

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**Ontario Woodlot Association holds conference & tours in Shakespeare Ontario:
forest management in an agriculture landscape**

April 12 and 13 – The Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) is hosting its annual conference in Shakespeare, Ontario. The two tours on the Thursday, April 12 will take forest landowners on a journey across the surrounding area of Shakespeare and Listowel showing parts of the forested landscape that is encompassed by farmland. The tours are intended to reinforce the mindset of the importance of private forests in southern Ontario. The Thursday evening banquet, being held at the Optimist Hall in Shakespeare, “gives woodlot owners a chance to share their forest stories”, says Eric Thompson, Executive Director of the OWA. “Owners have so many difficulties with invasive species and dealings with the effects of climate change.” Andrew Peregrine, a clinical parasitologist at the University of Guelph will speak on the troubles with ticks – a huge health issue facing those who like to be in their woods. On Friday, April 13, the conference is set with speakers to speak on the importance of: trees on the landscape; carbon sequestration; downed woody debris; invasive species; endangered and threatened forest species; windbreaks; shelterbelts, and riparian areas.

This two-day event is expected to be well attended. The idea that Huron/Perth, Elgin/Middlesex and South West, three of the OWA Chapters, are hosting makes it even more special. “It brings a local flavour this provincial event”, says Paul Robertson, Board member and president of the OWA’s Niagara Chapter.

The OWA is a non-profit grassroots association that promotes the sustainable management of Ontario’s forests by providing guidance, advice and best practices to woodlot owners that allows them to evolve as stewards of these most valuable lands. The OWA represents the interest of over 165,000 woodlot owners across Ontario.

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