

CLIPPITY CLIPS

Farmers oppose greening

(continued from page 1)

Lands and the requirement to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for any development or site alteration partially or wholly within the Greenlands System or Adjacent Lands.

The Adjacent Lands inclusion would include areas within 120 m of a provincially significant wetland or 50 m of any other component of the Greenlands System.

"The Niagara Escarpment Commission already tells us what we can do on our land, and so does Conservation Halton," said rural landowner Jayne Munro. "Now we'll have another tier of government telling us what we can or can't do on our own land."

Campbellville's Anne Taylor echoed her feelings. "No matter what you call this - it's a control."

Halton Hills farmer Nick Digirolomo expressed concerns about what the future could hold if his land designation was to be changed to

Greenlands B.

"By these designations, people will look more closely at our practices. Who's to say that five years down the road, some environmental group won't say 'You can't continue to spray on these lands the way you always have?' You're putting my livelihood at risk here."

Jane Clohec, Director of Planning and Transportation for the Region replied.

"The intent of the Directions Report is to allow the existing agricultural uses to continue, to operate and expand use of their lands in the way that they do now. We're trying to find a defensible approach to protect the woodlots, so that we can continue to provide for the agricultural uses of The Region as well as the urban."

"We've heard that the main issues are the designation, and the regulatory approach," said Ms. Clohec. "Obviously, we need to relook at the designation, while beef-

ing up the pro-active approach, instead of the regulatory approach, while still making it defensible. That's why we wanted this opportunity to sit down with the agricultural community to work out issues and alternatives."

Patrick Murphy, Commissioner of Planning and Public Works explain in greater detail. "We haven't actually written the policy yet. We're talking about a Directions Report, which is pretty general."

He did, however, reassure the farmers "Anything you can do now on your farms, you will be able to do after the policy is approved."

The Halton Federation of Agriculture presented The Region staff with an alternative policy to consider at the November 12 meeting. This alternative asks that no woodlands be identified in the rural area, and significant woodlands only be identified in the urban designation of the Regional Plan.

The policy alternative also encourages voluntary stewardship of woodlands in rural areas with incentives rather than penalties, and calls for a ban on the Adjacent Lands proposal and the Environmental Impact Assessment, as it is seen as a penalty to agricultural operations.

"This provision is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, in my opinion," commented Tom Smart, whose company BLS Planning Associates has been retained by the Halton Federation of Agriculture. "The Federation's proposal is another method of meeting the same end as the policy statement."

The Federation has requested a formal response to its alternative proposal by the end of November. It will review the response with its members, and a group of Federation volunteers will sit down with Regional staff before more workshops will be

held in January. The deadline for public comment on the Official Plan Review has been extended to the end of January, and all written submissions will be included in the package for Regional Council.

For now, the farmers of Halton

are waiting for the Region's response to their alternative. "If their response is feasible, then we'll help them fine tune it," says Federation member Jamie Fisher. "If it's not feasible, then I guess we'll have a big fight."

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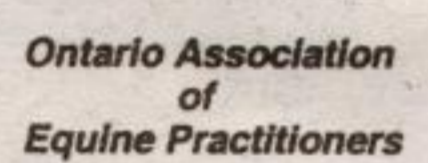

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Horse News and Views


- ♦ Recent experience with an umbilical hernia in a foal emphasizes "practice what you preach." For the first three months of a foal's life, I watched a two-finger-wide umbilical hernia in the hope that it would heal on its own. In frustration and curbing the surgeon in me, I finally decided to give the Elastoplast tape method a try. Four-inch wide Elastoplast was used to encircle the mid abdomen to push the contents of the hernial sac back into the abdomen. The bandage was reinforced or replaced as needed. To my surprise, the hernia had closed down to a one-finger defect in two weeks. After a further two weeks of bandaging, the hernia was healed. The downside of the successful treatment was the comment from family members, "Why didn't you do it sooner?"
- ♦ Black walnut shavings are well known to cause founder (laminitis) in horses. Within a few hours of being bedded on bedding containing as little as 20% black walnut shavings, horses will exhibit signs of founder. However, there have been no documented cases where horses have developed laminitis from contact with black walnut trees, nuts or leaves. While visiting a veterinarian in Illinois, a pony pastured on a very poor dried-out pasture was diagnosed with very severe laminitis. There was no access to lush grass, grain or other high-carbohydrate source. However, the pasture contained three black walnut trees. The only signs of fallen fruit or leaves were the hard pits on the ground. In this situation, it was postulated that the pony had eaten some of the green walnut hulls and/or the leaves. Horse owners are reminded of the danger particularly of black walnut shavings and possibly, in a situation where feed is limited, of other parts of the tree.

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