

Aug. 29, 2018

Afforestation Areas

The afforestation areas are located (refer to map):

1. Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – SE 23-36-6; 241 Township Road 362-A (south of C.N. Chappell Yards, between the South west Off Leash Recreation Area and Civic Operations Centre). This area is included within Meewasin Valley Authority conservation zone boundary.
2. Unnamed Afforestation Area – SE 23-36-6; 355 Township Road 362-A (includes the Southwest Off Leash Recreation Area and extends west to the wetland complex, includes areas directly north of Cedar Villa Estates). This area is included within Meewasin Valley Authority conservation zone boundary.
3. Unnamed Afforestation Area – S ½ 22-36-6; 467 Township Road 362-A (south of the C.N. Chappell Yards, west of the wetland complex, east of Cedar Villa Road)
4. “George Genereux” Afforestation Area – NE 21-36-6; 133 Range Road 3063 (north of Highway 7, west of the West Swale)

Community Engagement

Due to the unique significance of the afforestation areas, and increased interest from various stakeholder groups, a stakeholder engagement session was held on February 1, 2018. The stakeholder engagement meeting focused on the value and use of the afforestation areas prior to any potential development or classification options being proposed. The engagement session was used for the purposes of information gathering.

Stakeholders from the following organisations attended the engagement session:

- RM of Corman Park Councillor
- Stewards of the Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area
- Meewasin Valley Authority
- Cedar Villa Estates residents
- Fatlanders Fat Tire Brigade
- Wild About Saskatoon
- City of Saskatoon – Recreation and Community Development Division
- City of Saskatoon - Parks Division
- Saskatoon Nature Society
- City of Saskatoon – Saskatoon Land Division
- City of Saskatoon Councillor
- Southwest Dog Park Ambassador
- Montgomery Place Community Association
- City of Saskatoon – Planning and Development Division

History

The afforestation areas were planted by the City's Parks Division in the 1970's, with the aim of "improving the future environment of the city". Future land uses discussed over their history include various residential, recreational, and possible light industrial uses. In 2013, the first formal recreation area was established within the area, with the creation of the South West Off-Leash Recreation Area (SW OLRA).

Current State

The afforestation areas are owned by the City of Saskatoon. These areas are NOT included within the City's park inventory, and as such, no funding is available to support maintenance services, with the exception of the SW OLRA.

Summary of Engagement Results

At the stakeholder engagement session, participants were asked to note what they value about the afforestation areas. A discussion about those values and what conditions combine to contribute to, or detract from, them then occurred. Six themes emerged:

Recreation – The afforestation areas serve both passive and active recreation groups. Fatlanders Fat Tire Brigade have established a Winter Trail network for fat tire bicycles throughout the afforestation area. The SW OLRA is popular for off-leash dog walkers. The areas are used regularly for walking, and cross-country skiing. The windbreak, flat terrain, and relative quiet of the area supports recreation opportunities.

Ecological Importance – The benefits of the afforestation area were identified as important ecological features to the city as a whole. Water filtration, carbon sequestration, guard against desertification and soil erosion, cleaner air due to trees, and important wetlands within the areas were all noted to benefit the ecosystem of the region.

Education/Heritage – Areas provide an opportunity for education surrounding ecological systems. The area was named after Richard St. Barbe Baker, a renowned ecologist, who spent some time in Saskatoon, and should be honored for his efforts.

Aesthetic Beauty – The afforestation areas are unique to the city. The semi-natural areas should be protected for their beauty. Opportunities should be preserved for the citizens of Saskatoon to enjoy these unique areas.

Animal Habitat – Areas were noted for the important role it played for providing for animal habitat. Stakeholders identified critical areas near the wetland complex for waterfowl and the diversity of species found in prairie aquatic areas. Stakeholders also noted sightings of northern leopard frogs, many species of birds, owls, and deer.

Access Control/Maintenance/Safety – There are issues surrounding illegal motor vehicle access through specific areas, such as the RM of Corman Park land adjacent to Cedar Villa Estates, and access on the far west side via Cedar Villa Road. Issues were also identified relating to maintenance and safety of the areas, most notably illegal dumping, fire hazards from pit parties, ATV use, and illegal activities occurring.

Specific Areas

1. Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – SE 23-36-6; 241 Township Road 362-A (south of C.N. Chappell Yards, between the SW OLRA and Civic Operations Centre)

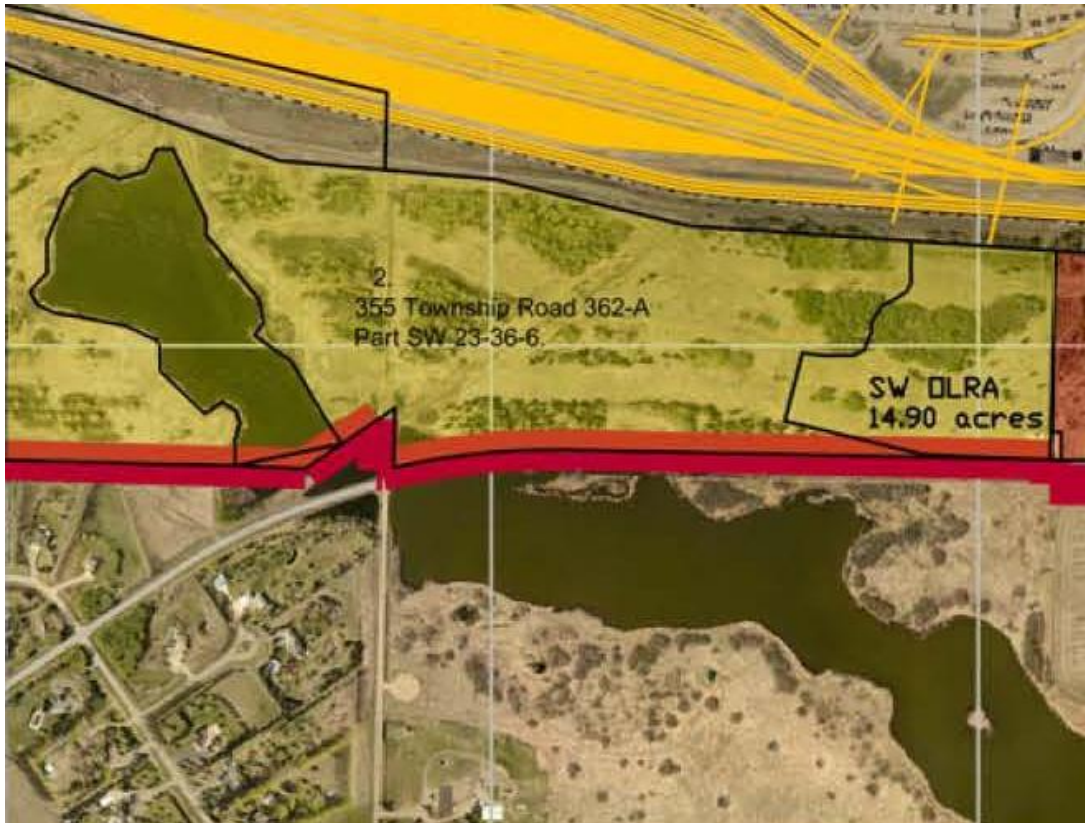


Themes: Ecological Importance, Animal Habitat, Education/Heritage, Aesthetic Beauty, Recreation

Summary:

- The area is an important animal habitat with noted sightings of deer, squirrels, hawks, and owls.
- This area is noted as having the most desirable ecological features of this afforestation area.
- Opportunities exist for education that provides ecological literacy for all ages.
- There is heritage value to the area as it links to the vision of Richard St. Barbe Baker.
- This is a unique forest environment within the city, specifically with the regrowth of tree species.
- The area is popular for walking, with the tree cover providing natural wind and sun breaks.
- A formalized winter bike trail network has been established.

2. Unnamed Afforestation Area – SE 23-36-6; 355 Township Road 362-A (includes the SW OLRA and extends west to the wetland complex, includes areas directly north of Cedar Villa Estates)

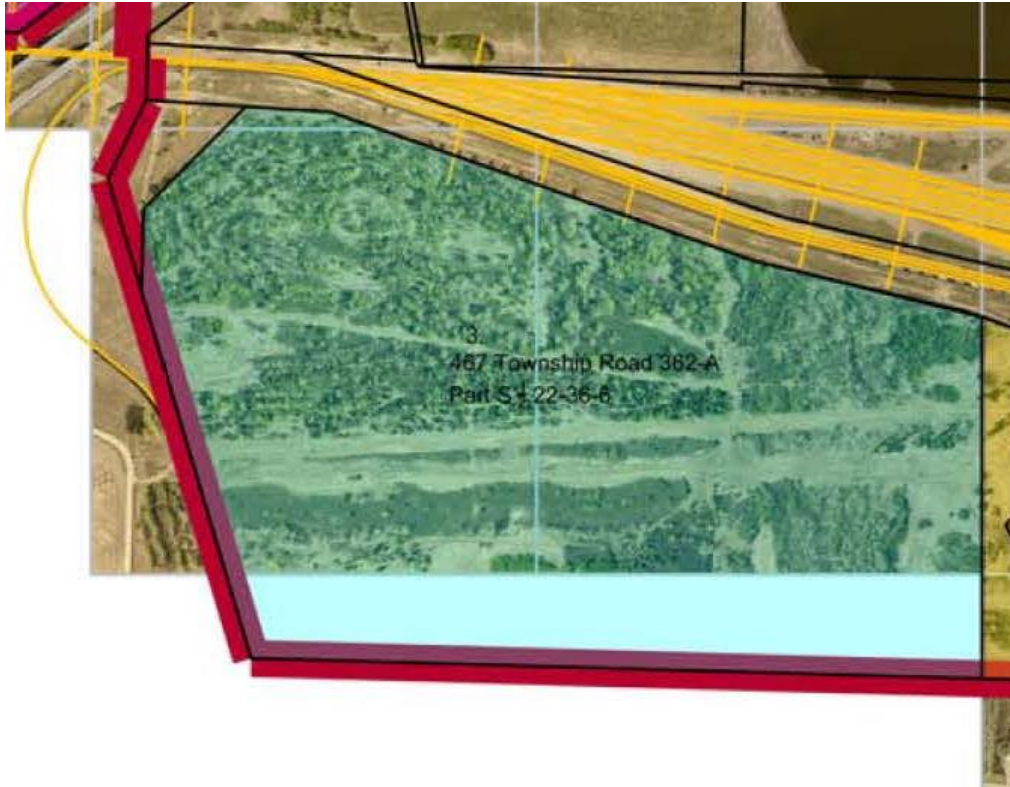


Themes: Access Control/Maintenance, Animal Habitat, Recreation, Ecological Importance

Summary:

- The area needs further restrictions and secured for safety purposes; Access within RM lands need to be addressed directly east and north of Cedar Villa residences.
- Significant waterfowl habitat, wildlife corridor and diversity of species found in a prairie aquatic corridor; Northern leopard frog have been noted within the area.
- The wetland area is an important feature of maintaining the ecology of the natural drainage system.
- Formalized winter bike trail network established; positive recreation user groups exist, as do winter city opportunities for recreation within the area.

3. Unnamed Afforestation Area – S ½ 22-36-6; 467 Township Road 362-A (south of the C.N. Chappell Yards, west of the wetland complex, east of Cedar Villa Road)



Themes: Access Control/Maintenance, Animal Habitat, Recreation

Summary:

- Issues include illegal dumping, ATV accessing and damaging the area, bush parties, illegal fire pits, a non-formalized BMX group using the area, and potential sex trade sites.
- Owls nesting has been observed, as have other bird species.
- Formalized winter bike trail has been network established – considered most valuable in the NW near Italian Cultural Centre; Winter City Opportunities.

4. "George Genereux" Afforestation Area – NE 21-36-6; 133 Range Road 3063 (north of Highway 7, west of the West Swale)



Themes: Access Control/Maintenance

Summary:

- The area is difficult to access – not ideal for active recreation or passive recreation based on this information.
- Illegal dumping, illegal activities exist in the area.
- No significant ecological features were noted.