

Sustainable Forest Cover in Chatham-Kent

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

July, 2013
Chatham, Ontario



Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	4
Stakeholder Workshops # 1	9
Participants' Current Perceptions	10
Advantages of Sustainable Forest Cover in Chatham-Kent	13
Challenges of Sustainable Forest Cover in Chatham-Kent	16
Perception of the Future	20
Consequences of Inaction	22
Stakeholder Workshops # 2	25
Key Areas of Focus	26
SMART Actions – Agricultural Working Group	27
SMART Actions – Pro Bylaw Group	30
Crystallized Recommendations in Each Area of Focus	35
Stakeholder Workshops # 3	38
Details of Actions Including Potential Leads	39
Bylaw Evaluation	45
Joint Stakeholder Workshop	47
Evaluating Policy of Agricultural Working Group	48
Evaluating Bylaw of Pro Bylaw Working Group	50

	Page
Public Meeting Input	54
Prioritized Key Areas of Focus	54
Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	54
Stakeholder Engagement and Education	58
Availability of Resources	59
Research Identification and Analysis	61
Program and Practices Development or Expansion	62
Property Rights	63
Value of Forest Cover and Trees	65
Impressions of Our Community of Chatham Kent	67
Species at Risk	69
Your Opinion of the Perspective of Others	69
Your Advice to Chatham-Kent Council	74

Executive Summary

Key stakeholders of the Chatham-Kent community were engaged in a process to address the issues around sustainable forest cover for Chatham-Kent. Bryan Boyle and Associates facilitated several highly interactive sessions designed to receive and discuss input and develop an action plan relating to sustainable forest cover for Chatham-Kent. The initial steps within the facilitated process included three workshops with a working group comprised of representatives from the Chatham-Kent farm organizations and three workshops with a working group of pro-bylaw community members. Results and progress from each of these meetings were shared regularly between the groups. The three sets of individual working group meetings were followed by a joint meeting with both groups where both their perspectives and proposed solutions were shared. Three public meetings were held in Chatham, Wallaceburg and Ridgetown to solicit public input into the research available and the solutions proposed by both working groups.

Although there was considerable common ground between both working groups, one of the main challenges was the philosophical divergence between "landowner rights" and actions for the "public good."

At the first set of individual workshops, participants' initial perceptions were somewhat polarized. The agricultural working group tended to favour the concept that conservation of natural resources in Chatham-Kent was well coordinated and effective with viable conservation practices and programs providing strong value to the Chatham-Kent community. The pro-bylaw working group tended towards the other end of the scale citing uncoordinated, ineffective or very limited conservation practices and programs providing limited value to the Chatham-Kent community.

When asked to identify the positive features or advantages of sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent, both working groups readily identified many factors which could be grouped into environmental, economic, social and health benefits. Current challenges or negative features about a sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent were also addressed. The approach to addressing sustainable forest cover emerged as the greatest challenge as opposed to any major negative environmental, economic or social and health impacts.

Realizing that there were many different perspectives within the entire Chatham-Kent community, both working groups identified their assessment of the perspectives held by the following key players within the community: Chatham-Kent Councillors, the general public, active farmers, rural non-farm

residents, environmental advocates, the Ontario government, as well as government and municipality staff. This proved to be a very meaningful activity since any viable solution to the issue must take all of these perspectives into consideration.

To help set the stage for their viable solutions, both working groups addressed their perception of what the agricultural sector and land holding in Chatham-Kent would feature five years from now. Fewer and larger farms, advanced technology and additional social pressure were common themes. When addressing the features of the entire Chatham-Kent community in five years, shifting demographics to an aging population with stagnant growth, diverse agriculture as the base of the local economy, greater social support and services needs and challenges to aging infrastructure emerged as features.

When asked to consider the consequences of continuing along the current path and approaches to sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent without taking any innovative or proactive approaches, the agricultural organizations working group tended towards the status quo as being acceptable whereas the pro-bylaw working group expressed major concerns in the areas of environmental, economic and social and health implications.

At the second set of individual meetings, the groups worked diligently to build on the strengths, reduce or eliminate the challenges and avoid the consequences of inaction that they had previously identified. Throughout this workshop, they maintained their awareness of the trends within the agricultural and general community as well as the perspectives of the many and varied stakeholders in Chatham-Kent.

The two working groups identified six key areas of focus. They prioritized which areas of focus would have the most impact to assure sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent. There was strong mutual support in both groups for four key areas, namely:

- 1) program or practices development or expansion
- 2) stakeholder engagement and education
- 3) availability of resources
- 4) research identification and analysis

There was considerable divergence in the two other key areas of focus. Property rights were a high priority for the agricultural organization working group and a low priority for the pro-bylaw working group. Legislation, zoning, bylaw and protocols topped the priority list for the pro-bylaw working group but was a lower priority for the agricultural organization working group.

Both groups engaged in action planning by developing SMART actions to help move toward a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent. These actions were designed to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. The following are examples of SMART actions developed within each of the areas of focus. The full range of actions suggested is included in the body of this report.

Programs and Practices - Initiate a forest management program featuring agroforestry, ecological planning, forest cover protection, windbreaks, etc. This could be based on coordinating existing programs or creating new and improved programs

Stakeholder Engagement and Education - Educate woodlot owners as well as non-farming rural residents about the quality of their woodlot resource, forestry practices and normal farming practices.

Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols - Draft a potential conservation bylaw for Chatham-Kent Council that is comprehensive, legally concise, ensures biological sustainability and follows good forestry practices.

Property Rights - All landowners should investigate and obtain crown land patents.

Availability of Resources (Human, Financial, etc.) - Assess the current budget and staffing situation. Access financing that is available through many levels of government and non-government organization programs. Secure commitment by Council and higher levels of government to provide resources for incentive programs and enforcement.

Research Identification and Analysis - Acquire independent and knowledgeable research that measures the changing tree cover in Chatham-Kent. Identify both short and long-term trends and deliver the information in understandable terms.

At the third set of independent meetings, each working group developed further details around their key recommendations in their action plan. They addressed the following questions:

What specific action should be undertaken relating to this recommendation?

Why is this important for a sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent?

Who should be responsible for taking the lead on this action?

When is the suggested timing for the implementation of this action?

Where should this action take place?

The crystallized recommendations in each key area are listed in the main report. Comparison of the two working groups' approaches in their recommendations shows that there is a great deal of commonality. One major difference continued to be that the agricultural organization working group's approach is based on a strategy with no bylaw and the pro-bylaw

working group emphasized that a bylaw is a key component of their solution to the issue of sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent.

At the joint meeting of the two working groups, the participants highlighted the features of the agricultural organizations working group's proposed strategy and pro-bylaw working group's proposed bylaw. Through small group discussion and feedback from their colleagues, they were able to provide meaningful input into the material being prepared for the public meetings and the recommendations to Chatham-Kent Council. Although they do not endorse the concept of a bylaw, the agricultural organization working group took the opportunity to make recommendations to the proposed bylaw.

Whenever any changes were proposed to the approach of either working group, the entire joint group evaluated them for both merits and concerns. This led to a better understanding of the various perspectives by all of the participants.

In terms of next steps, Tom Beaton of Chatham-Kent staff indicated that the research results and Geographic Information System (GIS) results would be available shortly and would be circulated to the working groups for their information. Staff will be working on correlating all the workshop material and information proposed by the two working groups, as well as the research to make a recommendation to Council. Tom indicated that public meetings would be held July 9th at the Thames Campus in Chatham, July 10th at the Youth Centre in Ridgetown and July 11th at the arena in Wallaceburg. The target is to have a recommendation ready for the Chatham-Kent Council Committee of the Whole meeting. Results and recommendations from that meeting would then be discussed and voted on at the Chatham-Kent Council meeting in September.

The six separate workshops and one joint meeting of the two working groups relating to sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent were productive events, where the participants were very engaged. Through their valued input, participants took an important step in their quest for a sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent.

Three public open houses were held in Chatham, Wallaceburg and Ridgetown to engage and get feedback from over two hundred interested stakeholders who attended. Display boards with summarized information relating to forest cover in Chatham-Kent were distributed around the room. Participants were encouraged to read the material and discuss their views with Chatham-Kent staff hosting the event. Each participant was

offered a form to provide written comments and prioritize which of the six key areas of focus that had been identified by the two working groups that they felt would have the most impact to assure sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent. Legislation, zoning, bylaw and protocols emerged as the highest priority by a large margin. Stakeholder engagement and education was a clear second priority. Availability of resources and research identification and analysis scored very similarly in the mid-range of priorities. Program or practices development or expansion was the next priority and property rights emerged as the lowest priority.

In their written comments, there were supportive comments and concerns or challenges identified in the six key areas of focus as well as in several general areas. The point that it is imperative that a Chatham-Kent tree cutting and conservation bylaw be passed as soon as possible was noted by 156 participants while 29 participants indicated that a tree cutting and conservation bylaw should never be implemented in Chatham-Kent. There was considerable discussion about the uniqueness of Chatham-Kent, including the impressions of our community of Chatham-Kent. Stakeholder comments strongly endorsed stakeholder engagement and education. In the area of availability of resources preferred tax rates or even no taxation assessed on woodlot acreage was a popular option in the stakeholder feedback. The importance of utilizing sound scientific research was reflected in several comments. Participants highlighted several programs or practices that they felt should be developed or expanding including a policy relating to sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent. Property rights generated many and varied perspectives. Some participants felt that property rights was the key issue relating to sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent while an even stronger number felt that there have always been laws restricting what people can do with their property in order to protect the rights of the community as a whole. The value of forest cover and trees was emphasized by many stakeholders while others felt that Chatham-Kent woodlots were of limited value due to the challenges they face, especially when compared to agricultural crops. Participants freely offered their opinions of the perspective of others relating to the forest cover issue. Many participants also provided some direct advice to Chatham-Kent Council, as they progress towards a decision relating to forest cover in Chatham-Kent.

It was obvious by the strong attendance at the public open houses and the thoughtful comments that many stakeholders are truly committed to a viable solution to the sustainable forest cover issue that is workable for the entire Chatham-Kent community.

CK Agricultural Stakeholders and Pro-Bylaw Stakeholders Workshops #1

Location, Chatham Municipal Buildings

May 21 and 24, 2013: Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Setting the Stage

Reconfirmed the process:

- each of two groups with different perspectives has 3 separate meetings
- one joint meeting to share/combine input and propose specific actions re: a sustainable forest cover strategy for CK
- three public meetings will be held in different areas of CK
- one joint meeting to finalize product for CK Council

Purpose of the Workshop Sessions

To receive and discuss input relating to issues around a sustainable forest cover strategy and action plan for Chatham-Kent.

Format

Today: **What?** (*Observations*)
So What? (*Meaning, Reflections*)

Next Meeting: **Now What?** (*Applications, Actions*)

Opening Session

Sharing our skills from other situations:

Give your name, location, stakeholders that you are representing and:

What is one interest that you have outside of your work or business and how does it contribute to these session's efforts to assure a strong and viable strategy and action plan for sustainable forest cover in Chatham-Kent?

Each participant introduced their table partner and shared a wide range of skills and experiences that were very transferable to contribute to today's team effort to help create a strong and viable strategy and action plan.

What? (Observations)

Presentation of research being completed on behalf of Chatham-Kent by University of Guelph at:

Agriculture Meeting:

Laura Zettler, Epidemiologist, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Pro-Bylaw Meeting:

Nicole Dupuis, Public Health, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Participants' Perceptions

What are the first one or two words that come to your mind when you hear "A sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent?"

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timber production • Forest retention • Windbreaks, put the trees where we need them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental destruction
Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictive bylaw • Bylaw - no way • Government intervention • Property rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the clear cutting immediately (x2) • Includes an effective bylaw
Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary policy • Partnership between municipality and farmers • Vital • Finally • Ability to have financially sustainable agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Protection • Great • Health Balance • Ecology • Conservation • Long overdue • Grandchildren • Animals / Wildlife

Current Perceptions of Conservation in CK

On the ballots that are numbered from 1 to 30, please give an indication of the number that you feel most accurately describes the current status of conservation of natural resources in the whole community of Chatham-Kent.

#30 = "Top of our Game"... Well-coordinated, effective and viable conservation practices and programs providing strong value to the Chatham-Kent community

#1 = "Dead in the water"...Uncoordinated, ineffective or very limited conservation practices and programs, providing very little value to the Chatham-Kent community

(See graph on Page 12)

Our Current Perceptions of Conservation of Natural Resources in Chatham Kent

30 A A
 29
 28
 27
 26
 25 A A
 24
 23
 22
 21 A
 20 A PB
 19
 18
 17
 16
 15
 14
 13
 12
 11
 10 PB PB
 9
 8 PB
 7
 6
 5 A PB PB PB
 4 PB PB
 3 A PB
 2
 1

Average A (Agriculture) = 19.9
Average PB (Pro-Bylaw) = 7.4

Scale: 30 = Top of our Game
 1= Dead in the Water

What are the current positive features or advantages that pop out at you when you think about a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent; opportunities on which we can build?

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term sustainability, for centuries • Windbreaks • Holds snow • Predictable cover for wildlife • Wildlife • Diversity of tree species • Improves visual appearance and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Wildlife habitat (x2) • Water quality • Soil quality • Balance of land-use • Climate mitigation • Decrease negative image of how CK treats the environment • Cleans and cools water • Habitat for pollinators
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice to generate revenue, short or long term • Make an educated decision on possible preservation or removal • Educate property owners on the value of the woodlot and windbreaks • Find funding to help pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction of people who want to live here • A mentality outside of money and profit (big picture) • Population retention • Sustainability i.e. economic, environmental and health (x2) • Profitable to both landowner in the public
Social & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowner buy-in • Democracy • Owner satisfaction • Room for all • Use media to promote the positives of the actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life (x2) • Public image • Positive mental health • Healthy protection for future generations • Supportive of OFA, ÖMAF and U of G policies • A good balance in our community for residential and farm

Now answer that same question (current positive features or advantages of a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent) from the perspective of these members of the Chatham-Kent community:

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
CK Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation over confrontation • Cost factor • More woodlots equal fewer phone calls • Political expediency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working towards a long-term strategy with input from both sides • Improves population retention • Better air quality • If I sit on the fence maybe no one will notice
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks good from the road • Warm and fuzzy feeling • Apathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps make CK attractive for growth • Community benefits, not just thinking of the individual • Hunting and recreation (many have agreements with landowners to use bush) • Need protection for future generations • Council needs to take positive action • More tree cover means a more appealing community and a better general perception of CK • A what? I haven't a clue. Did the Leafs win?
Active Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property rights • Fueling the bio economy • Takes the woodlot out of the equation during a land sale • Habitat for beneficial insects • Manage my farm to the best possible use • Save the soil through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable harvest of trees for added income • Family use and enjoyment • Firewood for woodstoves with proper forest management (x2) • Appreciation of wildlife (not just farm pests) • Potential source of revenue (x2)

	<p>windbreaks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed woodlots • We put the trees in the windbreak where they are most beneficial to all • Our choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunting and exploring (x2) • Contribute to the long-term future of the planet • Family legacy • Maple syrup production • Mental health
Rural Non-farm Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life • Diverse landscape • Increase forest cover and retain • My neighbor is killing the environment • Impacts my view • My view of the landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's happening is awful. "They" have to stop it! • Less conflict • Would stop the sand from blowing in the windows, our eyes and children's' faces • Would respect the rural resident who lives around farm fields and bushes • We love trees • Mental health more positive • Predictable surroundings • Stable property values
Environmental Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of important biodiversity • Respects the natural environment • Stop the removal of forests • Control what farmers do • Society owns the forest • I'm the expert, you know nothing, I'll tell you what to do and when 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CK is losing too much tree cover
Ontario Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expands government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes CK look less of an outlier in the province • Brings CK line with the rest of the province • Keeping with provincial mandate/acts/goals • It is a municipal issue. We give them the power they need to act on it • We gave the municipalities

		the power to deal with the issue in 2001. Let them deal with it.
Government & Municipality Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making order out of chaos • Allows farmers to plan for the future • Pleases the public • For future generations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal and provincial regulations would be in-step • Long-range planning would be possible • Easier budgeting • Less conflict

What are the current challenges or negative features about a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent...things that must be addressed for the strategy to be effective?

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that more woodlots is better, windbreaks may be more beneficial • Inability to convert poor woodlot to crop • Inabilities to self-manage woodlot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat fragmentation
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible economic costs • Emerald ash borer, do I remove it and at what cost • Land value, it's my property • Who is going to pay, everyone or just a few landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Short-term cost or revenue loss • Money is trumping the greater good (can we all think outside of profit?) • Tax incentives
Social & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Won't satisfy extreme views • Punishes the farmers and landowners that have no intention of clear cutting • May make farmers hate their woodlots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowner opposition • "Big Ag", absentee landowners, let someone else do it • Fewer individual rights, more community and global responsibility • Put the issue off, let our

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention to property rights • Too much red tape, too many rules. 	<p>kids fix it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict over enforcement (x2) • Attitudes may not change • Individual interests are a detriment to the rest of the community (can we encourage them to think of more than themselves) • Will there be compliance (x2) • Farmer buy-in • Understanding of the importance • CK buy-in, seeing the big picture • Can those opposing see that this is best for their future too (as they live here) • Conflict re: uptake • Negative image of "tree huggers" • Blame placed on environmentalists or pro-bylaw group • Counter Ontario Landowners Association disagreement or extremism • CK Council not convinced of the value • Some resistance to change • Start-up costs for enforcement
--	---	---

Now answer that same question (current negative features or challenges of a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent) from the perspective of these members of the Chatham-Kent Community:

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
CK Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will this cost (x2) • What's so great about a forest anyway? • Could upset landowners and farmers who own 84 per cent of the forests • Lawsuits • Non-compliance • Impossible to balance rural versus urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Votes for and against • We don't need one. Woodlots have no value and are 40% dead anyway • What's an ecosystem?
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding cost • Compliance to strategy • Are my taxes going up to pay for this (x2) • Losing our rights • May increase mosquitoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't trust the government • We don't like overregulation • How much will this cost me? • Are the farmers getting any extra benefits? • Would this increase my taxes? • We think farmers are too important to anger some of them • Can CK Council be leaders on this issue? • No downside, only upside
Active Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to lose control over land • Won't placate extremists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced available crop land • Losing out on agricultural income • Taxes on non-productive land • Telling me what to do with my land • Where are robins born? • I need to feed the world • What if I need more workable acres in the future to make ends meet? • Just lost \$15,000 per acre

		<p>of potential land values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hate government regulation, but I'm okay with government compensation • Trees are weeds • The value of my land won't go up, so no new tractor
Rural Non-farm Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No teeth • May still lose cosmetic view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbour relations • Neighbours are blaming me • Mosquitoes • Garden browsed by deer • Proximity to hunting
Environmental Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners do not know how to manage woodlots • Who pays the salary to enforce conservation • Risk of not achieving objectives of protecting the forest • Watered down like CK's Greening Strategy • No control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without a policy there would be more cutting tree loss
Ontario Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontented parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will doing what is right cost me votes? • How will this be reflected in future elections • Will we get an outcry to deal with from Ontario Landowners Association and farmers, where the opposition will step in? • What downside?
Government & Municipality Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to deliver what bosses want and still satisfy the landowners, with no extra budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work in enforcement • Where does the money for enforcement come from? • More responsibility for the same number of staff

Opportunity to Add Further Observations

1) Agricultural Group

- Communication is needed, not discord
- Farmers are taking the brunt of the blame, bugs doing damage to forests were imported by others
- Greening Policy potential impacts were unknown because of limited funding
- Due to insect damage, farm wood lots may not be well-managed
- A good strategy will help the community reach its goals by being supportive, voluntary and utilizing Growing Forward 2 federal funding
- Where we move forward from here is critically important
- Chatham-Kent is unique, clear cutting land is not unethical
- There are many examples of good resource management in Chatham-Kent

2) Pro-Bylaw Group

- Lack of appreciation of our biodiversity and regeneration ability
- All farmers are not of the same opinion
- This is not a rural versus urban issue
- Sustainable systems are critical
- There is an outside force in ownership by absentee landowners
- Local diversity unrealized potential could be lost
- Chatham-Kent’s reputation is important, there is evidence of habitat destruction and we don't want to be seen as a negative example
- Chatham-Kent feeds the world, is this real or not?

“Crystal Ball View” of the Future

Imagine we are sitting here at these same tables in May, 2018 (five years from now). Describe the current features of the agricultural sector and landholding in Chatham-Kent.

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer and bigger farms (x5) • Farms still owned and operated by local farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More foreign ownership in agriculture • Much more corporate ownership

	<p>families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big agriculture • More rented land and absentee landowners • Little change from now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landholding will be on a much larger scale • Larger farms, fewer farmers, further decline in rural population • Larger corporate farming and fewer family farms • With the bylaw, no great change in the natural landscape • More organic
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More technology to better manage inputs • GPS systems need open fields 	
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More demand to provide food • Attempts to curb phosphate run up to the Lake Erie by government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More demand to provide food • Evolving positive environmentalism and ecological awareness • More environmental advocates among the agriculture sector

Imagine we are sitting here at these same tables in May, 2018 (five years from now). Describe the current features of the entire Chatham-Kent community.

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagnant or lower population (x3) • Older population (x3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More immigrant population • More migrant workers • Older population, fewer children • Aging population (x2) • Fewer younger families living in the CK • Greater cultural diversity
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse agriculture, still number one industry (x2) • More jobs from small to medium-size businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More diversified growth in agriculture • More foreign investment • Less dynamic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower taxes • Limited employment so people move away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will we be able to attract more than just recently immigrated?
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater health needs • Fewer agricultural votes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less social support and services • Standard of living decline across the demographics • Quality-of-life improvement
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rundown towns, roads etc. • More windmills • More crows 	

So What? ...Reflections

What are the consequences of continuing along the current path and strategies without taking innovative or proactive approaches?

	Agricultural Group	Pro-Bylaw Group
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution will continue • Farmers will continue to care for the land • A thousand acres clear-cut per year for 20 years equals 20,000 acres gone • Realistically little or no change to the status quo • No impact on the environment • More bad bush would be removed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing loss of our natural heritage • Water and air quality worsens • An eventual denuded landscape (except for public lands) • Species loss of both flora and fauna • Population loss • More algae bloom due to reduced water quality more chemical runoff • Migratory species will be affected • "Dirty 30s" relived • Decline in biodiversity, air and soil water quality, sequestration and carbon dioxide capacity and pollinators

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued decrease in water quality • Negative impact on wildlife and ecological diversity (x2)
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower residential tax base due to lower rural property values • Economically agriculture is still sustainable • Economically doing nothing will not cause any problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow erosion and the decrease in soil quality will impact agriculture financially • The cost to remedy a problem always rises quicker as time goes on, always cheaper to fix things up early • Lack of in migration except for retirees seeking low home values • Population stagnation means declining tax base and increase in agricultural taxation • Less potential revenue • Decrease in land values in agriculture • Limits on diversity • Will be too expensive to fix at a later date especially with declining population base • Economic diversity needed in land-use (woodlots can actually profit when challenges in the market come for workable land and cyclical commodity prices) • Do what's proper when things are good because it's hard to make changes in times of bad economics • Population, investment and housing market decline from the negative perceptions of CK • Fewer people wishing to move to CK as an

		unattractive community, not just aesthetics
Social & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low appreciation for nature by our youth more pressure on council • Sharper divide between rural and urban • Less political support for farmers • May have more anger in both pro-and anti-groups • Hard feelings, no winners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air and water quality impacts health and mental health link to quality-of-life • Research in the United States shows higher cancer rates with higher percentage of agricultural land-use, so diversity is desirable • Nature deficiency disorder in children • Continued poor health statistics for CK • Resentment towards those degrading the environment • Lack of family appeal • Decline in quality of life and mental health • Diminished aesthetic value • Increased health anomalies • Less partnership with Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority and Stewardship Kent if no protection for projects

CK Agricultural and Pro Bylaw Stakeholders

Workshops # 2

Park Street Business Centre, 25 Creek Road, Chatham

May 28 and 29, 2013: Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Welcome and Setting the Stage

Review of Workshops #1, May 21 and 24 at CK Municipal Office

Purpose of the Session

To identify and prioritize the key areas of focus for a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent and develop an action plan to focus on those priority issues.

Format

Last Meeting – May 21 and 24: **What?** (*Observations*)

So What? (*Meaning, Reflections*)

Today: **Now What?** (*Applications, Actions*)

Now What? : Actions

We built on the good work that participants did at their May 21 and 24 meetings. Our goal was to build on the strengths, reduce or eliminate the negatives or challenges and avoid the consequences of inaction. Throughout all this, we maintained our awareness of the trends within our agricultural and general community as well as the perspectives of the many and varied stakeholders in Chatham-Kent.

Listed below are some potential Key Areas of Focus. They were suggested or confirmed and then prioritized by the participants.

Prioritization Method: Each participant had 100 points to allocate to these areas of focus that they had identified or confirmed. On the ballot beside each number each participant indicated the number of points they would give each area of focus (must be between 0 & 40 in multiples of 5).

Agricultural Stakeholders Perspective:

Rank	Key Area of Focus	Total Score
1 st	Program or Practices Development or Expansion	175
2 nd	Property Rights	155
3 rd	Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	115
3 rd	Stakeholder Engagement and Education	115
5 th	Availability of Resources (Human, Capital etc.)	70
5 th	Research Identification and Analysis	70

Pro Bylaw Stakeholders Perspective:

Rank	Key Area of Focus	Total Score
1 st	Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	265
2 nd	Program or Practices Development or Expansion	130
2 nd	Availability of Resources (Human, Capital etc.)	130
4 th	Research Identification and Analysis	115
5 th	Stakeholder Engagement and Education	70
6 th	Property Rights	50

Action Planning (Setting the Stage)

SMART explanation and sample scenarios (*Table Discussions*)
(*Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely*)

SMART Actions

What SMART steps will help us to move toward a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent?

These were designed to build on our strengths, reduce or eliminate our challenges, and keep in mind the consequences of inaction.

The table groups identified the following SMART actions including their supporting information.

Agricultural Working Group's SMART Ideas:

A. Programs and Practices

A.1

S - Coordinate existing programs i.e. EFP, LTVCA, MFTIP, etc.

M - How will these programs help farmers and what are the potential gaps or overlap

A - Will farmers and landowners use these programs to keep or enhance forest cover?

R - These plans and programs already exist so making use of them is realistic

T - Identify program deadlines

A.2

S - Initiate a forest management program featuring agroforestry, ecological planning, forest cover protection, windbreaks, etc.

M - Protection or enhancement of forest cover, participation, money available to pay for the program

A - If Council votes for it, based on a business plan outlining costs

R - Simple, proactive, focused

T - ASAP, depends on Council

A.3

S - Clear Creek Forest, LTVCA, Ducks Unlimited, Conservation Kent, GF 2, etc.

M - Read the papers

A - Look at the number of wildlife in my cornfield; no shortage of program usage

R - Farmers love incentives, but hate regulations

T - Strike while the iron is hot

A.4

Create new and improved programs with the following features:

- Utilize GF 2 and EFP to help fund woodlot and wetland rehabilitation and protection
- Convert marginal croplands to conservation uses
- Encourage or develop land conservation trusts
- Encourage cooperation between community groups and landowners to establish conservation projects

A.5

Allow woodlot severances

B. Property Rights

B.1

S - Assure the right to make a reasonable return on agricultural investment and decisions; work with all levels of government with constructive solutions

M - Stats Canada assessment value, MPAC

A - Democratic, promotes strategy instead of policy; cooperation not confrontation, education is key

R - Develop a working strategy; Rondeau Watershed is strong local success example

T - Awareness of current working projects

B.2

S - Investigate and attain Crown Land Patent

M - Does it relate to forest or trees? i.e. express grant

A - Get a copy of the Crown Land Patent

R - Courts recognize express grants; Chatham-Kent lawyer can decipher and give a professional opinion

T - Takes one year to get a crown land patent

B.3

Implement a strategy respecting property rights and implement land conservation protocols, encouraging landowner buy-in

C. Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols

C.1

S - Place restriction on forest clearing

M - Follow provincial guidelines for the definition of woodlot, start with a base area and update the area on an annual basis

A - This is achievable. We have GIS in place. The bylaw should have the "teeth" to enforce.

R - If cost effective, details may to be determined; if it accommodates other concerns

T - Could have a proposed bylaw ready by August deadline

C.2

S - Assure that "the carrot works better than the stick"; no mandatory Bylaw; human nature favours voluntary involvement

- M** - Essex example; Ottawa, Lambton with more restrictions; Dufferin recently rescinded because of increased complexity and restrictiveness. Is it legal; cost of permits; rural/ urban divide
- A** - Department of Fisheries and Oceans withdrew from rural drains. Clear Creek Forest
- R** - One nation under indictment; ignorance of the law is becoming a Defense; 10 Commandments have become 10 million regulations
- T** - Government does not move at the speed of the economy or pest invasions

D. Stakeholder Engagement and Education

D.1

- S** - Educate woodlot owners (both long-term and new, short term) as well as non-farming rural residents on quality of their woodlot resource, forestry practices and normal farming practices
- M** - Level of awareness
- A** - Will the target clients show up for these education programs? i.e. preaching to the converted
- R** - Limited
- T** - Not a short-term solution

D.2

Develop improved stakeholder engagement with the following features:

- Publicize funding opportunities
- Provide resource staff for engagement and education
- Publicize success stories
- Provide accurate information

E. Availability of Resources (Human, Financial, etc.)

E.1

- S** - Access financing that is available through many levels of government and NGO programs that currently existing; avoid the financial burden of the bylaw; is there a hiring freeze; no local money available
- M** - Essex example, no bylaw= more trees; access to information and local representatives to make deputations
- A** - Look at the Environmental Farm Plan example
- R** - Just do it: Ducks Unlimited, Lambton Rural group, windbreaks from the 70's, farm stewardship
- T** - Ongoing, GF 2 launch coming soon

E.2

Access funding from land trusts, conservation groups, private individuals, industry as well as government funding through EFP and GF 2. Utilize the guidance and expertise of Ministry of Natural Resources and conservation authorities. Encourage voluntary participation both financially and physically

F. Research Identification and Analysis

F.1

S - Accurately measure today's forest cover for a starting point

M - Maps, summaries of hectares of wood lots based on criteria

A - Utilizing GPS and satellite maps

R - A snapshot of our time using an agreed standard of forest cover management

T - It will be ready by August and updating will need to be continued

F.2

S - Analyze current research available as there is no shortage of studies; use rational and science-based discussion versus emotional

M - By satellites with great accuracy and MNR

A - No shortage of information applied to the CK issue

R - CK has a unique climate, soils, infrastructure and economy

T - 2003 déjà vu

F.3

Acquire independent and knowledgeable research measuring the changing tree cover over the long term, identify trends both short and long-term, deliver the information in understandable terms

Pro Bylaw Working Group's SMART Ideas:

A. Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols

A.1

A bylaw should be drafted for Chatham-Kent Council by mid-August with the following features:

- legally concise and clear
- comprehensive policy
- ensures biological sustainability
- follows good forestry practices
- based on basal area

- legal protection for forest stands greater than 0.2 ha
- partnerships with registered foresters
- exemptions that are fair but do not nullify the objective of the bylaw
- exemption permits at no cost to the landowner
- ability to sever wood lots with restrictions
- effective enforcement
- timely reviews

A.2

Create a bylaw by mid-August using good forest management practices as supported by OMAF and OFA. Don't reinvent the wheel, as there are many good bylaws in other counties, so material already in place that could be used as a template.

A.3

Educate Council as there are too many misconceptions

A.4

Create a bylaw that must:

- address long-term sustainability and the future generations in our municipality
- have enforcement and appropriate penalties for noncompliance
- accomplish the goal of preserving forest cover in preventing further destruction
- reflect the needs of the community as a whole (majority interest)

B. Programs and Practices

B.1

For existing programs, improve the awareness of the public, municipal government and stakeholders. The program should include the following features:

- accessible, easy to apply for and participate in
- educational component to show how benefits exist in conservation
- supportive of resource groups like University of Guelph, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, etc.

B.2

Create programs that engage partners and model successful programs from other jurisdictions (even the other countries)

- B.3
Recommend update of provincial incentive programs i.e. EFP, MFTIP, etc.
- B.4
Create demonstration plots as a model of best management practices
- B.5
Promote windbreaks through demonstration plots, research and data collection and municipal incentives
- B.6
Utilize planting programs through Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) and other conservation authorities
- B.7
Develop “Environmental Goods and Services” program
- B.8
Promote Carolinian Canada workshops
- B.9
Hire a forester/educator for woodlot stewardship in Chatham-Kent. Individual would work with LTVCA and SCRCA on broadening plantings. They would provide stewardship education in the broader community.

C. Availability of Resources (Human, Financial, etc.)

- C.1
Assess current budget and staffing situation. Secure a commitment by Council and higher government to provide the resources for incentive Programs, i.e. woodland tax elimination, etc. as well as for enforcement. Some incentive programs require fewer resources than others so try to focus on programs that are simple, long-standing and easy to administer.
- C.2
Support the exploration of external funding opportunities
- C.3
Provide compensation for such areas as land taxes on forest lands, land stewardship recognition, promotion and support of volunteerism

C.4

Make forestry knowledge a prerequisite for some new CK staff

C.5

Create a differential tax rate based on stewardship

C.6

Utilize staffing of existing programs

D. Stakeholder Engagement and Education

D.1

Include input from public open houses

D.2

Transparency of stakeholders (Who are they/we?)

D.3

Promote programs to engage landowners

D.4

Engage stakeholders to assure:

- equal opportunities for input
- various opinions within stakeholder groups are addressed and documented for accurate assessment
- consultation is well in advance of action by Council
- proper documentation of input
- fully engage the public as stakeholders
- utilization of social media for engagement, education and organization of stakeholders

D.5

When engaging and educating stakeholders keep these perspectives in mind:

- there are too many myths being presented as facts; science does not support the myths
- at the end of the day you cannot make everyone happy
- it comes down to what is needed and important for the greater good
- sometimes laws are needed to protect people from their actions in regards to long-term sustainability

E. Research Identification and Analysis

E.1

Data collection for research purposes should have the following features:

- analyze non-biased data that is factual
- data collected by a reputable researcher
- understand where the numbers came from and what parameters were used
- understand that data may be unavailable to make certain direct correlations
- consider global implications
- data should be collected and analysis complete by mid-June with no delays

E.2

Apply the numbers from research that has been done on forest cover requirements and move Chatham-Kent in a positive direction through legislation and initiatives.

E.3

Identify accurate tree coverage data. Remember the bigger picture and think of implications outside Chatham-Kent and how activities within Chatham-Kent affects others outside of our municipal boundaries.

E.4

Use past research to compare to present data and support funding applications.

E.5

Ensure that the research sources are strong and the project is on-target for the ultimate goal. Interact with other agencies doing research and ensure no duplication.

E.6

Simplify the research results for public review and understanding.

F. Property Rights

F.1

Consider property rights in the bylaw to get a fair balance of policy but put community responsibility before property rights. Beware of Ontario Landowners Association extremism.

F.2

Establish a review board composed of volunteers from the community for exemption applications.

F.3

Remember that civil society has the common good trumping property rights. If the only thing that mattered was property rights, we would have no bylaws.

F.4

Landowners own the property but do not have the right to destroy the environment when it affects air quality and water quality. There has to be some line to protect the future of everyone.

The SMART actions were discussed, grouped and crystallized into recommended actions that were endorsed by each entire group. For each recommended action, the groups identified a key lead group(s).

Crystallized Recommendations in each Key Area of Focus (in alphabetical order):

Availability of Resources (Human, Financial, etc.)

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
Refocus and optimize existing resources for administrative purposes. Any additional resources both financial and human would be direct directed toward stakeholders. Lead: CK Staff & CK’s Unified Farm Voice	Assess current budget and staffing needs. Assure that resources are secured for bylaw enforcement and incentive programs i.e. compensation on land taxes of forest land and land stewardship recognition Lead: CK Staff

Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
<p>Provide strong agricultural input into any proposed CK solution to the forest cover issue that emphasizes a proactive approach.</p> <p>Lead: CK's Unified Farm Voice and Agricultural Working Group</p>	<p>Create a comprehensive, legally concise bylaw to ensure a sustainable forest cover in CK based on good forestry practices. Effective enforcement and incentives would be featured.</p> <p>Lead: CK legal department with input from informed stakeholders and third-party resource people</p>

Programs and Practices

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
<p>Identify, coordinate and promote existing programs to encourage landowners to be proactive i.e., Environmental Farm Plan, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Nature Conservancy, MFTIP.</p> <p>Lead: CK Staff</p>	<p>Promote and encourage updates of existing programs i.e. EFP, MFTIP, conservation easements, etc. Assure these programs are accessible to potential stakeholders</p> <p>Lead: Stakeholders committee, CK Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities</p>
<p>Create programs to encourage the maintenance and enhancement of trees and forest cover i.e. land trusts, agroforestry, woodlot severances, wetland and marginal land rehabilitation, ecological planning, and rehabilitation of dysfunctional woodlot</p> <p>Lead: CK Unified Farm Voice, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority and University of Guelph (Ridgetown Campus)</p>	<p>Identify CK needs, relate them to provincial and federal guidelines and create new programs with partners that would be relevant to CK, measurable and long-term.</p> <p>Lead: Stakeholders committee, CK Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities and CK Administration</p>

Property Rights

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
<p>Assure that landowners have the right to make decisions to ensure a reasonable economic return from their property. i.e. offsetting support to maintain their woodlot.</p> <p>Lead: CK's United Farm Voice and CK Council</p>	<p>Assure that the greater good of society prevails over the perceived individual property rights.</p> <p>Lead: CK Council</p>
<p>Encourage landowners to obtain crown land patents and ascertain what rights are conveyed relating to trees and woods</p> <p>Lead: CK's United Farm Voice and Ontario Landowners Association</p>	

Research Identification and Analysis

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
<p>Assure strong scientific base to research relating to forest cover in CK by utilizing existing research methods and best management practices. Knowledge of specialists in the field should be utilized.</p> <p>Lead: CK Staff & CK's United Farm Voice</p>	<p>Engage reputable, non-biased researchers to collect meaningful data. This could utilize past and present studies of future public review and understanding.</p> <p>Lead: CK Administration and stakeholder groups</p>

Stakeholder Engagement and Education

Agricultural	Pro Bylaw
<p>Provide a broad-based environmental program with an education component featuring access to financial incentives to encourage uptake by stakeholders.</p> <p>Lead: Agencies with current programs, including OMAF</p>	<p>Fully engage all stakeholders including public and landowners by addressing and documenting their input. Promote programs and activities to engage landowners.</p> <p>Lead: CK Administration and stakeholder representatives</p>

CK Agricultural Organizations and Pro Bylaw Stakeholders

Workshops # 3

Park Street Business Centre, 25 Creek Road, Chatham

June 4 and 6, 2013: Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Purpose of the Session

- 1) To develop further details around the prioritized key areas of focus for a sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent
- 2) Evaluate the Lambton bylaw and suggest changes to make it appropriate for Chatham-Kent, if a bylaw was chosen by decision makers

Format:

Previous Meetings, May 21 and 24: **What?** (*Observations*)

So What? (*Meaning, Reflections*)

May 28, 29, June 4 and 6: **Now What?** (*Applications, Actions*)

Now What? : Actions

Participants built on the initial work that they completed at their May 21, 24, 28 and 29 meetings. They built on the strengths, reduced or eliminated the negatives or challenges and avoided the consequences of inaction.

Throughout all this, they maintained their awareness of the trends within our agricultural and general community as well as the perspectives of the many and varied stakeholders in Chatham-Kent.

Here are their prioritized Key Areas of Focus:

Agricultural Organizations Stakeholders Perspective:

Rank	Key Area of Focus	Total Score
1 st	Program or Practices Development or Expansion	175
2 nd	Property Rights	155
3 rd	Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	115
3 rd	Stakeholder Engagement and Education	115
5 th	Availability of Resources (Human, Capital etc.)	70
5 th	Research Identification and Analysis	70

Pro Bylaw Stakeholders Perspective:

Rank	Key Area of Focus	Total Score
1 st	Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	265
2 nd	Program or Practices Development or Expansion	130
2 nd	Availability of Resources (Human, Capital etc.)	130
4 th	Research Identification and Analysis	115
5 th	Stakeholder Engagement and Education	70
6 th	Property Rights	50

Keeping in mind the recommendations of both the agricultural working group and the pro bylaw working group, for each recommendation identify the 5W's listed below.

What are the details of the steps that will help us to move toward a strong and vibrant sustainable forest cover strategy for Chatham-Kent?
Remember...These should be designed to build on our strengths, reduce or eliminate our challenges, and keep in mind the consequences of inaction.

What specific action should be undertaken relating to this recommendation?

Why is this important for a sustainable forest cover strategy in Chatham-Kent?

Who should be responsible for taking the lead on this action and who is the intended target group?

When is the suggested timing for the implementation of this action?

Where should this action take place?

Crystallized Recommendations in each Key Area of Focus

(in alphabetical order):

Availability of Resources (Human, Financial, etc.)

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
Refocus and optimize existing resources for administrative purposes. Any additional resources both financial and human would be directed toward stakeholders. Lead: CK Staff & CK's Unified Farm Voice	Assess current budget and staffing needs. Assure that resources are secured for bylaw enforcement and incentive programs i.e. compensation on land taxes of forest land and land stewardship recognition. Lead: CK Staff
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Seek public input for public funding	What? Assure resources are secured for enforcement and incentive programs.
Why? Must be affordable and properly funded	Why? A bylaw without enforcement will not be successful. Incentive programs are needed to complement the bylaw for buy-in.
Who? CK staff and farm organizations	Who? CK Staff and stakeholder groups relating to incentive programs
When? As soon as possible	When? Before the proposal goes to council in August
Where? Tap all sources of funding. Ask for input at public open houses.	Where? In Chatham-Kent, although incentive programs may be provincial

Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
<p>Provide strong agricultural input into any proposed CK solution to the forest cover issue that emphasizes a proactive approach.</p> <p>Lead: CK's Unified Farm Voice and Agricultural Working Group</p>	<p>Create a comprehensive, legally concise bylaw to ensure a sustainable forest cover in CK based on good forestry practices. Effective enforcement and incentives would be featured.</p> <p>Lead: CK legal department with input from informed stakeholders and third-party resource people</p>
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>What? Develop a forest cover policy to protect wood lots 4 hectares and greater</p>	<p>What? (See above)</p>
<p>Why? So stakeholders and farmers have control of their farm operations This protects what we have and requires less tree planting on agricultural land in the future to maintain healthy forest cover</p>	<p>Why? Current clearing activities are impacting sustainability and unique Carolinian ecosystems.</p>
<p>Who? CK's Unified Farm Voice and Agricultural Working Group, CK Council, LTVCA Target Groups, farmers and the municipality</p>	<p>Who? CK administration and Council as lead with woodlot owners as the client group</p>
<p>When? Ongoing, as long as we are making progress toward a workable solution that is suitable to all, once established considered a review every five years</p>	<p>When? As soon as possible, by August for sure</p>
<p>Where? Chatham-Kent</p>	<p>Where? Chatham-Kent's bylaw will be in place in Chatham-Kent although the whole province should have protection</p>

Programs and Practices

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
<p>Identify, coordinate and promote existing programs to encourage landowners to be proactive i.e. Environmental Farm Plan, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Nature Conservancy, MFTIP.</p>	<p>Promote and encourage updates of existing programs, i.e. EFP, MFTIP, conservation easements, etc. Assure these programs are accessible to potential stakeholders.</p> <p>Lead: Stakeholders committee, CK</p>

Lead: CK Staff	Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Create database of all available programs, promote utilizing available funding and staff	What? (See above)
Why? To improve accessibility to programs by having a central registry, aware that there are limited resources, land and ability to pay. Uptake must be voluntary and this would minimize conservation costs.	Why? To engage landowners in conservation and an appreciation of nature, to enhance property values perhaps through compensation or tax breaks, the potential to increase forest cover and not just sustain it
Who? CK staff, OMAF, LTVCA	Who? Stakeholders committee, CK Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities, Ducks Unlimited, Carolinian Canada, EFP, grassroots groups, schools, Municipality
When? ASAP and to keep it current	When? ASAP
Where? CK website, KFA website, CFFO	Where? Websites(CK especially), public places, set example on municipal property
Create programs to encourage the maintenance and enhancement of trees and forest cover, i.e. land trusts, agroforestry, woodlot severances, wetland and marginal land rehabilitation, ecological planning, and rehabilitation of dysfunctional woodlot. Lead: CK Unified Farm Voice, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority and University of Guelph (Ridgetown Campus)	Identify CK needs, relate them to provincial and federal guidelines and create new programs with partners that would be relevant to CK, measurable and long-term. Lead: Stakeholders committee, CK Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities and CK Administration
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Utilize educational workshops to engage council and land owners	What? (See above)
Why? To encourage conservation management and best management practices in woodlots	Why? To show that without regulation, provincial and federal guidelines don't prevent deforestation
Who? CK Unified Farm Voice, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority and University of Guelph (Ridgetown Campus)	Who? Stakeholders committee, CK Unified Farm Voice, Conservation Authorities and CK Administration, Carolinian Canada, community groups i.e. Sydenham Field Naturalists
When? After harvest of 2013 to the spring of 2014	When? As soon as possible and ongoing
Where? Chatham Kent	Where? Chatham Kent

Property Rights

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
Assure that landowners have the right to make decisions to ensure a reasonable economic return from their property. i.e. offsetting support to maintain their woodlot Lead: CK's United Farm Voice and CK Council	Assure that the greater good of society prevails over the perceived individual property rights Lead: CK Council
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Include agricultural community and landowners at all bylaw discussions. Consider a possible closed session with Council. Landowners need to be informed what direction council is taking before action is passed.	What? (See above)
Why? To ensure cooperation with landowners, and maintain a good relationship for future interaction between Council and landowners.	Why? The action of clear cutting impacts us all, including wildlife, e.g. air and water quality
Who? CK's United Farm Voice and CK Council	Who? Everyone
When? Identify action plan and then execute at first available date	When? Now, before August presentation to CK Council
Where? Chatham-Kent	Where? Chatham-Kent
Encourage landowners to obtain Crown Land Patents and ascertain what rights are conveyed relating to trees and woods Lead: CK's United Farm Voice and Ontario Landowners Association	
<i>Details</i>	
What? Encourage landowners to apply for Crown Patents from MNR to determine what was granted	
Why? To clarify what land rights you have on your property	
Who? Individual responsibility, could be supported by OFA	
When? ASAP as it takes a year to obtain Crown Patent	
Where? Education starts at home, so it's up to each individual	

Research Identification and Analysis

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
Assure strong scientific base to research relating to forest cover in CK by utilizing existing research methods and best management practices. Knowledge of specialists in the field should be utilized. Lead: CK Staff & CK's United Farm Voice	Engage reputable, non-biased researchers to collect meaningful data. This could utilize past and present studies of future public review and understanding. Lead: CK Administration and stakeholder groups
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Seek out balanced input from industry and government agencies	What? (See above)
Why? Make informed decisions with input from all parties	Why? Good information is the basis for good decision-making. We are unique in our region, there is a great deal of information already out there so accessing it may be all that is required
Who? Industry and government, with land owners involved	Who? CK Administration, stakeholder groups, University of Guelph, MNR, Canadian Institute of Forestry, Health Canada, Canadian Forestry Service, Purdue University (agriculture and forestry), Carolinian Canada
When? As soon as possible	When? Now and continuing
Where? On the ground and in the woods, practical research	Where? Anywhere, but utilizing people in the field familiar with our area

Stakeholder Engagement and Education

Agricultural Organizations	Pro Bylaw
Provide a broad-based environmental program with an education component featuring access to financial incentives to encourage uptake by stakeholders. Lead: Agencies with current programs, including OMAF	Fully engage all stakeholders including public and landowners by addressing and documenting their input. Promote programs and activities to engage landowners. Lead: CK Administration and stakeholder representatives
<i>Details</i>	<i>Details</i>
What? Develop a broad-based program to encourage strategic forest cover for ecological sustainability.	What? (See above)
Why? To help stakeholders become aware of the facts, and educate both rural and urban of the great benefits!	Why? Because everyone's opinion is important engagement is education to guide good decisions

Who? CK staff to assemble information package to create central resources, use the EFP model	Who? You, me and anyone in CK (rural and urban alike)
When? As soon as possible	When? Ongoing with yearly reviews
Where? Made in Chatham-Kent	Where? Everywhere in everyday life, social media, public and municipal meetings, websites especially CK site, neutral territory, farm groups events and meetings

Bylaw Evaluation

The Pro Bylaw group is planning to use the proposed Lambton Woodlands Conservation and Preservation Bylaw as a model for a bylaw in Chatham-Kent.

Background:

- In 2012 Lambton County Council directed County staff to update the existing bylaw
- Staff updated the existing bylaw
- County Council initiated two public meetings to get input
- County Council then directed the County of Lambton Agricultural Advisory Committee (CLAAC) to evaluate the bylaw and give constructive criticism
- CLAAC consists of 14 individuals who are elected by their own groups to represent them when Lambton County Council wants input on any issue in Lambton County that relates to agriculture or the rural community
- CLAAC members represent the following groups: Lambton Federation of Agriculture, Lambton Farm Union, Beef, Dairy, Pork, Feathers, Specialty Livestock, Grain Farmers, Soil & Crop, Conservation, Specialty Crops, Woodlot Owners, Rural Non-farm and a Farming Mayor on County Council
- CLAAC evaluated the bylaw and recommended several changes
- County Council also created a technical committee to evaluate and make recommendations related to the bylaw. This committee includes a forester, three farm landowners, a conservationist, a logger and a sawmill operator

What are the current challenges with the “County of Lambton Woodlands Conservation By-law”? (Issues that would need to be addressed to assure effectiveness in Chatham-Kent)

Based on small group discussions and feedback from colleagues, the participants highlighted the features of proposed Agricultural Organizations Working Group and Pro Bylaw Working Group recommendations to County Council relating to a proposed bylaw. Although they do not endorse the concept of a bylaw, the Agricultural Organizations Working Group took the opportunity to make recommendations to the proposed bylaw. The potential bylaw was created in two formats. One was based on the Pro Bylaw Working Group recommendations. The other was based on the Agricultural Organizations Working Group recommendations. Those versions were circulated among their respective Working Group members to ensure that they accurately reflected their input.

CK Agricultural and Pro Bylaw Stakeholders
 Joint Workshop
 Park Street Business Centre, 25 Creek Road, Chatham
 June 25, 2013: Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Welcome and Setting the Stage: Bryan

Three Levels of Conflict:

1) Lack of Information:

Positive Response: "Now that I see those facts, I can see your perspective!"

Result: Cooperative resolution of issues

2) Difference in Values:

Positive Response: "You have a different perspective and background than I do, but I can accept your input in this situation."

Result: Cooperative resolution of issues

3) Entrenched Position:

Response: "I am unable to compromise my position by giving credit to your perspective."

Result: Some decision-makers at another level will decide the final outcome

Bryan Boyle suggested that in our situation the three levels of conflict could be translated in this way to guide this session's activities:

1) Lack of Information: Discuss the actual details of the policy proposed by the agricultural group and the bylaw proposed by the pro-bylaw group and offer input into the staff recommendation proposed to CK Council.

2) Discuss the Concept: The policy proposed by the agricultural group and the bylaw proposed by the pro-bylaw group would be discussed in general

terms (from participants' perspective, why either approach has merits or raises concerns).

3) *Don't even go there!* Agree to disagree on the concept of the policy proposed by the agricultural group and the bylaw proposed by the pro bylaw group. It would then be up to Chatham-Kent staff to make a recommendation and Council to make a decision based on the information and research that they receive.

Having met with both working groups three times each, Bryan Boyle felt there is great potential for a solution that can be created at the first two levels.

With that in mind and to make best use of the joint meeting, he encouraged the participants to share some of the good work they had done. This would provide information that could help final solutions emerge.

Participants agreed with this approach and committed to evaluate both the policy and bylaw proposed.

Evaluating Policy of Agriculture Working Group

Based on their discussion, and feedback from their colleagues, participants discussed the features that could be proposed to Council. They did not worry about "wordsmithing" at this point, but rather got the features "on the wall". These points were openly offered by the groups and were not necessarily a consensus of opinion within that group.

Note Merits or Concerns of Suggested Changes

Each of three groups (comprised of participants from both the agricultural and pro-bylaw working groups) evaluated each of these suggested changes in terms of the merits or concerns that they had.

Each section was evaluated by each group:

1) Background Page

Merits:

- Pleases landowners
- Allows education of landowners who opt to be educated
- Allows partnerships with landowners and woodlot owners
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you
- Forest management policy is proactive in addition to the bylaw
- We have a great opportunity here
- Funding education can be considered a “carrot”
- Democracy is a wonderful thing but can be challenging

Challenges:

- Will voluntary participation be enough to preserve any forest?
- Education is voluntary, so those who need it may not be interested or engaged
- Policy is good but it preaches to the choir
- How do you enforce a policy or deal with landowners who do not follow that policy?
- Issue management
- Looking at the long-term situation
- Landowners themselves have to pay for the consultant

2) Policy Statement and Reason for Policy

Merits/Challenges:

- On the property rights issue, balancing property rights versus/and responsibility

3) Procedures

Merits:

- Farmers and landowners need a specialist (forester) to keep current on agroforestry. Southwest Ag Conference would be a suitable venue for this.
- An advisory committee would involve key people who are motivated to address this issue on a voluntary basis.

- Benefits of education from the consultant
- Contacting neighbours before activities is a great idea
- Conservation Authority has a role to play
- Great to promote neighbour relations
- Assistance for woodlot planting benefits everyone
- Recognizes Chatham-Kent is an unique geographic area in Ontario

Challenges:

- Add the notion of social responsibility
- How to apply effective peer pressure on farmers who are demeaning to their profession
- Tax implication and Council guidelines may restrict the hiring of staff
- How much will the Chatham-Kent stakeholders listen to the advisory committee?
- If the landowner really wants to clear bush, he will not call or involve anyone who might jeopardize his ability to do that
- Will people want to hire a consultant at their own cost?
- Political pressure puts activity in jeopardy
- Demand for ethanol equals more corn
- When contacting neighbours is optional, will that be done?
- If we assist in windbreak planting, will those windbreaks remain with no protection when the land changes hands?

Evaluating the Bylaw Proposed by the Pro-Bylaw Working Group

Based on their discussion, and feedback from their colleagues, participants discussed the features that could be proposed to Council. They did not worry about “wordsmithing” at this point, but rather got the features “on the wall”. These points were openly offered by the groups and were not necessarily a consensus of opinion within that group.

Note Merits or Concerns of Suggested Changes

Each of three groups of participants blended from both the agricultural and pro-bylaw working groups evaluated each of these suggested changes in terms of the merits or concerns that they had.

Each section of the proposed bylaw was evaluated by the individual groups:

1. (b) Delete the reference to 15 to 20 years as acceptable growing stock.
Let the landowner decide based on the tree market.
1. (dd) i) MNR tree marking course for shade tolerant and white pine stands
iv) Specified by the landowner
1. (t) Police officer should be deleted under an officer definition since they aren't educated in matters of conservation
1. (nn) i-iv) Please add imperial measurement for clarity
1. (nn) Agricultural working group sees 0.5 hectares as too small of a woodlot to regulate
1. Same 2) All measurements of the trees are to be taken at 1.37 metres from the ground (instead of 1.3 m in text)
4. (a-k) The agricultural working group sees hypocrisy in the exemptions to the bylaw (everyone else can do it but we can't)
- (b) Include tree reservations by Crown on private lands and where Crown Patent passes woods to the original patentee
5. **Merit:** Cuts down on the "bad actors"
Challenge: Many woodlot owners will ignore the bush and it may deteriorate. Section 5 is wordy, generating fees for lawyers
- 5.4 (a) *Delete:* There should be no time of year when harvest is restricted.
- 5.4 (c) *Delete:* There should be no restriction on the impact of a vehicle, machinery or equipment. Both 5.4 (a) and (c) deal with more than trees.

5.4 (e) *Delete*. There is no benefit in requiring that branched tree tops not scheduled for fuelwood processing must be cut not to exceed a height of 1.5 to 1.8 metres above the ground to the highest branch

6. **Merits:** Woodlots managed in accordance with good forestry practices working with the landowner in regards to management of the woodlots

Challenges: Accuracy in the media. There is a fear in the farming community based on coffee shop talk and Ontario Farmer articles, especially relating to OSPCA (Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)

6.4 (a) "Have regard to good forestry practices". There should be other options such as diameter limits if the landowner desires it.

7. (6) Officer should be changed to Clerk

8.1 Will the committee have appropriate agriculture representation?

8.5 (b) No fee for minor exemption permits. Section 394 of the Municipal Act may limit fee or charge for natural resources

9. (a-b) Officer should be changed to clerk

11.-14. **Merits:** There is merit in any opportunity to tell landowners the rules beforehand. There is a stated process to move forward on woodlot management.

Challenges: Misinformation. Farmers feel their tax money is going to decrease their capital worth of the farm and increase their cost of doing business.

Next Steps: Staff Role, Public Meetings, Decisions on Approach

Tom Beaton indicated that the research results and GIS results would be available shortly and would be circulated to the working groups for their information. Staff will be working on correlating all the workshop material and information proposed by the two working groups, as well as the research to make a recommendation to Council. Tom indicated that public meetings will be held July 9 at the Thames Campus in Chatham, July 10 at the Youth Centre in Ridgetown and July 11 at the Arena in Wallaceburg. The target is to have a recommendation ready for the Chatham-Kent Council Committee of the Whole meeting. Results and recommendations from that meeting would then be discussed and voted on at the Chatham-Kent Council meeting in September.

Public Meeting Input

The stakeholder working committees addressing the issues relating to forest cover in Chatham-Kent identified the following areas of focus that they feel are critical to maintain forest cover in Chatham-Kent. Participants at the public meetings were encouraged to give an indication of which areas of focus they feel would yield the most positive impact on the goal to maintain forest cover in Chatham-Kent. Each participant was given exactly 100 points to allocate, with the potential to allocate from 0 to 40 points to each area of focus. The following results emerged:

Key Area of Focus	Rank	Total Score
Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols	1 st	4835
Stakeholder Engagement and Education	2 nd	2660
Availability of Resources (Human, Capital etc.)	3 rd	1965
Research Identification and Analysis	4 th	1925
Program or Practices Development or Expansion	5 th	1720
Property Rights	6 th	1540

Highlights of Stakeholders' Input from Public Meetings

A number in brackets after a comment indicates that this comment or one very similar to it was expressed by that number of participants.

1. Legislation, Zoning, Bylaw and Protocols

1.1 Bylaw

1.1.1 Chatham-Kent is Unique

Supportive Comments:

- Chatham-Kent has some of the best farmland in Ontario. As a result, it should be treated differently than other areas by allowing forest cover to be cleared to access this good farmland. (3)

Concerns or Challenges:

- Chatham-Kent needs a tree cutting bylaw similar to other municipalities in Southern Ontario. (7)
- Except for Essex and Chatham-Kent, all of southern Ontario has tree cutting bylaws. What makes Chatham-Kent so special? Most species at risk, most endangered species, worst health stats, people leaving in droves. Figure it out! (5)
- It is so upsetting to know that Chatham-Kent is one of the few communities in Western Ontario where a bylaw is not in place. (4)
- Over the years, I have loved living here in Chatham-Kent because we are not overcrowded and are a tight knit community. Where is this community and what's happening now? What about striving to be progressive in agriculture or even match counties like Norfolk, Elgin, Huron and Lambton who are proud of their farms and farmers but also proud to take care of the concerns of their other citizens. Even farmers there think differently. Why do we ignore the best practices of Ontario Federation of Agriculture here in Chatham-Kent saying we cannot protect woodlots or we're going against agriculture? (2)
- If Chatham-Kent was the first municipality in Ontario to pass a tree conservation bylaw in Ontario, I might understand the hesitation, but being as we are one of the last to pass a bylaw, we should get moving!
- Unlike many other municipalities where forest cover is somewhat protected, here in Chatham-Kent we see excavators destroying something that can never be replaced in our lifetimes.
- Driving Hwy 401, the difference in tree cover that you see when driving into Elgin County is way too obvious!
- As a farmer, I feel that the Chatham-Kent community does not need to reinvent the wheel on this issue as there are many counties with excellent bylaws to protect their forest cover. We can take parts of those bylaws and fit them to our Chatham-Kent conditions. We have a responsibility to future generations as stewards of the land.
- Why is it so hard to adapt our neighbouring communities' bylaws to Chatham- Kent? Research it, adapt it, pass it and it's done.
- There is a direct relationship between forest cover and the presence of forest conservation bylaws across Southwest Ontario.

- There are ample examples of how a forest conservation bylaw has not eroded farmers' rights, land values, productivity etc. for Middlesex, Huron, Lambton and other areas of southwestern Ontario. This information could be shared with agricultural land users in Chatham Kent.
- Chatham-Kent, this is 2013, not 1913 or 1813. Wake up!

1.1.2 Need for a Tree Cutting and Conservation Bylaw

Supportive Comments:

- It is imperative that a Chatham-Kent tree cutting and conservation bylaw be passed as soon as possible. (156)
- Voluntary incentives don't work. We need a tree cutting bylaw. (10)
- Chatham-Kent woodlots are disappearing at an alarming rate. The longer a decisive action plan is delayed the more risk of losing our woodlots. (7)
- Think of our children and future generations. This bylaw will help protect them. How long will it take to replace a woodlot when our great-grandchildren try to undo the damage we have done? (6)
- As long as land prices are climbing there will always be temptation for farmers to clear woodlots without a bylaw. (2)
- We should have had a tree bylaw 30 years ago when it was brought to Council at that time. (2)
- I am a farmer and I feel that the bylaw must be implemented for conservation of our tree cover for future families to survive on our farms. (2)
- A carefully drafted bylaw taking into account both economic and environmental concerns is the only real way forward.
- A bylaw and legislation are key factors to reduce deforestation.
- A bylaw must be carefully considered and crafted to be responsive to Chatham-Kent's conditions and needs. Farm groups have the ability to give input and identify problematic areas
- When are we going to implement the bylaw to give legal protection to the imperative action to conserve our trees?
- Please give us a strong bylaw that protects our forests and all their benefits and give us the resources to enforce that bylaw. We already have a voluntary policy that is helping no one.

- At this stage legislation is a top priority, which can be supported subsequently through education, ongoing research and program development.
- As a farmer, I agree that some areas have seen some aggressive clearing as of late, but I know of many woodlots that will remain. Perhaps a permit to clear land contingent on the quality of the forest cover and the quality of the land for agricultural production would make sense
- A bylaw needs to be fair but also effective. Current tree cover of about 4% is well below the minimum that should be targeted.
- Both our physical health and the health of our environment need to be protected. Investing in our future is essential and should not be disregarded for the sake of more farmland.
- A bylaw is necessary as proven by the reckless destruction of acres and acres of the irreplaceable woodlots in the last six months.
- We need a bylaw to protect our forest ecosystems. That is essential for our future and my kids' future. I am a farmer.
- When some people have no common sense, you have to legislate it. An Ipsos Reid survey said that 97% of Canadians feel that natural areas are important to their family's well-being. We must wake up before it is too late! Signed, a caring farmer.
- As a woodlot owner and avid outdoorsman, I say we need a bylaw because nature is a top priority in my Chatham-Kent community.
- I support a bylaw but for it to be effective there must be a process including a board of subject matter experts and stakeholders who have accountability to review exemptions according to clear and reasonable criteria.
- Why is a policy being offered as an alternative to a bylaw, since a policy is not likely to make any difference to the current status quo?
- A policy would only be effective if there was a bylaw that clearly articulates the power of the policy and clearly establishes threshold targets that would trigger action under the bylaw.
- A bylaw is required because a policy preaches to the choir, the landowners who are already acting responsibly.
- Agriculture/agribusiness/investment has changed so that the forests stand little chance without regulation.

Concerns or Challenges:

- A tree cutting bylaw should never be implemented in Chatham-Kent. (29)
- Any bylaw is restrictive and costly to all taxpayers. (3)
- A bylaw will not hold water and cannot be enforced. (2)
- It is concerning to me the amount of regulation and restrictions being put on good, law abiding citizens.
- The Forestry Act says a bylaw can only be made with regards to public lands.
- Any exemptions to a bylaw (development, construction etc.) make the bylaw illegal.
- Do away with the bylaw idea and trust us farmers to handle this through education and peer pressure.

1.2 Zoning and Planning Issues*Supportive Comments*

- Chatham-Kent should have a program where if a bush owner wants to sever bush, it would be possible but it cannot be built on and only good forestry practices used. (3)
- A special zoning class could let groups like Conservation Authority, Thames Talbot Land Trust etc. buy land that is not practical to farm and then plant trees.

Concerns or Challenges:

- You must understand that if you don't own it, you cannot plan for it.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Education*Supportive Comments:*

- Education on the value of a woodlot as a diversified ecosystem is important both now and in the future to keep Chatham-Kent environmentally viable. (5)
- If you use the carrot and education approach it will work. Chatham-Kent is one of the most recognized farming areas for conservation farming practices in the province. We take great pride in this.

- Education, proper politics and public relations with close relations to the farm groups and community is the best way to pass a bylaw and not portray it as a move against agriculture. Bring us into the 21st century where people are aware of these things and care about these things so that we can attract more people to Chatham-Kent. I love Chatham-Kent and no matter what happens I know I am staying and will be part of the change that needs to happen here whether it's now or in the near future.
- If education of stakeholders on agroforestry or forest farming is required, it can easily be implemented.
- Educational programs about forest cover should be initiated. These might include forest gardens, food, trees, etc.
- Educate the masses with proper facts and realistic projections and consequences we are facing. Ignorance will not help in the long term.
- You would be better to work with the farmers and landowners rather than try to force bylaws on them and alienate them.
- Education is an important component but we must be open to new information rather than dwelling on history and how things have always been done.
- Stakeholder engagement and education are very important particularly educating property owners on the economic benefits of woodlots. Farmers will not buy into any effort to restrict cutting if there's not an economic benefit.
- The sensitivities and need for communicating the details of the bylaw to effective groups is paramount.
- Stewards of the land need to be reminded what stewardship means and that they are entrusted with the land.
- There's a wealth of information available for all to read. Only those who care about the environment, endangered species, watershed management etc. take information to heart.

3. Availability of Resources (Human, Capita, etc.)

3.1 Staffing

Supportive Comments:

- The municipality should have staff with sufficient budget to cover duties to enforce and monitor a tree bylaw. (2)

- We should provide staff with the resources needed to purchase, plant and maintain forests in Chatham-Kent.
- We need an arborist on staff to help provide valuable information and enforce the bylaw.

Concerns or Challenges:

- Administration should not be promoting a policy when Council asked for a bylaw to be presented to them after receiving public input. (2)

3.2 Taxation

Supportive Comments:

- Preferred tax rates or no taxation should be assessed on woodlot acreage. (26)
- A percentage of our tax dollars should go back into reforestation, similar to some cities that have massive tree planting projects every year. (4)
- Chatham-Kent needs to eliminate all taxes on woodlots to help save our remaining forest cover. If something like this does not get put in place soon, then say goodbye to the rest of Chatham-Kent's tree cover.
- We have a 100 acre property that features Carolinian forests, wetlands and tall grass prairies. We have a very unique ecosystem that was once all over Southwestern Ontario. We are taxed on the basis of the highest and best use for our land as evaluated by MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation). As a result, we pay residential rates on very high valued land, based on the value of farm land all around us. Taxation should encourage conservation, not discourage it!

3.3 Compensation

Supportive Comments:

- If the municipality is going to impose the existence of forest cover on private lands for the benefits of the community at large, private landowners must be compensated for their market loss that has benefited all the community. (6)

- Taxpayers in Chatham-Kent should be willing to buy woodlots when they become available, if their interest is so great for woodlot preservation. (2)
- The bylaw needs to be tied to compensation for the goodwill of the conscientious landowners who are willing to preserve some of this rare Carolinian habitat.
- A comprehensive and strategic land acquisition program and allocating of funding should be developed to buy land for long-term conservation purposes.

3.4 Funding

Supportive Comments:

- Incentives are important to reduce the economic impact of maintaining forest cover. (6)
- There is a great deal of available funding out there for farmers to use, with limited cost for the municipality.
- I believe that a combination of incentives and legislation can be used successfully to meet the needs of both woodland preservation and sustainable agriculture.
- I belong to a group called "Generation Roots". We are trying to raise 1.5 million pennies because we have lost 1.5 thousand acres of forest cover. A penny per tree. Pennies are worthless and clear cutters say the trees are worthless, so our goal is to use the money to plant trees. Trees are precious and it will take many years to get back what we have lost.

Concerns or Challenges:

- I am concerned whether Chatham-Kent can afford to legislate and properly administer a bylaw on our limited budget. (4)

4. Research Identification and Analysis

Supportive Comments:

- The research results based on sound scientific research and stated by a third-party source should not be ignored. If they are, it is at the

collective peril of Chatham-Kent as our economic, social, health and agricultural future is at stake.

- Discover the facts and research all perspectives in an unbiased non-political approach to fact-finding and presentation. Then set the goals, create the guidelines, legislate to suit, achieve the goals and celebrate.
- I think the data and research says it all. I hope that each person voting on this issue reads the research report, digests what is being presented and votes to do what is right for the greater good of society.
- With the University of Guelph's Ridgetown campus in our community, student projects and university research projects should be encouraged and partnerships developed to identify viable means of maintaining forest cover.
- Research should continue and the results be presented to the citizens of Chatham-Kent.
- We must continue to research and develop policies for absentee landowners and foreign ownership.
- Only through further research and analysis will people who don't understand the value of tree cover be able to be educated.

5. Program or Practices Development or Expansion

Supportive Comments:

- By far, a policy is more acceptable than a bylaw. (7)
- We should re-create the tree planting programs of a generation ago that help instill pride in well maintained woodlots and fence rows. (4)
- For every tree cut down there should be an equal or greater number of trees replanted to replenish and protect for the future. (4)
- Initiate a program to plant trees on municipally owned land. (3)
- Research-based plan, with the professional arborist in charge of the program
- Use the farm stewardship program as a template.
- A strategy which contains voluntary incentive-based guidelines and programs but without enforcement would see us continue with the clear cutting status quo.
- Establish model forest plots with clear signs in Chatham-Kent.
- Efforts should be geared toward supporting existing programs and services provided by a variety of partners and programs.

- The forest stewardship program proposed at the Chatham-Kent Council meeting on March 4, 2013 may be a possible solution since it was a plan for everyone to work together.
- On my farm, I have over 40 acres of woodlot. I feel that every landowner should have a percentage of woodlot.
- In an effort to expand our forest cover, planting trees on reclaimed land or rehabilitated neglected woodlots should be part of a program to offset the impact of the destruction of woodlots that has occurred in the past two years.

6. Property Rights

Supportive Comments:

- This is not a tree issue but it is a property rights issue. (3)
- In any bylaw, agriculture should have the same exemptions as hydro, gas and municipal governments. (3)
- This is private land and I will not surrender my rights, period!
- If I want to clear a section of my woodlot or reforest a section of my field, I do not see the need to ask permission from Chatham-Kent Council. I pay the taxes, I maintain it and I own it.
- The perpetual talk of a bylaw has caused panicked reaction in landowners and caused a huge amount of clearing.
- I am deeply concerned about our ever diminishing property rights. It seems other people have more say in what happens on my land that I do.
- As I have a letter from the Queen (Crown Patent) saying I can cut trees, why would I listen to anyone in Chatham-Kent saying that I can't?
- As property owners, we are protected by the Crown Patent and this right must be respected.
- Remember no matter what you do relating to a bylaw, I still own the land and the trees and I'm willing to defend my personal property rights.
- My forest is not a public park. If I choose not to let anyone on my property, it is my right.

- Farmers own the bulk of the property in Chatham-Kent and will do the right thing. We are a very trusted profession. We also live here with our families.
- I do not feel society has the right to impose rules or laws on what I do with my personal property. The public trespasses all the time and doesn't care about that.

Concerns or Challenges:

- I keep hearing the argument, "It's our property, you can't dictate what we do on our own land." There have always been laws restricting what people can do with their property in order to protect the rights of the community as a whole. This is nothing new! (9)
- Community well-being cannot be sacrificed for the personal perception of property rights. (4)
- I recently purchased a property. The municipality tells me I must keep the grass cut at a certain height, structures must use approved materials and building codes, setbacks and septic laws must be met etc. The municipality can definitely dictate what citizens can do on their property.
- Property rights are not absolute. Homeowners in towns and cities must abide by zoning bylaws so as not to undermine the interests of the community at large. Farmers are simply entrusted with responsibilities for the land that make up our communities and affect our air and soil and the health of our citizens and wildlife.
- We all have issues with property rights, whether rural or urban dwellers. Remember, with rights come responsibilities.
- There should be a clarification of the difference in civics of "private property rights" in Ontario/Canada versus the United States. This misnomer should be rectified so it is not perpetuated.
- It is important to respect individual landowner's rights but I feel that just putting incentives in place to encourage these landowners to avoid cutting will not be enough.
- I want to respect property rights. If we have demands on property owners, we need to walk softly.
- This is not a property rights issue. This is about preserving natural heritage which is the responsibility of local government and its citizens

- I realize farmers own the land that the woods are on but we are all trying to survive in this community. We need to work on a solution that is satisfactory for both sides so that we can all try to live healthy and happy lives.

7. Value of Forest Cover and Trees

Supportive Comments:

- Forests hold on to massive deposits of carbon dioxide, release large volumes of oxygen, keep our climate cooler in summer, puts moisture back into the atmosphere to reduce droughts, provide habitat for wildlife, give us biodiversity, provide wood products and help filter rainwater. (10)
- It is unfortunate that sometime in the future our family farm will be sold and it's anyone's guess if the next landowner will keep the beautiful bush we worked so hard to establish and preserve. (3)
- A woodlot is much more than trees. It is an ecosystem – very complex and vibrant, an essential part of air quality and quality of life. We are part of the natural environment. Find a balance here in Chatham-Kent that most other counties in Ontario and across the country have found. I'm a farmer. I cut down some trees. I have woodlots on my farms. I do not clear cut!
- Protect rare and endangered trees and forests in Chatham-Kent
- Wildlife needs a place to thrive. Corridors are very important for wildlife to move from one woodlot to another.
- As a farmer who has forest cover on our property, our family obviously supports forest cover in our municipality and our woodlot is proof positive that our belief is deeply rooted.
- I am a farmer's wife and I value trees as they provide life, filter air, give beauty to the landscape, etc. People change, environments change and everyone now is concerned over the environment. Please keep our trees.
- We need trees for oxygen supply and to stop erosion.
- Please think of the health of the people who live here as well as the devastating effects on the environment as a result of so many trees being cleared.

- Woodlots have proven to be an asset both economically and from health perspectives.
- I grew up in Western Canada where there was an understanding about the need for environmental protection. What I see here in Chatham-Kent is appalling. I do not understand how the activity of rampant land clearing is allowed to continue. It is completely unsustainable and done for such short term gains!
- When I see the piles of trees waiting to be burned along Hwy 401 or close to my farm where a beautiful bush is now simply piles of trees waiting to be burned, it makes me feel that dollars dictate that we strip the land with no forethought to the future of Chatham-Kent.
- Trees can survive without humanity. Humanity cannot survive without trees.
- The positive benefits the trees provide to the earth and its inhabitants are clear and without debate. The question then becomes whether Chatham-Kent should leave it to others to provide earth with its trees.
- In Chatham-Kent we have some of the worst air quality in all of Canada, very high rates of respiratory illnesses, heart disease and other ailments. These problems may be directly related to low forest cover in Chatham-Kent.
- I understand the financial reason why people are clearing their land, but as a member of the community I urge you to reconsider chopping down such an important part of our world. I hope we can leave as few carbon footprints as we can so that our children might have a chance at repairing our earth.
- It is said that the rain forests in South America are the lungs of the world. Can you imagine what would happen if this was destroyed?
- From 1960 to the present I have seen thousands of acres of bush removed in Chatham-Kent along with a large amount of trees that have been removed off sandy soil which should never have been harvested. These acres should be replanted to trees.
- There may come a time when we will need to depend on alternate sources of fuel for cooking and home heating. We would be wise to keep all the woodlots we can and manage them in a sustainable fashion.
- Recognize the economic value of the “ecological goods and services” from woodlots for hunting in Chatham Kent.

- “Slash and burn” as it is currently occurring in Chatham-Kent is not presently legal even in Third World countries!
- There are many properties in Chatham-Kent where woodlot and farmland coexisted very nicely, including our farm.
- I have lived in Chatham-Kent my entire life with breathing problems. Relating to my asthma, my family physician has spoken with me about the poor quality of air in Chatham-Kent. I hope I do not have to sell my property and move to an area where I can breathe better. Have we in Chatham-Kent truly fallen this far back in time to forget to take care of the earth and the earth will then care for us?

Concerns or Challenges:

- Now our woodlots are of little value especially with all the diseased trees.
- With 50% of our forests dying due to blight, disease, bugs and climate change, give us help to cut them down not harassment.
- Most good trees are dead and bush lots may not even technically be considered viable woodlots. We have the best farmland in Ontario and possibly in Canada. We grow a diverse number of crops and this is not done on tree covered areas.
- All of forest is being cleared in Chatham-Kent is going into crop production. This at least ensures that there will be green plant life on the land to absorb pollutants and clean the air like a forest would.
- An acre of corn cleans more air than an acre of woodlot.

8. Impressions of our Community of Chatham-Kent

Concerns or Challenges:

- Do we really want to teach your children that money matters more than our environment, our neighbours and their future? (5)
- Cutting down our forests and destroying the ecosystems is short-sighted. It's a black eye and embarrassment for Chatham-Kent. It's bad for our farming industry, economic development, our health and tourism. (4)
- Are the piles of dead trees beside Hwy 401 really the image we want to greet newcomers and visitors to our municipality?

- As a farm owner and real estate broker I am proud to sell Chatham-Kent as part of my business. When I see what is happening due to lack of protection of our forests, for the first time I was disappointed in Chatham-Kent. Beautiful, serene Chatham-Kent starts to look like a barren place to me, a place where people cares more about their own property and large profits and has a municipal government that echoes those sentiments.
- Without Rondeau and Wheatley Provincial Parks there would be close to 2% tree cover in Chatham-Kent and that is unsustainable for future generations to live here. No trees equals no life!
- Perception of people outside of Chatham-Kent may be poor if we have a barren landscape. People will not have a desire to live here and that's critical to the future of Chatham-Kent.
- I'm interested to know what can be done to protect this environmentally raped landscape that we call Chatham-Kent. Please be a proactive community not a reactive one and protect our environment.
- We are destroying the reputation of Chatham-Kent as a progressive, healthy community worth investing in.
- Studies have been done on why so many people are leaving Chatham-Kent. The lack of and declining tree cover is a perfect example of why people don't stay.
- I live near Bothwell and with all the clearing of woodlots within 5 km of my house, we get to watch them burn the picturesque landscape with diesel fuel from our backyard. The amount of displaced wildlife has been brutal. These delicate ecosystems are threatened greatly by the uneducated acts of others. How can Chatham-Kent claim to be sustainable and allow this to continue?
- I drive up to Norfolk County and see how flourishing and beautiful it is! If Chatham-Kent wants any hope of attracting and retaining new residents who value quality of life, we need trees. Having a similar woodlot management bylaw is essential to a successful future here in Chatham-Kent.
- As a young professional currently deciding whether to remain here or begin my career elsewhere, I want to live in a place that cares about the environment. A tree bylaw is desperately needed for Chatham-Kent.

- I want Chatham-Kent to start to be a community I can encourage my children to stay, live and work in.
- Today I saw a quote board at the Chatham-Kent office claiming that Chatham-Kent was going to be the fastest-growing sustainable community. How can we ever say this in light of the current approach to maintaining forest cover?
- Chatham-Kent is now the laughing stock of Ontario for our flagrant disregard for the natural environment.

9. Species at Risk

Supportive Comments:

- Species at risk must be protected.
- In the forest there are many different habitats that are being destroyed and some could include endangered species.
- With the amount of habitat that is being destroyed, I am concerned that animals will move away from Chatham-Kent, become endangered or even extinct.
- Chatham-Kent has become ground zero for ecological sustainability. Our municipality harbours more species diversity and more species at risk than many other places in Canada. It will not reflect well on our municipality if we let a small vocal minority dictate outcomes on this issue.
- Does the present Chatham-Kent Council and community want to go down in the record of history as being the destroyers of species that have inhabited Chatham-Kent for tens of thousands of years?
- On CBC, it was reported that monarch butterflies are endangered and the low percentage of tree cover is one of the reasons.

10. Your Opinion of the Perspective of Others

Individuals Optimistic for Compromise

- I believe that compromise between woodlot owners and other stakeholders can be reached to please everyone on this issue. (3)
- I want Chatham-Kent to find a solution that respects the contribution of the local farmer while requiring his stewardship on our behalf.

- We need to look at this as a win-win for everyone. We are all one community, and what one does affects another.
- Right now there seems to be two sides “tree huggers versus tree cutters”, but we need to come up with a solution that benefits everyone.
- It makes me sad to think that our community is so divided and that resolution seems nearly impossible. This is a terrible legacy to leave our future generations in Chatham-Kent.
- Hopefully common sense will prevail and through observation and education it will be apparent to all of the tremendous importance of forests and woodlands in Chatham-Kent.
- We need to start acting like good neighbors and make Chatham-Kent a better place to live. Waiting is not an option as the landscape is changing too quickly.
- We all need to engage in better and more sustainable environmental practices and avoid the “us versus them” approach and work collaboratively I know there are many folks from all walks of life ready and willing to help make this happen.
- When folks are ready to embrace the idea of planting more trees rather than cutting them down, I'd be there with my shovel and friends to pitch in and make it happen.

Concerns of Pro Bylaw Individuals

- Most farmers know the value of trees, but their focus is on economics and what's in it for them.
- How we treat our environment says a lot about our community and its commitment to the health of our citizens. Are we a backward community that only protects the interests of the few vocal landowners or are we a forward thinking community that looks to the future, protects our environment, the health of our community, the beauty that draws tourism and ethical farming practices that will protect the long-term health of our agricultural industry?
- Our community needs to rethink the way we think about forests. Just because by man's standards we have paid for the land which holds the forest does not mean we should be able to cut it down

- Because it takes many years for a tree or a forest to grow, we should not be eager to cut something beneficial down in a matter of minutes in search of the almighty dollar
- Is it really worth risking the health of Chatham-Kent citizens for more money for the farmers?
- Why should a few farmers sway the vote when it's obvious that the tree cover left in Chatham-Kent must remain?
- As a farmer whose family has farmed in the county for 130 years and has 70 acres in woodlots, I feel that destroying hundreds of years of natural heritage, erosion control, drought moderation etc. by destroying woodlots on private land makes no sense when considering only small gains in profitability. Farmers who want to profit from their woodlots might consider agroforestry or even forest gardening which have higher yields and lower costs.
- I have seen a steady decline in the wooded areas in Chatham-Kent over my lifetime. If something isn't done soon, future generations will not get to experience the wildlife that Chatham-Kent has to offer.
- Even my seven-year-old son asks, "Dad, why do people keep cutting down the forest. Don't they know that animals need that to live?" If a child is smart enough to see that, is there a problem why we can't?
- Unlike most professions, the rural community refuses or is unable to self-regulate. When any group refuses to address irresponsible behaviour of members within its group, society must step in and achieve what is in the best interest of that society.
- No one in the anti-bylaw group has been able to answer the question: "If a voluntary policy existed and a rogue landowner refuses to comply, what will you do to address this problem?"
- How far can Chatham-Kent go with growth and development when we are catering to one portion of the agricultural community that is ultraconservative and anti-regulatory?
- Many landowners in Chatham-Kent have a respect for nature and would never consider bulldozing their woodlots. However, there are a few individuals who do not care and are willing to sacrifice their woodlots for a few more bushels of corn
- Chatham-Kent is a rural community who loves their trees, other than a few farmers motivated by economic return. Ours is one family that will

move to a neighbouring county with enough common sense to have a bylaw to protect the trees and their futures.

- Why does Chatham-Kent not see that a policy against clear cutting, destroying hundreds of years of natural growth and ecosystems is so important to our present and future lives?
- I'm a farmer and I feel that country people are supposed to be stewards of the land not destroyers. Removing woodlots is not good stewardship and it may be just selfish greed. This senseless destruction must stop now.
- I'm a farmer in my mid-80s and I have witnessed many changes over the years in Chatham-Kent. The clear cutting of our forests is not a change that I am proud of or approve of. What are we thinking that we don't do everything in our power to not only preserve the remaining forest cover but even attempt to increase the forest coverage. My son has our farm and woodlot now and we are proud to say we value diversified ecosystems.
- The most important thing for all of us to remember is that we humans are here on this planet earth for a very short period of time and it's very important that we respect the earth and leave something for the future.
- I think my fellow family farmers should have more input into this decision-making. Chatham-Kent should formulate a tree cutting bylaw and not be influenced by the wave of syndicate buying with owners that don't care about maintaining forest cover in Chatham-Kent.
- The will of the people of Chatham-Kent is being subverted by a small number of vocal landowners who are very knowledgeable about the necessities of farming but are very uninformed or misinformed about how the world's environment functions.
- If you really think that the economy is more important than the environment, try counting your money while you hold your breath!
- I am disappointed in the official stance taken by the Federation of Agriculture because being a farmer I consider adequate tree cover and its management is a vital component of good land stewardship. Anyone claiming otherwise either isn't using best management practices or doesn't understand what is at stake. A number of other farmers I know share my feelings.

- We are convinced that the spokespersons for the agricultural groups in Chatham-Kent are not speaking for all of farming community but only for a small segment.

Concerns of Anti-Bylaw Individuals

- Kent Federation of Agriculture and Kent Christian Farmers Association should have input on the forest cover issue as two accredited farmers groups respected by farmers. The National Farmers Union is not accredited in Ontario, so the Kent branch of National Farmers Union should have no voice in this issue. (3)
- I take great offence to the people who make us look like bad stewards of the land. Our forests are a part of our land use that we manage. If for some reason a woodlot needs to be removed, we do it. We also own about 80 acres of woodlot that is being managed and at this time have no plans to take it down.
- Proponents of a bylaw have not convinced me that this is the forest apocalypse they have made it out to be.
- We went through this in the 1980's. As a result, we have a policy in place that worked very well until the small special-interest group stirred up the pot. You will find that most farmers will do the right thing. You must remember that this is private land and business and without our cooperation very little will be achieved. They do not have a nickel invested in this. It's not a public park.
- It is no wonder that the farming community is up in arms. This group is interfering with the farmers' business.
- Green groups may want owners to maintain dangerous unprofitable woodlots where there is no potential for profit but that doesn't seem fair to the owners.
- Let the farmer farm his land. He does not need you trying to boss him. Why do you want to rob the farmer of his farm value?
- As stakeholders, we farmers are well educated but we need engagement so we can educate you.
- The people who are pushing this bylaw do not own the land. I am a primary land and forest owner. If they like the Communist ideas they should move to Cuba, where everything belongs to the state. I own the land that I am responsible for the best use of land which includes the forest which is a secondary crop to us.

- My farm is 20% woodlot, so if Chatham-Kent wants to take control of that 20% then every fifth house in the city needs to be torn down and planted to trees without compensation, just to be fair. That plan would do much more to protect the environment than a tree bylaw would.
- Reality is a factor that you people should take into consideration.
- Don't try telling landowners what to do, they'll end up doing it anyway
- Agriculture in Chatham-Kent is world-class and we must be able to compete with the rest of the world. Compare Chatham-Kent to every one of our competing countries and it will show that our competition has few or no trees on all of their Class 1 and 2 land.
- There are millions of acres of tree growing land in Canada but Canada's prime land in Chatham-Kent should be used to grow our food.

11. Your Advice to Council

Supportive Comments

- Council needs to take the initiative and do the right thing for the public today and in decades to come by enacting a no clear cutting bylaw. (4)
- Please protect the remaining woodlots in Chatham Kent by having a clear cutting bylaw. This issue is very important and your vote will be remembered at the next municipal election. Please do the right thing and stop clear cutting woodlots. (3)
- It is vital that council finds a compromise between supporting our farmers and ensuring that Chatham-Kent does not lose what little forest cover remains.
- I would like my Council representatives to support a sustainable future for my children with the trees they need to clean their air.

Pro Bylaw Concerns or Challenges:

- Council needs to act on behalf of its entire community not just a few individuals advocating for their property rights. (9)
- This debate is not only unnecessary but it makes Chatham-Kent look like a community that only cares about making more money regardless of the destruction it causes. (3)

- If Council is currently not willing to consider the wishes of all residents of both rural and urban Chatham-Kent, have a referendum on the issue of a tree cutting bylaw at the next municipal election day. (3)
- A continuing lack of leadership from Council on this issue will be felt by all looking for re-election in the next election.
- I hope that our hard-working Chatham-Kent Councillors will not be intimidated from doing the right thing for Chatham-Kent's future
- Have the integrity to act now decisively. The future will judge your time in office.
- Why is Council shirking their responsibilities to the greater good of our community and putting off a decision yet again, so that will be up to a later Council is to do what needs to be done?
- Council has missed the mark twice now on this issue.
- Council should remember their motion from February 11, 2013 that the motion regarding a temporary clear cutting bylaw be tabled until a woodlot conservation bylaw comes before Council after community consultation has taken place. I am concerned when I hear talk about a policy rather than a bylaw. I hope and expect that Council will vote on the bylaw, based on reality not myths.
- I am a senior citizen and the wife of a farmer. I appreciate and respect farm owners who value woodlots. Talk to seniors on this issue. We have not only the experience of years but also the energy to educate younger generations. I hope the current Council will base their vote on facts and not emotional untruths.
- The stakeholders in Chatham-Kent have a much higher priority on this issue than municipal council does

Anti-Bylaw Concerns or Challenges:

- Local government needs to let farmers do their business and everyone else to mind theirs. (2)
- Chatham-Kent has much more important things to worry about than this tree cutting bylaw, as I would bet many Councillors will agree.
- All plants purify the air, not just trees. Chatham-Kent Council should consider a bylaw where homeowners cannot mow their grass or trim their shrubs which is only for cosmetic look. That would do a lot more for the environment than a tree cutting bylaw.

- There are hundreds of acres of municipal owned property which could be re-forested.
- Careful consideration should be given by Council to the interaction between a tree cutting bylaw and drain clearing, hydro and rail line cover, etc.
- If a tree bylaw passes my bush dies! I hope this does not happen but if push comes to shove... Council should think clearly!
- The woodlot cover in Chatham-Kent must be determined by world market forces and by a few of us who keep woodlots as a hobby.
- The municipal Council needs to make a decision one way or the other and stop putting things off over and over again.