habitat Stewardship Program proposal for \$7500 to do an assessment of all butternuts in ESAs. If suitable trees are found, will collect seeds and plant out in UTRCA's test site. May hear in August. Can proceed now with inventory and health assessment and do seed collection if grant proposal is successful.

6) Next Meeting - May or June 2016

Proposed 2016 ESA Capital Projects

Project Category

Master Plans and Studies

- Update to Planning and Design Standards for Trails in ESAs w Trails Focus Group (TFG)
- Medway (south) Phase II CMP on hold until Trail Standards Update complete
- Meadowlily Phase I and II CMP on hold until Trail Standards Update complete
- Update to Environmental Management Guidelines (Non ESA Capital Budget)

Invasive Species Management / Habitat Restoration:

- Kains – Buckthorn, Knotweed, Goutweed
- WMP – Phragmites, Buckthorn, Black Locust, Knotweed
- Medway - Phragmites, and third year of SAR/Goutweed/Knotweed/restoration project
- Meadowlily - Phragmites
- All ESAs – Emerald Ash Borer TreeAzin injection of ~ 150 Ash Trees (done bi-annually since 2012)
- All ESAs – Monitor using EDRR approach and touch ups of all 2014/2015 work under operational budget
- City Wide – Invasive Species Management Strategy (Non ESA Capital Budget)

Trail Improvements

- Coves – Elmwood Gateway, Euston Meadows & Southcrest Ravine as per CMP & Local Implementation Cmte.
- Westminster Ponds – Saunders Cabin area restoration and trail improvements for 2017 implementation
- Sifton Bog – Boardwalk to Redmond’s Pond at end of life – MZ and review options for 2017 implementation
- Medway - Review options for Metamora Staircase removal and/or replacement, w TFG in February
- Warbler – Trail links to new subdivision to the west in 2017
- Warbler – Boardwalk repairs in southern portion of the ESA

Stewardship / Education

Mail out EEPAC’s Living with Natural Areas brochure to homes adjacent t