



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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To: Mayors/Reeves and Councils
From: Sandra Weber, Director
Denise Van Amersfoort, Senior Planner
Date: April 10, 2018

Re: Draft Huron Natural Heritage Plan (HNHP)

This report provides an update on the draft Huron Natural Heritage Plan.

Background

The County of Huron Official Plan as approved by Huron County Council on June 2, 2010 states that the County will develop a Natural Heritage Plan.

The approach the draft HNHP takes in protecting Natural Environment is the same approach that has been used for many years in Huron County. The Plan refines this approach and provides updated mapping which more accurately reflects what is on the ground.

The goals of the Huron Natural Heritage Plan are to:

- Provide an increased understanding of the location, significance and interaction of the County's natural heritage features;
- Ensure the County and local planning documents are consistent with the provincial direction for protecting natural heritage features;
- Develop priorities for land stewardship projects;
- Support sustainable economic development.

Public consultation for the draft Plan was held in the fall of 2016. In February of 2017, Huron County Council received the draft report for information and provided direction on adjacent lands (to be considered 120m from provincially significant wetlands and 50m from all other features). In addition, County Council directed the mapping be updated to reflect 2015 aerial photography.

The updated mapping is now complete and further public consultation will be held in May of 2018.

Public Consultation

The first round of public consultations on the Natural Heritage Plan generated valuable feedback from constituents. The questions and comments received have helped to inform changes made to the documents and the design of the upcoming public consultation.

Mapping

In response to comments from the public, the mapping in the technical document was updated to reflect the 2015 aerial photography. The new, draft mapping for each municipality will be available for public review at the upcoming information sessions. It is intended that this mapping be

reviewed at a site-specific scale at the time the mapping is incorporated into local Official Plans (during the local Official Plan Five Year Review process).

Natural Heritage Plan Documents

In an effort to better reflect the contents of the Natural Heritage Plan, the document names have been adjusted.

- The Technical Document has had the following subtitle added: 'Background Research for Natural Environment Planning'.
- The 'Huron Natural Heritage Plan Implementation Strategy' has been renamed; moving forward, the document will be referred to as the 'Huron Natural Heritage Plan' with the subtitle 'Current Approach to Natural Environment Planning and Recommended Updates'.

Drop-in Information Sessions

The Planning Department will be hosting three drop-in information sessions in the month of May (one located in the northern area of the County, one central and one southern). The sessions will be held at local libraries and will provide an opportunity for members of the public to review the draft document.

Online Consultation

Members of the public will also have an opportunity to review the draft plan and mapping online and provide feedback.

Notification

To ensure residents are aware of the upcoming public consultation, the following actions will be completed:

- Presentations to local Councils in advance of information sessions;
- Update the Natural Heritage Plan information on the Huron County website including the addition of 'Frequently Asked Questions' document;
- Advertise schedule of information sessions using website, radio and newspaper;
- Email notification to County stakeholder groups
- Direct mail notification to members of the public who have submitted comments or attended past open houses.

Following the public consultation process, the Draft Natural Heritage Plan will return to Huron County Council.

Others Consulted

Planners

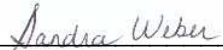
Natural Heritage Advisory Committee

R. White, Biologist;

N. Bean, GIS Technician

Sincerely,


Denise Van Amersfoort
Senior Planner


Sandra Weber
Director