

Scout Valley Forest Management Study, City of Orillia

Stakeholder Session & Public Meeting



November 13 & 28, 2013

Guiding Solutions

in the Natural Environment



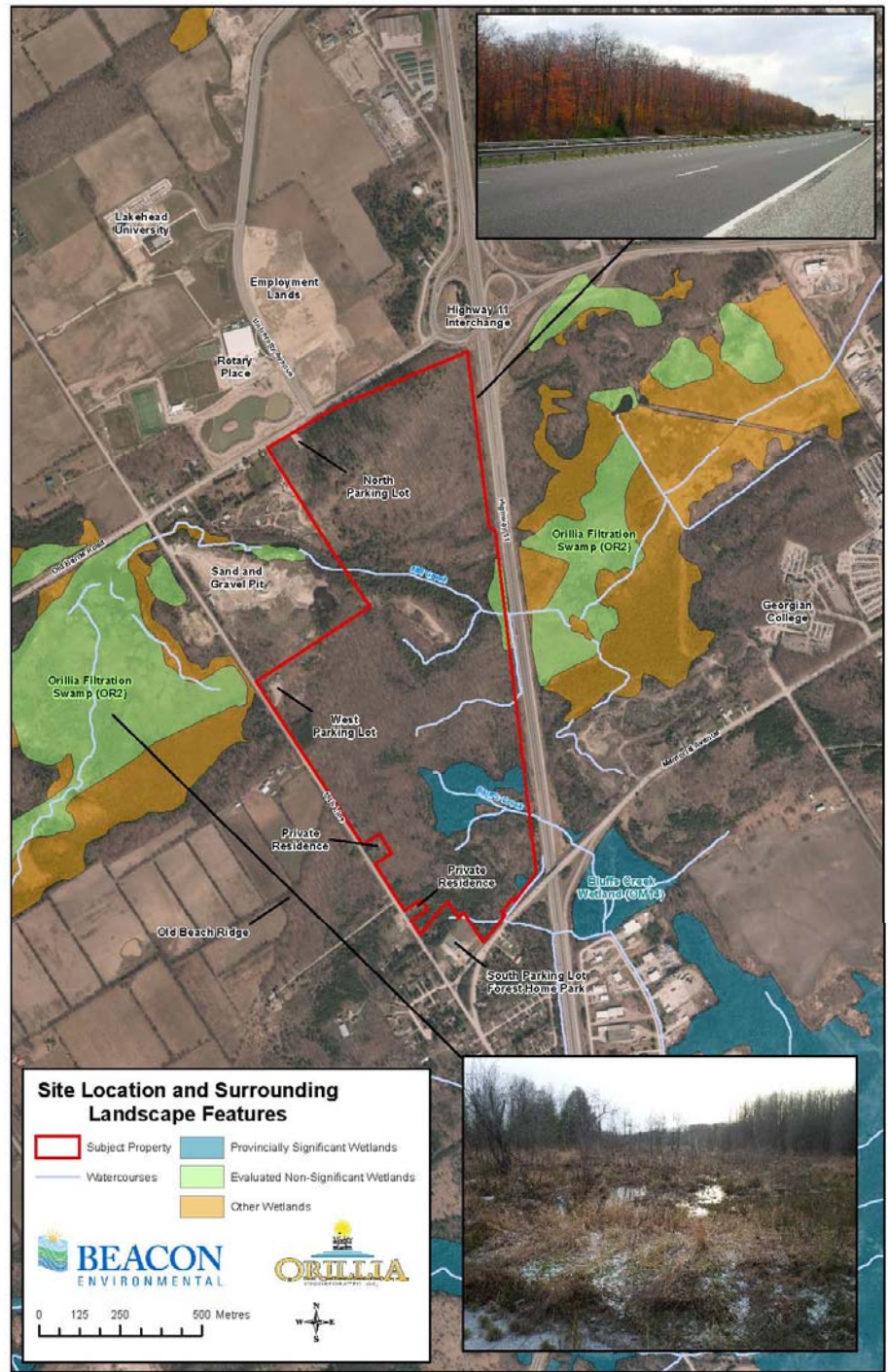
Project Objectives and Schedule

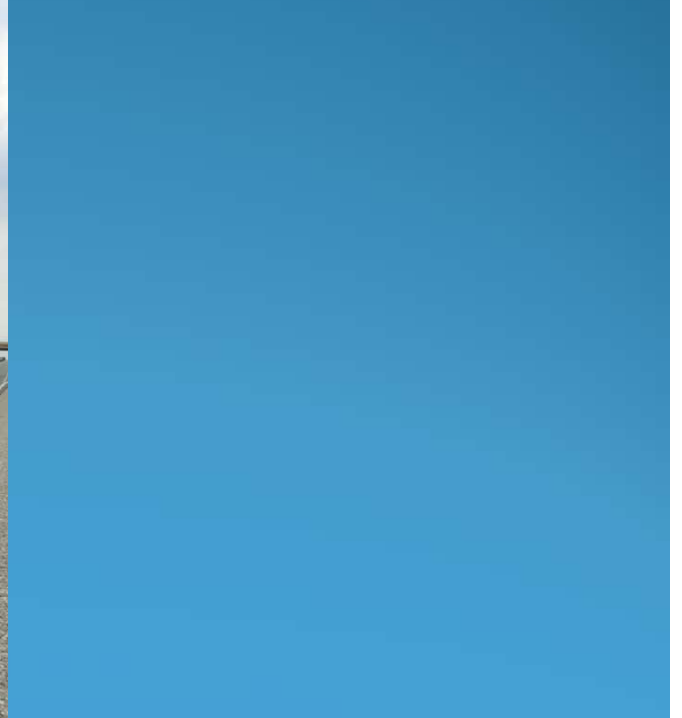
- Recognizing the ecological and social values of Scout Valley, The City of Orillia commissioned the study to plan and manage for the long term sustainability of the park.
- Project started in April 2013 with field inventories through summer and fall for ecological, cultural and built environment. Final report in early 2014 for council review/approval.
- Key Goals: consult broadly throughout project; review and compilation of data; multidiscipline field inventory; constraints and opportunities; detailed report/maps and recommendations
- Management time scale of 20 to 25 year with 5 year targeted management plans for implementing tasks and adapting to changes and results (e.g., site restoration)



Scout Valley Site Setting

- Located in the southwest portion of the City (Hwy 11 & 15th Line); access/parking at the north, west and south sides. Site is 92 ha (227 ac) in size.
- Recreational areas to the north & south (Rotary Place, Forest Home Park) with access to Scout Valley – cultural linkage
- Range of adjacent land uses (industrial, agricultural, single residences and subdivision, major Hwy, future growth)
- Large natural heritage & EP land areas (Orillia Filtration Swamp, forested ridge, Bluffs Creek provincially significant wetland); Mill Creek flows through site; ground water recharge and discharge areas – ecological linkage

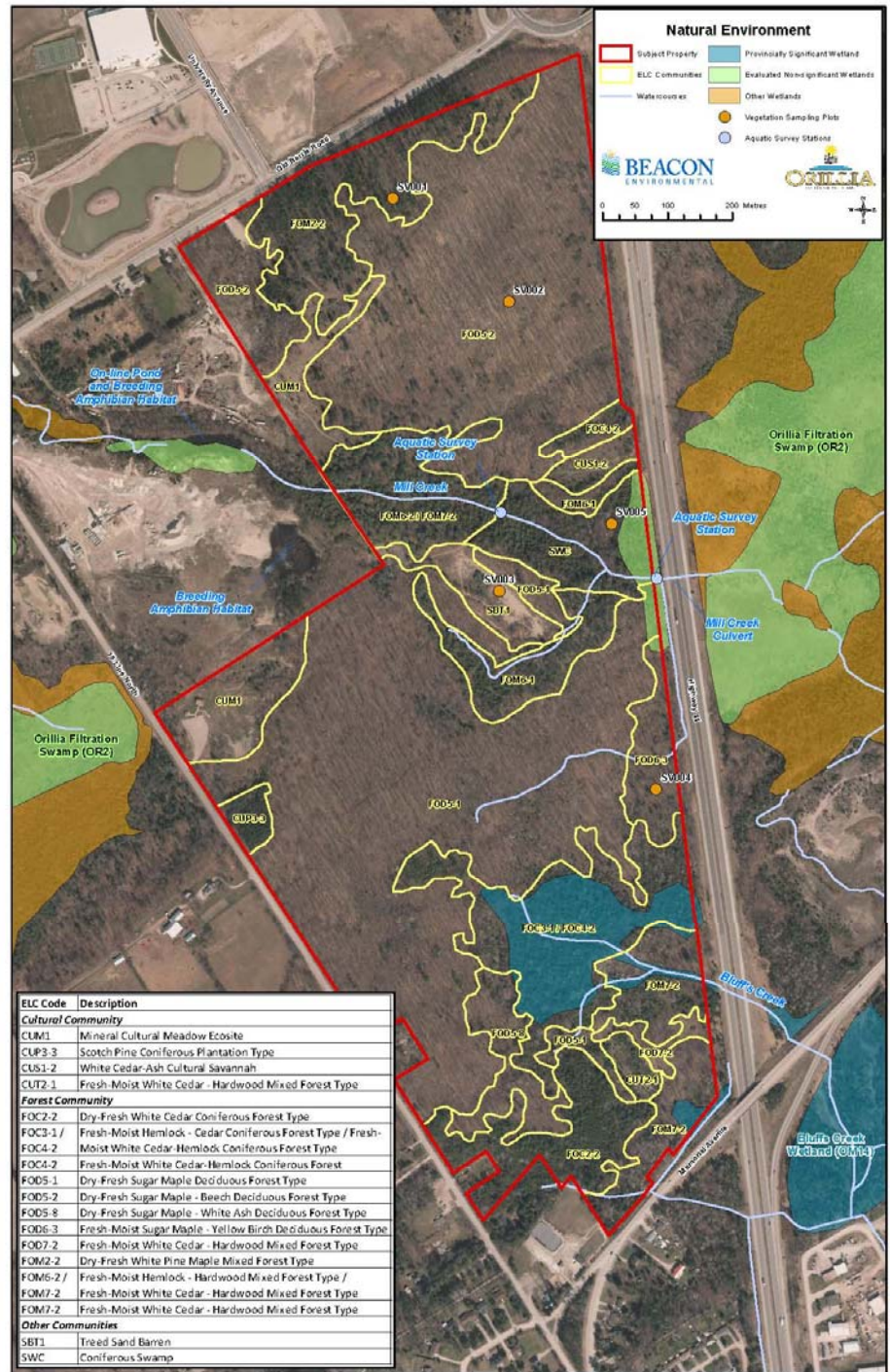


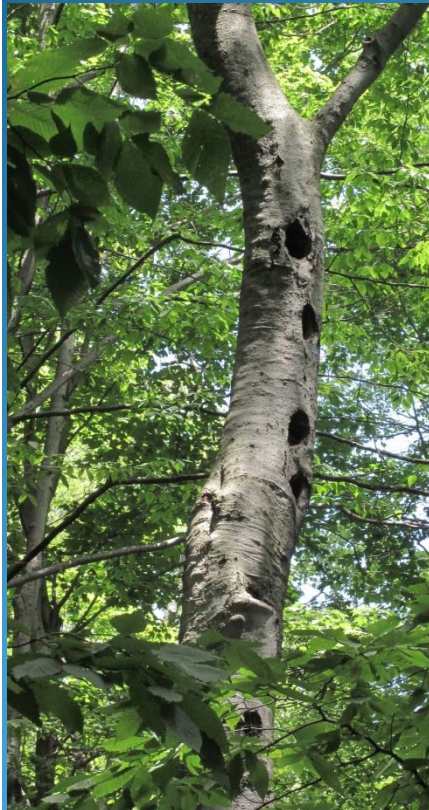
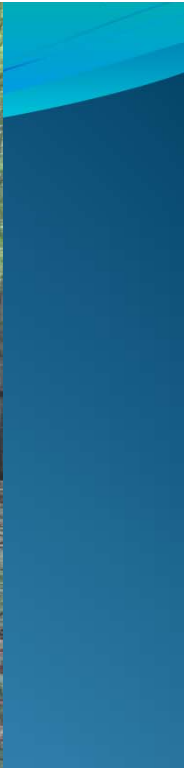




Natural Environment

- Largest City park and likely most significant ecological asset;
- Important ecological linkage: Lake Simcoe-City-Oro/Medonte;
- Diverse representation of forest, wetland, and other vegetation communities (treed sand barren), old growth elements on ridge;
- Important habitat for flora and fauna including habitat for forest interior birds, seepage areas for winter wildlife and unique plants;
- Species at Risk: Butternut (Endangered); Milksnake (Special Concern); Eastern Wood-Pewee (Special Concern, Nat); and,
- High quality coldwater stream with springs/seeps and potential to support Brook Trout and other species.

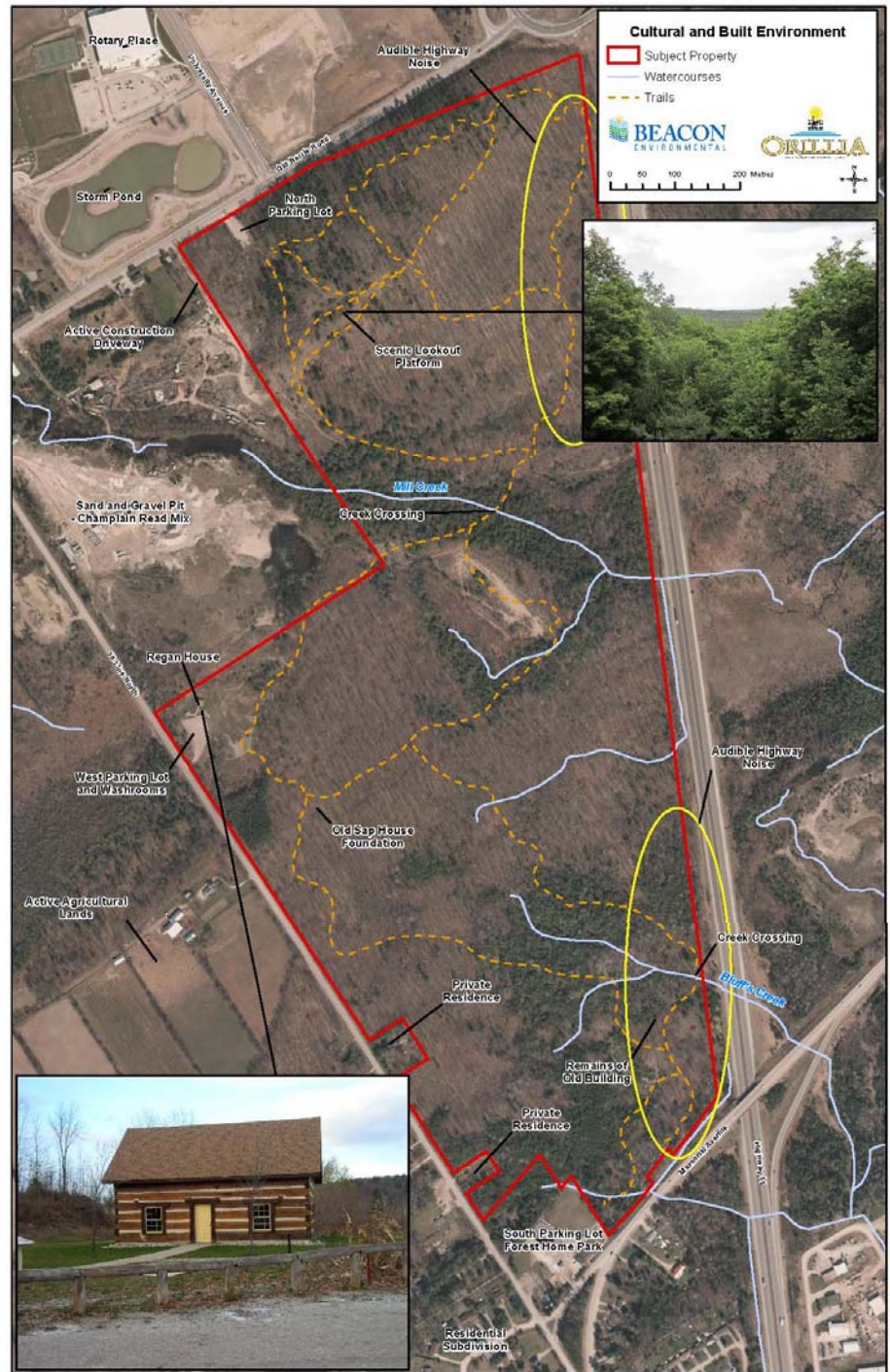






Cultural and Built Environment

- Strong community involvement and support (naturalist and conservation clubs, volunteers) – Regan House, bridge crossings and trails, garbage clean-up;
- Scenic lookout platform, park infrastructure (washrooms, signage and general interpretation, parking lots);
- Remnant features such as old sap house and building foundation, old roadway, old fencerow trees, past sand/gravel pit
- Active sand/gravel and concrete facility, major/minor road infrastructure, recreational facilities, future employment lands; municipal servicing, hydro utilities







Field Inventory Findings

- Five Vegetation Sampling Protocol (VSP) plots in representative areas for baseline, medium and long term monitoring. Over 18 vegetation community types.
- Some representation of invasive species and disease such as Gout Weed, Garlic Mustard, Scotch Pine, Butternut Canker.
- Diverse and abundant bird community (at least 33 breeding birds, 8 area-sensitive) and other functions such as migration habitat. Over 300 species of plants (some rare and specialized species).
- 12 species of fish (cool & warmwater) recorded by MNR/CA from Mill Creek within property. Coldwater species such as Brook Trout found downstream of Bluff's Creek (22 fish species).



Initial Opportunities/Constraints

- Continue to monitor Vegetation Sampling plots and engage community involvement, integrate with planning/monitoring
- Integrate FMP with Trail Master Plan (e.g., avoid sensitive areas)
- Species at Risk net benefit site through restoration and enhancement (e.g., Butternut planting, Barn Swallow boxes)
- Reintroduction of Brook Trout into Mill Creek
- Fulfill requirements of Conservation Easement

- Fish barrier to migration upstream past on-line pond
- Loss of channel flow west of Hwy 11 (low culvert)
- Resources and potential issues such as Emerald Ash Borer impacts
- Access for emergency works or first aid response



Initial Examples of Threats

- Some representation of invasive species with some issue areas of concern close to parking lots and trails. Remain proactive but not a significant issue at this time - monitor. Plan for Beech bark disease and Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Climate Change and adaptation.
- Mill Creek arises from west of the property and flows through an active industrial area. Intensification or alternative land uses may result in downstream impacts (creek flows through on-line pond).
- Highway/roadway improvements or expansion (e.g., MTO lands in the northeast, Hwy 11 culvert), 15th Line upgrades (manage edge).
- Vandalism of facilities and inappropriate or intensive use of trails (ATVs, mtn. bikes in sensitive areas), trail/ridge erosion, introduction of invasive species. Adjacent land activities.





Balancing Use, Management and Sustainability

- Promoting use while managing to minimize negative effects to forest, wetland, beach ridge, Mill and Bluff's Creek.
- Managing hazard trees along trails through low footprint method (e.g., using wood chips for trail to minimize root compaction) .
- Looking at options for emergency access.
- Identifying appropriate bike use and suitable trails.
- Management techniques for one feature may not be suitable for another



Initial Recommendations/Solutions

- Maintain strong community involvement and commitment to volunteers through support and communication.
- Management plan to identify key natural and cultural attributes and develop a framework for management options
- Management objectives can be divided into priorities, resource allocation, and timeframe (e.g., ecological succession)
- Identify reasonable and realistic management objectives and indicators to measure results over short, medium and long term.

- Trail impacts: good signage and information with monitoring
- Road improvements: know schedule of works and identify mitigation options (e.g., early management of new forest edge)

