

EEPAC's RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR THE MVHF CMP

Katrina A. Moser, Ph.D.
EEPAC Representative

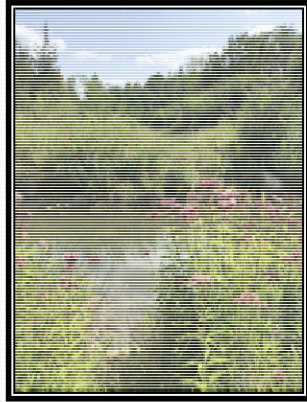


History of EEPAC's review of CMP

- EEPAC's initial recommendation to the City was based on the Draft CMP from Oct. 2017; these recommendations were unanimously endorsed by EEPAC on Dec. 21, 2017 and submitted to the City in time for the meeting planned for Feb. 2018
- The final CMP was only available in mid March 2018
- The recommendations submitted April 9, 2018 and the presentation today are in the same direction as the earlier recommendations, but have not been formally endorsed by EEPAC owing to tight timelines
- If the council wishes to have full comment from EEPAC the CMP should be referred back to EEPAC
- I would also draw attention to a statement in the staff report that indicates that EEPAC endorsed the Trail Guidelines; this is incorrect. EEPAC was never asked to nor did they endorse the Trail Guidelines.

What makes the MVHF so special?

- A variety of special habitats in a relatively continuous forest provides homes for many species (564 flora), including species at risk (9)



False Rue-anemone populations in Ontario

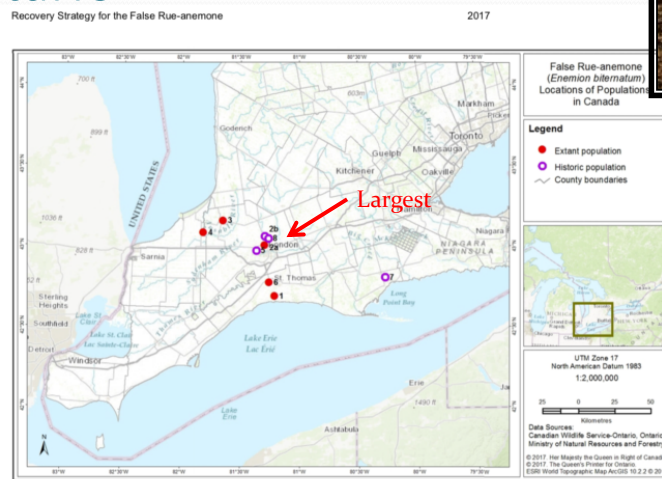


Figure 1. Distribution of the False Rue-anemone Populations in Canada.

The CMP must meet.....

- The City Plan Section 15.1.1 (v) Maintain, restore, and improve the diversity and connectivity of natural features, and the long-term ecological function with biodiversity of natural heritage systems.
- The AODA (section 80.6), which “applies to *newly* constructed and *redeveloped* recreational trails” except if (section 80.15) “there is a significant *risk* that the requirements, or some of them, would adversely affect water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values, whether the adverse effects are *direct* or *indirect***.

***INDIRECT EFFECT*= “effects that occur in a location different from the location where the activity causing the effects is taking place” (from Categorizing and Protecting Habitat under the Endangered Species Act, Feb., 2012, pg. 9)

EEPAC recommends that:

1. **Council reject any CMP that includes bridges crossing Medway Creek .**
 - The CMP says that bridges will reduce impacts to creek banks. *EEPAC finds no or minimal impacts; negating the need for a bridge.*
 - *EEPAC identifies significant risks (e.g., increased trampling) to SAR and the ecological integrity of the ESA from bridges.*
 - The staff report indicates that these risks will be avoided by hardening trails, trail closures and signage; all of which will keep people on the formal trails. *Evidence shows that these strategies do not work in the MVHF ESA.*
2. **a revised CMP should identify and assess shortcomings with previous strategies for trail closure and monitoring. By doing this strategies can be improved moving forwards.**

Locations of key sites



1. CMP positions on bridges

- The CMP proposes that bridges at A and D are necessary to “reduce impacts to creek banks” (CMP, Table 10).
- The onus is on the City to provide scientific data to support this claim; to date no evidence or data has been presented and none is included in the CMP
- Numerous site visits by EEPAC members indicate that people do not cross at sites A and D and there are minimal, if any, impacts

Site A and D visits reveal no impacts to creek banks



EEPAC supports some improved crossings




EEPAC positions on bridges and trail closures

- Bridges will increase hiker and bike traffic to sensitive areas
- Thus, bridges A and D increase both *direct* (e.g., construction) and *indirect* (e.g., increase trampling) *adverse affects*
- The staff report argues that concentrating trail usage, closing informal trails, and signage will mitigate risks
- The City has failed to close trails; if previous trail closures haven't worked, why will the proposed closures work?
- The CMP describes an ineffective monitoring scheme to determine the impacts of the bridge on species at risk; results of this monitoring will only be available after the bridge is built and it is too late

Site visits reveal trail closures are failing

- The City's actions have failed to close trails






Final Recommendation

- The MVHF is a small, but unique and incredibly diverse environment (of 21 ESAs in London the MVHF comprises 20% (one fifth!) of the total ESA area)
- ***The CMP for the MVHF ESA fails to protect species at risk***
- EEPAC believes that a revised CMP can better protect the ESA and SARs, and improve accessibility (AODA)
- London is very fortunate to have this unique space and it is our responsibility to protect it
- The continued protection of these remnants must be the priority of the CMP; ***the stakes are high; extinction of species in Canada and the loss of the last remaining natural environments in London are real possibilities***

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Extra Slides

Monitoring of False Rue-anemone

- The CMP highlights restoration efforts to eradicate Goutweed to protect False Rue-anemone.
- Such efforts should be continued and applauded, however, ***monitoring of these and other restoration efforts, including trails, must be timely and scientifically sound.***

Photographic Evidence



Dillon, 2018

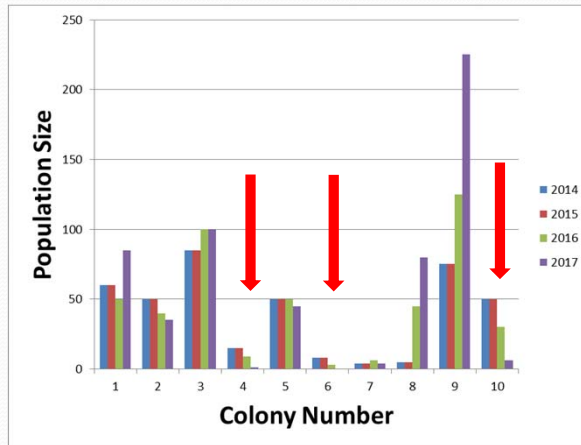
Photographic evidence

- Photographs (Dillon 2015, 2016, 2018) indicate an initial reduction in goutweed; the 2017 photos indicate an increase from 2016
- The effects of restoration on False Rue-anemone are uncertain because acceptable limits and targeted outcomes, as well as measurements to determine these, were not clearly described before the action.

Measurements of Colony Size

1. How were counts made? For COSEWIC 1990 and 2005, and therefore Austen (1991), all counts are based on stem counts (flowering and non-flowering) (E and CC, 2017 notes with Table 1).
2. Stem counts were not made by Dillon; only “estimates”, what are these estimates based on?
3. Dimensions of the areas covered by colonies/sub-populations were determined in COSEWIC (1990, 2005) and Austen 1991 – why not by Dillon?
4. Why are “estimates” of populations provided in the 2018 report, but not in 2015, 2016? Or in the data requested by EEPAC? (report from Dillon - Jan. 6, 2017)
5. What is the accuracy and precision of the measurements?

Results of False Rue-anemone



This graph shows the data from Dillon (2018). Note the decline to almost 0 in three colonies. Is this a success?

ESAs in London

- The City of London encompasses 42,060 hectares
- There are 21 ESAs in the London area, totalling 680 hectares or 1.6% of the area of London
- The MVHF comprises 129 hectares, which is only 0.3% of the area of London, but 20% of the ESA area