



Memo

To: Local Associations, Community Members, and Ward Councillors

From: Environmental and Parks Planning

Date: June 14, 2013

RE: Medway Valley Heritage Forest
ESA Conservation Master Plan

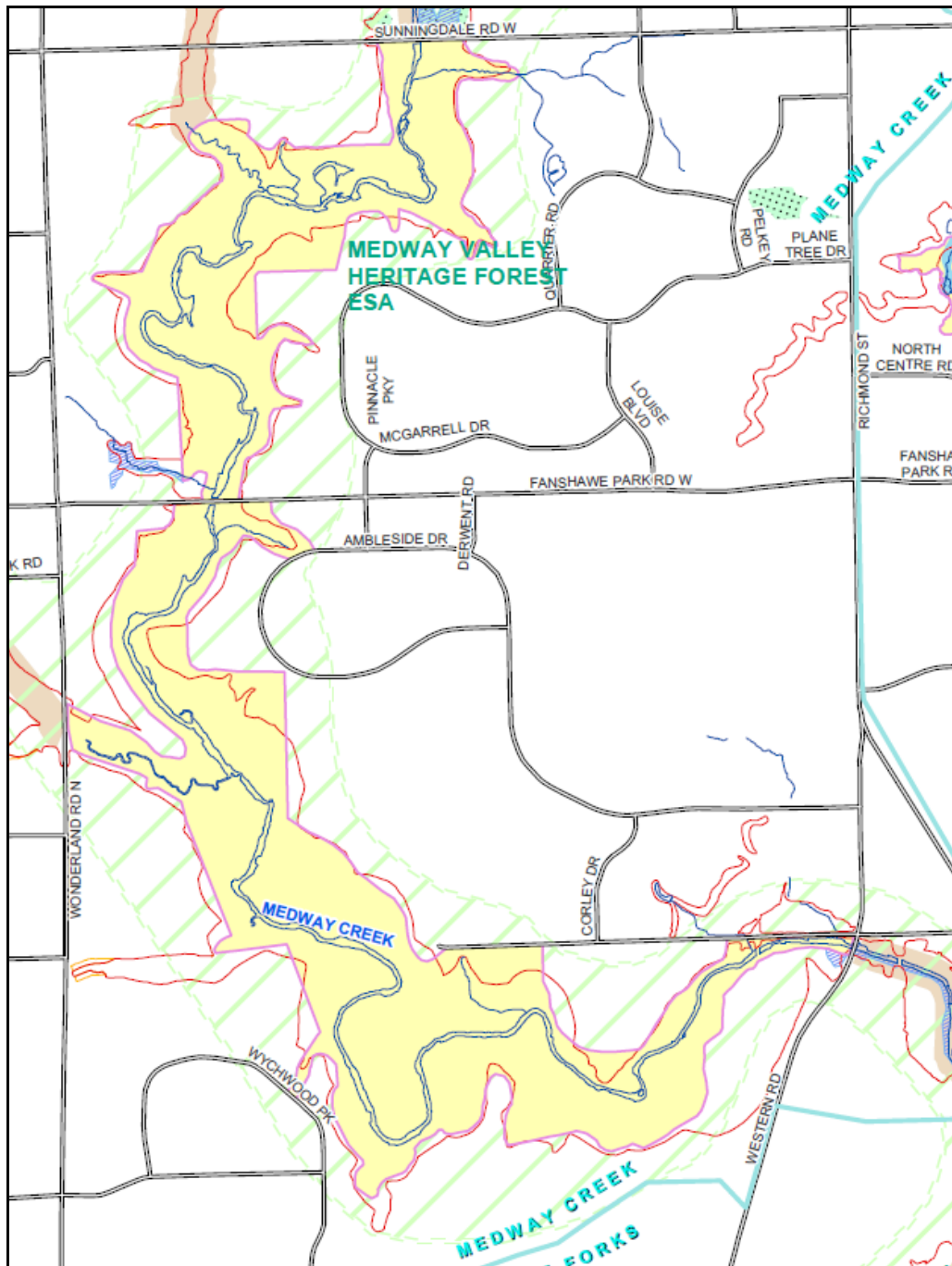
The City is undertaking an update to the current Conservation Master Plan (CMP) for the Medway Valley Heritage Forest, Environmentally Significant Area (MVHF ESA). CMPs for ESAs function as guideline documents for the purposes of providing direction in the management of these areas. ESAs contain natural features and perform ecological functions that warrant their retention in a natural state. The current study will update the 1989 Medway Valley Heritage Forest Conservation Master Plan and the 1995 Medway Valley Heritage Forest Site Planning Study.

The City will be hosting a **Community Information Meeting** about the MVHF ESA CMP project later this summer and we will invite the community, Ward Councillors and other stakeholders to attend this meeting once we have a firm date. Originally this meeting was scheduled to coincide with the Public Information Meeting for the Medway Subwatershed Study Update, this spring; however, that meeting had to be postponed.

The City has hired Dillon Consulting Ltd. to complete a life science inventory and evaluation of the MVHF ESA. The study is focused on the lands south of Fanshawe Park Road as part of Phase 1 of the CMP process. Dillon will be reviewing the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) vegetation community descriptions and current mapping from the Medway Creek Subwatershed Plan, as validated through on-site observations and focused species level inventories. The ELC is a standard method across Ontario to meet the needs of ecosystem management and land use planning. This process is in keeping with our new Planning and Design Standards for Trails in ESAs document that includes establishing management zones based on natural area significance and sensitivities. Site inventory must occur to establish these zones in Phase I and then direct management objectives including trail use decisions in Phase II.

We anticipate receiving the Dillon report on the life science inventory in late 2013. A second **Community Information Meeting** will then be held in early 2014 to present the findings and launch the Phase II start-up meeting. We will ask at that time for interested members of the local Community, the larger London public, other organized groups (e.g. Friends of the Medway Creek, Nature London, Thames Valley Trail Association, etc.) and Advisory Committees of Council (EEPAC, LACH) to join a Local Advisory Committee (LAC). The LAC would meet several times over the following months to work with staff and consultants on the Master Plan.

**Map of the Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA
Excerpt from the City of London Official Plan, Schedule B-1**



Please contact Linda McDougall, Ecologist Planner at 519-661-2500 x 6494
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