



Provincial Policy Statement – Planning for the future

Recently, the NFU-O provided feedback to the revised Provincial Policy Statement, the document which guides most municipalities on their land use planning, and at a land needs assessment methodologies workshop.

The NFU-O is pleased to see that the province continues to support an agriculture systems approach to land use planning, which looks at the entire agri-food network, including “infrastructure, services, and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector.”

We also support the recognition of and need for addressing the impacts of a changing climate when managing land use.

There remain a number of troubling issues that need to be addressed in the revised PPS though.

Development and aggregate extraction are prioritized over farmland protection

The PPS has long prioritized aggregates over land use with the note that land must be remediated after aggregate extraction occurs. The draft policies continue to assume that aggregate extraction can be an interim use and that once the aggregate is removed the land can be rehabilitated back to the same agricultural condition. Farmers, who work land on a daily basis, know this is simply not true. The aggregates under the soil contribute to the 'soil capability' of the specific piece of land and increase the value of the land for growing crops.

As well, the NFU-O requested that settlement boundary expansions should not occur outside of a municipal comprehensive review (MCR), which happen every five years. Allowing expansions outside of the MCR leaves municipalities open to pressure by developers and

abandons long term planning for an ad hoc approach.

Market demand

We raised concerns with the reduction of the requirement for intensification in designated growth areas. Intensification must be prioritized over increasing settlement boundaries in order to promote the other priorities of the PPS including protecting prime farmland, specialty crop areas, and natural heritage features.

We are concerned with the addition of “market demand” as a reason to expand settlement areas, which allows boundaries to be redefined based on a vague, undefined term and leaves farmland vulnerable to development.

Finally, the province revised the PPS due to concerns regarding the cost and supply of homes, yet we are disappointed that there is no corresponding inquiry or policy revision that addresses the continued rising cost of farmland, and by focusing on creating more housing, farmland prices are only going to be

driven higher to the detriment of new farmers. If we continue to put pressure on agricultural land for development, we will irreversibly take farmland out of production, causing a direct threat to our food sovereignty.

Coming Events

Local 330 Renfrew – Next meeting is Monday, November 4, 7:30 p.m. at the Barr Line Community Centre. For more information, contact Connie Tabbert at rcnfu330@gmail.com or 613-646-7753.

Local 316 Frontenac, Lennox Addington's Fourth Annual Fabulous Farmers Fall Feast – Saturday, November 2, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Battersea United Church Hall, 2216 Wellington St. Join friends and neighbours to celebrate the best of the local harvest with a scrumptious dinner lovingly prepared by local farmers and friends. This year's feast highlights Sonset Farm's organic chicken with a southern flair. Vegetarian option available. Tickets: \$50 at www.eventbrite.com/e/fourth-annual-fabulous-farmers-fall-feast-tickets-70984968953.

NFU's 50th Annual Convention November 25-27, 2019



Fifty years ago, the National Farmers Union held its inaugural convention in Winnipeg, Manitoba – and this year, we're going back! We will celebrate our achievements, honour the members whose dedication and wisdom helped us achieve so much, pass on the lessons we've learned along the way, and help shape a vision for what the National Farmers Union and agriculture in Canada will look like in the next 50 years.

The convention will be held at Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park, 1405 St. Matthews Ave., Winnipeg. Call: 1-204-775-8791 Ext. 5 (direct to hotel). Use room block #371730

If you have a piece of NFU history to share with convention-goers, whether it be a news clipping, a story to tell, memorabilia, or pictures, you are encouraged to email nfu50@nfu.ca or to call the NFU national office at 306-652-9465.

A subscription to The Rural Voice is one of the benefits of being an NFU-O member