Cedar Point Tree Cutting
Impact Assessment and Remediation

David Charlton June 16, 2015

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May 13, 2015: field investigation

Stantec asked to assist in response

- Brian Miller, Stantec Botantist, visited the site
- Confirmed the location, general size and community type of the cleared areas
- Documented site disturbance with photos and field notes
- Areas not grubbed – stumps and ground vegetation left in place
- Soil relatively dry, not excessively disturbed or compacted
- Piles of branches, trunks and chips i.e. “slash”

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Communities and Functions

Forest communities

- Dry – Fresh Oak – Hardwood Deciduous
- Dry – Fresh Sugar Maple – Beech Deciduous
- Fresh – Moist Lowland Deciduous
- Part of the Cedar Point and Rawlings Road PSW

Habitat and Functions

- Wood Thrush Breeding Habitat Special Concern
- General wildlife habitat
- Landscape character
- Hydrology

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Impact Assessment

Potential concerns post- tree cutting

- Erosion and deposition of soil from surrounding agricultural fields into woodlots = “siltation”
- On May 13 there was no evidence of siltation into the remaining woodlots
- Silt fencing had been installed post-clearing to prevent future siltation
- Silt fencing should be maintained and inspected
- Edge effects – light, drying winds, and pests all extend further into the woodlot

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Impact Assessment

Communities and Species

- Woodlots are rare in the landscape and important regardless of species or quality
- No rare or highly specialized habitat vegetation communities were affected
- Based on pre- disturbance inventories no species or habitat protected under the Endangered Species Act were harmed
- Approximately 4% of the wooded wildlife habitat in the project landscape was removed

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Impact Assessment

Functions

- Hydrologic function not adversely affected, minimal ground disturbance
- Ecological function of the areas reduced – direct loss of 4% plus edge effects
- Wood Thrush prefers to breed in areas with varied understory (shrub) cover
- Shrub cover and diversity will increase slightly in the short term

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Potential Mitigation Measures

Immediate - Clean up and stabilize

1. Consult with St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA)
2. Remove tree trunks and limbs
3. Spread mulch in the disturbed areas - no more than 5 cm
4. Maintain silt fencing adjacent to disturbed areas
5. Cleanly cut stumps or trunks with broken or shredded margins
6. Environmental monitor on-site daily to monitor all construction activities

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Potential Mitigation Measures

Short term – plant and monitor

1. Protect existing seed bank and mature vegetation
2. Plant locally sourced, native vegetation under guidance of SCRCA.
3. Monitor and care for plantings
4. Monitor forest edges
5. If monitoring indicates, apply additional mitigation e.g. temporary shade structures, remove invasive species etc.
6. Consider adding habitat structures

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Potential Mitigation Measures

Longer term- maintain a commitment

1. Ongoing monitoring during the growing season
2. Annual reporting to SCRCA
3. Additional care and planting as needed
4. Annual reports to SRCA for five years beginning in 2015, or until the edge areas have successfully regenerated to the satisfaction of SRCA

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Conclusions

- **Suncor is committed to making it right and Stantec will work with SCRCA to design an effective remediation plan**
- **The damage is real and cannot be fixed immediately BUT the damage is not permanent**
- **Additional enhancements in the surrounding area such as nesting boxes and habitat structures will help compensate for the delay in mature forest replacement**
- **Suncor has instructed Stantec to be open and to answer questions and take suggestions so that a dialogue with neighbors can also feed into the remediation plan process**

Thank you

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