

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County of Simcoe Forestry to conduct controlled burn in the Tosorontio Tract in Adjala Tosorontio

Midhurst/April 24, 2019 – The County of Simcoe will be executing a controlled burn on 40 hectares (100 acres) of County Forests within the Tosorontio Tract in the Township of Adjala Tosorontio (west of Base Borden and near the western boundary of Simcoe County). The controlled burn, which will occur as early as conditions allow between late April and early May, is anticipated to take two days to complete. The exact timing of the burn will be dictated by site and weather conditions and cannot be determined at this time.

Once the date of the controlled burn has been confirmed, media, stakeholders and the public will be informed through a variety of communication channels.

A highly experienced company has been retained to plan and conduct the burn, and trained personnel will be on site until the fire is completely extinguished. The impact of the smoke will be minimized by burning under specific wind and atmospheric conditions, however there will be times when large amounts of low-lying smoke will be present. At other stages in the operation, a very large smoke column protruding hundreds of feet into the atmosphere may be seen for many miles. There is no cause for alarm, as this is all part of normal operations for the type of fuels being burned. The County does not anticipate any road closures or any major impact or disruption to local residents.

While controlled burns differ from wildfires, in that they are often managed to control smoke exposures to the public and are of much shorter overall durations than forest fires, concerns can arise regarding smoke exposure and health. Smoke exposure may pose a risk for more vulnerable individuals such as children, elderly and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions. Here are some simple steps you can take to minimize your exposure to smoke:

- If you live close to the controlled burn site and have chronic health conditions such as asthma and chronic lung disease, you may wish to minimize your exposure by staying indoors during the burn. If you have health concerns, follow up with your health care provider.
- If you have concerns regarding exposure to smoke while outdoors, consider reducing your outdoor physical activities near the affected area.
- To help reduce smoke in your homes and businesses, keep windows and doors closed.

County Council approved the Simcoe County Forest Management Plan to guide our policies through 2030. The Plan outlines that fire has historically played a primary role by influencing the composition, structure and patterns of our forests, and states that fire will continue to be used as a strategy moving forward. This particular controlled burn is part of a long-term plan to enhance an Oak forest ecosystem.

Controlled burns have been conducted previously within the County Forests. The two most recent burns occurred in 2018 within the Museum Tract in Springwater Township and in 2014 within the Brentwood Tract in Clearview Township.

Public questions and inquiries can be directed to our County Forestry Department by contacting Service Simcoe at 1-800-263-3199 or service@simcoe.ca. More information about the controlled burn can be found at <https://www.simcoe.ca/Forestry/Pages/Controlled-Burns.aspx>

The County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at simcoe.ca.

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