HETC – Highlands East Trails Committee

2017 AGM update

I continue to have a seat on the HETC and attend monthly meetings in Wilberforce.

The main project here was to take the official recreation management plan for Greens Mountain and build a business and implementation plan to make this a pay for use managed recreation area. However that project has now been put on hold due to mining claim concerns and we are re-focusing our efforts on other trails opportunities. For 2016 that has been our support and financial contribution to the work on the Goat trail/HCSA#9/HATVA T3.7.

Background

The municipality of Highlands East covers 758 km² and approximately half of this is Crown land. Like similar, rural municipalities, Highlands East have found attracting economic development challenging. Industrial development is not really a practical or desirable option. Given the significant proportion of natural landscape and lakes they see tourism as a suitable growth opportunity. In support of that the municipality are looking to invest in the development and marketing of a trail infrastructure product. Beside some direct revenue, the hope is it will draw tourist traffic to support local businesses.

To that end the municipality formed a trails committee some time ago, on which we have had a seat for over three years now.

Forest Management consultation

I continue to attend Bancroft Minden Forest Management Local Citizen Committee meetings in my position as LCC Chair.

2016 update: Instead of us having to dig through Forest Management Annual Work Schedules and determine where forestry operation/decommissioning could impact us we now have agreement that Forest Management Company will review our submitted GIS trail information and notify us if their operation will touch these areas. If they do we can then discuss options to avoid the trail ultimately being decommissioned.

We are now also registered as stakeholder for French Severn FMP area too and I recently attended and made presentation at an LCC meeting in Bracebridge.