

Subject Use Management Strategies - Roads		Policy PL 10.01.00	Page 1 of 3
Compiled by - Branch Lands & Waters	Section Land Management	Date Issued February 22, 2007 Draft	
Replaces Directive Title Use Management Strategies	Number Access Roads Manual RA 2-4	Dated August 1992	

1.0 BACKGROUND

The *Public Lands Act* grants the public the right, subject to certain restrictions, to use roads on Crown land. Periodically, the Ministry reviews applications for new roads on Crown land – often for access to private property or for purposes of commercial activity, resource extraction or economic development. Many users rely on these roads on Crown land for access, recreation, tourism and commercial purposes.

Given the broad public interest in how roads on Crown land are managed (e.g. public safety, environmental protection, fiscal investment), the Ministry has long recognized the benefit of developing “use management strategies” for roads on Crown land. Use management strategies are essentially a statement or strategy which: describes a road or road network on Crown land; outlines its purpose; and defines its roles and responsibilities related to use, maintenance, control, monitoring and decommissioning.

Use management strategies provide the Ministry, other agencies, municipalities, stakeholders and road users a common understanding of how a road will be built and/or how a new road or existing road will be used, maintained and eventually decommissioned through its life cycle. Use management strategies also clearly identify the parties responsible for activities such as road repair, maintenance, monitoring and decommissioning.

The principle of use management strategies for roads on Crown land was established on a policy basis in the Ministry’s 1992 *Access Roads Manual*. Many of the recommendations of the *Forest Roads and Water Crossings Initiative Report* underscored the need to support the development of use management strategies – particularly as it relates to existing roads on Crown land where there are deteriorating capital infrastructure and/or risks to public safety or the environment.

In addition to this policy which applies to all roads on Crown land administered by the *Public Lands Act*, the *Forest Management Planning Manual for Ontario’s Crown Forests* also provides for the establishment of use management strategies, for those roads planned and managed through the forest management planning process. Secondly, use management strategies for roads within provincial parks and conservation reserves are addressed as part of the provincial park and conservation reserve management planning process.

While this policy does not supersede the broad policy and procedural direction related to the planning and management of roads undertaken through the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and the *Class Environmental Assessment Approval for Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario* and roads planned or managed through the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act and the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, this policy and its accompanying procedure PL 10.01.01 do however provide valuable information and guidance on how to undertake the preparation, approval and implementation of use management strategies for roads directed by the forest or protected area management planning system.

2.0 GOAL

Use management strategies will be prepared for all roads on Crown land.

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

- A) Use management strategies will be developed for new roads or road networks on Crown land.

As part of the review and authorization of new roads on Crown under the *Public Lands Act*, a use management strategy must be prepared and approved prior to construction and authorization of the road. Such requirement may not however apply to short, single use roads on Crown land where there is minimal potential for use, maintenance, capital investment and conflicts (e.g. driveway access to single property).

- B) Use management strategies will be developed for all existing roads or road networks on Crown land.

In recognition of the extensive number of roads and road networks on Crown land for which use management strategies have not been developed in the past, use management strategies for existing roads and road networks will be developed over time, based upon the establishment of priorities and the strategies laid out in this policy.

- C) Use of a road on Crown land will be consistent with the use management strategy developed for that road or road network.

Roads that are constructed and maintained for specific purposes, may not necessarily be suitable, safe or sustainable for other uses (e.g. public versus private use, low volume versus high, specific types of vehicle only, specific seasons only).

- D) Any work (construction, repair, maintenance, decommissioning) on a Crown land road shall be consistent with the use management strategy developed for that road or road network.

4.0 STRATEGIES

The following strategies address the implementation of the goal and objectives associated with this policy for use management strategies for roads on Crown land.

- 1) Use management strategies are to be prepared and approved consistent with PL 10.01.01 Road Use Management Strategies (Procedure).

Public Lands Act PL 10.01.01 Road Use Management Strategies (Procedure) provides procedural guidance and a template on the process for the development and Ministry approval of a use management strategy for both existing roads and/or road networks and for new roads on Crown land.

- 2) Use management strategies may be developed on a road network basis rather than for individual roads/road segments.

Where it is practical to do so, a single use management strategy may be developed to cover a number of roads that together, provide access to a distinct geographic area. Such an approach reduces that number of individual road strategies to be prepared and avoids duplication of effort (e.g. inventory, documentation, consultation) and provides a more consolidated and comprehensive approach to local road management.

- 3) Responsibility for preparing a use management strategy may be assigned and/or shared with another party.

It is not always necessary for the Ministry to assume responsibility for developing a use management strategy. Where there is a party willing to assume responsibility for a road, that party may also be assigned primary and/or shared responsibility for the preparation of a use management strategy. This approach may

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be undertaken where the assigned party is willing to accept this responsibility and can demonstrate the capacity to complete the required planning process. In all such cases, the Ministry will retain a review and approval function and responsibility.

- 4) Use management strategies will conform to applicable Ministry land use and resource management planning direction.

Consistent with the Ministry's hierarchical approach to land use planning and management of Crown land, the development of use management strategies for roads and/or road networks are subordinate to broader policy direction contained in land use planning documents (e.g. Crown Land Use Policy Atlas, District Land Use Guidelines, other area specific plans) and resource management plans (e.g. forest management plans).

As such, use management strategies shall be consistent with the Crown land management guidance provided with those higher tier documents, particularly as it may relate to access management and control. If revisions are made to broader land use planning or resource management direction during the term of a use management strategy, it may be necessary to revise the use management strategy accordingly.

- 5) Use management strategies shall be implemented consistent with the *Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facilities Development Projects*.

The project level activities (e.g. water crossings removal) associated with the implementation of use management strategies are subject to the *Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facilities Development Projects* (MNR 2003). Individual projects must be screened to determine their potential impacts and specific review processes devised to adequately address screenings' findings. Consultation with the public, Aboriginal communities and local stakeholders may be an important element of the process.

- 6) The use of roads and/or road networks on Crown land shall to be monitored over time to ensure that the use is consistent with approved use management strategies. Should the use of a road and/or road network alter over time, or if new uses are proposed for said roads, the use management strategy should be reviewed and amended if necessary, following an appropriate planning process.

5.0 REFERENCES

- PL 10.01.01 Use Management Strategies (Procedure)
- Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facilities Development Projects (MNR 2003)
- Forest Management Planning Manual for Ontario's Crown Forests (MNR 2004)