



Joint Operations Base Feasibility/ Needs Study

Natural Heritage

Presentation Overview

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Department Overview

- ▶ The Natural Heritage Department looks after the Northumberland County Forest (5,500 acres), Weed Act, invasive species and Forest Conservation By-laws across the county
 - ▶ Restore and conserve forest primarily on Oak Ridges Moraine
 - ▶ Maintain 121 km trail network
 - ▶ 100,000 annual visitors
 - ▶ Manage ecological, recreational and forestry aspects of the County Forest
- ▶ The County took over managing the forest in 2001 from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources



Staffing Complement

- ▶ In early 2000's only part-time enforcement staff
- ▶ After several years, changed to 2 full-time operations staff
- ▶ Current staff 1 Manager, 4 operations (trails, forestry & natural heritage) and 4 students (May to August)
- ▶ Forecasting future staff increase of 1 position based on increased usage and operational requirements.



Current Working Conditions

- ▶ Manager's office is located at 555 Courthouse
- ▶ Staff work from mobile office trailer at the Veronica Street Public Works depot
- ▶ Portable washroom with no water
- ▶ Equipment is stored in:
 - ▶ 40-foot trailer at Veronica Street
 - ▶ 20-foot sea container at Northumberland Forest



Current Challenges

- ▶ The current trailer is inadequate and does not meet current or future needs, specifically:
 - ▶ Department manager is located offsite; challenging for communication and supervision of staff
 - ▶ Staff generally rotate working in the trailer due to the limited capacity
 - ▶ Lack of meeting space for meetings, training, lunchroom, etc.
 - ▶ Poor ventilation and poor heating/ cooling
 - ▶ Staff feel cramped in their workspace.
 - ▶ Facility does not align County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
 - ▶ Insufficient space to store/ charge equipment



Looking ahead

- ▶ The Natural Heritage department needs a permanent facility for current staff compliment and future needs
- ▶ Current configuration is a temporary solution and not a sustainable option
- ▶ Alternative option if JOB does not proceed – would need to rent a light industrial space
 - ▶ Assessed local real estate market, no locations close to the forest
 - ▶ Light industrial space available for lease in urban areas
 - ▶ Renovation would be required to suit the needs of the department and meet County's standards
 - ▶ Annual lease values \$60,000 - \$75,000
 - ▶ Increase size of onsite trailer, including washroom facilities

Current Operating Costs

Current Cost per Year

- Office trailer rental \$8,280
- Portable washroom rental \$2,400
- Sea container rental \$864
- Cleaning \$1,284
- Mileage, includes floating equipment costs and vehicle maintenance on County vehicles \$20,000

Total Annual Cost = \$32,828

Estimated Future Operating Costs

Lease Facility option

- Total expense for facility lease - \$70,000/year + Renovation
- Mileage = \$20,000
- Total Annual Cost = **\$90,000 + Renovation**

Leasing a facility will also likely lead to an increase in our operational GHG targets as it will be challenging to locate a facility capable of meeting our GHG emissions reduction target of 30% below 2005 levels by the year 2030, and 80% below 2005 levels by the year 2050.

Benefits of JOB for Natural Heritage

Slide - 1

- ▶ Improved communication and supervision: manager and team in same location
- ▶ Improved efficiency and level of service: staff and equipment closer to forest
- ▶ Inclusive and accessible facilities including entrances, workstations, washroom, changeroom and lunchroom
- ▶ Space to conduct health & safety meetings, job-specific training, indoor activities during poor weather days
- ▶ Space to store and maintain forestry equipment
- ▶ Electric plug-ins for vehicles and equipment to charge

Benefits of JOB for Natural Heritage

Slide - 2

- ▶ Time and cost savings for travel and trailering equipment from various sites to forest
- ▶ Cost savings by eliminating trailer and sea container rentals
- ▶ Improved health and safety for staff with proper ventilation systems, heating/ cooling and facilities for hand washing
- ▶ Cost savings from energy efficiencies and carbon reductions
- ▶ Operational benefits of shared facilities with other County departments

Summary - Slide 1

- ▶ The Natural Heritage department provides an important service and benefits to the residents of Northumberland County and the conservation of forest and Oak Ridges Moraine
- ▶ Natural Heritage needs a permanent facility to meet current and future needs
- ▶ The existing temporary location lacks adequate space for staff and equipment, leading to overcrowding and inefficiency
- ▶ The working conditions may attribute to health and safety concerns and do not meet accessibility standards

Summary - Slide 2

- ▶ Including Natural Heritage in a new JOB is expected to result in annual operating savings of \$32,800
- ▶ Alternatively, the cost of renting a suitable facility would be approximately \$70,000 per year plus capital costs for renovations