

2020 ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACTIVITIES IN RENFREW COUNTY FOREST

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HARVEST

Timber sales for 2020 harvest activities were advertised in October 2019. Successful bids were received for all four sales. In addition, two longer-term contracts awarded in 2019 were available for harvest in 2020 (Opeongo and Shine Hill/Yantha). About half of the area at Opeongo was harvested in 2020, with the remaining area to be harvested in 2021. Harvest did not occur at Shrine Hill/Yantha and the contract has expired. This area has been advertised 4 times in the past with no success. There are limited/no markets for spruce pulpwood, making the completion of spruce plantations thinning difficult. Some revenue from Maves Tract applied to 2020, because of a short-term extension provided in 2019 due to extenuating circumstances. A summary is provided in Table 1.

Harvesting activities took place in almost all seasons of 2020, although five out of six blocks had some sort of timing restrictions for species at risk or recreation value. No major operational issues occurred, but because of the limited timing window available for harvest and some equipment issues, one block required an extension into early 2020 to complete harvest and hauling. As a result, some revenue for Germanicus Tract will apply to 2021. There was a complaint from an adjacent landowner about the harvest at Opeongo. Ongoing communication occurred with the individual, information was shared, and attempts were made to address the concern.

Approximately 24 people worked on the Renfrew County Forest (RCF) in 2020¹, as a result of tendered harvest operations, cutting and skidding or forwarding wood, building roads, processing timber on site, supervising operations, and hauling logs to mills.

Two County of Renfrew staff completed all planning (timber cruising, analysis, prescription writing), layout, tendering, wood measurement and operations monitoring activities. Most tree marking was completed by County staff, with a small area contracted out due to staff time being reallocated to trails activities.

Table 1. Summary of 2020 Harvest Activities in RCF

Tract	Harvest Type	Area (ha)	Volume (m3)	Revenue (\$)
Maves	Spruce/Red Pine Thinning; extended from 2019	8	820 ²	7,958.36
Opeongo	Poplar/Mixedwood Clearcut, shelterwood; Multiple year harvest continuing in 2021	80 ³	7,301	76,960.29
Shrine Hill/Yantha	Spruce/Red Pine Thinning; not completed (19 ha)	0	0	0
Simpson's Pit	Red Pine Thinning	48	2,075	60,155.39
Beachburg	Red Pine Thinning	15	915	23,051.92
Germanicus	Red Pine Thinning; small extension into 2021	12	599	21,148.20
Elliot	Red Pine Thinning	9	807	14,465.79
Total for 2020		172	12,517	203,739.95



Figure 1. Operators Sarah and Mike Ott at Simpson's Pit Tract

¹ During active operations, employed by successful bidders.

² Approximate. \$7,000 was accrued for 2019, from associated estimated volume that was harvested in 2019. Total volume from Maves was 1,496m³.

³ Approximate. About half of total allocated area (162ha) was harvested in 2020.

RENEWAL

Aside from monitoring existing renewal projects, no renewal activities took place in RCF in 2020. Recent harvest activities have been red pine plantation thinnings or poplar clearcuts, which do not result in forest conditions conducive to tree planting because of the stage of management, or the occurrence of natural regeneration. It is anticipated that some area currently being harvested and upcoming planned harvests will require artificial regeneration (e.g. tree planting) activities in the coming years.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Given that in-person gatherings were limited in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, education and outreach activities were reduced. Opportunities are taken to positively promote sustainable forest management that occurs on RCF, as well as in Renfrew County as a whole, when staff time permits.

- Staff presented virtually to Algonquin College's Forestry Technician program about Renfrew County Forests.
- At the request of the Renfrew County District School Board, the County Forester was profiled in a video series [Edge Factor](#) exploring careers in STEM for high school students.
- The County Forester participated on a "Dream Maker Panel", a virtual Career Discovery Expo on October 7, 2020. The event was open to all young women (grades 7-12) and their parents in Renfrew County to explore career pathways in skilled trades, STEM, emergency response, entrepreneurship, and advancing women in society.

OTHER

Forest health and invasive species were big news items in Renfrew County forests in 2020: gypsy moth, emerald ash borer and sudden fir mortality were the main concerns and resulted in several public and municipal inquiries. A forest health report was prepared by County staff to summarize the major events of the year. The report will be made available to the public on the [County of Renfrew Website](#). In addition, 2020 was the first year of garlic mustard control (manual, by pulling) by staff at the Centennial Lake Tract. A population of the invasive plant was discovered in 2019 and will require annual monitoring and follow-up.

A student in Algonquin College's Forestry Technician program completed a 2-week co-op placement in forestry and trails with County staff.

County staff, on behalf of the County, submitted comments on three postings on the Environmental Registry of Ontario: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy, Proposed changes to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, and the Long-Term Management Direction for the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan for the Algonquin Park Forest.

Another historic well was filled, at Simpson's Pit Tract.



Figure 2. Edge Factor's Virtual Workplace Experience



Figure 3. Gypsy Moth egg masses at Barnett Park in Calabogie



Figure 4. Garlic Mustard removal from Centennial Lake Tract