

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent

Community Development

Planning Services

Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole

From: Gabriel Clarke, MES, BA
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Date: December 3, 2021

Subject: 2021 Woodlot Public Engagement Survey and Analysis of Survey Results

This report is for the information of the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole.

Background

On April 26, 2021, Council approved a motion that introduced a temporary woodlot removal bylaw and directed administration to launch a full public engagement process to seek the public's input on options to manage woodlots in Chatham-Kent. In response, the Municipality held an online public engagement process between Monday June 14, 2021 and July 9, 2021.

On August 23, 2021, Council received the [Woodlot Preservation Motion Report](#) which provides a general overview of the community engagement process.

A more detailed summary of the results of the community engagement process was provided as [Appendix B](#) to the Woodlot Preservation Motion Report. This Appendix discussed participation activity and outlined the community's responses to a variety of general and more specific questions on issues related to Council's motion. A link to the now closed survey can be accessed [here](#).

As part of this survey, participants were asked to share their views on:

- General priorities related to woodlots
- Possible educational approaches to woodlot preservation
- Possible incentive-based approaches to woodlot preservation
- Possible regulatory approaches to woodlot preservation

The Woodlot Preservation Motion Report also provides:

- An overview of existing woodlot preservation incentive programs currently available to landowners,
- An analysis of the provincial legislative framework on natural heritage in Ontario,
- A review of woodlot related programs currently offered in other comparable Municipalities, and,
- An [Implementation Status Report](#) for Chatham-Kent's 2014 Natural Heritage Implementation Strategy.

As such, the Woodlot Preservation Motion Report provides a significant body of information that serves as a reference for the Staff, Council and the community on woodlot preservation and natural heritage matters in Chatham-Kent.

At the August 23, 2021 Council meeting, Council approved the creation of the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole (NHCOTW) and approved the [Committee's Terms of Reference](#) on September 27, 2021.

At the NHCOTW's inaugural meeting held on November 1, 2021, the Committee approved the [Meeting Framework and Public Participation Report](#) which committed to revisiting and further analyzing the results of the community engagement process in support of the NHCOTW's deliberations.

This Report was written in support of this commitment.

Comments

This Report outlines the following:

- An overview of municipal instruments to achieve various policy objectives,
- The structure of the online community engagement process, including the main sections and their purpose,
- A segmented analysis of the responses to the specific questions that were included in the survey.

1. Municipal Instruments to Achieve Policy Objectives in the Community

Broadly speaking, Municipal Governments have three types of instruments at their disposal when seeking to achieve various policy objectives in the community. These include:

- Education and awareness building programs
- Incentives programs and various forms of rewards
- Regulations and various enforcement mechanisms

Each of these instruments have specific strengths and limitations that are considered when assessing their ability to serve a particular policy objective. This, along with a general description of each instrument is outlined below:

Education and Awareness Building Programs

Description	Dissemination of information to the public.
Change Mechanism	Provides the recipient with information to align their actions with an outcome.
Strengths:	Requires comparatively lower levels of resources to implement, aligns with notions of autonomy and self-determination, and does not impact property rights.
Limitations:	Requires the voluntary participation of the public to align their actions with the objective, is dependent on the public's receptivity to the message and the credibility of the delivery agent. Does not address any competing pressures that may exist and does not establish a common set of rules.
Generally Effective When:	The barriers for the individual to take action (i.e. cost, effort, competing pressures etc.) are lower and/or the information demonstrates that the individual will benefit directly by taking action or is disadvantaged by not taking action.

Incentive and Reward Programs

Description	A form of monetary or non-monetary reward or encouragement.
Change Mechanism	Provides the recipient with an encouragement to align their actions with an outcome.
Strengths	Has the potential to address competing pressures, address barriers to participation (i.e. cost) and provides motivation to align actions with an objective. Incentives are voluntary in nature which aligns with notions of autonomy and self-determination and do not impact property rights.
Limitations	The level of the incentive has to be calibrated to adequately address competing pressures surrounding the issue in order to be effective. If competing pressures are high, the incentive has to be set accordingly which leads to a high cost of implementation. Incentives are dependent on the public's willingness to opt-in. Incentives do not establish a common set of rules.
Generally Effective When:	The incentive sufficiently addresses competing pressures. Incentives are much less effective when competing pressures outweigh the encouragement provided by the incentive.

Regulations

Description	Rules, penalties and enforcement.
Change Mechanism	Establishes rules that outline acceptable conduct and employs penalties and enforcement to discourage actions that do not align with an outcome.
Strengths	Regulations establish rules that prescribe a range of acceptable conduct and can vary from permissive to restrictive depending on their design. A well calibrated set of penalties and consistent enforcement has the potential to discourage undesired actions. Regulations have the potential to establish a level playing field.
Limitations	Unclear, complex and/or overly onerous rules can limit compliance. Poorly calibrated penalties and/or uneven enforcement can limit effectiveness. Unpopular regulations can lead to willful non-compliance and/or a high cost of enforcement. Regulations might only apply to and/or disproportionately burden certain groups.
Generally Effective When	The rules are fair and clear, compliance is simple, enforcement is implemented, the penalties are proportionate to the transgressions and a general consensus exists that the collective benefits resulting from the regulations outweigh the burden placed upon the individual on whom the regulations apply.

Education, Incentives and regulatory instruments may be implemented either individually or in combination to support a given policy objective. Their appropriate application is informed by the strengths and limitations outlined above along with the nature of the issue and the degree to which the community is already organically aligned with the policy objective. In certain circumstances, the instruments have the potential to complement one another when used in combination in so far as the strengths of each can offset the limitations of the others and which can lead to a more optimal result than if only one instrument were employed.

For example, in a given hypothetical situation where significant competing socio-economic pressures exist and a particular policy objective is pursued, employing education alone may only persuade a relatively small percentage of the community to align their actions with the policy objective, and success is unlikely.

If an incentive-only approach is employed in pursuit of the policy objective, the incentive would have to be set high enough to adequately address the most significant of the competing socio-economic pressures, which leads to a high implementation cost. If the incentive is set at a lower level, implementation cost is reduced but its ability to achieve the policy objective is also reduced commensurate with those socio-economic pressures it leaves unaddressed.

If a regulations-only based approach is employed in pursuit of the policy objective, the rules, penalties and enforcement all have to be set high enough to adequately address the most significant of the competing socio-economic pressures, leading to a rigid regulatory regime and higher enforcement burden. If the rules, penalties and/or

enforcement are relaxed, the rigidity and the enforcement costs of the regulatory regime are reduced but its ability to achieve the policy objective is also lowered in so far as it will not fully capture all instances of non-compliance and/or actions that differ from the policy objective.

In this hypothetical case, a combination of education, incentives, and/or regulatory instruments might be the optimal approach based on their ability to complement one another. The incentive might be set to a more moderate level than if it is used on its own because the regulation can be relied on to address the more significant instances of non-compliance. The regulation might be relaxed compared to employing regulation on its own because the incentive can be relied on to provide an encouragement in support of the policy objective and the regulatory regime can be limited to addressing those more significant actions that run counter to the policy objective. Finally underpinning the entire effort is the education instrument which might not only articulate a value proposition in support of the policy objective but might also provide a means to increase awareness about the availability of the incentive and the existence and scope of the regulation.

It is important to note that the above is provided as a hypothetical thought exercise and not a statement of preferred action by Administration regarding woodlot preservation in Chatham-Kent. It is included in this Report as a means to stimulate thought in support the decision making process, recognizing that the particular characteristics and considerations surrounding the issue might warrant the investigation of a different course of action.

It should also be noted that previous investigations revealed a variety of existing educational and incentive programs related to environmental stewardship and woodlot conservation, restoration and enhancement currently being delivered throughout Chatham-Kent by a number of partner agencies, including the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, the Saint Clair Region Conservation Authority, the Government of Ontario, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, and numerous community-based groups including Releaf Chatham-Kent and the Sydenham Field Naturalists for example.

In summary, education and awareness building instruments might provide an effective means to achieve policy objectives in some cases, the incentive instrument or the regulatory instrument might prove to be more effective in other cases, and a combination of education, incentives and/or regulations might be more effective in others. This thinking formed the foundation of the community engagement process that was undertaken in support of Council's Woodlot Preservation Motion.

2. Structure of the Community Engagement Process

In support of Council's Motion from April 26, 2021, Administration hosted an online community engagement process between June 14, 2021 and July 9, 2021. This included a dedicated information page on www.letstalkchatham-kent.ca, a virtual open

house, an online survey, and a diverse communications campaign. Throughout this time, approximately 1500 residents partially or fully completed the survey and over 3500 comments were received. The survey was structured with six (6) main sections, each of which is described below:

Section 1: About You

This section contained a number of demographic-related questions. The data collected provided a means to segment the results based on a number of socio-economic factors and also helped with survey authentication during the preparation of the survey security analysis report.

Section 2: Your Priorities

This section contained three questions meant to gain a general sense of the community's views on issues related to woodlot preservation before getting into the details. Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with statements touching on support for woodlot preservation, property rights, and taxes.

Section 3: Woodlot Preservation Tools

This section contained one multiple choice question that outlined a range of potential instruments that might be employed to support woodlot preservation modeled on the Education-Incentive-Regulation spectrum discussed above. Participants were asked to select a preferred instrument, combination of instruments, or indicate that no additional action should be taken by the Municipality to preserve woodlots.

Section 4: Education

This section contained questions on details that would have to be considered in the event that Council directed the creation of a new educational program in the future. Participants were asked to select the kinds of information they thought could be worth including in a woodlot-themed education program and the formats to deliver the information.

Section 5: Incentives

This section contained questions on details that would have to be considered in the event that Council directed the creation of a new incentive program in the future. Participants were asked to share their views on the kinds of woodlot preservation activities might be incentivized, the form the incentive might take (i.e. tax break, direct cash payment, etc.), and an appropriate size for the incentive.

Section 6: By-Law

This section contained questions on details that would have to be considered in the event that Council directed the creation of a By-law in the future. Participants were asked to share their views on what size of woodlot might be captured in a By-Law and what activities they felt should be exempted or not from a By-Law, or allowed with a permit. Participants were also asked if they felt that some form of compensation might be desirable as a condition for permit approval, which decision-making body might be

responsible for reviewing applications, and their level of support for assigning enforcement resources.

It is important to underscore the hypothetical nature of the questions posed in sections 4-6. Each section began with: “If Council chooses to introduce...” to clearly lay out that no decisions had been made in any regard. These sections were developed in alignment with the content of Council’s Woodlot Preservation Motion and included to make best use of the survey by collecting views on items that would be considered as part of Council’s deliberations on the matter.

3. Community Responses to the Survey Questions:

Launched in response to Council’s Woodlot Preservation Motion, the survey forms one of several data collection efforts undertaken at Council’s direction that has also included a review of existing incentive programs, a Best Management Practices review, the tree cover change analysis, a review of stewardship activities, and a provincial policy review, among others.

The online survey generated a significant community response. An initial summary and analysis of the results of the survey was included in the August 23, 2021 Report to Council. However, given the volume of information generated and the evolving work of the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole, a second review of the results was completed so that it might support the decision making process. Specifically, the second review highlights the points of convergence or high agreement, and divergence or low agreement that exist in the survey along via a segmentation of the answers provided by woodlot owners and non-woodlot owners.

It is important to note that Administration does not hold an opinion on the weight that should be accorded to the results of this survey versus any other piece of information or factor that might enter into Council’s decision making process. As with any other survey, the results provide an aggregation of the opinions of those who participated, which might over-represent or under-represent the true sentiments of the community on any particular item included.

It should also be noted that this second review provides a non-exhaustive supplementary analysis of the survey results and should be considered in conjunction with the survey summary included in the August 23, 2021 Report to Council. Additional analysis may be undertaken at the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole’s direction.

Section 1: About You

Survey Question: “I live in a rural area/urban area”

Result: 59.9% of respondents identified as rural residents and 40.1% as urban residents.

Analysis: Rural residents provided a majority of the 1500+ survey responses received.

Survey Question: “I have a forest on my property”

Result: 38% of respondents identified as having forest on their property, 62% identified as not having forest on their properties.

Analysis: Landowners with forest on their property provided an important minority of the 1500+ survey responses received, and were overrepresented in the survey results compared to Chatham-Kent’s overall population¹. This in no way suggests an unfair outcome as organizing voter turnout and ensuring high participation rates are a long-held tradition in democracy.

Section 2: Your PrioritiesSurvey Question: “I support the preservation of woodlots in Chatham-Kent”Result:

	Totally Support	Slightly Support	Neutral	Slightly Oppose	Totally Oppose
Owners of Forested Lands	56.9%	10.9%	9%	5.3%	17.9%
Owners of non-forested lands	81.1%	6.1%	4.5%	2.7%	5.7%
Overall	71.7%	7.9%	6.3%	3.8%	10.3%

Analysis: Overall, the majority of respondents expressed support for the statement. The majority of owners of forested lands expressed support for the statement, but expressed less support and more opposition to the statement than respondents who do not have forests on their property.

Survey Question: “I support the introduction of restrictions on property rights to preserve woodlots in Chatham-KentResult:

	Totally Support	Slightly Support	Neutral	Slightly Oppose	Totally Oppose
Owners of Forested Lands	34.3%	11.6%	6.5%	7.2%	40.4%

¹ Please see Page 16 of the Woodlot Consultation Security report for a detailed calculation in support of this statement, available at <https://pub-chatham-kent.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=591>

Owners of non-forested lands	55.6%	17.3%	5.9%	4.7%	16.5%
Overall	47.6%	15.2%	6%	5.6%	25.5%

Analysis: Overall, the majority of respondents expressed some degree of support for the statement. Owners of forested lands were almost evenly split between supporting and opposing the statement, with a slight majority either slightly or totally opposed to the statement. Respondents who do not have forest on their property generally expressed a higher degree of support for the statement than their forest-owning counterparts.

Survey Question: “I am prepared to pay more in taxes to preserve woodlots in Chatham-Kent”

Result:

	Totally Support	Slightly Support	Neutral	Slightly Oppose	Totally Oppose
Owners of Forested Lands	23.4%	10.4%	14.6%	7%	44.5%
Owners of non-forested lands	30.4%	20.2%	18.5%	8%	22.9%
Rural Residents	23.6%	14%	15.1%	8.1%	39.2%
Urban Residents	33.7%	20.6%	20%	7.1%	18.7%
Overall	27.7%	16.4%	17.2%	7.6%	31.2%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that 44.1% of respondents voiced some degree of support for the statement, 38.8% expressed some degree of opposition and almost 1 in 5 expressed a neutral stance. Owners of forested lands were significantly more opposed to the statement than their non-forest owning counterparts. Urban residents expressed a greater willingness to pay more in taxes to support woodlot preservation than their rural counterparts when the results were segmented along those lines.

Section 3: Woodlot Preservation Tools

Survey Question: “What Should the Municipality do to Preserve Woodlots?”

Result:

	Nothing	Education	Education & Incentives	Education, Incentives & Regulation	Education & Regulation
Owners of Forested Lands	17.7%	5.5%	32.4%	35.2%	9.2%
Owners of non-forested lands	7.1%	3.4%	17%	54.8%	17.8%
Rural Residents	15.4%	4.8%	28.7%	39%	12.1%
Urban Residents	4.5%	3.1%	14.7%	60.1%	17.7%
Overall	10.8%	4.8%	22.9%	47.1%	14.5%

Analysis: the overall results reveal that a majority of survey participants expressed support for some form of Municipal action to support the preservation of woodlots in Chatham-Kent.

Support for a form of Municipal action to preserve woodlots by non-forest owning survey participants was found to be at over 90%, with majority support expressed for the “Education + Incentives + Regulation” option and an almost even split level of support for the “Education + Incentive” and “Education + Regulation” options.

Although a larger minority of owners of forested lands opposed municipal action to preserve woodlots than their non-forest owning counterparts, over 80% of forest land owners did express support for Municipal action somewhere along the education-incentive-regulation spectrum, with the majority coalescing around the “Education + Incentive” and “Education + Incentive + Regulation” options.

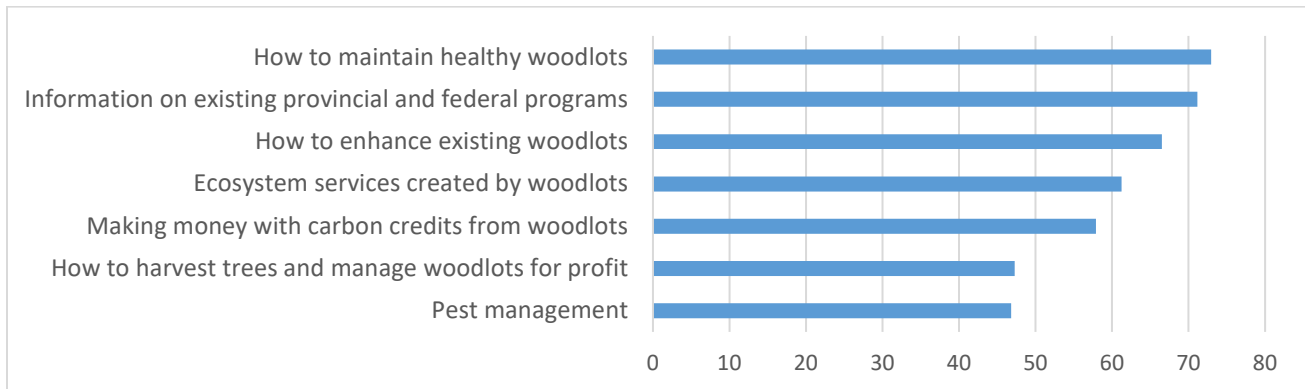
When the results were segmented between rural and urban participants a similar pattern emerges to that which exists between owners of forested lands and owners of non-forested lands. More than 95% of urban residents support municipal action to preserve woodlots with a majority supporting the “Education + Incentive + Regulation” option and a fairly even split between the “Education + Incentive” and “Education + Regulation” options.

A larger minority of rural resident participants opposed any form of Municipal action to preserve woodlots than their urban counterparts, yet over 80% of rural participants expressed support for some form of action, with most support expressed for the “Education + Incentives + Regulation Option” followed by the “Education + Incentives” and “Education + Regulation” Options, respectively.

Section 4: Education

Survey Question: What kind of information should the municipality provide for preserving woodlots?

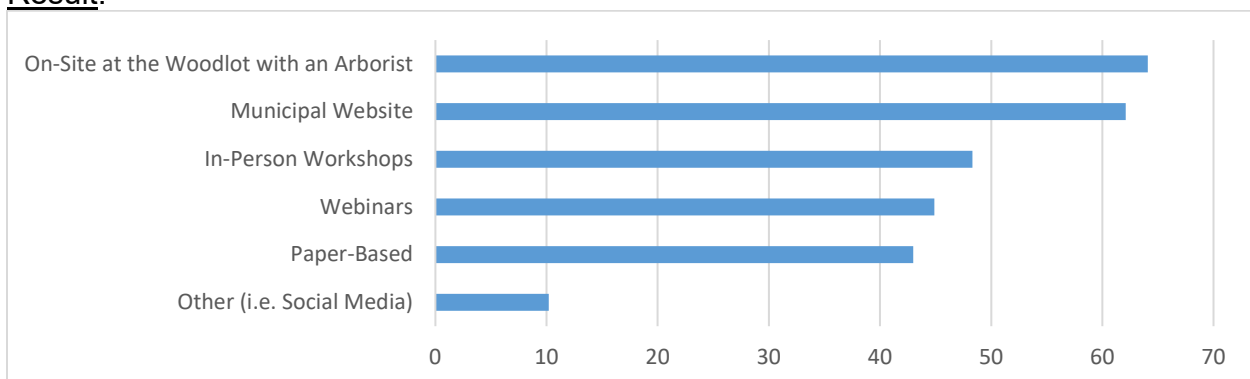
Result:



Analysis: Based on the results of this question, it would seem that a variety of topics to woodlot preservation should be considered for inclusion in information, outreach, and awareness building efforts. Given that a number of community partners such as the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, The Saint Clair Region Conservation Authority and several community groups currently deliver educational programming on issues related to woodlot preservation, an effective use of municipal resources might consider gaps in existing programming along with opportunities to leverage and potentially collaborate on the development of relevant educational content.

Survey Question: “What format(s) should the Municipality use to effectively deliver woodlot preservation education?”

Result:



Analysis: Based on the results of this question, it appears that the most desirable formats for the delivery of educational content related to woodlot preservation are on-site at the woodlot with an arborist, on the Municipal website and through in-person workshops. As with the previous question, a number of community partners are

currently engaged in delivering woodlot educational programs using the variety of means listed above, and an effective use of municipal resources might consider what gaps might exist along with opportunities for collaboration and/or supplementing these efforts.

Section 5: Incentives

Question: “What woodlot preservation activities should CK consider for incentives?”

Result:

	The Preservation of Existing Woodlots	Only the Preservation of Significant Woodlots	Only the Expansion or Enhancement of Woodlots
Owners of Forested Lands	69.6%	15.7%	14.7%
Owners of non-forested lands	72.4%	9.4%	18.2%
Overall	71.4%	11.6%	17%

Analysis: The results reveal a fairly consistent preference for directing potential incentives towards the preservation of existing woodlots. It should be noted that incentives might be structured to apply to existing woodlots, significant woodlots, and/or the expansion and enhancement of existing woodlots.

Question: “What type of incentive should CK consider?”

	Direct Cash Payment	Tax Break	Non-Monetary
Owners of Forested Lands	22.7%	70.8%	6.5%
Owners of non-forested lands	8.6%	77.8%	13.5%
Overall	13.9%	75.2%	10.9%

Analysis: The overall results reveal a fairly consistent preference for employing tax breaks as a vehicle for the potential delivery of woodlot preservation incentives and between owners of forested lands and their non-forest owning counterparts. That said, a larger minority of owners of forested lands expressed support for employing direct cash payments as a vehicle delivery mechanism for a potential woodlot preservation incentive. It should be noted that a number existing woodlot preservation tax incentive programs are currently available to woodlot owners in Chatham-Kent, including the [Alternative Land Use Services](#) program delivered by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, the [Farm Forestry Exemption](#) program delivered by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the [Conservation Lands Tax Incentive](#)

[Program](#) and the [Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program](#) delivered by the Province of Ontario. An effective use of municipal resources might consider what opportunities might exist to augment and/or address gaps in existing incentive programs.

Question: “How much should a landowner receive per hectare per year to preserve woodlots?”

Result:

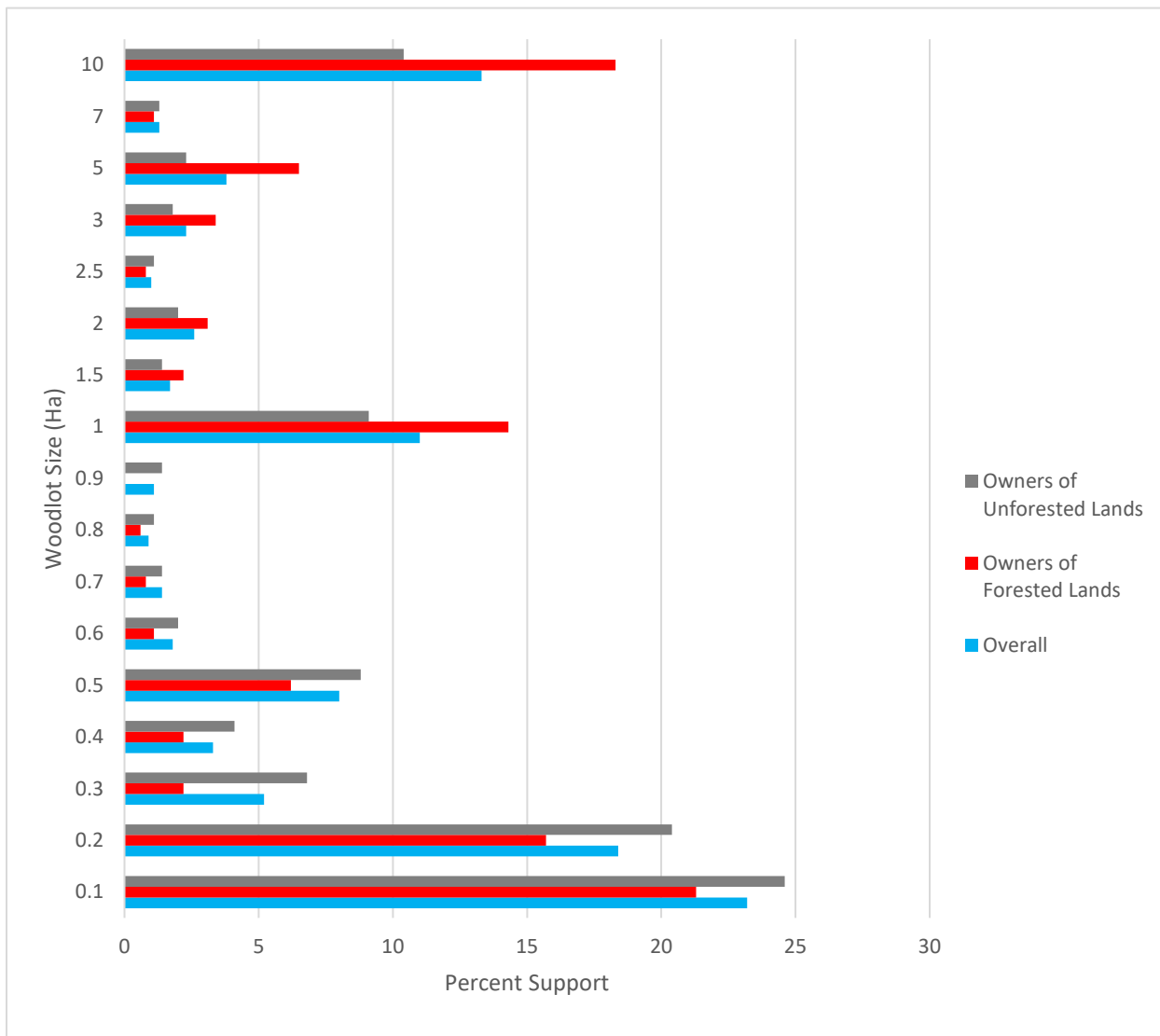
	\$0 per acre per year	\$40 per acre per year	\$80 per acre per year	\$120 per acre per year	\$160 per acre per year	\$200 per acre per year
Owners of Forested Lands	13.3%	17.7%	13.9%	10.3%	8.6%	36.3%
Owners of non-forested lands	17.5%	27.2%	22.4%	10.7%	5.4%	16.9%
Overall	15.87%	23.17%	19.12%	10.31%	6.84%	24.68%

Analysis: The survey results reveal a divergence of opinion on what might constitute an appropriate annual per acre payment for a potential woodlot preservation incentive program. The overall results show that although the highest payment amount (\$200/acre/yr) received the most votes, the lowest payment option (\$40/acre/yr) came in at a very close second place. If we look at the voting average across the different payment per acre options, the annual payment would come in at \$104 per acre. When the results are segmented, survey results reveal that owners of forested lands were generally more inclined to support higher incentive payments than what owners of non-forested lands expressed support for.

Survey Section 6: By-Law

Question: “If a permanent By-Law is implemented by Council, what MINIMUM size of woodlot should it apply to?”

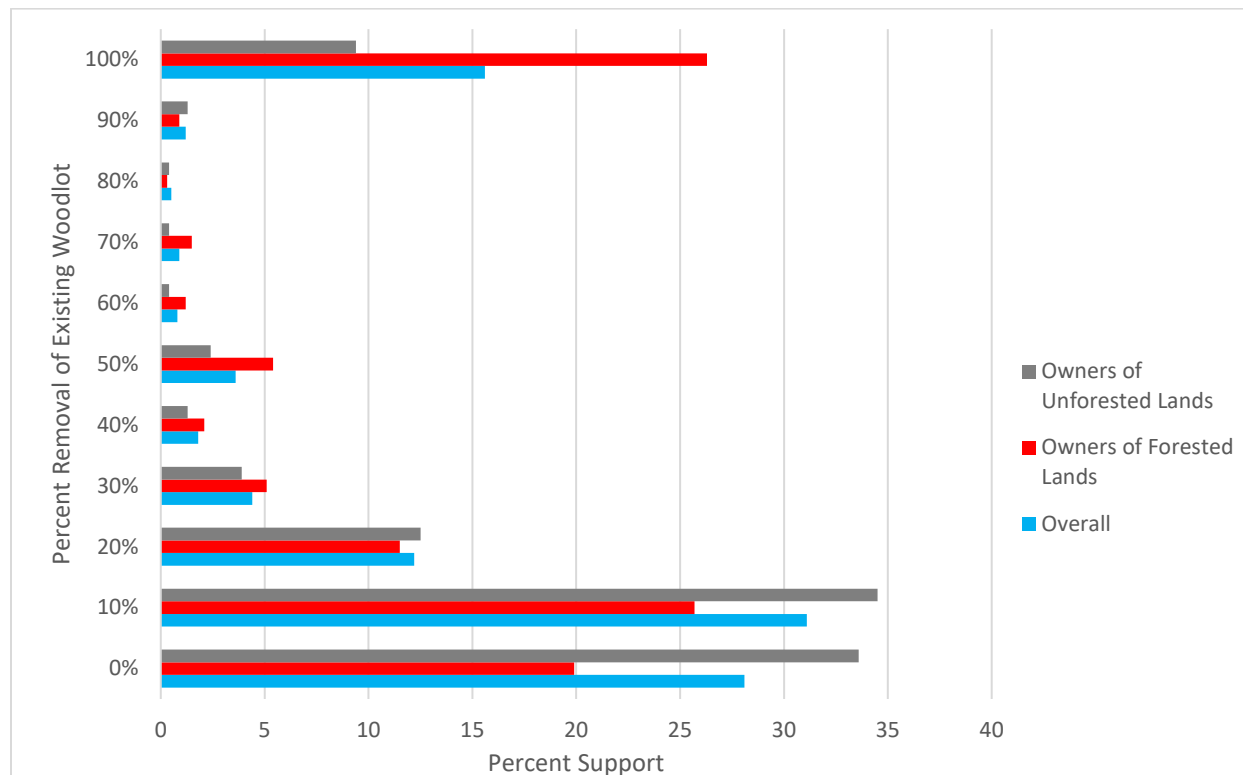
Result:



Analysis: A similar pattern is evident in the overall results and in each of the segmented results. Opinions are concentrated the top and bottom ends of the options provided, with a higher degree of support expressed in each case for the options at the lower end. Notably, a higher proportion of owners of forested lands chose the highest woodlot size option (10 hectares) than owners of non-forested lands, who in comparison, tended to be more supportive of the options at the lower ends of the options provided (i.e. 0.1 to 0.9 hectares).

Question: “Activities not allowed – How much tree removal from an existing woodlot should be allowed?”

Result:



Analysis: The overall survey results reveal that most support is concentrated at the lower end of the options provided, with just over 70% of participants expressing that the removal of between 0% and 20% of an existing woodlot might be allowed. Notably, just over 26% of owners of forested lands expressed support for allowing the removal of up to 100% of an existing woodlot, whereas 9.4% of owners of non-forested lands selected that option.

Question: “Activities not allowed – Some trees stop erosion on slopes, while others may be the cause of it. It all depends on the slope and the trees. Should tree removal on steep slopes be prohibited?”

Result:

	Do Not Prohibit	Depending on Geotechnical study	Always Prohibit
Owners of Forested Lands	33.3%	42.6%	24.1%
Owners of non-forested lands	17.2%	59.8%	23%
Overall	23.1%	53.2%	23.8%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that just over half of participants would prefer decisions on whether to allow the cutting of trees on steep slopes to be based on the results of a geotechnical study, with the remaining participants split between always prohibiting and not prohibiting these activities. Support for not prohibiting tree cutting on steep slopes is notably higher with owners of forested lands.

Question: “Activities not allowed - Should tree removal in significant woodlands and designated Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) be prohibited?”

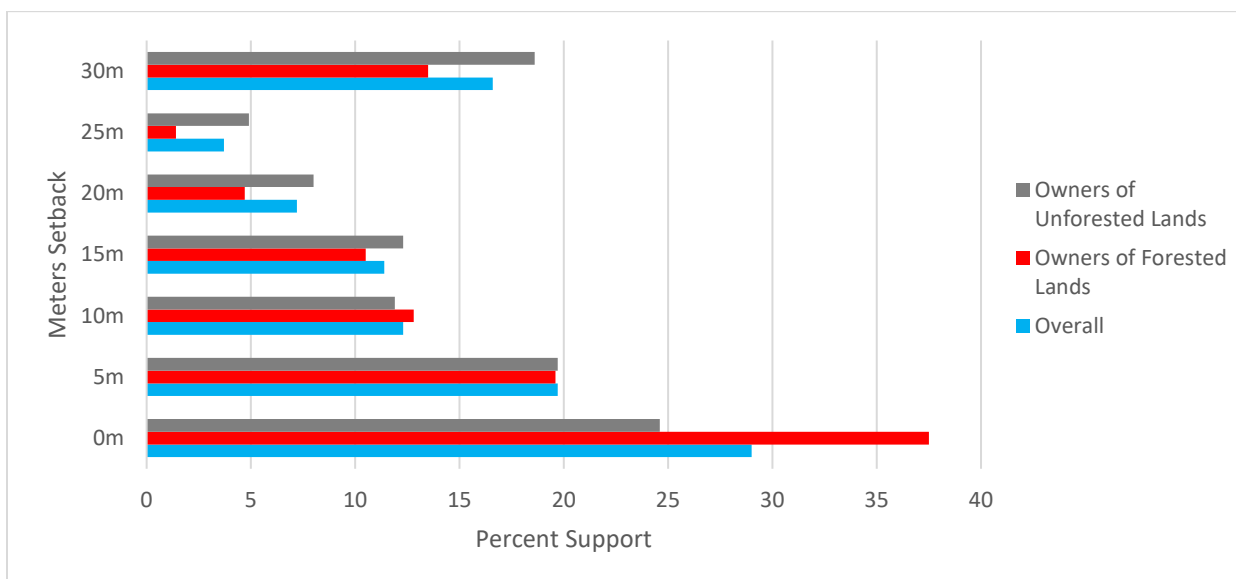
Result:

	Do Not Prohibit	Depending on Environmental Assessment	Always Prohibit
Owners of Forested Lands	41.5%	31.6%	33%
Owners of non-forested lands	18.2%	35.3%	46.6%
Overall	26.7%	32.1%	41.3%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that the “always prohibit” option garnered the most votes. A notable divergence of opinion emerges when the results are segmented: the “do not prohibit” option received the most votes from owners of forested lands whereas the “always prohibit” option was most popular among those owners of non-forested lands.

Question: “Activities not allowed - What should be the setback distance when removing trees near wetlands, creeks, lakes, and natural water bodies?”

Result:



Analysis: The overall results reveal a preference among survey participants for setbacks on the lower end of the spectrum with 0m receiving the most votes. The segmented results show that the answers provided by owners of non-forested lands were somewhat more evenly distributed amongst the options whereas the 0m option was much more popular among the owners of forested lands group.

Question: “Activities allowed with a permit – What tree removal activities should a By-Law allow with a municipally-issued permit? – Select all that apply”

Result:

	Selective Harvesting	Clear Cutting to the % Previously Selected
Owners of Forested Lands	43%	39.7%
Owners of non-forested lands	51.5%	43.6%
Overall	49.5%	42.6%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that the selective harvesting option garnered more support among participant than the clear cutting option did. Notably, support for each option was lower among owners of forested lands which likely because general support for a By-Law was found to be lower among this group of participants.

Question: “Activities allowed without a municipal permit – What activities should be exempted from a By-Law? – Select all that apply”

Result:

	Harvesting for Personal Fuel (Heating)	Harvesting for Personal Construction / Woodworking
Owners of Forested Lands	81.3%	65.2%
Owners of non-forested lands	74.2%	49.1%
Overall	78.9%	56.8%

Analysis: The overall results and the segmented results all reveal a very high level of support among survey participants for exempting harvesting woodlot trees for personal fuel use from a potential By-Law. The overall results also reveal that just over 55% of survey participants would support exempting harvesting woodlot trees for personal construction or woodworking purposes from a By-Law. Support for both exemptions is higher with owners of forested lands and lower with survey participants who do not have forests on their properties.

Question: “Compensation – Should a By-Law require compensation to the Municipality as part of permit approval and in what form should the compensation be?”

Result:

	Yes, Payment to Municipality for Tree Planting	Yes, Tree Planting by Applicant	Yes, Choice of Payment or Tree Planting	No.
Owners of Forested Lands	15.2%	14.4%	20.1%	50.3%
Owners of non-forested lands	35%	20.3	25.1	19.5%
Overall	27.3%	18.3%	23.3%	31.2%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that the option to not require compensation as a condition of receiving a permit under a potential By-Law received the most votes by survey participants. The segmented results reveal a strong divergence of opinion on the matter between owners of forested lands and owners of non-forested lands. Whereas a majority of the former group selected the “no” option, the option to require a payment to the Municipality to fund tree planting activities received the most support from the latter group and the “no” option received the lowest level of support.

Question: “Decision-making process – Who should make the decision when a permit under a woodlot preservation bylaw is received?”

Result:

	Council for all applications	Council for complex applications, staff for simple applications	Qualified Staff for all applications	Appointed Committee
Owners of Forested Lands	6.2%	18.8%	43.8%	31.2%
Owners of non-forested lands	9.6%	25.7%	35.4%	29.3%
Overall	8.3%	23.7%	38.1%	30%

Analysis: Notwithstanding differences in the apportioning of votes to each the four options, the overall results and the segmented results reveal an identical ranking of options. In each case, the option to have qualified staff review all application received the most votes, followed by an appointed committee in second place, a mix of Council and staff in third place, and exclusively Council in fourth place.

Question: “Enforcement – Do you support the hiring of trained personnel to appropriately administer a Forest Conservation Bylaw?”

Result:

	Totally Support	Slightly Support	Neutral	Slightly Oppose	Totally Oppose
Owners of Forested Lands	30.1%	10.9%	12.3%	7.0%	39.8%
Owners of non-forested lands	45%	22.4%	12.6%	4.5%	15.5%
Overall	39.4%	17.9%	12.7%	5.3%	24.7%

Analysis: The overall results reveal that the majority of survey respondents are very or moderately in favor of the hiring of dedicated staff for administer a potential bylaw. The segmented results reveal that support for hiring dedicated staff is notably higher with owners of non-forested lands than it is with their counterparts who own forested-lands.

Consultation

There was no consultation required for the preparation of this Report.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications resulting from this Report.

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Attachment: None