

The History of the
Limerick Forest
Advisory Committee
(LFAC)



The Spirit
of a
Community Forest

Prepared By Sue Willis
March 2006



DISCOVER LIMERICK FOREST



Introduction

This document begins in the 1800's with a brief history lesson on how Limerick Forest came to be. It documents the events leading up to the inception of LFAC in 2001 and traces the accomplishments made by this community group through to the end of 2005.

Acknowledgements

Historical data and information was gathered from numerous sources to produce this document. The following represents where the majority of information was obtained: Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Grenville Land Stewardship Council, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Ducks Unlimited Canada.

Funding for this project was provided by Human Resources Skills and Development Canada (HRSDC) and the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG).

Photos were provided by Limerick Forest Advisory Committee (LFAC) members and are credited where possible.

Of course, without the cooperation (and reliable memories) of the members of LFAC this project would not have been possible.

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Limerick Forest Gets It's Name

Limerick was settled in late 1840's, mostly by Irish potato famine survivors coming up the Rideau River. These brave souls fled their homeland as the potato famines spread and thousands came across the Atlantic to settle in the new world. One of these early immigrants, Andrew Forsythe, settled on a 200 acre tract on the northern edge of a forest just south of Bishop Mills. This he named Limerick, after his old home in Ireland.

Families were large and these farming communities had a fast rate of growth. They cleared their land, drained the marshes, laid out roads and fenced their properties. Unfortunately clearing of the land continued at a fast pace and by the late 1800's the forests were gone.

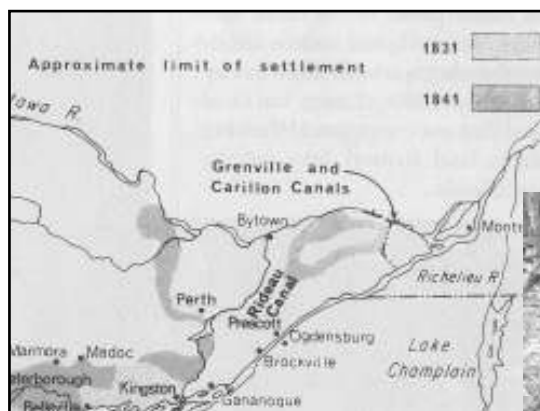
The unprotected soil started to blow away. Choking dust storms and later, sand storms turned the land into a desert with stony plains and sand dunes.

From 1910 until after the Great Depression of the 1930's, whole families abandoned their farms and with taxes due, ownership of the land, buildings and all, fell back to the Counties.

It was not until 1921, when not one acre of the original forest was left intact in Southern Ontario, that the political will was found to do something about it. A Reforestation Act was passed by the Province by which counties could enter into an agreement in which the provincial government was responsible for reforesting, developing and managing the land.

In 1940 the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville signed an agreement with Lands and Forests (Ministry of Natural Resources today) under the Provincial Agreement Forests Program whereby the Province of Ontario agreed to reforest and manage the County lands for forestry purposes. In more recent years further properties were obtained.

Extensive tree planting occurred in the early 1940's and early 1950's. In total, nearly 9 million trees were planted in Limerick Forest. The forest was actively managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) until the mid 1990's when forest operations essentially ceased.



Management Responsibilities Change

1995

Provincial restructuring forced the MNR to end the Provincial Agreement Forest Program and a process to terminate the numerous forest agreements was initiated in 1995. By 2001 the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG) assumed full management responsibilities for Limerick Forest.

1997

JANUARY 1997:

Members of the Grenville Land Stewardship Council (GLSC) proposed a project "Leeds/Grenville County Forests" to its members. The goal was: "To ensure that the management and use of the Limerick Forest and crown lands in Grenville County are ecologically sustainable, based on natural characteristics, ecological functions and overall value to the community." Information was provided to the public through several local fairs that year.

GLSC expressed an interest to play a continuing role in the management of these lands through some form of landowner representation.

MARCH 1997:

The GLSC sent a letter to the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG) notifying them of their interest to help manage Limerick Forest. A reply was received in May of 1997 from Warden Joan Williams Birch which said: "...we are presently reviewing options for the future management of Limerick Forest. Discussions are underway at this time with other agreement forest property owners to determine and evaluate options."

Les Shepherd, Director of Public Works, Planning Services and Asset Management for UCLG pointed out the level of commitment to this project: "With the strong support of the Grenville Land Stewardship Council, and through the intense interest and efforts of the volunteer committee, we have been able to successfully assume the management of Limerick Forest."

The Grenville Land Stewardship Council is a part of the Ontario Stewardship program, and is comprised of a Stewardship Coordinator from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, a council of community members representing landowner interests and a variety of environmental interest groups, and countless dedicated volunteers -- all committed to protecting and enhancing the natural landscape around them. The Stewardship Council has provided and will continue to provide in-kind support to LFAC. (taken from the GLSC website)



Cooperative Efforts

1998

JANUARY 1998:

After the massive ice storm early this month, the Grenville Land Stewardship Council coordinated an effort to clean up the road access and fire routes throughout the forest.



JULY 23, 1998:

Ducks Unlimited wetland enhancement Project began in the wetland behind the chalet.

“This wetland has been subject to extensive drainage, beaver flooding, road construction and forest management over the last 50 years. As a result, the water level has fluctuated drastically from a dry, overgrown condition to a deep-water stagnant condition. This resulted in a relatively low production of the area for waterfowl breeding and other wetland dependent fish and wildlife species.

To optimize habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife species, a variable water control box inlet structure and earthen containment dyke was installed to manage water levels. This will permit the setting of water levels within a predetermined operating range depending on vegetation conditions. This will improve habitat diversity for waterfowl and a variety of fish and wildlife species.

Waterfowl that have used this wetland for breeding and migration include, mallard, blue-winged teal, green-winged teal, hooded merganser, black duck, wood duck and Canada geese. Many other fish and wildlife species use this wetland as needed habitat such as white-tail deer, red fox, great blue herons, bullfrogs and snapping and eastern painted turtles and many invertebrates.” (Taken from DU agreement with UCLG)



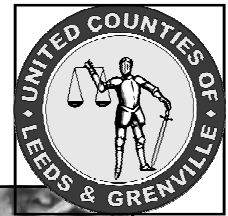
Photo by Sue Willis



Photo by Sue Willis



Photo by Brian Day



Why LFAC?

The Limerick Forest Advisory Committee (LFAC) is a dedicated group of volunteers who formed this group in 2001 sparked by an interest and desire to preserve a local forest very dear to their hearts. This forest is called Limerick Forest.

Today, this group has over 100 members from very diverse backgrounds and interests. All share the same goal; to manage Limerick Forest on a sustainable basis for a wide variety of goods and services.

The Voice of the People

2001

MARCH 24, 2001:

The Grenville Land Stewardship Council (GLSC) organized a Limerick Forest community stakeholder/public information meeting which had a huge attendance. A steering group was formed and the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG) publicly committed to providing staff assistance with the Limerick Forest management planning process. The GLSC will provide in-kind support to this group.

The following stakeholder groups and individuals also committed to helping:

Mark Richardson - Eastern Ontario Model Forest

Dave Chapeskie - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture-Food and Rural Affairs

Garry Holmes - Dog Sledding

Carl Sayeau - Grenville Area Fur Managers

Josee Brizard - South Nation Conservation Authority

Rudy Dyck - Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Larry Murray - off roader

Fred Godde - Trail 2000/Ruffed Grouse Society

Fred Schueler - Eastern Ontario Biodiversity Museum,

Jennie Schueler - Recreationalist,

Doug Hayes - Ducks Unlimited

Bruce Robinson - Leeds and Grenville Snowmobile Association (umbrella organization representing Athens, Elizabethtown, Grenville, South Nation River and Kemptville Ridge Riders)

Dale Fretwell - ATV Club Charleston Lake

Stew Hamill - Hunt Club

Pieter Trip - Grenville Land Stewardship Council

Adrian Wynands - Grenville Federation of Agriculture

Ed Patchell - Ferguson Forestry Centre

Mike Stephenson - Federation of Anglers and Hunters

Louise Thompson - Horseback Riding

Aleta Karstad - North Grenville Art Guild & Eastern Ontario Biodiversity Museum

Pud Johnston - Agreement Forests in Ontario

Paul Van Luit - Ducks Unlimited Greenwing Club

Sandra Lawn - affiliated with Eastern Ontario Model Forest

Mark Pergunas, Bruce Harrison and George Vail - United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council

Steve Fournier - CAO, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

Sandy Hay - Planner for United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

LFAC is Born

APRIL 1, 2001:

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG) assumed all management of Limerick Forest. The Grenville Land Stewardship Council has been instrumental in the transition of management responsibilities from The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to UCLG.

JUNE 27, 2001:

LFAC is officially formed with the goal: "To manage Limerick Forest on a sustainable basis for a wide variety of goods and services."

Five sub committees emerged from this meeting:

1. Limerick Forest Harvesting/Commercial Sub Committee
2. Limerick Forest Financial/Administrative/Planning Sub Committee
3. Limerick Forest Recreation Sub Committee
4. Limerick Forest Health Sub Committee (Ecosystems/Research)
5. Limerick Forest Education Sub Committee (History/Outreach)

Five draft objectives are determined, based on input provided by members :

1. To ensure Limerick Forest continues to provide a source of economic activity for local people.
2. To manage Limerick Forest effectively in order to maximize benefits to the UCLG.
3. Provide a wide range of quality recreational opportunities in a safe environment.
4. Protect the ecological features and values of Limerick Forest.
5. To provide outdoor education opportunities and to foster a strong understanding of sustainable resource management.

The members of LFAC report to the UCLG through it's Public Works Committee and advise council regarding the continued management of Limerick Forest. LFAC oversees the management operation and presents annual budgetary requests to the UCLG through the Public Works Committee.

SEPTEMBER 20, 2001:

Limerick Forest Planning Meeting in which the First Draft Strategic Plan was submitted by John Ambrose. This strategic plan included data requirements, goals & objectives, strategies and issues which in turn laid the foundation for the current Long Range Management Plan.

NOVEMBER 29, 2001:

Plans were made to move files from MNR in Kemptville to the GLSC office in Brockville. UCLG will enter into a data sharing contract with MNR to digitize all 175 compartments of Limerick. In addition, a data base being piloted for the crown land parcels in UCLG will be shared to track historical and future activities of the Limerick Forest.

DECEMBER 14, 2001:

The Strategic Plan Draft is now complete and ready to present to UCLG for approval.



The Old School House (Chalet)

Sub Committees and Policies Begin to Take Shape

DECEMBER 18, 2001:

The first draft of the LFAC Terms of Reference (TOR), which provides the mechanism for the effective communications between LFAC, UCLG and the general public on issues dealing with Limerick Forest, was presented at this meeting. Chairs for each sub committee were elected and budgets/work plans for each were drafted.

1. Limerick Forest Harvesting/Commercial Sub Committee-Adam Shewchuk
2. Limerick Forest Financial/Administrative/Planning Sub Committee-TBA
3. Limerick Forest Recreation Sub Committee-Larry Murray and Dale Kingston
4. Limerick Forest Health Sub Committee (Ecosystems/Research)-Stew Hamill
5. Limerick Forest Education Sub Committee (History/Outreach)-Fred Schueler

2002

JANUARY 10, 2002:

At this Administration Sub Committee Meeting Bob Gollinger was voted in as chair, a second draft TOR was presented and Ed Reynolds made a presentation on some of the priorities and restrictions in Limerick Forest recently discussed:

Forest Uses

- Sale of aggregates requires a license-one area is presently being used for aggregates.
- Fur harvesting-written permission is required.
- Recreation-no restrictions except, no overnight camping (Boy Scouts & Military exempt).
- Miscellaneous products can be taken such as: sphagnum moss, rail fences (not sold except mutual line fence), hay (one time sale on request) and old buildings sold to bidders.

Tree Harvesting

- Harvesting the forest in a sustainable way will require marking and inventory.
- UCLG is receptive to hiring one staff member and offering support.
- There should be a review of the existing MNR Forest Management Plan to see how it applies and if it is acceptable to use until a new one specifically for Limerick can be drawn up.

The LFAC Identity Grows

FEBRUARY 4, 2002:

This was the first official meeting with UCLG Public Works. LFAC presented their strategic plan including a work plan and budget for consideration. A recommendation was also made to hire a forest manager to oversee all forestry operations in Limerick Forest.

FEBRUARY 26, 2002:

An Operating Procedures document created by Fred McFarland to accompany the Terms of Reference (TOR) was distributed for consideration.

APRIL 10, 2002:

At this meeting of the Education Sub Committee a logo for LFAC (created by Aleta Karstad & Fred Schueler) was presented for consideration. Mark Rowsell and Cliff Rogers each designed and submitted their versions of a logo but Fred and Aleta's would later turn out to be the one accepted by LFAC. Cliff Rogers has begun work on a web page.

APRIL 22, 2002:

The new TOR and Operating Procedures were accepted by LFAC subject to minor changes made at this meeting. These TOR still need to be presented to the UCLG for approval. Peter Neave, in a contract position, is doing forest inventory of the Limerick South Block (Approx 1000h).

MAY 5, 2002:

The first field trip for the general public was held with Stew Hamill and Jack Henry as guides.

MAY 27, 2002:

Rob Ross joined as staff Forest Technician. Funding for his position was provided by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) through their *On Site Ontario* program. For eight months, ending January 2003, Rob assisted with the physical movement of files, maps, and inventory of the forest. Rob was later hired as staff by the UCLG.

JUNE 5, 2002:

UCLG have approved the Terms of Reference and Operating Procedures.

JUNE 22, 2002:

The five sub committees are now officially called: Administration, Forest Resources, Recreation, Ecology and Education.



May 5, 2002 Field Trip:
Larry Murray, Fred Schueler, Philip Fry, Adam Shewchuk,
John McCrea, Stew Hamill and Fred McFarland
Photo from Office File

Limerick has a Forest Manager

AUGUST 12 2002:

Ed Reynolds was hired as Forest Manager to coordinate the development and delivery of the forest management program of Limerick Forest. An office was opened at 32 Wall St, Brockville for him to work from and to store files.

AUGUST 14, 2002:

At this Administration Sub Committee meeting the new Limerick "Long Range Management Plan" outline was submitted by John Ambrose.

SEPTEMBER 19, 2002:

Adam Shewchuk has stepped down as chair of the Forest Resource Sub Committee.

OCTOBER 19, 2002:

The First Annual Limerick Forest Open House

Sixty people attended a Community Meeting in Roebuck and later, in the rain, eighty enjoyed a barbeque at the Old Forest Headquarters (now called the Chalet). The public participated in numerous events including nature walks, horse drawn wagon rides and children's games. Special recognition plaques were presented to Stew Hamill, Fred McFarland and Larry Murray for outstanding contributions to LFAC.



Photos from Office File

NOVEMBER 18, 2002:

Kirk Easterbrook has agreed to represent the Forest Resources Sub Committee at the next chairs meeting.

DECEMBER 4, 2002:

The work plan and budget for 2003 was finalized and approved in principle by LFAC Chairs.

Other Highlights for 2002

Rob Ross and Jack Henry have prepared a Power Point presentation to promote Limerick.

The Ecology Sub Committee has set up monitoring plots to monitor changes in the under-story development and invasive species encroachment where harvesting will take place. Stew Hamill worked on a project to identify old growth stands in Limerick.

The Recreation Sub Committee worked on fixing up parking areas at the old picnic site at the Y and at the gravel Pit/toboggan hill. Signs were donated and erected at all snowmobile trail intersections by Arnold Williams and Leeds and Grenville Snowmobile Association. Larry Murray cleaned up tires that were dumped on Limerick lands. This sub committee also prepared a recreation User Code of Conduct for Limerick.

Mark Rowsell, from the Education Sub Committee, prepared a map of the counties highlighting locations of Limerick Forest and worked on GPS mapping the recreational trails in Limerick South.

The Forest Resources Sub Committee developed the insurance, certificates and reference requirements for contractors to bid on tenders to cut timber.

Ken McBeath and the work crew from the Ontario Works Program worked on trails, fixed up the headquarters and cleared brush back from forest access roads. As a follow up to the ice storm assistance program in 2001, 4000 white pine trees were planted by Ontario Works staff in May of this year.

The Bytown Motorcycle Association helped out by donating time and effort clearing and fixing up the trail system.

Neave Resource Management was contracted to carry out a resource inventory on 1726 hectares of Limerick Forest.



Snowmobiling from Office File



Office File



Tracks in Snow by Sue Willis

LFAC Planning Guarantees the Future of Limerick Forest

2003

JANUARY 21, 2003:

Limerick Forest's official tree stand policy was approved by the chairs. Plans to form a new sub committee, under the name "communications" were discussed. The Administration Sub Committee will set up a communications working group until the name is changed in the Terms of Reference.

FEBRUARY 13, 2003:

This was the first meeting of the new Communications working group. Plans were discussed to make this an official sub committee.

FEBRUARY 27, 2003:

The annual progress report was presented at this meeting outlining the events and projects completed in 2002.

APRIL 12, 2003:

At this general LFAC meeting the chairs of each sub committee had an opportunity to voice their opinions and ideas for the future of the forest. The need for a long range plan was expressed again and the members answered a few questions to clarify their vision.

JUNE 12, 2003:

Community Fisheries and Wildlife Improvement Program (CFWIP) funding through the Ministry of Natural Resources was received. This funding enabled the construction of nesting structures and a beaver pond trail including a boardwalk. The boardwalk was built through the winter and completed in May 2004.

JULY 9, 2003:

The Long Range Management Plan draft and tree stand policy was presented to UCLG Public Works for their approval.

JULY 23, 2003:

At this chairs meeting, repairs were approved to be done to the well at the chalet and a colour was selected for paint on the chalet, which will be completed shortly.



Chalet Painting Photo from File



Boardwalk Photo by Brian Day



Wood Duck Box
Photo by Brian Day

A Time for Celebration

SEPTEMBER 25, 2003:

The Limerick Forest Long Range Management Plan has been approved by the UCLG. This collaborative effort will now guide the development and operations in Limerick Forest for the future.

OCTOBER 19, 2003:

Limerick Forest Second Annual Open House

Somewhere between 250 and 300 people attended the 2nd Annual Open House held at the Chalet on October 19, 2003. Forestry and ecology tours were completed in vans as well as nature tours, horse & wagon tours and a mountain bike tour! Since the weather was uncooperative, 12 static displays were set up outside; most under tents. LFAC produced a new display which was set up inside the chalet. John Ambrose was recognised for his outstanding contributions to LFAC. His name will be added to the honour roll.



Photo from Office File



Open House Photos by
Dale and Vicki Cameron



NOVEMBER 20, 2003:

It was decided at this Communications meeting that this group would be combined with the Education Sub Committee to form a new joint sub committee. It was agreed that Rob Ross and Fred Schueler would co-chair.

DECEMBER 2003:

This month Larry Murray was voted in as chair for the Recreation Sub Committee and Fred McFarland was voted in as chair for the Administration Sub Committee; both for 2004.

DECEMBER 2, 2003:

It was announced at this Forest Resources Sub Committee meeting that the UCLG has approved the request to make the chalet available for rent to scouting or similar organizations. Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has approved funding to hire a crew to work in woods and for administrative support.

DECEMBER 4, 2003:

Ideas were suggested and a discussion arose at this meeting around the proposed name change of Limerick Rd north from Roebuck. This road would later become Forsythe Road.

Other Highlights for 2003

During the spring several public meetings were held involving the Limerick Forest Long Range Plan.

Ontario Works crews and staff planted 2000 red pine in Limerick Forest North Tract in May 2003. Openings for planting were created by the 1998 ice storm.

A new snowmobile trail was established at the south end of Wolford Centre Road. This was a joint venture between LFAC and the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs.

General information for the public was outlined and this would become part of a brochure available to the public in 2004. Highlights:

1. Hunting is permitted in Limerick Forest.
2. No permanent tree stands are allowed for hunting.
3. Limerick is a "multi-use" community forest. Many different types of recreational users share the forest such as: mountain biking, hiking, snowmobiling, 4 wheeling, dirt biking, skiing, snowshoeing, walking dogs, horseback riding and tobogganing in the gravel pit.
4. Illegal Activities include: dumping of any garbage, poaching, cutting of any trees without written permission from the forest manager and lighting fires.
5. Overnight camping is not permitted without the written permission from the forest manager.



Photos by Brian Day



Photo by Sue Willis



Limerick is Promoted Locally and Globally

2004

JANUARY 28, 2004:

The completed Limerick Forest web site was presented by Steve Smith at this chairs meeting. Some minor adjustments will be made and Steve agreed to maintain the site for LFAC. This site features a section pertaining to LFAC and another to Limerick Forest information. The development and maintenance of the site is ongoing and presently contains information on recreation, forest management, and a satellite image of Limerick Forest South Tract. The site is being linked to the Counties website as well as the Municipalities within Leeds and Grenville and can be viewed at www.limerickforest.ca

Fred Schueler and Aleta Karstad's approved LFAC logo design will be prominently placed on an informational brochure, which they also designed and 1000 colour copies will be printed for distribution to the general public.

FEBRUARY 19, 2004:

The annual report was presented and proposed budget/projects for 2004 at this annual progress meeting.

MARCH 21, 2004:

A web work bee was held on this date by the members of the Education and Communications Sub Committee to give instruction on editing the new web site.

APRIL 15, 2004:

Maps showing potential old growth areas in Limerick Forest were presented and displayed by Stew Hamill at this Forest Resources Sub Committee meeting. Stew plans to have 78 sites completed and mapped by the summer with the help from a student. Scott Davis presented a forest certification outline and discussion began on the need for Limerick Forest to be certified.

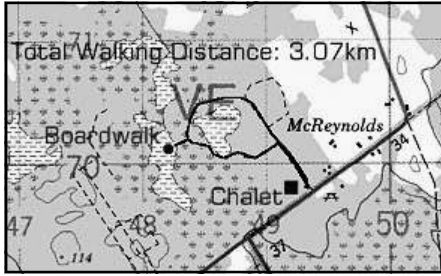
MAY 2, 2004:

A forestry tour for the public was held which began with a meeting at the chalet and a ceremonial planting of a sugar maple in the front yard. The group then headed out to tour a red pine stand.



Photos by Brian Day

Limerick Forest is Enjoyed by All



New Boardwalk
Photo by Brian Day

MAY 2004:

Rob Ross has left his Forestry Technician position.

JULY 18, 2004:

The Education and Communications Sub Committee hosted a field day. This event was combined with the Open Doors event held at the chalet for the public to attend.

AUGUST 15, 2004:

Another successful Open Doors event was held at the chalet. Three were held in total this year.

OCTOBER 17, 2004:

Limerick Forest 3rd Annual Open House

Somewhere between 160 and 200 people came out to this third annual open house held at the chalet. LFAC members Brian Day, Steve Smith and Mark Rowsell were all honoured for their outstanding contributions to LFAC and their names will be added to the LFAC honour roll.



Photo by Brian Day



Open House Photos by Brian Day





Photo by Sue Willis



Photo by Brian Day

Other Highlights for 2004

An Envirothon was held at the chalet, in conjunction with the Grenville Land Stewardship Council (GLSC). The purpose of this annual event is to increase the awareness of the environment in high school students.

An outdoor education day took place at the chalet in conjunction with Environmental Connections and the GLSC.

The Recreation Sub Committee was responsible for establishing a new single track trail north of the hydro line with access off Forsythe Road in Limerick South Block. This trail, which is a 3.5 to 4 km loop, is good for mountain bikes, hiking and dirt bikes. Limerick property and trail markers and signs were installed throughout many of the trails.

Mark Rowsell completed the mapping of Limerick Forest trails in the South block using the Global Positioning System (GPS).

The Bytown Motorcycle Association sponsored their annual motorcycle ride in the Limerick South Block.

A fire plan has begun and meetings were held with local fire chiefs.



Envirothon Photo by Jack Henry



Envirothon Photos by Geoff McVey

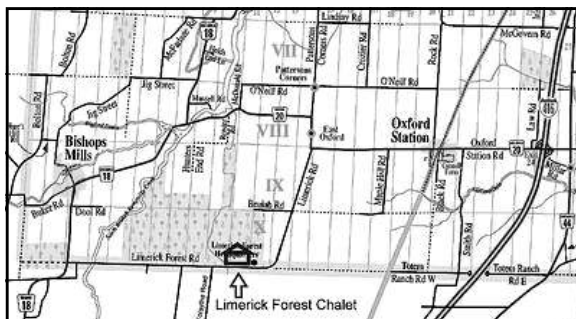


Photo by Brian Day

Athens High School Gets Involved

2005

JANUARY 20, 2005:

An update on forest certification was presented to the Forest Resources Sub Committee by Scott Davis (EOMF) as well as a 5 year plan update was presented by Peter Neave. Greg Knops was voted in as chair for this sub committee for 2005. Four abandoned wells were located and have been professionally decommissioned thanks in part due to funding received from the South Nation Conservation Authority.

FEBRUARY 5, 2005:

A field trip to view a potential old growth stand was held as an educational event in North Augusta.

FEBRUARY 11, 2005:

Athens District high School has signed an agreement with UCLG to use portions of Limerick Forest for educational purposes. LFAC member Jim Wilson, who teaches at Athens District High School, recently developed a Natural Resource and Outdoor Studies course with his colleague Linda Ross. "Our goal is to make the course as engaging and educational as possible, while the students develop skills and knowledge transferable to life beyond the classroom." (Jim Wilson)

FEBRUARY 23, 2005:

This was the first Annual Progress Meeting to include all LFAC members. The TOR was revised and will be sent to UCLG for approval.

MARCH 2, 2005:

A two page summary on forest certification was produced and presented to UCLG as an information item. Council has approved the \$3000 for the pre-audit. Brian Day was voted in as chair of the Education Sub Committee with Fred Schueler as an alternate when Brian cannot attend.



Old Growth Outing Photo
by Stew Hamill



Athen School Plot
Photo by Stew Hamill



Abandoned Well Photo
by Geoff McVey

APRIL 13, 2005:

There has been a joint application made to Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG) and both the Leeds and Grenville Stewardship Councils for office staff and a forestry crew to begin in Sept 2005.

APRIL 16, 2005:

Peter Neave left the Forestry Technician's position with UCLG.

APRIL 17, 2005:

Another Open Doors event was held at the chalet.

MAY 1, 2005:

Geoff McVey began as Resource Technician to assist with forest management and support LFAC with their activities.

MAY 7, 2005:

An old growth field trip was held for National Forest Week.

MAY 10, 2005:

Larry Murray has stepped down as chair of the Recreation Sub Committee and Rob Gates was voted in to take his place.

MAY 14, 2005:

A new outhouse has been constructed by students from Rideau District High School in Elgin and has been placed at the old picnic site on Forsythe Rd. by members of the Bytown Motorcycle Association (BMA). The BMA had 20 volunteers participate in this "volunteer day" where they also managed to collect six half tonne truck loads of garbage from the forest.

MAY 22, 2005:

An Open Doors event was held at the chalet.

JUNE 1, 2005:

An "Old Growth" workshop was held at Chaffey's Locks for local woodlot owners and practicing foresters to learn more about old growth forests. Approximately 50 people were treated to some very interesting presentations in the morning. A field tour to LIM compartments 91-92 after lunch provided an opportunity to view and discuss various characteristics of old growth forests.

These large, undisturbed tracts of mature forest provide suitable habitat for many species of flora and fauna such as the red shouldered hawk, red-breasted nuthatch, pileated woodpecker, silver-haired bat, red-backed salamander, trilliums, hepatica and Solomon's Seal. The loss of these areas due to forest fragmentation can have serious consequences for "forest-interior" species.

Unique Weather Event Hits Limerick

JUNE 6, 2005:

Fred McFarland was voted in as chair for 2005 for the Administration Sub Committee.

JUNE 27, 2005:

A very successful BBQ was held at the chalet.

JULY 5, 2005:

Microburst

UCLG staff discovered a number of large trees had been blown down across the trail network in various locations around the "loop" directly north of the Limerick Chalet. Upon further investigation it appeared that a "microburst" had occurred covering 40-50 acres of land north of the Chalet. The wind seems to have traveled from the northwest to the southeast. The trees which were blown down and/or snapped off are scattered throughout the area in clumps....anywhere from 1-2 trees to 15-20.

The hardest hit area is in the NE corner in a section of red pine. In general, the majority of the trees damaged are red pine, hard maple and white spruce. Those affected seem to have been quite large (i.e. large tops which caught the wind) and also located in low, wet areas, thus having a very shallow root system. Approximately 50 trees in total were affected by this unusual weather event.

The Canadian Climate Centre did not have any record of "damaging" winds in the area on that date; however, thunderstorm warnings had been issued for various parts of eastern Ontario at that time.

(taken from the LFAC newsletter produced by Geoff McVey)

AUGUST 2005:

The Leeds, Lanark and Grenville Stewardship Rangers spent two days working behind the chalet cleaning and brushing the nature trail and building three new benches.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2005:

Thanks to funding from an HRSDC program seven people were hired to help with Limerick Forest and LFAC. Six crew members began to assist Geoff McVey in the forest and one was hired as LFAC Coordinator (Sue Willis).

SEPTEMBER 9, 2005:

A tour for LFAC members of areas of Limerick Forest scheduled for thinning was held.



Photo of Stewardship Rangers
by Geoff McVey



Microburst Damage Photo by Sue Willis



Photo of BBQ by Geoff McVey

The Management Planning Process Has Begun

SEPTEMBER 21, 2005:

Work began tonight on a Limerick Forest Management Plan. Scott Lee from MNR was the special guest facilitator for this meeting. A total of 23 chapters, covering various topics affecting the forest, were agreed upon to be in the plan. This plan, when completed will become the guide to all management practices for Limerick Forest.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2005:

LFAC members got help from the new coordinator, Sue Willis, to set up and look after a booth on Limerick Forest and LFAC at the Ferguson Forest Centre's Forestry Fair in Kemptville.



OCTOBER 2, 2005:

Limerick Forest 4th Annual Open House

Close to 200 people came out on this very hot sunny day to enjoy the BBQ, tours of the forest and to renew old friendships. The theme this year was *A Tribute to Those Who Planted Trees in Limerick Forest over the Past 65 Years*. An award was given to Bob Gollinger for his outstanding contributions to LFAC. Gwen Peters, who had been one of the very first to plant in Limerick Forest 65 years ago, was there to plant a ceremonial tree in front of the chalet.



Open House Photos by Sue Willis

NOVEMBER 2005:

The following members were voted in as chairs for 2006: Greg Knops-Forest Resources Sub Committee, Stew Hamill-Ecology Sub Committee, Brian Day-Education and Communication Sub Committee and Fred McFarland-Administration Sub Committee. The Recreation Sub Committee is still seeking a chair for next year as Rob Gates has stepped down and Larry Murray is only able to chair in a temporary capacity.

DECEMBER 12, 2005:

A Management Plan Steering Committee was formed to prepare a terms of reference which will in turn assist in the hiring of a consultant to prepare the new Management Plan. The first meeting of this steering committee was scheduled for January 5, 2006. Members include: Stew Hamill, Fred McFarland, Greg Knops, Bob Gollinger, Jack Henry and Dale Cameron with assistance from staff member Geoff McVey. John Ambrose has offered to help with the development of the Terms of Reference for the Management Plan.

Other Highlights of 2005

Geoff McVey created a new newsletter which was distributed in August 2005.

The HRSDC work crew established new trails and make modifications to existing ones behind the chalet with new signs and benches.

The chalet received new windows and shutters and a new front door is installed, built by Steve Lindsay.

The LFAC membership list is updated and 100 members are contacted and interviewed.

A Communications Strategy is being developed by The Education and Communications Sub Committee. Dale Cameron is leading this project and expects it to be ready early in 2006.

Plans have begun to build an extension to the existing boardwalk, which will be completed through the winter.

Athens District High School: A new EMAN (Ecological Monitoring & Assessment Network) plot has been established in LIM 174 by Athens District High School students under the direction of teachers Jim Wilson and Linda Ross. The students will monitor vegetation changes in a white pine plantation as it is thinned over time as part of their "Natural Resource & Outdoor Studies" course.

South Grenville District High School sponsored a mountain bike race in Limerick Forest.

Dale Cameron and Bob Gollinger began an historic register of all the people who planted trees in Limerick Forest. A commemorative pin was designed by Dale Cameron and Aleta Karstad which is ready to distribute to these planters when the list is complete.



Photos by Geoff McVey



Photo by Brian Day

Looking Ahead...2006

The Terms of Reference for the Management Plan has been completed and plans are underway to hold three workshops for LFAC members in 2006.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Eastern Ontario Model Forest and LFAC for Forest Certification was not approved by UCLG early in 2006, however, Forest Certification will be revisited again in the future.

HRSDC crew have completed the boardwalk extension and the first public outing was held in February to view it.

LFAC has voted to produce newsletters on a quarterly basis. The first of these was produced by Fred Schueler and Sue Willis with contributions from a variety of LFAC members and distributed in January 2006.

A Tourism and Recreational Development study with recommendations for LFAC and Limerick's future will be completed this year by Sue Willis.



Forestry Crew with Boardwalk Extension
Photo by Geoff McVey



Photo by Sue Willis



On the trail for tracks

Open Doors January 2006
Photos from EMC



Open Doors February 2006
Photos by Sue Willis



LFAC Members Speak Up

Here are some comments from LFAC members who also affiliated with other groups:

John Wilson, former MNR employee as Private Land Forester which included Agreement Forests: "LFAC is one of the outstanding success stories-people taking an interest and control of their own forest and making things happen." John is also a volunteer with the Ferguson Forest and says he looks forward to continuing to work with LFAC in this ever changing environment of forest management.

Frank Chabot, member of the Bytown Motorcycle Association: "The multi use trails are great In Limerick, people respect one another; which is the most important thing."

Ed Miller, member of the Bytown Motorcycle Association: "Limerick is well managed and well structured. Limerick serves as the model other forest groups should follow."

Bruce Robinson, Governor/Director for the Eastern Ontario sector of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs: "Snowmobilers are very thankful for an area like Limerick Forest to enjoy our sport. Now that we have a management committee looking after the forest, we feel more secure about the future of Limerick. It is great how it is working out where the many different interest groups work together to make sure Limerick is around for many years to come."

Rudy Dyck, Forest Program Manager and Regulations Officer for Rideau Valley Conservation Authority: "I'm impressed with the community support and involvement over a wide variety of user groups for the management of Limerick Forest."

John McCrea, Reeve of Augusta Township: "The members of County Council and the Council of the Township of Augusta are proud of LFAC. It is the best example of inclusive planning that I know of. Best wishes LFAC."

Kerry Coleman, Program Manager for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources: "LFAC has done an incredible job pulling the community together and continues to promote stewardship and endeavours to instil a sense of pride in the management of Limerick Forest."

Dennis O'Grady, General Manager South Nation Conservation: "LFAC and other community forests are tremendous assets to the people of Eastern Ontario. The transfer of management from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Counties resulted in the formation of LFAC and now the local communities benefit both economically and ecologically due to this unique relationship."

The Last Word

DISCLAIMER:

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and continuity of information in producing this document. If there is important information that has been overlooked or there is incorrect information please bring it to the attention of the forest manager for future publications.

Special thanks to the following for their contributions to this project:

Mark Rowsell for his production of a timeline poster.

Greg Moffatt who will be creating a special web page in the near future.

The staff of UCLG for helping me locate historical information.

HRSDC for the opportunity to work with this fine group of people.

Ed Reynolds for keeping every last piece of paper!

Especially the members of LFAC.

Without their contributions over the past five years there would be nothing to write about!

Thank You,

Sue Willis, LFAC Coordinator 2005/2006



Photo by Brian Day

*It is hoped that this document containing
the first five year history of LFAC will not be the last.*



“A century from now Limerick Forest will be an outstanding example of community cooperation in the sustainable management of its natural resources.

Limerick Forest will be providing a wide variety of community goods and services including jobs and revenue, varied recreational opportunities, the protection of areas of significant biodiversity, the protection of soil and water resources and the provision of structured educational opportunities”

LFAC April 2003-Taken from the Long Range Management Plan

