



FERGUSON FOREST CENTRE (FFC) REPORT: SPRING/SUMMER 2010

The big news, at this time, is that FFC is likely to lose about 4 hectares (10 acres) of prime production land, for the municipal equalization ponds, as early as this year. The proposed area is west of the water treatment plant and, hopefully, south of Veterans' Way. This will mean an annual loss of approximately 400,000 bareroot stock in our inventory and the subsequent loss of revenue. As you can imagine, it is causing a fair amount of reallocation of our crop plan.

We are still repairing and replacing old equipment and facilities, but we are gaining ground. There has been the usual unexpected breakdowns and extra costs, but we have weathered those and still kept our nose close to the surface. If our contract with Trees Ontario comes through and everything else goes as usual, we plan to put more resources into education, conservation and recreation this year than ever before.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has been spearheading the development of a Management Plan (MP) for the crown portion of our area. This will include information on forestry, wildlife and ecology as well as recreation. It will set out standards for management on a holistic basis. Trails will be identified, mapped, usage described and provincial standards set. Once a rough draft of the total plan is ready, you and the rest of the public will be invited to comment.

In conjunction with that plan, the FFC Board has approved a project in principal to refurbish the Forest Management Trail and fund a forestry education package associated with it. Alf Campbell is leading this effort.

More work will be done on the recreational, educational and conservation (REC) area along Kemptville Creek. The material that was piled there from the construction of the municipal centre will be removed, as soon as weather permits. That site and the brush site will then be available for levelling and preparation for future plantings.

The FFC and the FFFC have a procedure in place to report work that needs to be done on the trails and adjacent lands. If you see something that you believe should be looked into, please give the information to Ed Patchell. He can be reached at 613-258-0110. Your prompt reporting will allow us to fix the problem quickly. Your eyes and ears will help us to keep the garbage down and the trails in better shape.

- John Wilson

## TIPS FOR THE TRAILS

The Ferguson Forest encompasses about 1000 acres of municipal and crown lands. It was once farmland. Since 1945 some areas have been planted, some left to naturalize and some were used to create the nursery. The natural forest habitat has become a popular place to walk, with or without a dog, bicycle, cross-country ski or snowshoe.

In order to remain safe in the forest, which is actually larger than Stanley Park, in Vancouver, BC, there are some things that you need to do.

### Safety - Things to Take with You:

Your cell phone (charged).	A walking stick.	A whistle.
A compass.	A water bottle.	A map and/or GPS.

## Upcoming Events

**North Grenville Earth Day Fair – April 18, 2010 – 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.**

The Friends participate in this fair to raise awareness amongst the community about the Friends and its goals and objectives.

**Spring Trail Clean-Up Day - April 24, 2010 - 9:00 am to 12:30 pm.**

Clean up will start at 9:00 am and volunteers will meet at the FFC office to receive their work assignments. Workers should come dressed for the weather (warm clothing, boots and work gloves) and students will be given credits for community service hours. Free hot dogs and hot drinks will be served after clean up. Bring shears, Robertson screwdrivers, and clippers if you have them. For more information visit our web site at:

[www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca](http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca)

**Spring "Walk in the Woods" - May 15, 2010 10 am to 12:30 pm.**

Tentatively, this fun and educational walk will focus on bats and their value in our ecosystem. The event is open to all. Participation is free for members and their families, and there will be a nominal fee charged to non-members who attend, to cover the cost of food.

**Membership Drive – June 12th, 2010 - 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.**

The FFFC will be holding a spring membership drive on June 12th at Jonsson's Independent Grocers. Volunteers will be needed to staff the booths in two-hour shifts between 8:30 am and 12:30 pm. If you can help, please contact Colleen at 613-258-4400.

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## Dos and Don'ts

### **Do:**

Wear sturdy boots.

Tell someone where you are going and when you will likely be back.

Bring a field guide to trees, bird, mushrooms or whatever interests you.

Bring a camera – the forest is a wonderful place to take pictures.

If your dog poops on the trail, bag it and take it home; if you leave it, you may be the one to step in it the next time you walk there. Keep your dog under control at all times.

### **Don't**

Litter – if you bring it in – take it out with you.

Harass the wildlife, or allow your dog to harass them -it's their home, you're a visitor.

### Things to Remember:

The old access roads, about 10 feet wide and now overgrown with grass, are easily identified by their relative straightness and the right angled intersections. They may also end abruptly.

There are five wilderness trails that were developed by the MNR when the forest was part of the G. Howard Ferguson Forestry Station. These trails are narrow and winding. Three are presently marked.

The Turtle Trail along Kemptville Creek is marked by yellow turtles.

The Maple Trail parallel to County Road 44 is marked by blue maple leaves.

The Management Trail runs east-west north of the nursery and is marked by orange arrows

The Beech Trail and the Chickadee Trail in the north west part of the forest are unmarked. They will be re-marked as time and money permit.

The trails in the Ferguson Forest are woodland trails, not groomed trails. The ground is often uneven and there may be roots sticking up, so you will need to watch where you are stepping. They may be very muddy or even partly flooded in spring or after heavy rains, and icy in the winter. This is where your walking stick will come in handy.

There often appear to be other unmarked trails. These may be either game trails - the forest has a large wildlife population - or they may be trails that people have created through repeated passage. We do not recommend that you walk off-trail, but if you do, be safe and ensure that you have a compass with you. It is not hard to get lost in the forest.

Unauthorized motorized vehicles are prohibited with one exception - during the winter certain trails are maintained by the snowmobile club for their members. These trails are marked. If you are walking on one of these trails, listen for snowmobiles, step to the side if you hear one coming and make sure your dog is also off the trail. This is also true for cross county skiers and snowshoers.

Bow hunting (archery) is allowed for one week in early November. Warning signs are posted. For that week, you might consider walking elsewhere, or at the very least wearing bright orange or red clothing.

Horses are allowed. Pleasure drivers (horse and buggy) use the old road system. Riders sometimes use the narrower trails. Again, when meeting these large animals, move over to the side of the path and let them pass. Keep dogs away from horses- no one wants an unfortunate accident.

The forest is there for everyone to share, and small courtesies make it more fun for all.

For more information or to report any garbage, trail damage or misuse, please drop into the business office at the FFC, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm or contact Ed Patchell at 613-258-0110. Take care and be safe.



### **Canada Day Parade - July 1, 2010**

The Friends will be entering a float and decoration will take place on June 30th. Help will be needed to decorate the float and walk in the parade.

### **Forest Fair -September 25th, 2010 - 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.**

Come out and enjoy the fun. Forest Fair hosts the largest lumber and wood auction in Eastern Ontario. There will be dog and horse demonstrations and of course the Friends will be selling their now famous coffee and home baked cookies. We will also have an information booth and be selling memberships and gifts. This will be the 3rd annual quilt show sponsored by the Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre.

### **Fall Walk in the Woods –October 2nd, 2010 – 10 am to 12:30 pm.**

This is a special fun and educational event that is open to all. Participation is free for members and their families, and there will be a nominal fee charged to non-members who attend, to cover the cost of food.

### **Fall Trail Clean-Up Day – November 6th, 2010 between 9:00 am to 12:30 pm.**

Workers should come dressed for the weather and students will be given credits for community service hours. Free food and hot drinks will be served after clean up. For more information visit our web site in September at: [www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca](http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca)

**Annual General Meeting – November 18th, 2010 – 7:30 pm.**  
Ferguson Forest Centre board room.

**The Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre would like to thank our corporate members for their support.**

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