

Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee

“Walk in the Woods” Series Event No. 3 of 6

A Forest in the Fall – Marlborough Forest

Sunday, 17 September, 2006

Marlborough Forest is located in the Townships of Rideau and Goulbourn, part of the amalgamated City of Ottawa. There is 7,226 hectares owned by City of Ottawa and 469 hectares owned by the Province of Ontario (crown land). The forest is not an unspoiled wilderness; it is a diverse blend of mixed conifer and mixed hardwood forest, patchy openings, old fields, plantations and wetlands. Many of the values for which it is known are the direct result of its history and use over the past 200 years. For more information the forest management plan for Marlborough Forest is available online at www.ottawaforests.ca/Marlborough/management%20plan/Management-Plan.pdf



Ottawa Forests A Greenspace Advisory Committee

Advises Ottawa City Council and provide a forum for citizens on issues related to forests and greenspace. OFGAC advises the City of Ottawa on municipal policies relating to trees and forests, protection, management, acquisition and conservation of greenspaces, management of community forests, public-private initiatives to protect greenspace, and rural reforestation.

www.ottawaforests.ca
ofgac@ottawaforests.ca



City of Ottawa - Forestry Services

Increase, enhance and preserve forest cover in the City of Ottawa. This is accomplished through tree planting, maintenance, and community forest management programs. Forestry Services also develops and manages tree preservation/protection policies and programs and provides reliable information to the public about our City's trees.

www.ottawa.ca
forestry@ottawa.ca



Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

The ministry is committed to protecting and managing the province's natural resources. The Forests Division is committed to sustainable forest management.

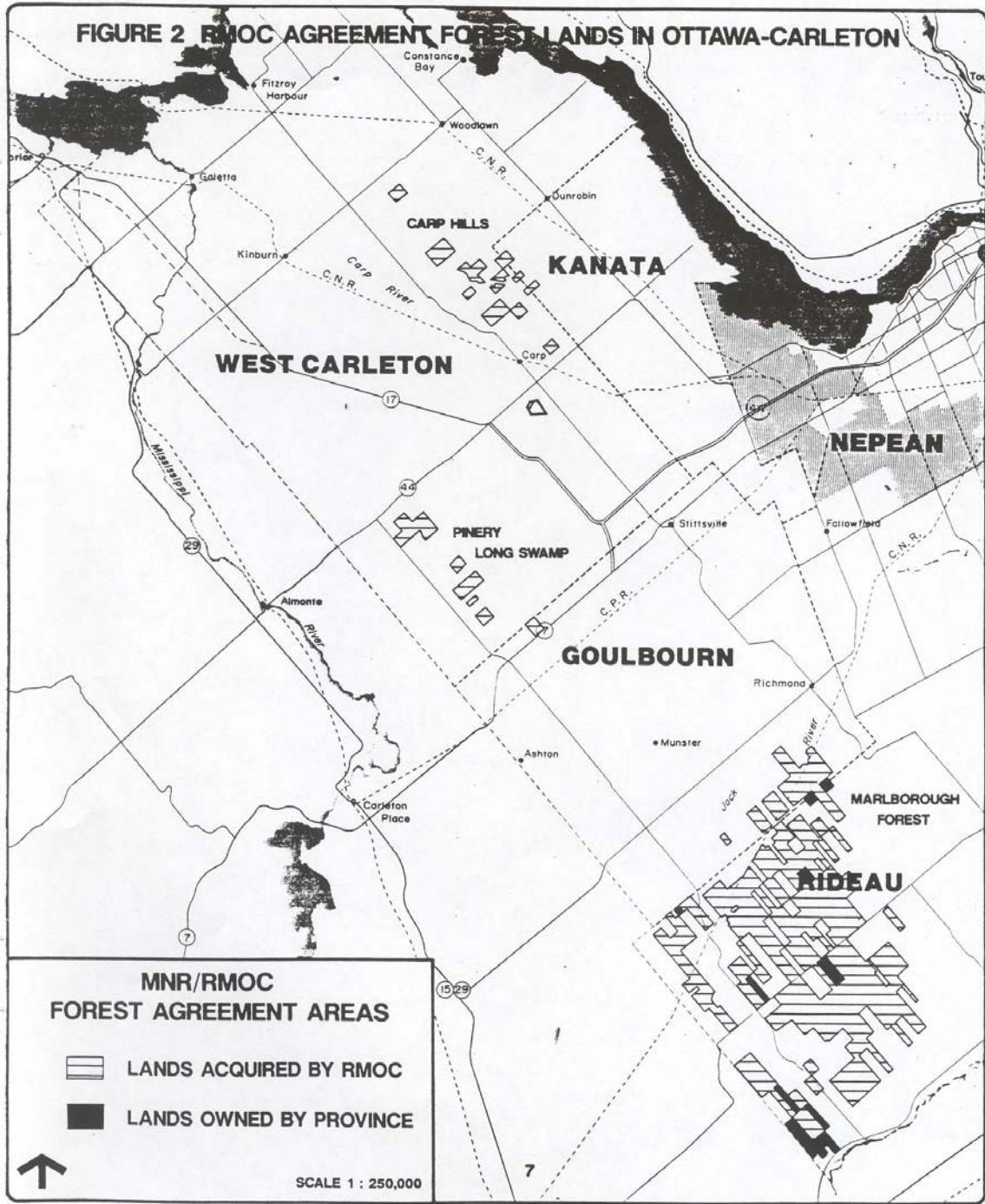
www.mnr.gov.on.ca
613-258-8204

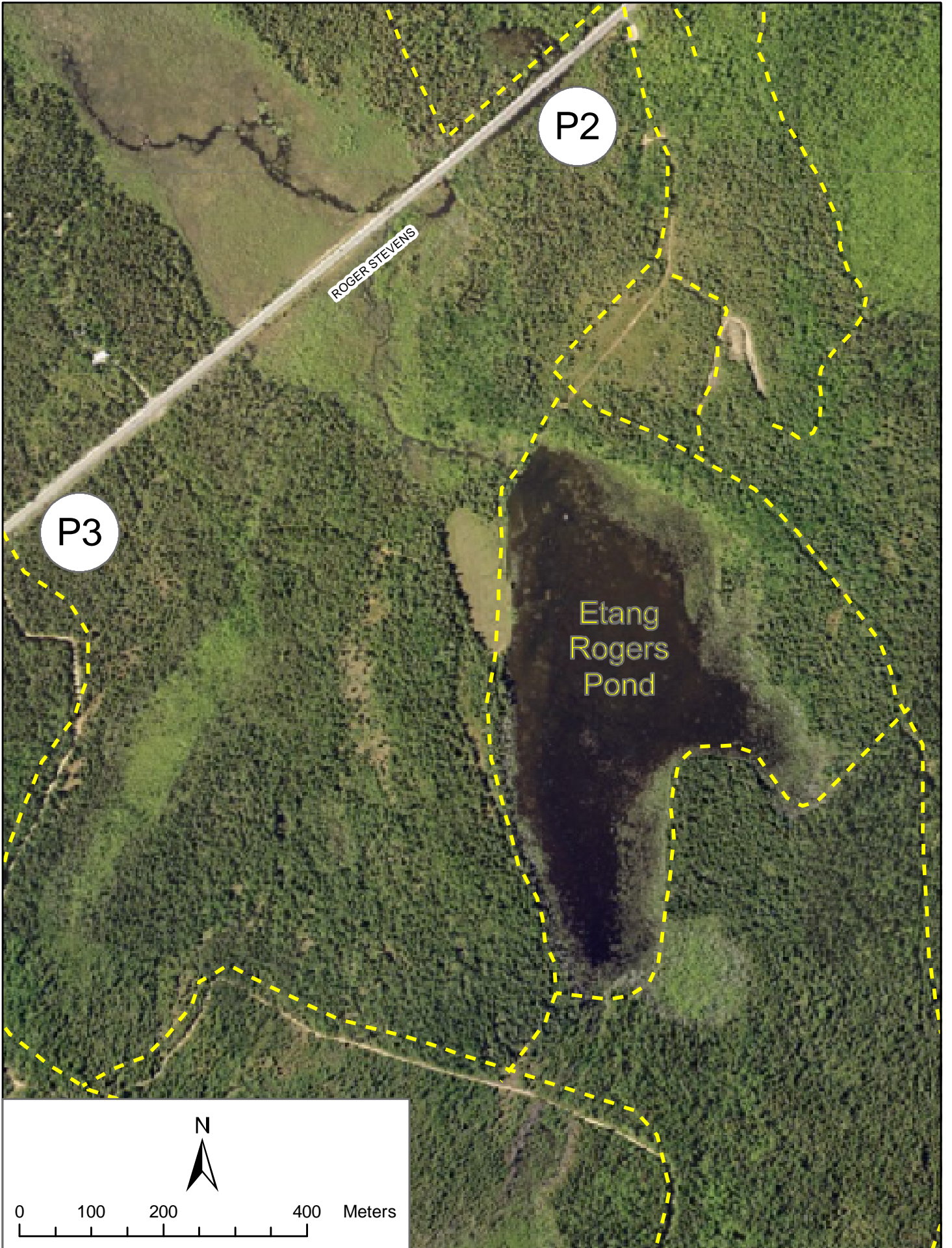


EOMF – State of Eastern Ontario's Forests

The Eastern Ontario Model Forest is a non profit organization reporting and monitoring the state of eastern Ontario's forests. The EOMF is continually raising awareness about the importance of forests in our settled landscape.

www.sof.eomf.on.ca
613-258-8400





History and Success of the Agreement Forest Program in Eastern Ontario The Evolution of the Community Forest

By the late 1800s, the negative environmental impacts of extensive forest removal by early settlement and lumbering activities provided the impetus for reforestation in eastern Ontario. Combined effects of widespread tree removal by settlers and lumbering resulted in conditions unable to sustain either activities. Tree removal and tilling exposed soils to erosion by wind and rain. Nutrient rich topsoils were eroded downhill and exposed the sandy substrate which were picked up by winds and deposited elsewhere. The blowsands were so severe that they changed entire landscapes, covered fences and made roads impassable. The cumulative effects of erosion by wind and rain combined with nutrient export from fire reduced the soil's productivity to the point where agricultural production became unsustainable. Unable to make a living, settlers abandoned their farms and livelihoods. These abandoned lands were assumed by the local municipality. By the end of the 1800s the magnitude of excessive deforestation in eastern Ontario could not be ignored and a report in 1908 by forester, E.J. Zavitz, entitled "Reforestation of Waste Lands in Southern Ontario" initiated a chain of events which would lead to the Agreement Forest Program of Ontario.

The Agreement Forest Program was a long-term agreement under which the Ministry of Natural Resources (formerly the Ministry of Lands and Forests) managed the lands of its partner (e.g. Grenville County) for forestry purposes. Enabled through the Reforestation Act of 1921 (formerly the Counties Reforestation Act of 1911), the modest beginnings of the program focused primarily on the reforestation of the waste lands and soil protection. As the program evolved and forests matured additional features and values of the forests had lead to changes in the management direction of the agreement forests.

The Agreement Forest Program (1922-2001) is accredited for the successful reforestation of many of southern Ontario's wastelands as well as paving the way for increased public involvement in the management of their community's forest. In 1928 Larose Forest, in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, became the first Agreement Forest in eastern Ontario. When the program terminated there were 11 different Agreement Forest partnerships in eastern Ontario totaling over 41,500 hectares.

Details of each agreement varied but shared similar goals of rehabilitating the eroding soils and establishing healthy forests through reforestation. Agreements were usually 20 to 50 years in length and began as soon as the agreement was signed. Special provisions of this program included the following: no charge for the trees used for reforestation, grants for up to 75 percent of the lands and legal fees for the purchase of the lands, lands that received the grant could not be sold without Ministry approval and proceeds from the sale of these lands would be shared equally between the agreement holder and the Ministry of Natural Resources, the amount of land under the agreement could be changed, the costs and revenues from lands managed for recreational purposes were not charged against the forest but were treated as current expenditures and revenue either by the Ministry, the agreement-holder, or shared between the two, extensions to the length of the agreement were permitted.

In the program's infancy, agreements were limited to partnerships with counties and narrowly focused on forestry. However, as the program gained popularity and as society's values changed, the entire scope of the program broadened and become more flexible. By the end of its duration, agreements had been made with conservation authorities, townships, municipalities, a federal department (National Capital Commission), and a private forestry corporation (Domtar Inc.). In 1970, the Forestry Act replaced the 1921 Reforestation Act and gave a new definition to "forestry purposes" which expanded the program's focus to include management considerations for other forest values such as wildlife habitat, recreation, prevention of erosion and the protection of water supplies. In 2001, due to changing business needs within the Ministry of Natural Resources, the agreement forest program was terminated. There were 56 agreements with a total of 128,853 ha of land and a total of 147.5 million trees had been planted (OMNR 2001) since the programs inception. Through negotiations, all debt to the MNR incurred by the partners (e.g. municipalities) for forest management was forgiven and all management responsibilities were handed back to the owners.

Although the Agreement Forest Program had many accomplishments, perhaps its greatest achievement was its legacy of well-managed forests and the foundation for community forestry in Ontario.