



Staff Report

By-law Enforcement

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: December 9, 2024
Report Number: CSOPS.24.091
Title: Annual Report on Abandoned Orchards for 2024
Prepared by: Debbie Young, Manager of By-law & Licensing

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CSOPS.24.091 entitled "Annual Report on Abandoned Orchards for 2024";

AND THAT Council receive this report for information purposes only;

B. Overview

This report is provided for information purposes in relation to the Annual Abandoned Orchards complaints received in 2024. To date, no complaints were received in 2024, however, a summary and update of the Abandoned Orchards complaints made in 2023 is set out in this report.

C. Background

In 2023, Staff received 8 complaints in relation to potential abandoned orchards within the Town. Staff (certified weed inspector) conducted an investigation and subsequently engaged the services of a third-party horticultural specialist to assist in identifying the abandoned orchards. This report will provide an overview of the steps taken to bring the abandoned orchards into compliance with the Town's Abandoned Orchard By-law 2003-38 and the Weed Control Act.

D. Analysis

As indicated 8 properties were found to be in violation of the Abandoned Orchard By-law and the Town worked with the property owners to implement a reasonable management plan to bring the property into compliance.

To date, 7 of the properties have been brought into compliance with the By-law and have completed all the required work, and 1 property remains in violation.

One property exercised their right and was subject to an appeal of the Town's order. This appeal took several months as it required the Chief Inspector for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to conduct an investigation which included a site visit. The Town subsequently received the Appeal Order which affirmed the Town's Order and requires the property to come into compliance by April 1, 2025. A further Management Plan was implemented by the Chief Inspector for the Ministry and the Town Weed Inspector will continue follow-ups.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

Positive impact on the environment as it has potentially removed the detrimental cause to the land thus creating a naturalized flow that minimizes orchard-related disease and invasive species.

G. Financial Impacts

There was a financial impact on the Town that consisted of the following:

1. The cost to identify the abandoned orchards conducted by the Horticultural Specialist \$2,962.64 which included site visit and report.
2. Obtain a legal opinion on the Town's current by-law and have legal representation at the appeal \$4,091.73.

Total cost associated with the Abandoned Orchards for 2023/2024 was \$7,054.37.

H. In Consultation With

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Debbie Young, Manager of By-law & Licensing bylawadmin@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Young
Manager of By-law & Licensing

For more information, please contact:
Debbie Young, Manager of By-law & Licensing
bylawadmin@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 242

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CSOPS.24.091 Annual Abandoned Orchard Report for 2024.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Nov 29, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ryan Gibbons - Nov 29, 2024 - 8:54 AM