

2016 ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACTIVITIES IN RENFREW COUNTY FOREST

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HARVEST

Timber sales for 2016 harvest activities were advertised in November 2015. Successful bids were received for three out of six sales. Areas where no bids were received had access challenges or were dominated by spruce plantations. Harvesting activities took place throughout much of the year, with a break for the spring melt. No major operational issues occurred.

Approximately 12 people worked on the Renfrew County Forest (RCF) in 2016¹, as a result of tendered harvest operations, cutting and skidding or forwarding wood, building roads, processing timber on site, supervising operations, and hauling logs to mills. These workers go above and beyond on many occasions, to ensure that Renfrew County Forests are managed sustainably and forest values are protected.

Two County of Renfrew staff completed all planning (timber cruising, analysis, prescription writing), tree marking, layout, tendering, wood measurement and operations monitoring activities.



Figure 1. Commercial thinning of Afelskie Tract

Table 1. Summary of Harvest Activities for 2016

| Tract | Harvest Type | Harvest Area (ha) | Harvest Volume (m3) | Revenue (\$) |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Afelskie | Red pine thinning | 12.5 | 898 | 35,202.38 |
| Sernoskie | Red pine thinning | 32 | 2,112 | 81,352.27 |
| Simpson's Pit | Poplar Clearcut/ Pine Shelterwood | 42 | 4,556 | 51,594.38 |
| Ruby (forward/ haul only) | Red pine thinning | | 936 | 32,279.41 |
| Total for 2016 | | 86.5 | 8,502 | 200,428.44 |



Figure 2. Landing at Simpson's Pit Tract

SILVICULTURE

A number of multi-year silviculture projects are currently underway in the RCF, to sustain the long-term profitability and diversity of the landbase.

Mechanical site preparation occurred on 10 ha of RCF, where natural red and white pine had been harvested in previous years at Byer's Creek Tract. This is to prepare the ground for planting of red and white pine in coming years.

Chemical site preparation occurred on 25 ha of RCF, where mechanical site preparation had taken place previously, to control regeneration of vigorously growing, undesirable species. This takes place prior to the planting of red and white pine seedlings to increase plantation success and establishment. This area will all be planted in 2017. The seedlings are currently growing in a tree nursery (Figure 3).

Mechanical tending was carried out at the 150th Anniversary Tract, to remove hawthorn competing with red pine planted in 2011.

¹ During active operations, employed by successful bidders.

Table 2. Summary of Silviculture Activities in 2016

| Silvicultural Activity | Tract Name | Area (ha) | Cost (\$) |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------|------------------|
| Mechanical Site Preparation | Byer's Creek | 10 | 4,802.50 |
| Chemical Site Preparation | Crooked Fence, Sernoskie, Byer's Creek | 25 | 8,475.00 |
| Mechanical Tending | 150th Anniversary | 2 | 0* |
| Total | | 37 | 13,277.50 |

*Work was carried out by County of Renfrew Staff

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Opportunities are taken to positively promote sustainable forest management that occurs on RCF, as well as in Renfrew County as a whole, when staff time permits. This year, over 900 people were directly reached through a number of activities.

- Forestry and Economic Development staff partnered with Ontario Wood to talk about forestry and careers in the industry to local high school students at the Options Skilled Trades Fair in May.
- Forestry staff and other local forest industry volunteers led a number of student groups through forestry-based learning experiences at Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre. This included two separate events with 70+ high school students attending each.
- The County was invited to participate on a province-wide advisory committee for broad efforts to increase positive public awareness of sustainable forest management (Forest Ontario's **It Takes a Forest** campaign).
- Forestry Connects in Renfrew County took place during National Forest Week in September. County forestry staff co-organized the event with Forests Ontario, and reached over 45 students and teachers for in-depth learning about forestry.
- Several classroom visits occurred as part of Forest Ontario's "Forestry in the Classroom" program. Over 140 students were reached.
- Presentations were given at conferences and events on topics including species at risk, communicating about forestry, and invasive plants/insects/diseases.
- Feedback on several forest-related policies was submitted, including federal recovery strategies for species at risk, provincial forest management guides, and FSC Certification standards revision.

OTHER

The Draft 2017-2026 Forest Management Plan for the Renfrew County Forest was presented to and accepted by the Development & Property Committee and County Council. A 30-day public review occurred and the final version of the plan will be approved in February 2017.

Invasive species continue to be a concern for forest health in Renfrew County. Beech bark scale (the precursor to Beech Bark Disease) was observed in several tracts. Emerald ash borer (EAB) has not yet been found in any RCF Tracts, but was confirmed to be travelling further up the Highway 17 and 60 corridors. A status report was prepared and distributed to municipalities and posted on the County website.

Support was provided to municipalities upon request. A general tree assessment and butternut health assessment was completed for the Township of Greater Madawaska, information was provided to the Town of Deep River on the Town's 2013-2023 Forest Management Plan, and high-level forest assessments were done for two properties owned by the Town of Renfrew.



Figure 3. Future White Pine Seedlings for RCF



Figure 4. Options Skilled Trades Fair



Figure 5. Hanging an EAB Trap