

Some Principles of Restoration Forestry

The objective of restoration forestry is to recreate the original forests typical of Lanark County. Not only does this style of forestry enhance the environment for native plant and animal species, but it creates forests with the high quality saw logs and veneer trees essential for the future of local industry.

1. The cut is always light, and the forest canopy is never opened more than about ten percent. Cutting is planned to create small gaps similar to those created naturally by fallen trees.
2. Forests are gradually converted toward their original composition. In upland sites, desirable trees typically include Sugar Maple, Beech, Hemlock, White Pine and Red Oak. Special attention is paid to rarer hardwoods such as Bur Oak, White Oak, Butternut, Elm and Hickory.
3. Dead fallen wood (called ‘coarse woody debris’ by forest ecologists) is left to rot whenever possible to provide habitat for fungi and salamanders.
4. Standing dead trees are left as wildlife trees for woodpeckers, nesting birds and small mammals such as flying squirrels.
5. The best trees are left to provide seed.
6. Trails are kept narrow and shaded, and allowed to regrow with native plants.
7. Large trees are always present to maintain shade and provide habitat for canopy dwelling wildlife.
8. Large clearings are avoided, since these encourage weedy species rather than native forest species.
9. Deer populations are kept low to minimise damage to regenerating trees, whereas Fishers, Black Bears and other native mammals are protected.
10. Each piece of forest is connected to other forest permitting wildlife to move easily. Forested strips are planted or allowed to regrow to connect isolated islands of forest. Roads are kept narrow.
11. Cutting and skidding are restricted to winter months when the ground is frozen and there is snow cover. Horses are used when possible.
12. All human activity is kept to a minimum in May and June, as this is the period when the soil is soft, spring flowers are growing, frogs are breeding and birds are nesting.