

Email from Nick Stow to Judy Makin, 27 July 2015 - bolding added

----- Original Message -----

Hello Judy:

I can briefly summarize the conclusions of our review of woodlot S20 against the NHRM criteria for significant woodlands.

The City was prepared to consider the woodlot as significant if it met one or more of the criteria.

The City considered the rail line to provide a break of more than 20 m between woodlots S20 and S23, meaning that the two woodlots should be evaluated separately against the criteria.

- **Criterion 1 – Woodland Size.** Forest cover in the subwatershed is between 30% and 60%, corresponding to a recommended size threshold of 50 ha. The woodlot is less than 50 ha in size.
- **Criterion 2a – Interior Forest.** Forest cover in the subwatershed is between 30% and 60%, corresponding to a recommended interior forest threshold of 8 ha. The woodlot has less than 8 ha of interior forest.
- **Criterion 2b – Proximity.** Woodlot S20 lies within 30 m of woodlot S23, but it was not immediately apparent what “ecological benefit” woodlot S20 would provide to woodlot S23. In order to apply this criterion in a defensible way, the City would have needed unequivocal evidence of a functional connection (*e.g.* a species at risk using both woodlots, groundwater recharge in one area supporting wetland or springs in another area, etc...), or have defined *a priori* what functions would be considered significant (*e.g.* providing mutually supporting habitats for area-sensitive birds or small mammals, etc...). The City will be defining the parameters for this criterion as it works on new guidelines for significant woodlands.
- **Criterion 2c – Linkages.** Woodlot S20 does not provide a linkage *between* other NHS features.
- **Criterion 2d – Water Protection.** Woodlot S20 is a headwater feature, but there’s no evidence that it is a “sensitive” headwater area, either in terms of fish habitat or other ecological functions. The City asked for the Province’s opinion on whether the wetlands within and adjacent to the woodlot provide habitat for Blanding’s turtle. The Province concluded that they do not.
- **Criterion 2e – Woodland Diversity.** Woodlot S20 is not unusually diverse, nor does it support any unusual species or assemblages of species.
- **Criterion 3 – Uncommon Characteristics.** Woodland S20 does not have a unique species composition, does not contain any S1 – S3 vegetation communities, and does not support any significant numbers of rare, uncommon or restricted woodland plant species. Based upon a detailed tree inventory, the woodlot does not contain 10 trees/ha greater than 100 years old, does not contain 10 tree/ha greater than 50 cm dbh, and does not have a basal area of 8 m²/ha in trees 40 cm dbh.
- **Criterion 4 – Economic and Social Values.** Woodlot S20 has no unusual economic value, is not known to provide any unusual or high value services, and is not known to have any particular educational, cultural or historical significance.

Given that most of the woodlot has grown up since 1976, and that the core of the woodlot is highly disturbed cedar, none of these conclusion are particularly surprising. Put in simple language, the woodlot is a small, irregularly shaped example of a disturbed, second-growth forest very common in the Ottawa area.

Nick

From: Judy Makin
Sent: July 23, 2015 9:46 PM
To: Stow, Nick
Subject: rationale for S20

Hi again, Nick

I've been asked by my community association and by Greenspace Alliance to give feedback on the City's decision regarding the S20 forest. I tried to take notes at our meeting on Monday when you provided your rationale for applying the criteria from the Natural Heritage Manual, but as I review my notes, I can see that I don't have a very comprehensive explanation.

Could you please send me something in writing that provides the rationale for your conclusions? As you know, this is the first application of these new provincial criteria, and we all need to understand and learn from this first important example.

Thank you,
Judy

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REFERENCE:

Natural Heritage Reference Manual, 2nd edition, March 2010, chapter 7, esp. pp. 68-70.

(8 MB - accessible from: <http://www.ontario.ca/document/natural-heritage-reference-manual>)