

Resolution 2020-01 *Recommending that the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (EMC) approves the submission of the Unique Natural Areas (UNA) Committee's report on the evaluation of options for the potential management of the Tompkins County-owned Forest Lands to the Tompkins County Legislature's Planning, Energy, and Environmental Quality (PEEQ) Committee.*

1. Whereas, the Tompkins County Legislature in 2019 approved a Five-year Update to the 2015 Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan and,
2. Whereas, an Action Item in the Update is as follows: County-Owned Forest Lands: Establish clear goals for managing County-owned Forest Lands and develop a plan of action for advancing those goals. [County Legislature, Environmental Management Council, Department of Planning and Sustainability] and,
3. Whereas, in December 2018 the Department of Planning and Sustainability submitted a proposal to conduct a sustainable forestry project on the County-owned forest lands in Newfield,
4. Whereas, the Planning, Development, and Environment Quality (PDEQ) Committee supported the issuance of bids to undertake the project and,
5. Whereas, no bids were received to conduct the project and,
6. Whereas, subsequently the EMC's Unique Natural Areas Committee volunteered to conduct a literature search and consult with experts in the field of forestry and then to prepare a report evaluating options for the potential management of the County-owned forest lands and,
7. Whereas, the UNA Committee held a public meeting on June 12, 2019, at the Tompkins County Public Library to discuss the scope of the project and,
8. Whereas, the UNA Committee continued to gather relevant information and discuss progress at its monthly meetings and,
9. Whereas, a draft document was produced and reviewed by the Committee and,
10. Whereas, the UNA Committee issued a press advisory and emailed the attendee list from the June meeting notifying the public of a presentation of the draft report on December 18, 2019, at the Tompkins County Public Library and to receive comments and,

11. Whereas, the UNA Committee continued to accept comments until January 3, 2020, and,
12. Whereas, the final report was changed in response to the comments submitted, and additional comments and responses will be added as an appendix and,
13. Whereas, the UNA Committee met on January 6, 2020, reviewed the final report, and voted to forward it to the EMC , now let it therefore be resolved,

That the EMC approves the submission of the final report to the PEEQ Committee for its consideration.

Date Adopted: Jan. 9, 2020, Voting Yes: 15, No: 0, Abstentions: 1