

## Sandy Hills Regional Forest

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# SANDY HILLS

Region of Waterloo

Regional Forest

<b>Municipality:</b>	Township of Woolwich	
<b>Location:</b>	Part Lot(s): 62, 63, 76	Concession(s): G.C.T.
<b>Access:</b>	Open to the Public; entrances on Sandy Hills Road	
<b>General Location:</b>	5 km north-northwest of Elmira	
<b>Size:</b>	74.1 hectares	
<b>Physiographic Area:</b>	Elmira Moraine	
<b>Eco-region:</b>	Conestogo	
<b>Associated ESPA(s):</b>	1 (Woolwich Sandhills)	
<b>Date of Acquisition:</b>	1945	
<b>Soils:</b>	Fine sandy loams and sandy loams predominate, with organic soils in the extreme south	

### General Description

The Sandy Hill Regional Forest consists of two tracts of land on either side of Sandy Hills Road at the extreme northern tip of the Region of Waterloo. It is a large complex of conifer plantations some of which were established as far back as the 1930s on wind-eroded sandy soils. Some of the older stands are now quite mature and have some of the attributes of conifer forests much further north.

From 1957 to 1974, the federal Department of Forests had a research station within a clearing in the southern block to study forest insect pests.

The conifer stands support a number of bird species which prefer this type of habitat for breeding. One Scots Pine stand in the northern block is in poor condition, but is now being converted to Red Oak. The southernmost part of the forest is a high quality cedar swamp.

### General Management Goals

High quality conifer plantations sustaining Regionally significant breeding birds and plants will be maintained as conifer stands, or only very gradually allowed to convert to mixed forest so as to maintain suitable habitat for the Regionally significant species.

The poor quality Scots Pine Stand in the northern block will be converted to a Red Oak-dominated stand.

The cedar swamp will be maintained as a preservation area without formal access trails.

### Facilities

There is a network of trails through both parts of the forest which is in reasonably good condition. An access to the northern block is being abused as an illegal dumping ground, and needs to be closed. The parking lot within the southern block needs to be improved.

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### **Special Considerations**

The breeding habitat of such Regionally significant Breeding Birds as Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ovenbird, Pine Warbler must be maintained. The forest contains a stand of Male Fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) which is rare in Southern Ontario and unique to Waterloo Region, as well as Ebony Spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*). The cedar swamp contains many species which are indicators of high habitat quality, and is also known as the habitat of the Regionally significant Porcupine.

The Region has an agreement with the Elmira Snowmobile Club to permit snowmobiles to traverse the narrow waist of the southern block.

# Sandy Hills Regional Forest



Scale: 1 to 6000

Total Area: 74.1 ha

**SANDY HILL I (Regional Forest)**

Area: 19.3 ha

0%

# Sandy Hills Regional Forest



Scale: 1 to 6500

Total Area:  
74.1 ha

**SANDY HILL II (Regional Forest)**

Area: 49.3 ha

