

Comment Form

2011-2021 Mazinaw-Lanark Forest Management Plan

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Mazinaw-Lanark Forest Inc. and the Local Citizens Committee (LCC) invite your written comments regarding the preparation of the 2011-2021 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Mazinaw-Lanark Forest. All comments received will be reviewed by the FMP Planning Team and the LCC.

You may also send your comments directly to: **Mazinaw-Lanark FMP Planning Team**
P.O.Box 500, 106 Monck Street
Bancroft Ontario, K0L 1C0

Please print clearly:

Date: August 8_ Name: Gordon Birnie_____

Affiliation (if applicable): Skootamatta District Ratepayer Association - SDRA

Address: ; Cloyne, Ontario,

Phone/Fax #: _905 647 3491 – home telephone of Gordon Birnie

Email Address: webmaster@skootamatta.ca or Gordon.Birnie@sympatico.ca

Main Concerns (please fill in to help us accurately record your comments)

Please add me to your mailing list x (include your full address)

Specific forest management activity Specify _Forest Sector 27 MLFI

Possible forest management activities in specific area Township –Addington Highlands _____

Description (e.g. lake, road, camp) _ALL_____

Concerned about wood supply Species? _Yes - ALL

Other concerns Specify __Impact of cutting on biodiversity ;viewscape on lakes Skootamata, Pringle and Sheldrake _

Would you like to be contacted with a response? __Yes

Comments: (please use back of sheet)

Comments are collected and documented as part of the public consultation process for forest management planning as required under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (1987) or FIPPA, personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent is obtained. However, this information

may be used by the Ministry of Natural Resources as public input for other resource management initiatives. For further information regarding FIPPA, please contact Craig Dodds at (705) 286-5211

For Office Use Only

Date Received:

Received by (phone, interview, mail, in-person):

Follow-up Date:

Stage of Plan: ①②③④⑤

Given to:

Response sent:

Comments:

The SDRA represents both permanent and seasonal lakeside property owners on lakes Skootamatta, Pringle and Sheldrake. We have numerous concerns with regards to the proposed forest management plan in the area surrounding our lakes.

As you know we are the major property taxpayers in our townships and put significant effort and take tremendous pride in our stewardship of these lakes and the surrounding wilderness. The funds that we spend in the local communities are the largest single contributor to the local economy far exceeding logging. The SDRA is in the middle of preparing a Lake Management Plan for our three lakes. We expect to complete our first draft in 2011.

We appreciate and acknowledge the effort of Gareth Davies on behalf of the MNR and Tom Richardson and Matt Mertins – of the LMF inc. who communicated the proposed forest management plan to us this spring. The SDRA was not prepared for, nor previously aware that major logging activity in the crown land surrounding our lakes was planned. We are not represented on the LCC nor do many SDRA members read the local newspapers in the winter months.

As such, the SDRA executive and our recently formed multi lake logging committee have needed to spend a considerable amount of time and energy this spring and summer getting up to speed on your proposal. We then needed to communicate our findings to our members and solicit their input/feedback. As well we

needed to meet with and dialogue with the leadership of a number of other local lake associations such as Mazinaw, Weslemkoon, Sheldrake, Kashwakamak, Shabomeka, Ashby, Pringle and Shawenegog.

We have learned that lakeside ratepayer response to the proposed plan is varied. Some people strongly oppose all logging activities on crown land and believe that an intact forest has much greater environmental value than your proposal. Most ratepayers are very concerned about the impact your proposal will have on the viewscape, water quality and biodiversity in and around our lakes. However, most residents understand that logging on crown land has gone on in the area for over 150 years and will continue.

Many people acknowledge that the current MNR/LMF proposal is an order of magnitude better for the environment in both the short and especially the long term than what has occurred historically on crown land in the area.

Notwithstanding the above, permanent and seasonal lakeside property owners have a number of shared concerns. They believe LMF and MNR need to acknowledge and accommodate their concerns related to the impact of crown land logging on biodiversity, both in the forest and in our lakes, the water quality impact on lakes, creeks like Wolf, Killer and Skootamatta and wet lands, the viewscape around our lakes and the need for wide buffers around private/ public roads, hunting camps, hiking and X-country ski trails. In addition, noise, air pollution and increased traffic from logging trucks and increased break-ins due to new ATV access roads on crown land when seasonal residences are closed. These issues must be addressed. Finally, the increased cost of municipal road maintenance due to heavy logging trucks is a concern since our property taxes are already high enough.

These concerns are outlined in more detail below.

1. VIEWSCAPE - The viewscape from the lakes' edges need to be maintained so that no evidence of logging on crown land is visible from the lake. John Coulter has video recorded the shore of Lake Skootamatta in High Definition format and GPS for you to view. You will note once you view this recording that as the forest cover and shoreline vary greatly in density, tree type and shoreline steepness; thus the minimum width of the viewscape necessary to achieve our goal is quite variable – from 350 to 500 metres at minimum.
2. WATER QUALITY – In a number of areas on our three lakes the water depth in bays such as Jacques Bay or the Narrows on Lake Skootamata or the west end of Sheldrake Lake near the mussel beds is quite shallow 10-12 feet. We are concerned about any cutting in the vicinity of all areas of shallow water. Many years of water testing has determined that phosphorous levels are higher in these areas, oxygen levels and water clarity are lower. As a result weed growth is higher in these areas. Logging in these areas would result in more run off and accelerated water quality issues. We believe a buffer of 500 to 750 metres is necessary in these areas. The SDRA is working with all lakeside residents to encourage them to naturalize their shoreline to minimize run off. As well we are actively asking residents to maintain and upgrade their septic systems to reduce biological loading in our lakes. Finally, we are the upper headwaters of the Quinte Bay watershed. These crown lands are the last remaining unspoiled/relatively untouched part of this watershed. We need to maintain this resource for generations to come.
3. HIGH DENSITY AREAS OF LAKESIDE RESIDENCES – In areas where there is a high density of lakeside residences

- such as Jacques Bay, the North Shore Road; O’Borne Road, Hughes Landing Road, Henninger Road and the north side of Sheldrake Lake we believe that a significant area of crown land should be set aside as “not available for cutting”. We recommend that this buffer be 600 to 750 metres wide. This would ensure that the wilderness experience that these property owners have enjoyed for many years would be maintained. As well, we need to protect the significant financial investment that property owners have made as well as the assessment value for the townships tax base.
4. NEW LOGGING ROADS – In the lower density/boat access areas of Lake Skootamatta on the South West side of the lake we are concerned that the proposed logging activity on crown land will result in new roads that will attract ATV traffic and accelerate an already higher incidence of break-ins in this area. We propose that no new roads be built on crown land within 1000 metres of the lake in this area. Finally, the SDRA does not support the use of ice roads on our three lakes due to possibility of pollution should a truck break through the ice.
 5. MUNICIPAL ROADS – As taxpayers, we are very concerned that our taxes are paying to maintain gravel roads for the logging company trucks. The logging companies pay no taxes in our township. At minimum, the municipality should be reimbursed for all damage and necessary maintenance to township roads. As well, logging trucks should be restricted to any use of township roads in freeze up and thaw periods. Finally for safety reasons, truck traffic should be restricted to specific times of day and year when resident traffic is lowest. There should be no municipal road usage on weekends from Mid May to Thanksgiving weekend.
 6. BIODIVERSITY – The impact of your proposed plan on the biodiversity in the areas of our lakes and forest wilderness

are not known. We have found no study that documents the current status of the biodiversity. We have found no plan to study the impact of the crown land logging proposal on species at risk like Blanding's turtle, blue skink, frogs, eastern cougar, elk or rainbow mussels in Sheldrake or deer yards, bear, fox and wolf dens, snapping turtle nesting sites, or walleye and bass spawning areas, beaver and otter habitat as well as numerous loon, duck, goose, heron, turkey, partridge, hawk, owl, kestrel, osprey, peregrine, crow, humming bird and pileated woodpecker nesting sites to mention just a few of the species that we enjoy in our crown land wilderness environment. MNR input to date is of a general nature and claims that there is no lasting negative impact on species at risk or other species from logging on crown land. We find this conclusion very surprising. Because there is no known data to support these findings, we believe that they are lacking in credibility. As such, the SDRA is in the process of commissioning a biologist to complete a study of the biodiversity in the crown land surrounding our lakes to better understand what the biodiversity concerns really are. We would appreciate technical and financial support for this effort over the next 12 months from both MNR and LMF inc.

7. OLD GROWTH FOREST – As you know, there are crown lands around our lakes where significant stands of old growth/mature pine forests exist. For example, there is a stand between Sheldrake and Skootamatta in the area where building an ECO Lodge was proposed. There is a second site behind the "Million Dollar Beach" on the south west side of Skootamata just south of Jacques Bay that contains significant old growth. These historical sites should be preserved so that we can continue to show our friends the way the crown land forest was before we

started to log it. There is no substitute for the majesty of these forest sites and these giant trees.

8. BEACHES AND PUBLIC CAMPSITES ON CROWN LAND –

There are numerous beaches and public campsites on crown land that residents and visitors to our lakes enjoy. These sites need to be sustained as shared resources that we all can continue to use and enjoy. Each of these sites should have a buffer of at least 750 meters so that the current crown land wilderness experience is preserved. The SDRA would be pleased to provide a guided tour of our lakes to make sure that these specific sites on crown lands are pointed out to you before any logging activity is planned.

SUMMARY and SDRA PROPOSAL

In conclusion, for the reasons outlined above the SDRA requests a 12 months moratorium (or until we reach a firm agreement) on any crown land logging within one kilometre of the shoreline of Lakes Skootamata, Sheldrake and Pringle.

This moratorium provides LMF inc. with timely input that allows them to proceed with their near term crown land cutting plan in an orderly manner. We understand that LMF inc and their shareholders have a business to operate and the SDRA wishes to continue to co-operate with LMF inc in a responsible manner.

This moratorium provides SDRA, MNR and LMF inc. time to continue our constructive dialogue and the SDRA time to complete our biology study and make recommendations.

The SDRA offers this proposal without prejudice to our rights in the future to submit new proposals as we increase our understanding of the impact of logging in our area on the wilderness and the natural habitat.

