

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority
Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee
Terms of Reference
March 2023

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) is to provide advice to the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Board of Directors on:

1. Etiquette, standards and guidelines for recreational uses occurring in the Ganaraska Forest;
2. Recreational user conflicts within the Ganaraska Forest;
3. Change in trends and technology related to recreational use types in the Ganaraska Forest to mitigate future conflicts, retain recreational interest in the Ganaraska Forest, and ensure safe trail use while reducing liability;
4. Changes to or new Provincial legislation or Ganaraska Forest documents that that pertain to recreational use; and,
5. The multi-use recreational trail system, and how recreational opportunities can be improved upon, while at the same time mitigating risk to the user and the ecology of the Ganaraska Forest.

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee will also carry out work to:

1. Ensure rules, etiquette and regulations pertaining to recreational use in the Ganaraska Forest are communicated to their organization or municipality membership/population;
2. Promote co-operation among the various recreational user groups;
3. Develop recreational programs and/or events in the Ganaraska Forest subject to approval of the Conservation Authority;
4. Undertake trail maintenance including relocation of trails, sign inspections, and site restoration projects; and,
5. Communicate with the respective recreational organization or municipality opportunities to participate in Conservation Authority programs or initiatives that are mutually benefiting and in the best interest of the Ganaraska Forest and recreational opportunities.

2.0 Committee Structure

Each governing body/municipality listed below is responsible to appoint a representative from that organization or municipality to sit on the RUC.

Municipal Appointees will be a member of the public residing in that Municipality and will be appointed by Council. Each representative will sit on the RUC as a voting member for a four (4) year term. The RUC will decide a succession plan to ensure the rotation of the members will provide experience on the Committee at all times. Municipal appointees will be appointed every four (4) years or as per the Municipality's policy on appointments.

A GRCA Board of Director will sit on the Committee as an ex-officio non-voting member and will be appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Board of Directors.

2.1 Voting Members

Members will be appointed for a four (4) year term. When a new member is appointed to the RUC, an orientation session may be provided, along with the terms of reference of the Committee.

Members of the RUC will be appointed by a governing body which represents the majority of Ontarians. The governing body shall represent one of the uses authorized within the Ganaraska Forest. The governing body includes:

- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- Ontario Trail Riders Association (equestrian)
- Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
- Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
- Ontario Federation of Trail Riders (off-road motorcycles)
- Ontario Federation of 4Wheel Drive Enthusiasts
- Ontario Nature
- Hike Ontario
- Cross Country Ski Ontario
- Orienteering Ontario
- Ontario Cycling Association

In addition, a member from each municipality whose boundaries fall within the Ganaraska Forest will be appointed to the RUC by the municipality to represent the municipality as outlined in Section 2.0

- Municipality of Port Hope
- City of Kawartha Lakes
- Township of Cavan/Monaghan
- Municipality of Clarington

2.2 Responsibilities of Members

- Members must follow the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).
- Members must report to the governing body, organization, or municipality at least once per year.
- Members need to have an open line of communication with the user or municipality that they represent.
- Members are to bring user or municipal population concerns to the Recreational Users Committee.
- Members must attend 3 of the 4 regularly scheduled meetings.
- Members must work cooperatively and collaboratively with other members of the Committee.
- Members must make decisions in the spirit of what is best for the Ganaraska Forest rather than best for the individual user group.
- Members are encouraged to do their best to solve conflicts/issues brought forward prior to the involvement of staff from the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority.
- Members are encouraged to volunteer in the Ganaraska Forest and help organize volunteer days.

2.3 Chair

The Chair is appointed by the Conservation Authority and is a non-voting member of the Committee. In the absence of the Chair, a non-voting Committee member will assume the role of Chair.

2.4 Recording Secretary

A staff member of the Conservation Authority will be appointed by the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer and is a non-voting member of the Committee.

The agenda and minutes of each meeting will be posted on the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority website.

The minutes are sent to the following GRCA Board of Director meeting as information.

2.5 Amendments to Committee Structure and/or Terms of Reference

The Committee structure and the terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the GRCA Board of Directors, and any updates will be provided before the first RUC meeting of the year.

3.0 Rules of Order

All meetings will be conducted in a normal businesslike manner.

3.1 Public Participation (Delegation Policy)

The general public is welcome to attend all meetings, however, to make representation to the Committee, a request must be made in writing to the Chair at least 10 calendar days prior to the meeting. Such requests should include a brief summary of the nature of the presentation and the name of the person(s) making it. Presentations shall be limited to 10 minutes. Presenters should be prepared to answer questions from Committee members.

3.2 Correspondence

All correspondence pertaining to Committee business should be addressed to the appropriate member in care of the GRCA. Correspondence will normally be dealt with at the next meeting following receipt. Correspondence originating from the GRCA will be copied to the member(s) of the Committee, as appropriate.

3.3 Conduct of Business

At the discretion of the Chair, new business will be introduced by a notice of motion introduced at the meeting prior to when the business will be dealt with. This will permit members to solicit input prior to voting. Notices of motion require a mover and a seconder.

All motions require a mover and a seconder. Discussions on motions will be limited to 10 minutes with extensions beyond this time at the discretion of the Chair. Members may speak twice on any motion.

All motions will be decided by majority vote. A tie vote means that the motion is defeated.

One half (50%) of the Committee's voting membership shall form a quorum for the transaction of business.

4.0 Meetings

Meetings of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee shall normally be held on the first Thursday of the month for the months of April, June, September and November at the Administrative Office of the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority or virtually. Additional meetings will occur at the call of the Chair.

5.0 Reporting Function

The Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Chair or designate, other than staff, shall report to the GRCA Board of Directors on its activities over the previous year by December 1 of each year.

Appendix 1 - Code of Conduct

1. Background

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) demands a high level of integrity and ethical conduct from its Committee Members. The Authority's reputation has relied upon the good judgement of individual Members. A written Code of Conduct helps to ensure that all Members share a common basis for acceptable conduct. Formalized standards help to provide a reference guide and a supplement to legislative parameters within which Members must operate. Further, they enhance public confidence that Members operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy.

The Code of Conduct is a general standard. It augments the laws which govern the behaviour of Members, and it is not intended to replace personal ethics.

This Code of Conduct will also assist Members in dealing with confronting situations not adequately addressed or that may be ambiguous in Authority resolutions, regulations, or policies and procedures.

2. General

All Members, whether appointed representatives of an organization or municipality, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Authority.

All Members shall serve in a conscientious and diligent manner. No Member shall use the influence of their position for any purpose other than for the exercise of their official duties.

It is expected that Members adhere to a code of conduct that:

- i. upholds the mandate, vision and mission of the Authority;
- ii. considers the recreational use of the Ganaraska Forest in its entirety, including their appointing organization or municipality;
- iii. respects confidentiality;
- iv. approaches all Ganaraska Forest issues with an open mind, with consideration for the Ganaraska Forest as a whole;
- v. respects the democratic process and respects decisions of the Recreational Users Committee, GRCA Board of Directors, GRCA staff, as well as Executive Committee, Advisory Boards and other committees, if and when applicable;
- vi. declares any direct or indirect pecuniary interest or conflict of interest when one exists or may exist; and
- vii. conducts oneself in a manner which reflects respect and professional courtesy and does not use offensive language in or against the Authority or against any Member or any Authority staff.

3. Gifts and Benefits

Members shall not accept fees, gifts, hospitality or personal benefits that are connected directly or indirectly with the performance of duties.

4. Confidentiality

The Members shall be governed at all times by the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Members shall not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, either in verbal or written form, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position, except when required by law to do so.

Members shall not permit any persons, other than those who are entitled thereto, to have access to information which is confidential.

In the instance where a Member vacates their position on the Recreational Users Committee they will continue to be bound by *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act* requirements.

Particular care should be exercised in protecting personal data from an individual who has brought forward information to the Recreational Users Committee.

5. Use of Authority Property

No Member shall use for personal purposes any Authority property, equipment, supplies, or services of consequence other than for purposes connected with the discharge of Authority duties or associated community activities of which the Authority has been advised.

6. Work of a Political Nature

No Member shall use Authority facilities, services or property for his/her election or re-election campaign to any position or office within the Authority or otherwise.

7. Conduct at Recreational Users Committee Meetings

During meetings of the Recreational Users Committee, Members shall conduct themselves with decorum. Respect for delegations, staff and for fellow Members requires that all Members show courtesy and not distract from the business of the Authority during presentations and when others have the floor.

8. Influence on Staff

Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the Authority as a whole and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective, without undue influence.

9. Business Relations

No Member shall borrow money from any individual who regularly does business with the Authority unless such individual is an institution or company whose shares are publicly traded and who is regularly in the business of lending money.

No Member shall act as a paid agent before the Authority, the GRCA Board of Directors, Executive Committee or an advisory board or committee of the Authority, except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

10. Encouragement of Respect for the Authority and its Regulations

Members shall represent the Authority in a respectful way and encourage public respect for the Authority and its Regulations.

11. Harassment

It is the policy of the Authority that all persons be treated fairly in the workplace in an environment free of discrimination and of personal and sexual harassment. Harassment of another Member, staff or any member of the public is misconduct. Members shall follow the Authority's Harassment Policy as approved from time-to-time.

Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to an individual's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disabilities, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. The Authority will also not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images; practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit and any other prohibited grounds under the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

12. Breach of Code of Conduct

Should a Member breach the Code of Conduct, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Code of Conduct shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.