02-24-BOD
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
Mar 22, 2024 at 9:00 AM EDT to Mar 22, 2024 at 12:00 PM EDT

Agenda

1. Events

Tiffin Nature Program (for preschoolers)
Tiffin Nature Program will help preschoolers gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural world and our amazing planet. Children learn about risky play, and develop a better understanding of their relationship with the land.
Half Day Dates: Tuesdays March 19, 2023 – June 4, 2024
Full Day Dates: Thursdays March 21, 2023 – June 6, 2024
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival
Hosted in partnership with the Rotary Club of Barrie, the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival at the Tiffin Conservation Area is a tradition spanning more than three decades.
Visitors will take a trip back in time to explore how maple syrup was made in the past. After that, they will return to current times and see how maple syrup is made today! End your tour with a pancake and sausage breakfast with fresh maple syrup. Prices for most activities are included in the admission fees.
Date: April 6 – 7, 2024
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

Learn to Fly fish like a biologist
Learn to fly fish like a biologist to make the most of your fishing season! Event hosted by Fred Dobbs, Manager, Stewardship Services, in partnership with Cabela's Barrie.
Date: April 6, 2024
Location: Cabela's Barrie, 50 Concert Way, Barrie, ON L4N 6N5

PA/PD Day Camp Tiffin
Camp Tiffin encourages outdoor exploration, guided excursions in the forest fueled by student interest. Every day will be guided by student inquiry, seasonal changes, and weather and program availability.
Date: Friday, April 8, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

2. Call to Order

3. Land Acknowledgement

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Board acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional land of the Anishnaabeg people. The Anishnaabeg include the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires

Confederacy. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect with all First Nation, Métis and Inuit people.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest

5. Motion to Adopt the Agenda

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting #02-24-BOD dated on March 23, 2024 be approved.

6. Announcements

The NVCA is pleased to announce that out 2023 Annual Report is now availabe and posted on our website.

7. Presentations

7.1. New O. Reg Changes from Tyler Mulhall, Planner

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Board members receive this presentation as presented.

8. Deputations

There are no deputations at this time.

9. Hearings

There are no hearings at this time.

10. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Board members are requested to identify items from the Consent List that they wish to have considered for separate discussion.

11. Adoption of Consent List and Identification of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: agenda item number(s), _____ was identified as requiring separate discussion, be referred for discussion under Agenda Item #12; and
FURTHER THAT: all Consent List Agenda Items not referred for separate discussion be adopted as submitted to the board and staff be authorized to take all necessary action required to give effect to same; and
FURTHER THAT: any items in the Consent List not referred for separate discussion, and for which conflict has been declared, are deemed not to have been voted on or discussed by the individual making the declaration.

12. Consent List

12.1. Adoption of Minutes

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings 12-23-BOD and 01-24-BOD dated on January 26, 2024 be approved.

12.2. Correspondence

Correspondence dated February 2024 provided by Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority regarding a newsletter on the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program.

12.3. Staff Reports

12.3.1. Staff Report No. 01-02-24-BOD from Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 01-02-24-BOD regarding the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan summary of progress in 2023 and 2024 goals for information.

12.3.2. Staff Report No. 02-02-24-BOD from Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Staff Report No. 02-02-24-BOD regarding the appointment of Ian Ockenden as an alternate Risk Management Official and as a Risk Management Inspector as required under Sections 48 (1-3) of the *Clean Water Act, 2006* be approved; and
FURTHER THAT: a certificate of appointment be issued as required by Section 48(3) of the *Act.*

12.3.3. Staff Report No. 03-02-24-BOD from Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning and Permits

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors receive and approve Staff Report No. 03-02-24-BOD regarding legislative and regulatory proposals affecting Conservation Authorities.

12.3.4. Staff Report No. 04-02-24-BOD from Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services and Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors Approve Staff Report No. 04-02-24-BOD and;
FURTHER THAT: the identified staff positions in the report be delegated the recommended powers for permit issuance, cancellations, and hearings, and;
FURTHER THAT: the identified staff persons in the report be appointed as officers for the NVCA under the Conservation Authorities Act.

12.3.5. Staff Report No. 05-02-24-BOD from Sheryl Flannagan, Director, Corporate Services

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors approve Staff Report No. 05-02-24-BOD regarding the updated Agricultural Committee Terms of Reference, and;
FURTHER THAT: the terms of reference be implemented.

12.3.6. Staff Report No. 06-02-24-BOD from Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 06-02-24-BOD regarding the 2024 workplan and key near-term considerations for NVCA's flood structures.

12.3.7. Staff Report No. 07-02-24-BOD from Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive and approve Staff Report No. 07-02-24-BOD regarding the Final of MOU Cost Apportioning Agreement Programs and Services and;
FURTHER THAT: the CAO will provide final changes to this staff report and the final transition report (attached) concerning Springwater and Oro-Medonte MOUs for the Chair's approval prior to the March 31, 2024 submission to the Minister and Office of the MNRF.

12.3.8. Staff Report No. 08-02-24-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialists

Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: Staff Report No. 08-02-24-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – *January 14, 2024 – March 8, 2024,* be received.

13. Other Business

14. Adjourn

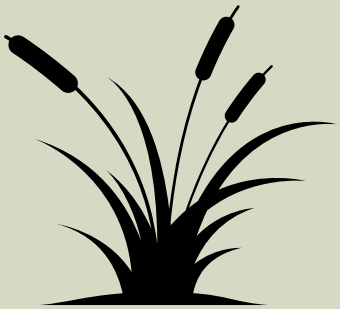
Recommendation:
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors adjourn at _____ to meet again on April 26, 2024 or at the call of the Chair.

2023 NVCA Annual Report

NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Table of Contents

HERE'S A GLANCE OF JUST SOME OF WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED in 2023



12,363
Children Attending Programs

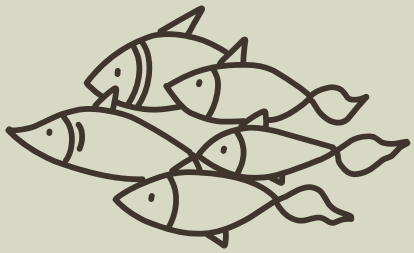
5,300
Hectares of Land Protected

10
Hectares of Land Acquired

6,050
Volunteer hours Contributed

1,469
Volunteers

58
Schools Hosted



62
External Bookings

$497,128
Stewardship Grants

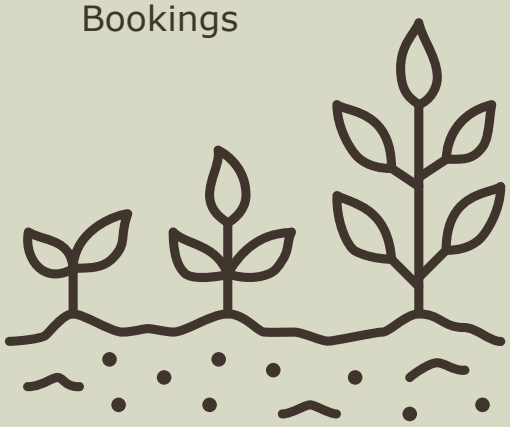
130
Ecological Restoration Projects

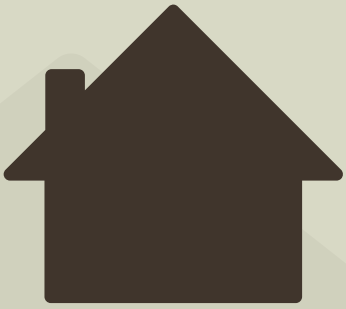
9
Kilometres of Rivers & Streams Restored

$220,607
Forestry Grants

78,000
Trees Planted

35
Forestry Projects

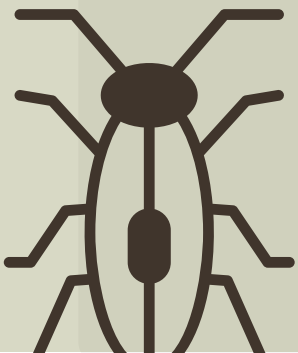




6
Flood Messages Issued

196
Monitoring projects

90
Wells sampled



839
Conservation Authorities Act Approvals

12
Subdivisons (includes condonimiums)

103
Violations

850
General Inquiries

2,527
Planning and Permitting Inquiries

4
Freedom of Information Requests

Message from the CAO

Broken heat records, droughts, irregular weather patterns, smoke from Canadian forest fires transported across oceans – these are all examples of how climate change has affected many areas of the globe in 2023, including the Nottawasaga Watershed. Similar to many regions of the world, our watershed is also facing many local challenges due to climate change.

Every day, the NVCA team works with our municipalities, funders and other partners to prepare the watershed for the impacts of climate change. Through restoration work, they inspire residents to share rivers, wetlands, forests and grasslands with the plants and animals that also call our watershed home. They remind us that although climate change is upon us, there are still many opportunities to mitigate and adapt to this global issue with local solutions.

In 2023, NVCA navigated the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the requirements under the *More Homes Built Faster Act*. We worked with municipalities to develop memorandums of understanding and cost apportionment agreements with our member municipalities. Through this process, we enhanced our relationships with our municipal partners by better understanding their needs in a changing climate and growing watershed.

In the coming year, we look forward to working with our municipalities to manage a watershed that supports human, economic and ecological health. We will continue to work hard to ensure our watershed is resilient to the effects of climate change, urban growth and other stressors and provides for safe, healthy and prosperous people and communities.

Doug Hevenor

Environmental Education

NVCA's Environmental Education team continues to be a trusted partner with many organizations, including the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB), the Rotary Club of Barrie and RTOERO (formally known as the Retired Teachers of Ontario). In 2023, the team worked with over 12,363 youth to help them connect with our natural world and become the future stewards of our watershed.

Expanding education offerings

In 2023, the Environmental Education team launched several new programs.

Thanks to funding from the RTOERO, residents from three senior homes visited the Tiffin Conservation Area to participate in programming such as flower hikes and tree identification.

The team created and launched the Amazing Race Wilderness Survival Program, which can be adapted to suit school groups, corporate bookings, birthday parties and secondary school students in the Specialist High Skills Major programs. The program can be modified to include many activities, such as mapping, wilderness challenges, team building, leadership skills and Indigenous games.

They also introduced new climate change programming to give youth hope and empower them to be change makers. Participants learned about the cause and effects of climate change, the carbon cycle and how youth across the world are fighting for a healthier environment.

Reducing eco-anxiety... with beavers

NVCA's Environmental Education program partnered with the SCDSB to deliver Grade 4 Habitat's and Communities curriculum at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation and within the schoolyard.

In 2023, NVCA delivered programming to 19 schools, connecting with each school on three separate occasions. The lessons and activities are engaging so that students learn the required material in a way that invites respect and care for Ontario's habitats, as well as the impressive adaptations of all plants and animals.

Each year, the Environmental Education team focuses on one animal found in the Nottawasaga Watershed. As eco-anxiety is becoming more and more prevalent amongst youth, the team decided to pick the beaver for its ability to positively impact the carbon cycle and the environment in general.

Education for families

After a few challenging years with the COVID-19 pandemic and running camp with reduced numbers and social distancing, Camp Tiffin finally returned to pre-COVID programming!

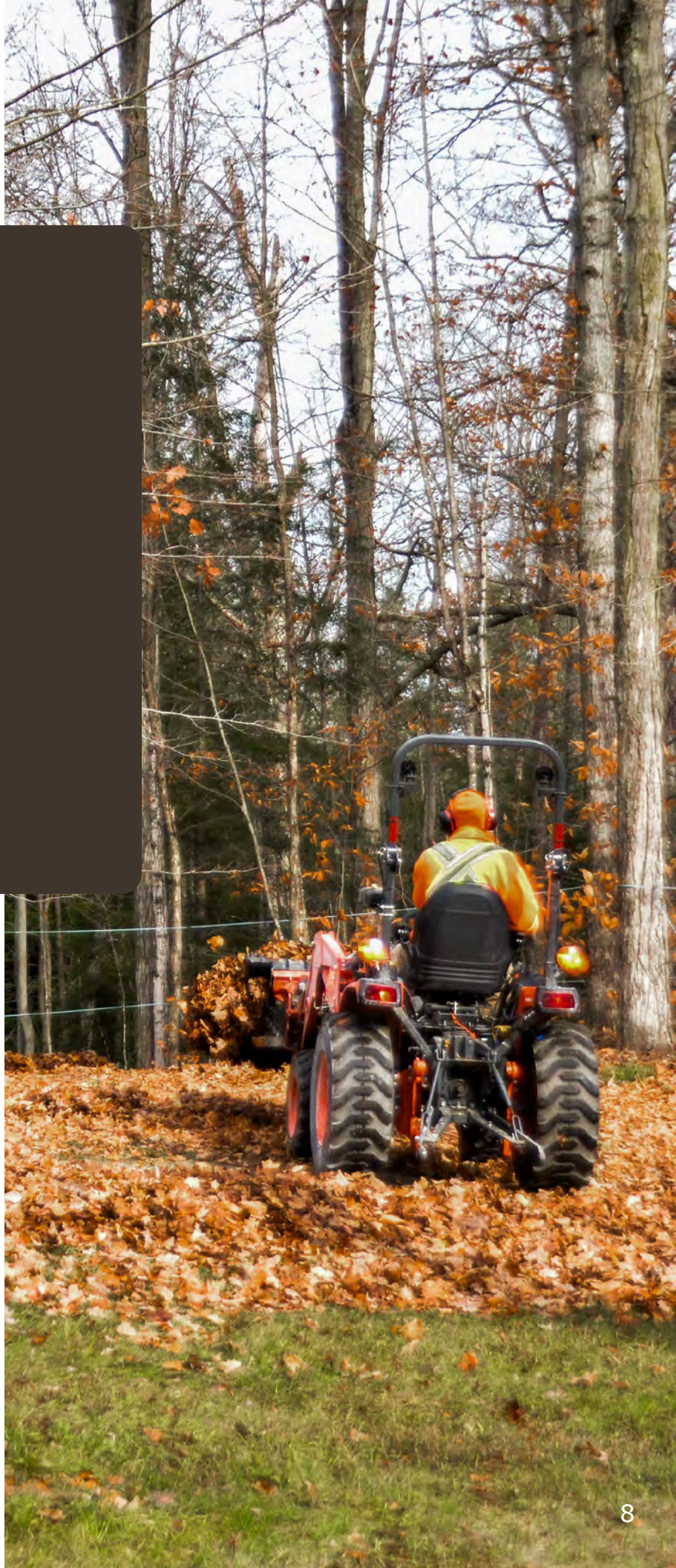
Campers had a great time canoeing, pond dipping, shelter building, orienteering, making crafts, making friends, having fun in nature and so much more. They welcomed guest speakers throughout the summer, including a local historian, astronomers, a local children's author and a paleontology student who used to attend Camp Tiffin!

Preschoolers attending the Tiffin Nature Program connected with nature through hikes, songs, games, photography, general exploration, learning socialization skills, and discovering interests with open-ended play.

With funding and support from the Rotary Club of Barrie and Nature Barrie, NVCA welcomed 25 children and 20 adults from Ukraine to participate in habitat hikes, Indigenous crafts, disc golf and singing Ukrainian folk songs.

Lands & Operations

Since 1960, NVCA has secured approximately 5,300 hectares of mostly environmentally sensitive lands within the Nottawasaga Watershed. Initially, the purpose was to limit soil erosion in rivers and streams, and to protect lives and properties against flood hazards. These historic actions are now proving to have long-term, wide-ranging benefits.



Protecting and improving conservation land

Lands owned by NVCA are important in many ways, including flood and erosion protection, providing clean water, habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities. Most of these lands are not open for visitors as they contain significant natural heritage features, natural hazards and other sensitive features, such as provincially significant wetlands.

NVCA's Lands staff are designated as Provincial Offences Officers under Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act.* They regularly monitor NVCA's lands to ensure there is no improper, illegal use or encroachment.

In 2023, the Lands team used mapping tools to identify issues or concerns with the properties, and followed up with ground-truthing to their findings.

Creating better visitor experiences

NVCA has 11 conservation areas in the Nottawasaga Watershed for visitors to hike, picnic, canoe, bird watch, play disc golf and much more!

Maintaining and enhancing visitor experience and safety is a priority for NVCA's Lands team. To help with the cost of maintenance, NVCA generates funds from parking fees, festival admission fees, and rents out venues for weddings and other special events.

Thanks to Canadian Healthy Communities Initiative, the popular Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area has a new dry washroom. To improve safety, visitors are no longer required to park on the road, and can now safely park in the 40-spot parking lot!

In late 2023, NVCA took over the management of the Edenvale Conservation Area from the Township of Springwater. Found on the banks of the Nottawasaga River in the hamlet of Edenvale, this scenic conservation area offers visitors a convenient place to rest, picnic, launch their small boat, canoe or fish.






Bringing communities together

NVCA hosts two festivals each year – Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival in the spring, and Festival at Fort Willow in the fall.

The 2023 Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival was a success thanks to the ongoing partnership with the Rotary Club of Barrie. Activities included a pancake breakfast with fresh maple syrup, as well as activities including wagon rides, firefighters, paramedics, outdoor skill demonstrations by the cadets, dog agility demonstrations by Red Barn and much more!





In the fall, the Historic Fort Willow Conservation Area came to life, as 850 students from eight different schools and more than 640 members of the public experienced what life was like in the early 1800s. Visitors made candles, learned about the items that were traded between Indigenous peoples and Europeans, experienced first-hand how sailors worked on ships, made ropes, learned about blacksmithing, saw how food was made by settlers and learned about military drills of the time.

In 2023, many organizations supported NVCA's land conservation efforts. Thank you to North of 89 Outdoors who hosted two trail runs with proceeds going towards NVCA's lands maintenance. The Friends of Utopia received funding through the Rural Economic Development Fund to support the restoration efforts of the Utopia Gristmill, with ongoing fundraising taking place.

Learning about the history of the watershed

Led by licensed archeologist, Trevor Carter, the archeology class at St. Joseph's Catholic High School completed an archeological study at the Historic Fort Willow Conservation Area. The students found printed ceramic that belonged to the families of settlers who moved into the Fort's buildings after the military abandoned them. These artifacts are the first definite evidence of these settlers.

NVCA's staff regularly looks for opportunities to learn and grow. Through connections with SCDSB, the Environmental Education team learned that Indigenous peoples boiled sap in clay pots to produce maple syrup. With an updated understanding of Indigenous methods, the team is able to provide a more comprehensive description of historic maple syrup production during their programming and tours.

Harold Parker Memorial Trail

Harold Parker was a former Township of Springwater Councillor, past-Chair of NVCA, involved with the Friends of Minesing Wetlands, and a life-long resident of the community of Minesing.

He has been a community leader and mentor to those following in his footsteps. He spent decades restoring his property adjacent to Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area. Over the years, he has planted thousands of trees, installed dozens of bird nesting boxes, supported stream condition improvement projects such as stream bank stabilization and the construction of wing deflectors.

To recognize Harold Parker's dedication to NVCA and Minesing Wetlands, the Meadow Mouse Trail (located by the canoe corral off George Johnston Road) has been renamed the Harold Parker Memorial Trail. Harold's family and friends joined NVCA to recognize this honour.

Forestry

NVCA's Forestry department works with funders, municipalities and landowners to plant forests on private land across the Nottawasaga Watershed. Planting trees helps provide wildlife habitat, shade rivers and streams, and produces oxygen, among many other benefits. Well managed forests also contribute to the economy by providing lumber for construction and wood fiber for products such as paper.

In 2023, winter came later in the year, giving the Forestry department more time to complete site visits for potential property owners who would like to plant forests in 2024. In 2023, NVCA planted 78,000 trees on 19 properties.

Depending on the location of the project, NVCA may be able to cover 25% – 88% of tree plantings for private landowners. Tree planting is supported by grants from Forests Ontario.

Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program

Ontario's Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) encourages good forest management by giving a property tax reduction to eligible landowners who prepare and follow an approved managed forest plan. To qualify, property owners must hire a Managed Forest Plan Approver.

NVCA's forester, Rick Grillmayer, is a Managed Forest Plan Approver and helps complete plans for property owners who plant forests with NVCA. In 2023, Rick completed or renewed 17 MFTIP plans.

Seed sourcing

Similar to many other watersheds in Ontario, the forests in the Nottawasaga Watershed are facing new threats from diseases and invasive species. In 2023, oak wilt was detected in the Nottawasaga Watershed, while hemlock woolly adelgid was detected in other parts of Ontario.

Oak wilt is a fungus that restricts the flow of water and nutrients through oak trees. Hemlock woolly adelgid is a small insect that attacks and kills hemlock trees.

As more invasive species and diseases threaten forests in the Nottawasaga Watershed, it is vital to keep our forests healthy by planting suitable trees that are resilient to these threats.

In 2023, NVCA's forester worked with nurseries to collect bur oak seeds to ensure there is an ample supply of seeds for future forest plantings.

Stewardship

Thanks to $170,000 of municipal levy, $550,000 of partner funding and 1,469 volunteers who contributed 6,050 volunteer hours, NVCA restored 14 km of rivers and streams, 13 hectares of grasslands, 9.7 hectares of wetlands, planted close to 15,000 trees and completed many other projects in 2023!

The completed projects improve water quality in the Nottawasaga River and watershed, and enhance habitat for both species at risk and recreational sport fish.

Restoring grasslands

In 2023, NVCA's Stewardship team continued to restore native grasslands in the Nottawasaga Watershed. Although these grasslands are restored primarily for pollinators and birds, they provide many other benefits.

Native grasslands thrive in poor sandy soils, and hit their growth peak in mid-summer. This complements the hay and pasture production of common cool-season Eurasian hayfields, which typically enter dormancy in the summer. For farmers, fields of native warm-season grasslands can provide drought resilient hay. They are also a great option for mid to late summer pasture rotation.

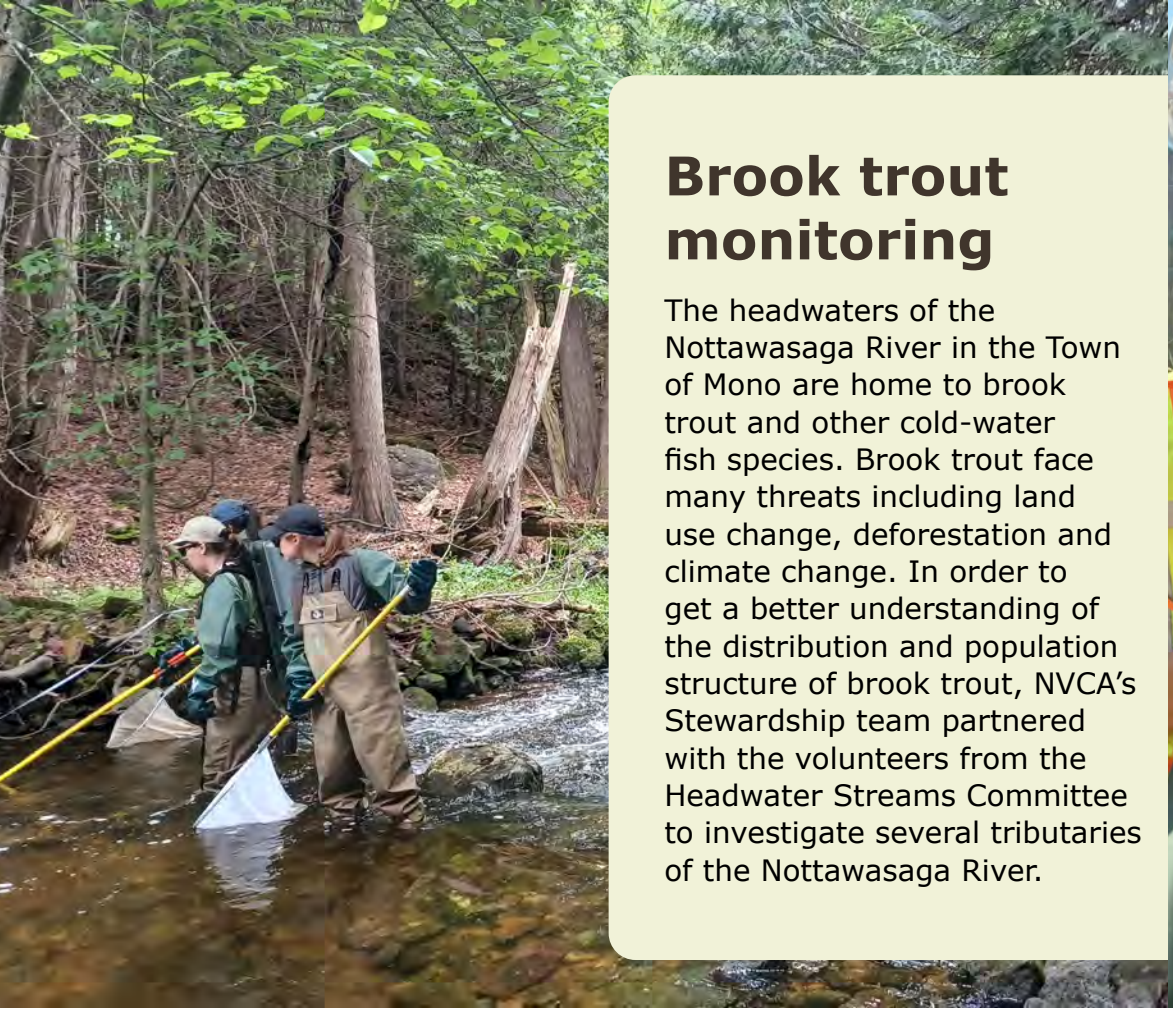
Additionally, the deep roots in native grasses can loosen compacted soils, creating a landscape that can absorb more water, decreasing flood risk. Grassland soils help fight climate change by reducing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The carbon sequestration capability of a 40-hectare native grassland is the equivalent of taking 49 cars off the road in a year!

Real rivers have curves

Restoring Willow Creek in the Township of Springwater has been a priority for NVCA and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The creek flows from agricultural areas into Minesing Wetlands. In its natural form, the creek is narrow and meandering and may split into many different channels.

Historically, some parts of the creek were dredged, over-widened and straightened. These actions also impact stream-side vegetation, making the creek banks much more prone to erosion. The combination of these problems created a habitat that did not support a high biodiversity of fish and benthic macroinvertebrates, both of which form the base of the food chain in the creek.

To put the 'Wiggle back in the Willow', NVCA staff and volunteers spent the last 10 years anchoring Christmas trees along the creek bank to trap sediment and recreate the meanders that naturally existed in Willow Creek many years ago. Native plants are planted on top of the deflectors and along the banks to provide stability and fish and wildlife habitat.



Brook trout monitoring

The headwaters of the Nottawasaga River in the Town of Mono are home to brook trout and other cold-water fish species. Brook trout face many threats including land use change, deforestation and climate change. In order to get a better understanding of the distribution and population structure of brook trout, NVCA's Stewardship team partnered with the volunteers from the Headwater Streams Committee to investigate several tributaries of the Nottawasaga River.

Restoring the Nottawasaga River

In 2023, NVCA's Stewardship team and Nottawasaga Futures — South Simcoe Streams Network completed its 5th year of the Nottawasaga River Restoration Project (NRRP). Together, they restored 0.4 km of eroding stream bank and trout habitat along two properties in the Township of Adjala-Tosorontio in 2023. The restoration work was completed on Sheldon Creek, the largest water course that flows into the upper Nottawasaga River, and an important trout and salmon spawning habitat.

Since 2018, 2.4 km of stream was restored under the NRRP, making the program one of the largest trout habitat restoration initiatives in southern Ontario! The stewardship team is working to engage new funding partners to further expand the scope of this program in 2024!

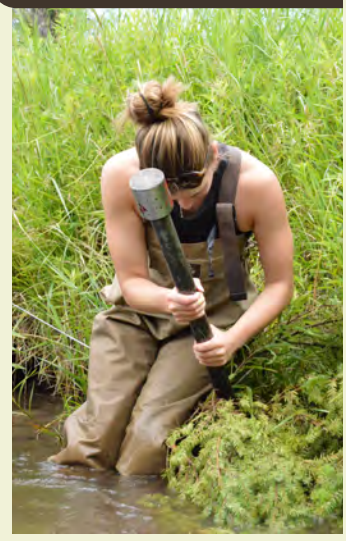
A healthier Pine River

In 2023, NVCA's Stewardship team and volunteers stabilized eroding banks and enhanced woody bank habitat along 150 m of the Pine River in the Township of Mulmur. This was the second year of work completed under the new Pine River Enhancement Program.

The Stewardship team completed the Pine River work using NVCA's four-step river bank restoration technique.

Step 1

Volunteers secure cut Christmas trees in "shingle-fashion" to the bottom of the eroding bank. This step stabilizes the bottom of the eroding slope, captures sediment and creates habitat for small fish.



Step 2

An excavator reduces the height of the eroding bank and installs logs and tree roots on top of the Christmas trees to stabilize the middle part of the bank and create habitat for larger fish.

Step 3

The excavator moves live sod, shrubs and trees from nearby areas to stabilize the work site and create an 'instant' streamside habitat. The areas where the sod was removed are reseeded.

Step 4

Volunteers plant trees and shrubs along the river to create long-term stream-side habitat and provide shade, which helps to reduce in-stream water temperatures.

Mad about the Mad River

In 2022, NVCA's Stewardship team and the Friends of the Mad River completed fish community sampling and summer stream temperature monitoring on the Mad River. The goal was to identify sections of the river that had poor trout populations and warm water conditions. These sections of the river were identified as critical areas for habitat restoration and bank stabilization. The most important section identified for restoration was the 1 km long "Carruthers Park Corridor" located on the Mad River west of the community of Avening on Airport Road.

In 2023, the team worked with the Friends of the Mad River and the Township of Clearview to complete Year 1 of the new Mad River Enhancement Program. A 40 m long habitat improvement and stabilization project was completed in Carruthers Park at an eroding bank adjacent to the pavilion. The project was completed through constructing a granite boulder wall and incorporating top soil and live vegetation.

NVCA and the Friends of the Mad River are actively raising funds to prepare for a much larger restoration project planned for the Mad River in the Carruthers Park Corridor in 2024!

Society for Ecological Restoration

On May 30, 2023, ecologists from around the province attended a site tour of river restoration work completed in the Township of Adjala-Tosorontio. NVCA's Stewardship team shared technical perspectives on river restoration techniques and strategies, and received great feedback from renowned scientists in Ontario.

Workshops at Cabela's

On April 15 and June 17, 2023, NVCA's Stewardship team partnered with Cabela's staff to host fly fishing workshops at the store in Barrie. Over 60 participants attended these events to learn about the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program and to pick up new fly fishing skills. The Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund provided $25,000 of support to NVCA in 2023 for restoring trout and salmon habitat in Sheldon Creek and the Mad River.

Natural Channels Award

On June 23, 2023, Fred Dobbs, Manager of Stewardship Services at NVCA, received an Award of Recognition at the Natural Channels Systems Conference, a national event held every four years at the University of Guelph. He was awarded for the scope and success of the NRRP, as well as the profile this program received through tours and presentations delivered in the first half of 2023.

In his 37-year career, Fred has worked with many conservation partners and funders to restore stream and floodplain habitats in the Nottawasaga Watershed. His personal commitment to the field almost matches the passion he brings to his work. Fred is always willing to share his knowledge with newcomers, and always with an infectious enthusiasm!

Drains Done Differently tour

On September 21, NVCA partnered with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Town of Innisfil and R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited (R.J. Burnsides) to host a tour of the South Innisfil Creek Drain, 'Drains Done Differently' project. The South Innisfil Creek Drain (SICD) is a 10 km long municipal drain that services 900 properties in the Towns of Innisfil and Bradford West Gwillimbury.

As the drain required maintenance, the Town of Innisfil, working with R.J. Burnsides, took advantage of an opportunity to design and implement extensive ecological enhancements and improvements into the drain cleanout project. These enhancements included the construction of floodplains to provide extra capacity in the drain and use of natural woody materials to stabilize the banks to create habitats for fish and birds.

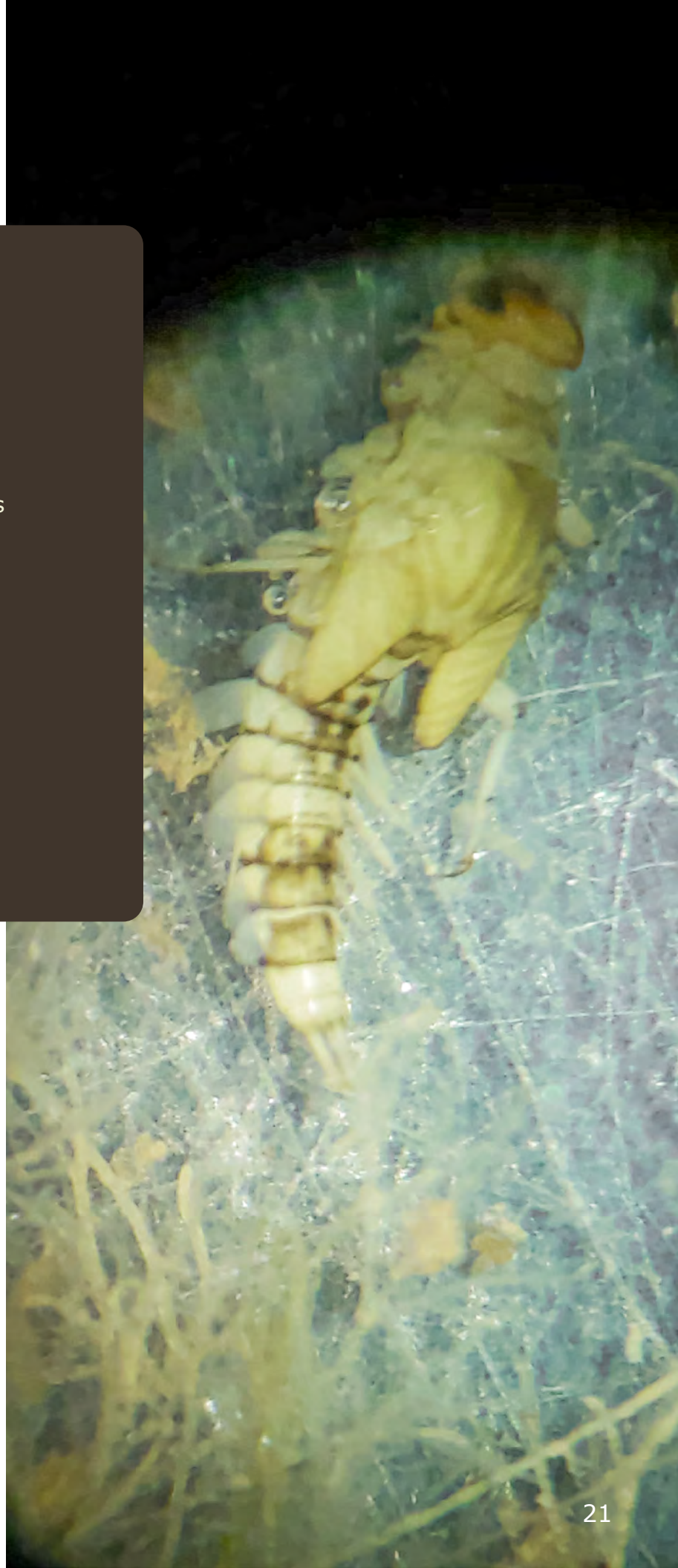
Thank you to our partners and volunteers!

NVCA's restoration projects are funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), OMAFRA, TD Tree Days, Forests Ontario, H. John McDonald Foundation, Takla Foundation, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund, Mansfield Ski Club and World Wildlife Fund.

These projects are made possible with support from Nottawasaga Futures – South Simcoe Streams Network, Rumball Excavation, Friends of the Mad River, Mono Headwater Streams Committee, Bruce Trail Conservancy, Nottawasaga Steelheaders, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Trout Unlimited Canada, Ontario Streams, Society for Ecological Restoration – Ontario Chapter, University of Guelph, Somerville Nurseries Inc, GEO Morphix Inc., Walker Aggregates, Pestrin Group Ltd, R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited and the Canadian Conservation Corps.

Watershed Science

NVCA's Watershed Science team monitors the rivers, streams, groundwater, wetlands and forests in the Nottawasaga Watershed to identify stressors that are impacting the local environment. This information can help shape land use planning and policy decisions, and measure the effectiveness of environmental restoration projects or the impacts of new development.



Long-term monitoring projects

Long-term watershed monitoring can identify trends and fill in knowledge gaps. NVCA's Watershed Science team is engaged in several long-term monitoring projects for both public and private organizations.

NVCA is a partner with the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network — programs managed by the Province of Ontario. Partners collect water quality samples from rivers, streams and groundwater wells, while the province conducts the laboratory analysis. Results are used locally and provincially to determine the health of these natural resources.

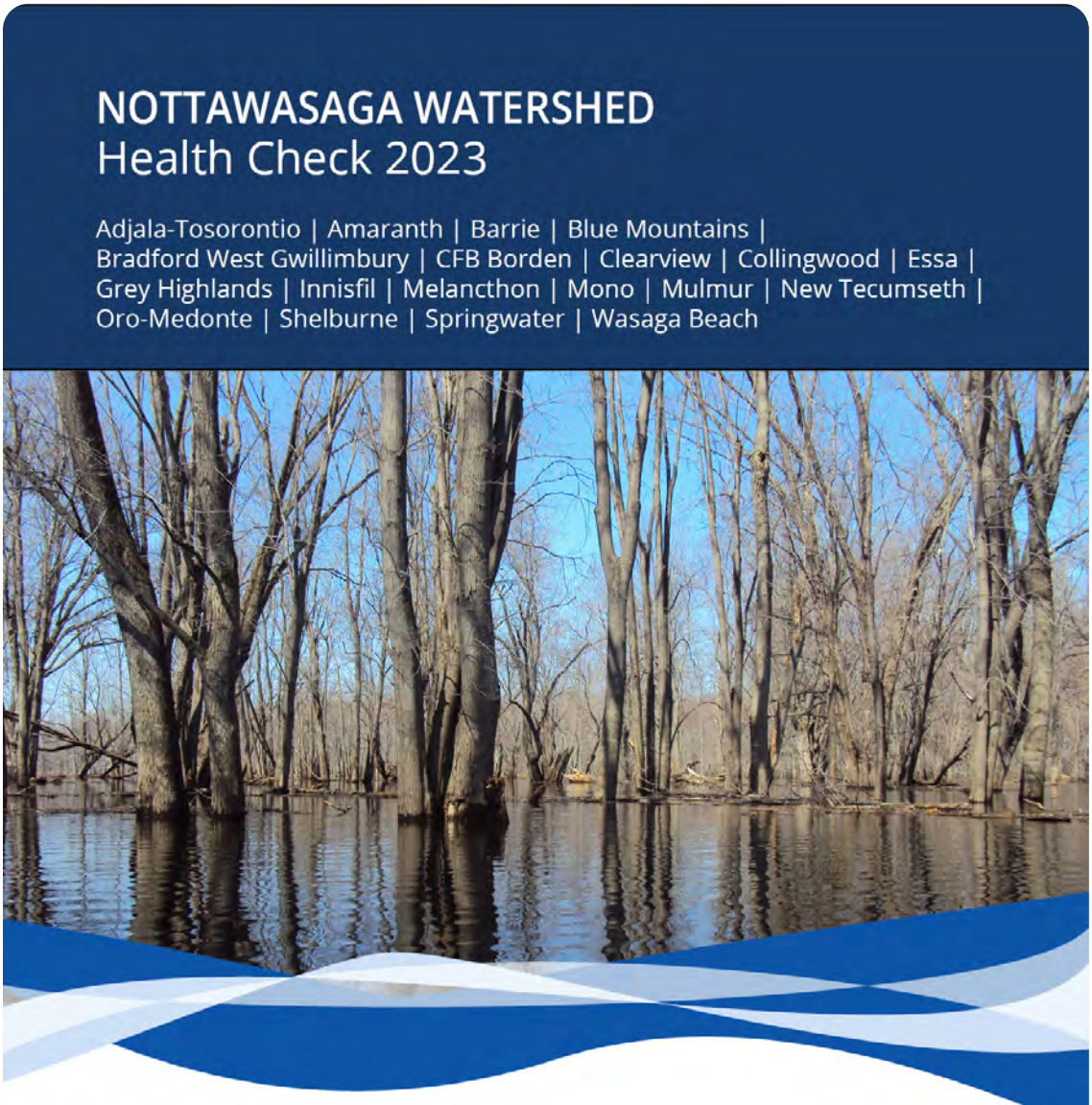
For 20 years, NVCA has partnered with Hockley Valley Resort to monitor the water quality in the upper Nottawasaga River, allowing the resort to maintain clean streams and watercourses throughout the property. This information has also revealed some interesting trends about the water quality in the upper Nottawasaga River, for example decreased stream health, increased algae growth and increased erosion.

Watershed Health Checks

In 2023, the Watershed Science team released NVCA's 2023 Subwatershed Health Checks. These are a set of nine reports that offer information on the health of forests, wetlands, streams and groundwater on a subwatershed level from 2017 to 2021. They also identify stewardship priorities, future challenges and opportunities to improve environmental health.

The health checks cover the entire Nottawasaga Watershed and all subwatersheds in NVCA's jurisdiction. Subwatersheds are geographic areas that are smaller basins within a larger watershed – think smaller bowls within one big bowl. In the Nottawasaga Watershed, water from each subwatershed contributes to streams and rivers that eventually flow into Georgian Bay.

To produce the health checks, NVCA's Watershed Science team analyzed the most up to date data sources available, most of which was exclusively collected by NVCA's Watershed Science team. These sources include aerial photos, maps, provincial groundwater and stream health data, and the types of insects and fish that live in rivers in the watershed.



A new direction for watershed monitoring

A well-designed watershed monitoring program helps ensure the highest-quality data are collected and analyzed in an accurate, timely and cost-effective manner.

In 2023, the Watershed Science team reviewed its approach to watershed monitoring and developed the Watershed Monitoring Strategy to ensure efficiencies while better aligning with NVCA's Strategic Plan and to meet the requirements of our partners.

To meet these goals and objectives, the Watershed Science program will refocus under the disciplines of climate, groundwater, natural heritage, and surface water. The program will also produce more and varied communication materials to get more of its data out to the public.

The Watershed Science team has completed the surface water discipline of the strategy and will be completing the remaining sections in 2024.

The strategy is centered around the following goals

1. Evaluating status and trends in the health of the watershed's natural resources – forests, wetlands, groundwater, surface water, and climate

2. Maintain accurate data to inform daily operations and strategic planning

3. Remain nimble enough to adapt to emerging issues without sacrificing long-term baseline data

Assisting with stormwater management

Managing stormwater is a priority for many municipalities in the Nottawasaga Watershed. In 2022, NVCA established the Stormwater Management Technical Working Group. It is a knowledge sharing group where municipal staff share best management practices for stormwater management facilities.

As a result of the *More Homes Built Faster Act*, NVCA is now only responsible for reviewing the water quantity aspects of stormwater management plans. The working group has been especially important for municipalities as they are now responsible for reviewing the water quality components of stormwater management plans.

Maintaining stormwater ponds

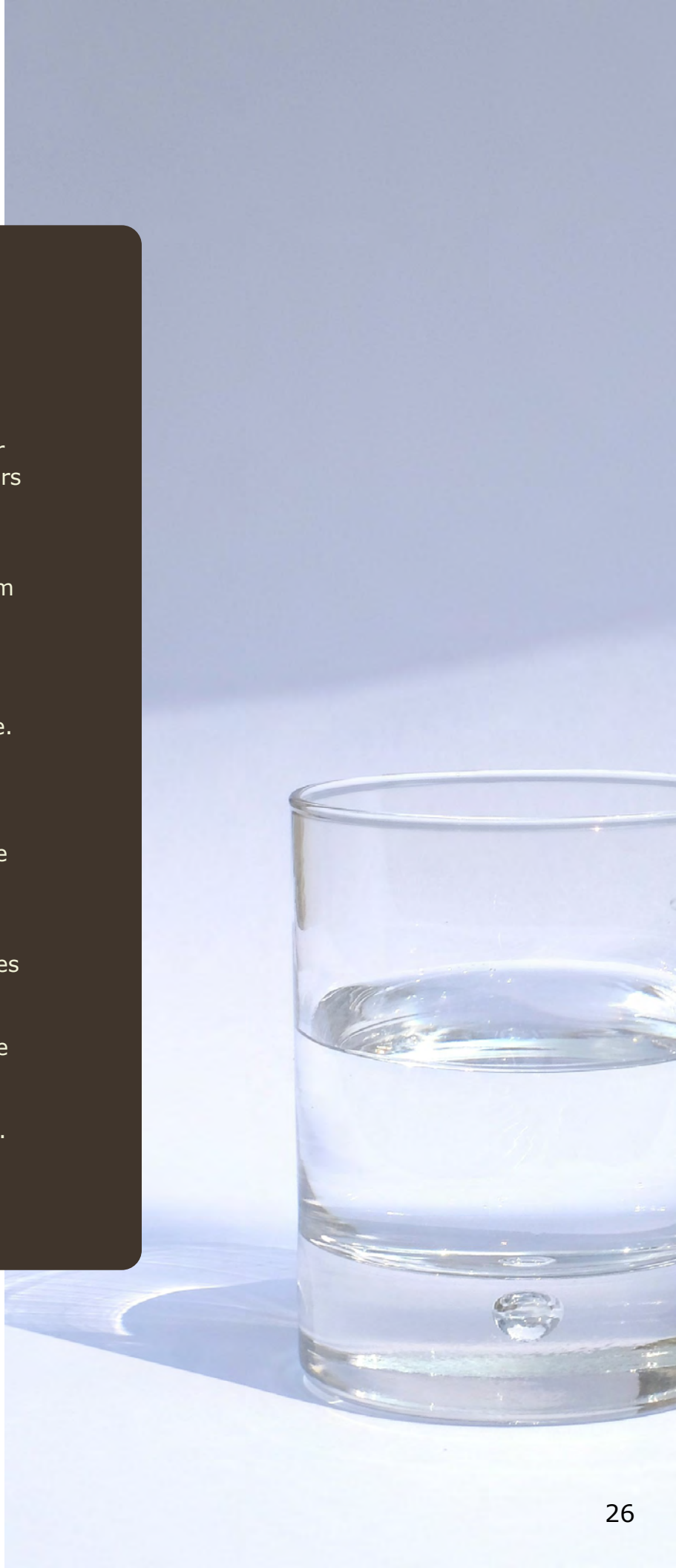
While municipalities in the Nottawasaga Watershed are responsible for maintaining stormwater management ponds, NVCA's Watershed Science team can assist municipalities in monitoring their ponds in a more detailed and cost-effective way.

In 2023, NVCA used new technology to measure the amount of sediment accumulated in a stormwater management pond in the Town of New Tecumseth. Compared to traditional methods of stormwater management pond monitoring, the new technology produced a much more detailed analysis of sediment build up in the ponds.

Source Water Protection

Source water is untreated water from lakes, streams, and aquifers that is used to supply municipal drinking water systems. Protecting source water simply means to protect this water from overuse or contamination due to pathogens or chemicals. This will ensure that there is enough safe water for all designated uses – for now and in the future.

NVCA, along with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and Severn Sound Environmental Association make up the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region. This region spans over 10,000 km^2, from the Oak Ridges Moraine in the south to the Canadian Shield in the north. It contains 52 municipalities, three First Nations communities, 291 municipal supply wells, and 16 municipal surface water intakes.



Municipal well review

As municipalities grow, the need for safe drinking water also increases. NVCA's Source Water Protection team works with municipalities, consultants and MECP to develop source water protection plans to ensure drinking water from new municipal wells is safe for residents.

In 2023, the Source Water Protection team reviewed new wells in Colgan in the Township of Adjala-Tosorontio, Craighurst in the Township of Oro-Medonte, Palgrave in the Region of Peel, and the Town of Shelburne. Reviews have started in Midhurst Heights in the Township of Springwater and are expected to be completed in 2024.

Risk management plans

NVCA's Risk Management Officials and Inspectors provide source water risk management services under the *Clean Water Act* to municipalities through partnership agreements. The officials negotiate plans with landowners to manage risks that may impact source water. These risks can include waste management, snow storage, and chemical storage.

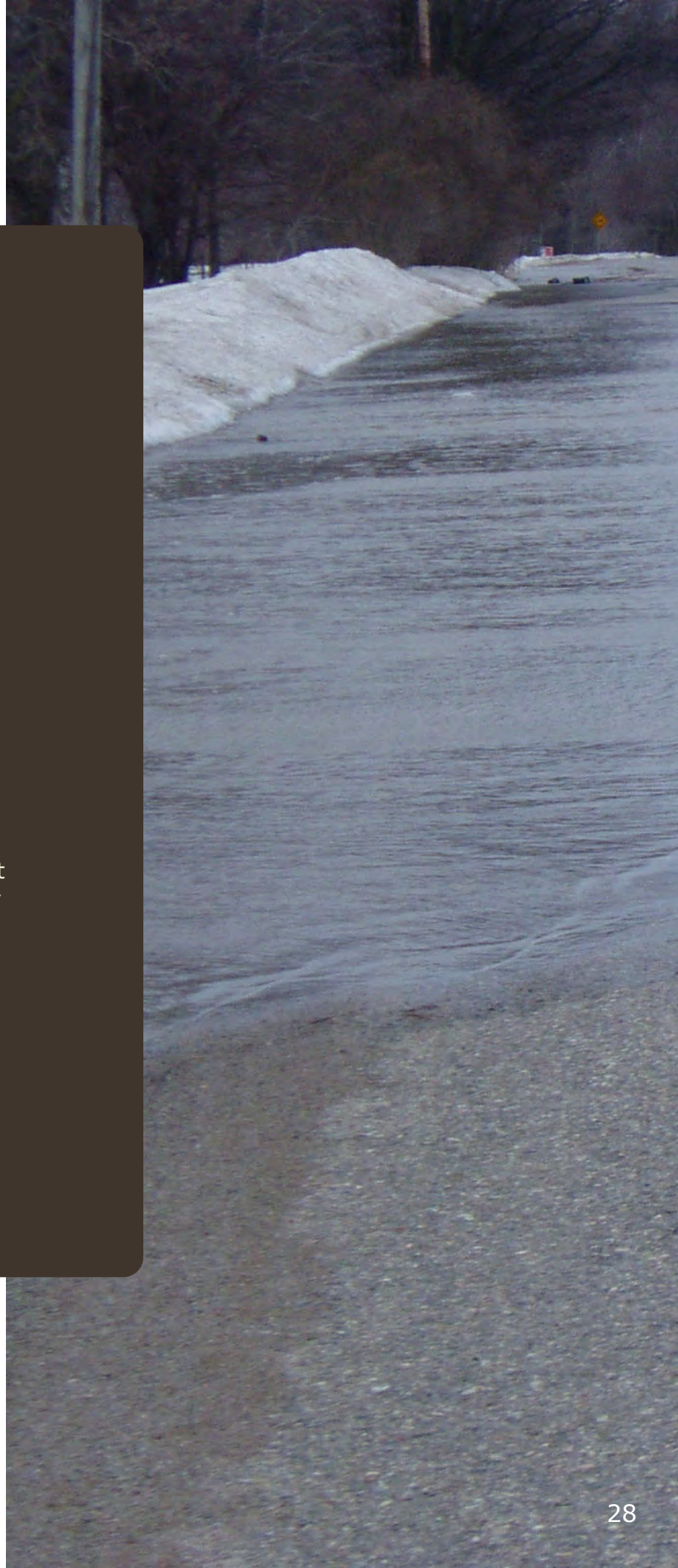
All risk management plans in the province were scheduled to be completed in 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MECP extended the deadline to July 2024.

In 2023, in collaboration with landowners, NVCA's Risk Management Officials established 13 Risk Management Plans, and will complete the remaining five in 2024.

Engineering

According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, 2023 summer storms in Ontario alone caused over $340 million in insured damage. Across Canada, this number exceeded $3 billion. As we experience more frequent and more intense storms, there will be even more impact on our lives and the places where we live and work. The Insurance Bureau of Canada also states that the country's greatest climate threat is flooding.

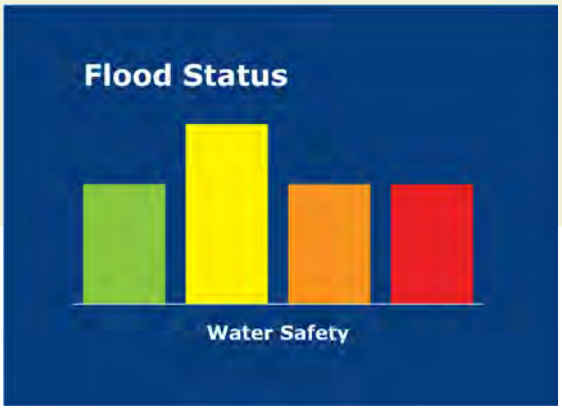
In recent years, NVCA's Engineering team observed that changing weather patterns may impact the way that flooding occurs in the Nottawasaga Watershed. As the timing, frequency and magnitude of snowmelt and rainfall events change, so must NVCA's understanding of flooding hazards within the watershed.



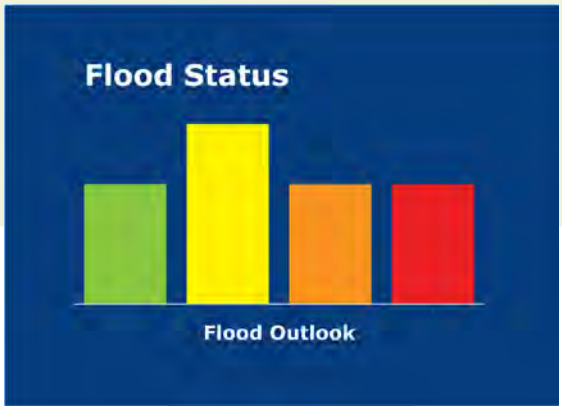
Flood forecasting and warning

There are many organizations across Ontario that work together to manage flooding and its impacts. NVCA's Flood Forecasting and Warning team monitors weather forecasts, forecasted and actual rainfall, snowpack and potential snowmelt, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed to inform daily assessments on the potential for flooding. If the potential is high, a flood message will be sent to partners such as municipalities, schools, first responders, and residents to take the appropriate action.

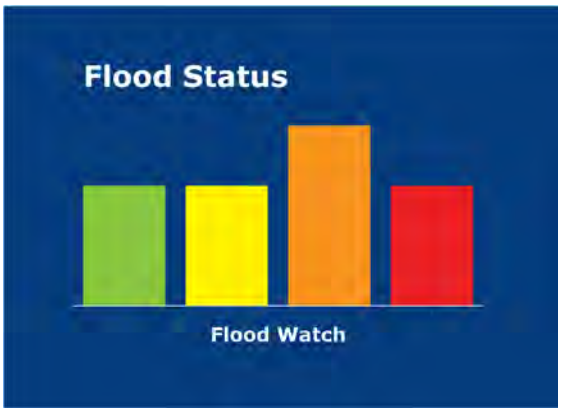
In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message.



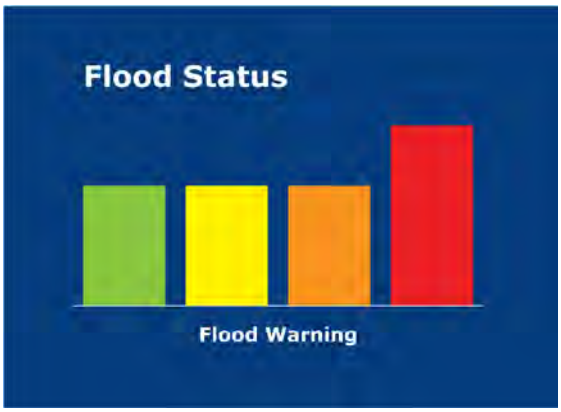
Water Safety statements are issued when there are high river and stream flows, unsafe banks, melting ice or other factors that could be dangerous for recreational users such as anglers, canoeists, hikers, children, pets etc. Flooding is not expected when this message is issued.



Flood Outlook messages are issued as an early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high wind or other conditions that could lead to high runoff, cause ice jams, lakeshore flooding or erosion.



Flood Watch messages are issued when flooding is possible in specific watercourses or municipalities. Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should prepare.



Flood Warnings are issued when flooding is imminent or already occurring in specific watercourses or municipalities. Municipalities and individuals should take action to deal with flood conditions. This may include road closures and evacuations.

Informing responsible development decisions

As natural and rural areas in the Nottawasaga Watershed become urban development, they are replaced with hard surfaces such as parking lots and pavements.

Natural areas and farmland help decrease flooding as they absorb and slowly release water, rainwater and snowmelt. Most hard surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, lead to an increase in runoff as rainfall and/or snowmelt travels rapidly over hard surfaces into streams and rivers. Some of these watercourses may not have the capacity to handle large quantities of water, causing areas to flood.

NVCA's Engineering team uses a combination of tools, including flood hazard maps and flood modelling, to determine whether a proposed development will likely experience flooding. With the threat of climate change and a changing landscape, NVCA staff are conducting targeted updates to flood hazard maps throughout the watershed to reflect these changes in order to keep lives and properties safe. With the ongoing threat of climate change, these maps will need to be updated to accurately reflect the potential spatial extent and severity of the hazard. Staff also encourage municipalities and developers to incorporate low impact development in their plans.

Updating flood hazard maps for the community of Creemore

The community of Creemore in the Township of Clearview has had a history of flooding since the early 1900s. As settlers cleared forests, built homes and established farms near the Mad River, the community has suffered from many devastating floods.

Fast forward to today, as the community of Creemore continues to develop, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the natural hazards posed by the Mad River.

In 2023, the Township of Clearview and NVCA initiated a study to develop a better understanding of flood hazards that may impact the community. The study will produce up to date, high quality flood mapping that can help NVCA and the Township of Clearview make future decisions on land use and permitting.

The project is funded in part by the Government of Canada (Natural Resources Canada) and the Province of Ontario (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) as part of the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program. The Township of Clearview provided the remaining funding for the project, which will be completed in 2024.

Flooding in Creemore on April 21, 1975

Maintaining the Pretty River Dike

NVCA continued to work with the Town of Collingwood to maintain the Pretty River Dike. This work helps reduce the risk of flooding in the urban areas of Collingwood. While considering the ecological functions of the corridor, vegetation growing along the sides of the dike must be removed from time to time to ensure the floodway can meet its full conveyance capacity.

In 2023, vegetation removal was completed on the western side of the Dike, between Hume Street and Pretty River Parkway.

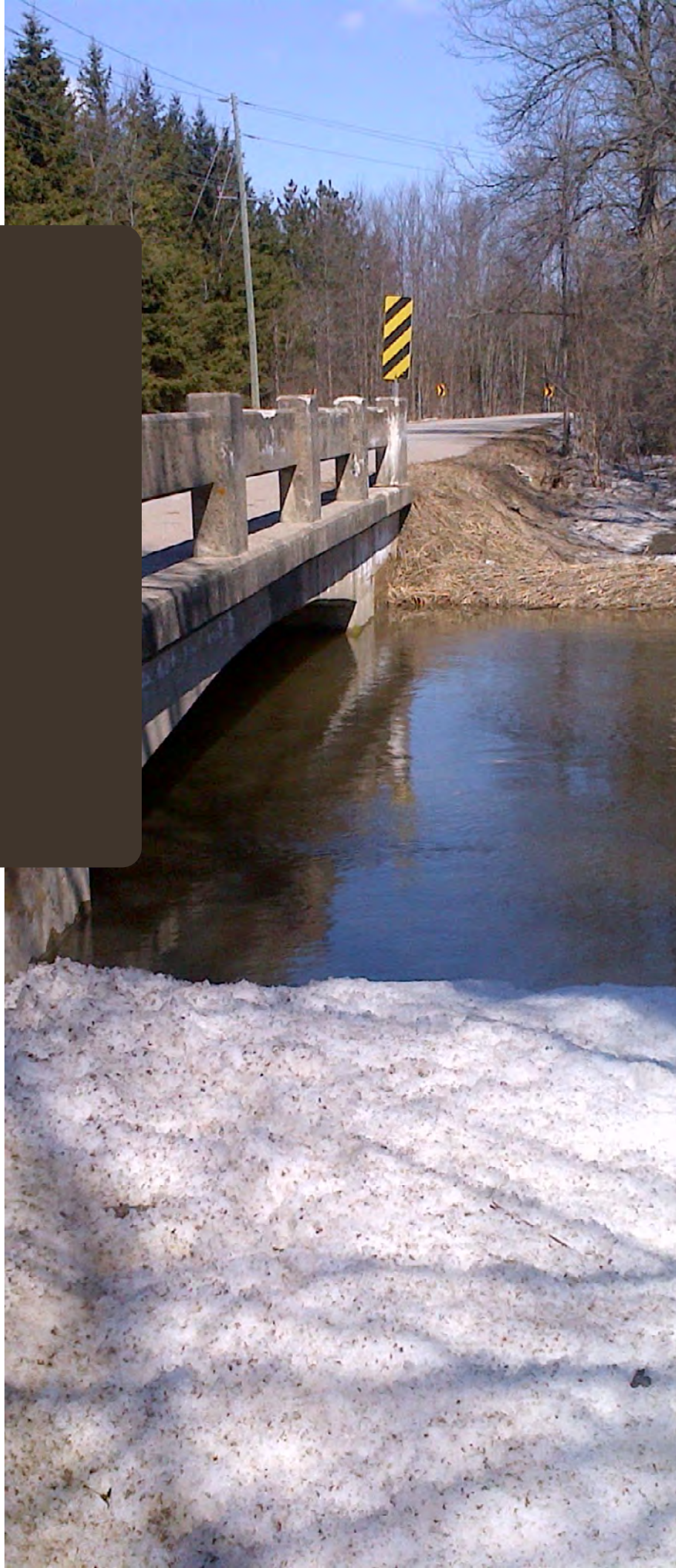
Ongoing safety reviews and inspections for flood structures

NVCA owns and manages six flood structures in the Nottawasaga Watershed. It is important to keep them structurally sound and ensure that they are meeting flood management and other capacities, where applicable.

In 2023, NVCA completed an emergency inspection of the New Lowell Dam and updated the recommendations from the 2019 Dam Safety Review. The Engineering team is developing a workplan to implement the recommendations to ensure the dam is functioning as designed.

Development Planning & Permits

NVCA's Regulations and Planning Services team works closely with municipalities, developers and consultants to find a balance between development, protecting lives and property from natural hazards and preserving watershed health.



Review of the development planning and permits program

In 2023, NVCA contracted Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. to review planning and regulation program rates and assess the full cost of providing plan review and permitting services, applicant affordability, competitiveness, and industry best practices. Watson & Associates also considered recent legislative changes such as the *More Homes Built Faster Act* which altered the role of conservation authorities in the plan review and permitting process.

The analysts assessed the cost of adding additional staff in order to provide a desired level of customer service. Their recommendations included hiring more staff, and increasing some *Planning Act* application and permit review fees to recover the full costs of plan review and improve cost recovery levels for permitting.

Based on the recommendations of the Watson Report, NVCA staff have developed and presented an updated fee structure to the Board of Directors. The draft fees have been circulated to the development community, member municipalities, the agriculture community, aggregate industry and members of the public for comment. Based on the feedback received, the new fees will be phased in over a two-year period once the province lifts the freeze to conservation authority planning and development fees.

Enhancing customer service

From 2018 – 2021, permit applications have increased by 75%. This puts significant pressure on the NVCA Regulations and Planning team to meet shorter timelines required by the province. In 2023, the team met the timelines set out by the Province of Ontario by 97%, and Conservation Ontario timelines by 92%.

Following these timelines helps NVCA meet the service levels expected by residents, municipalities and other partners. It also aligns with the province's housing objectives to ensure development is not impacted by natural hazards and climate change.

In 2023, NVCA restructured the Planning and Regulations team to make it more cross functional and resilient through diversifying staff experiences and building capacity. The former regulations positions have now transitioned to planner positions, and current planning staff have provisions which include regulation duties. All staff under the newly structured Development Planning and Permits team will be reviewing permit applications in addition to planning applications.

To ensure customer service levels are met, the Board of Directors directed staff to add two additional planning positions to provide enhanced customer service in the 2024 budget.

NVCA has also started to develop an e-permitting platform to make the permitting process more accessible and seamless for applicants. Applicants will have more control over the information they provide to NVCA. This will also allow staff to focus on reviewing permit applications rather than manual intensive administrative work. The new platform also is expected to allow payments to be made online rather than calling in. These initiatives are anticipated to be available to the public in 2024.

Better service depends on collaboration

Municipalities use official plans as policy documents to guide development within their municipalities. Official plans are regularly updated to ensure that they reflect the municipality's long-term strategic objectives, as well as changes to the provincial policies and directives. The official plan updates are also an opportunity to ensure it continues to address local priorities and changing community needs.

During the official plan review process, NVCA provides input related to natural hazards and ensure policies meet provincial direction, provide clarity, and inform land use decisions.

NVCA continued to work with municipalities across the watershed to make the permit review process more efficient, remove service gaps and complement each other's processes.

Corporate Services

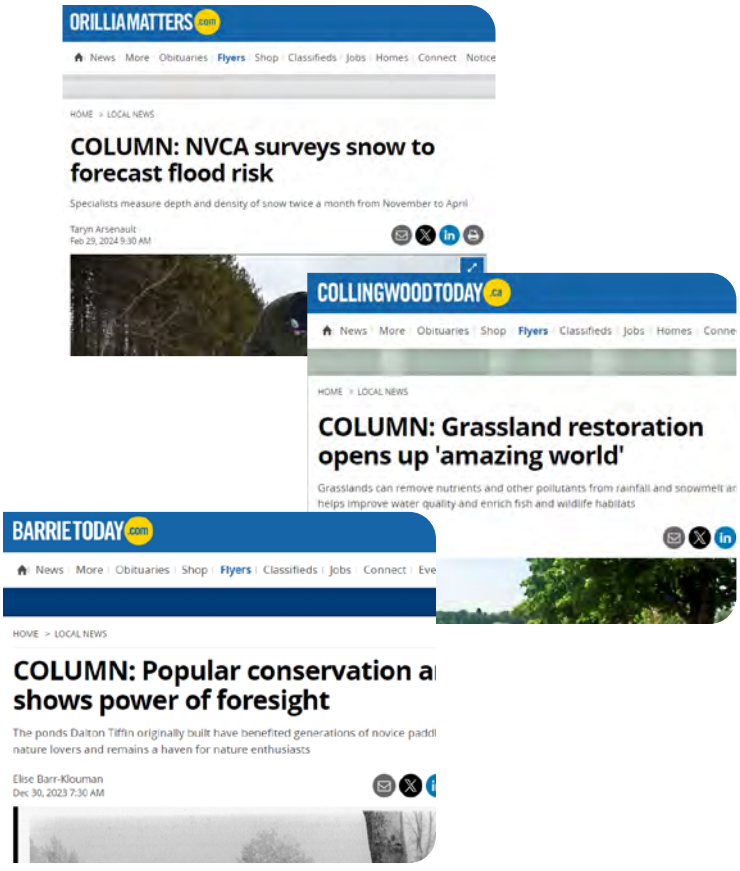
NVCA's Corporate Services team include Human Resources, Finance, Governance, Communications and Information Management. These teams provide critical support to other departments within NVCA.

Promoting NVCA

To help residents and partners across the watershed take advantage of all the services that NVCA offers, the Communications team works with all departments to promote programs through various communication channels.

In 2023, the team updated NVCA's website to include better aesthetics, better browsing experience and to improve the accessibility of the site.

They also worked with the Conservation Lands team to complete a Tiffin Conservation Area and Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area emblem contest. Watershed residents voted for their favourite emblem. These emblems were printed on a variety of apparel that is available for sale to help raise funds for the maintenance of NVCA's conservation areas.

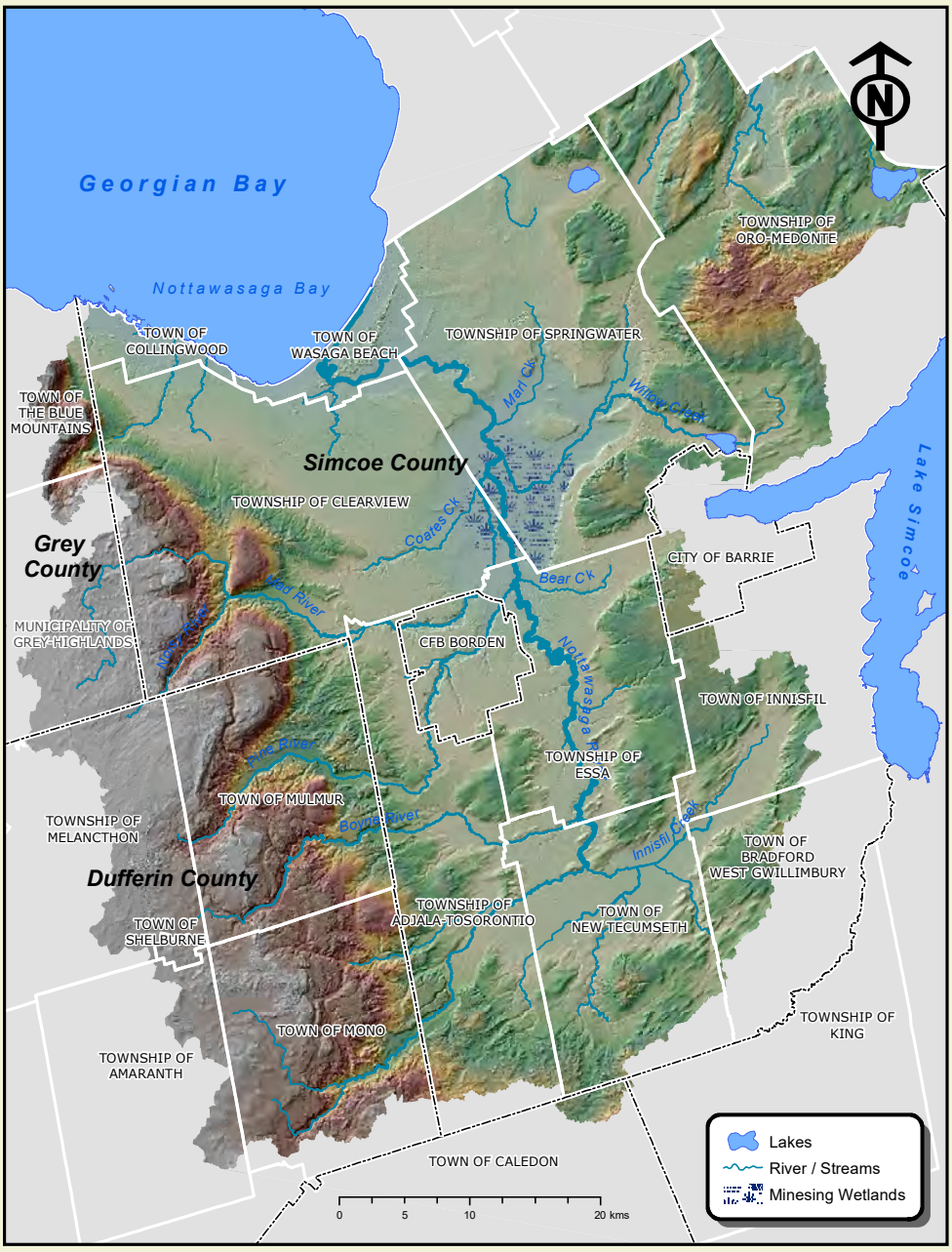


Stories about integrated watershed management

Integrated Watershed Management is the process of managing human activities and natural resources on a watershed basis while considering social, economic and environmental factors to manage watershed resources sustainably.

Each department at NVCA contributes to the integrated watershed management process. They do this through working with funders, municipalities, partners, residents and volunteers from across the watershed to develop and implement strategies that achieve a sustainable and resilient system.

In 2023, NVCA partnered with Village Media to publish a series of columns to inspire people who live, work and play in the Nottawasaga Watershed to appreciate and participate in preserving and enhancing the watershed.



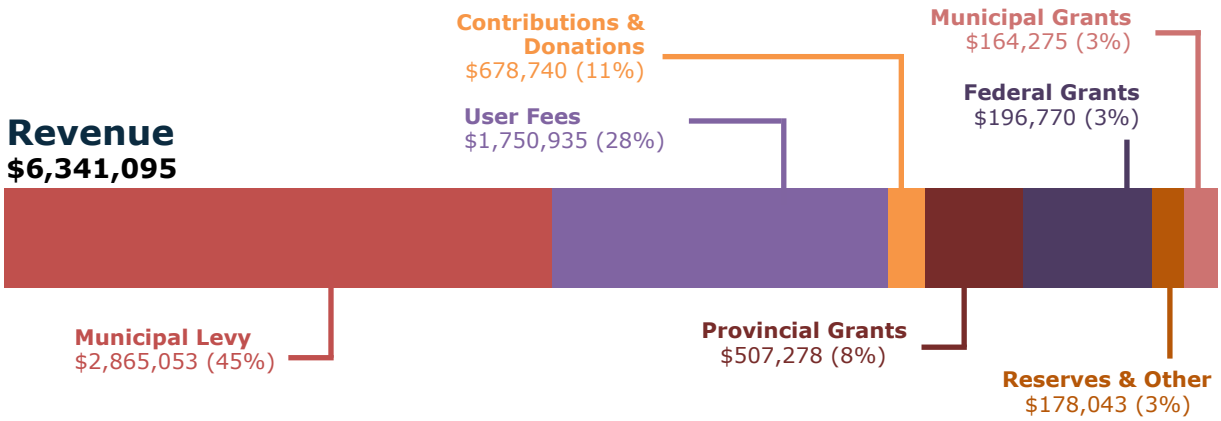
Information Management

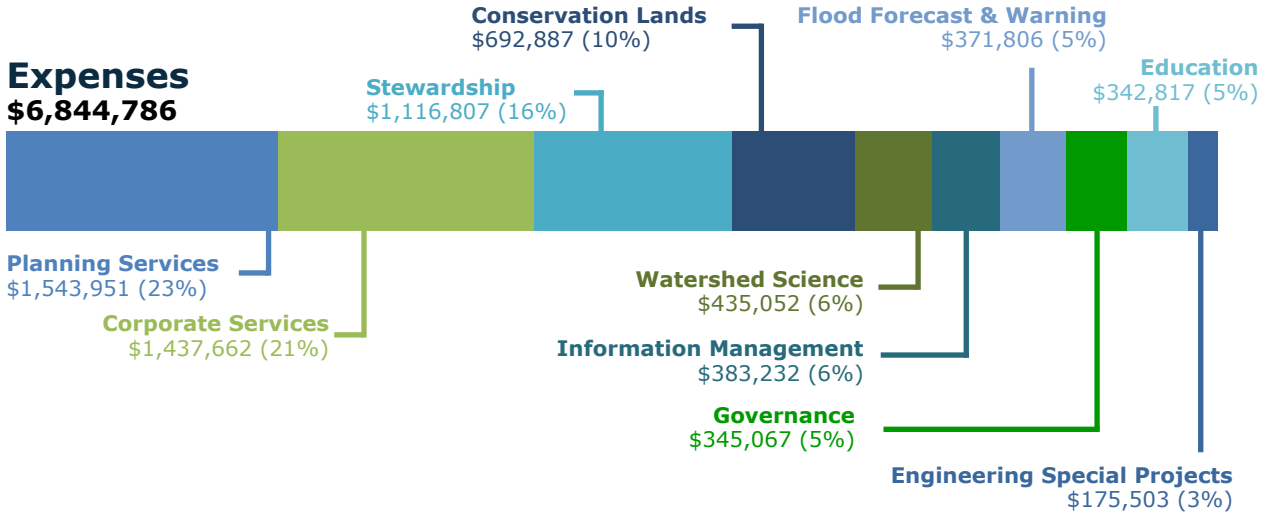
The Information Management team continued to develop and build a data management platform for NVCA's Watershed Science Data. This allows for viewing, uploading, and querying capabilities, and is linked to our GIS system.

In 2023, the team initialized an Open Data platform to make this data available to NVCA's partners and the public through a new public facing mapping site. This helps to provide access to information and makes various programs available through NVCA more efficient.

Financial Report

NVCA's total 2023 operational budget was $5,687,989. Revenue came from diverse sources, including member municipalities, provincial and federal governments, local non-governmental partners, and user fees for programs and services. NVCA ended the year with revenue at $6,341,095 while operational expenses for the year came in at $6,844,786. In 2023, NVCA purchased $133,216 in capital assets (from an approved capital budget of $310,380), funded through the capital asset levy. This financial information is condensed from year-end, unaudited, statements. The auditor's report for the year ending December 31, 2023, is posted on the NVCA website at nvca.on.ca once approved by the Board of Directors.





NVCA Staff as of December, 31 2023

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
Doug Hevenor

CORPORATE SERVICES
Sheryl Flannagan, Director
Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant
Christine Knapp, General Accountant
Kimberly Winder, Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
Megan Muxlow, Accounting & Payroll Clerk

Communications
Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist

Information Management & Technology
Hendrik Amo, Manager
Robert Bettinelli, Information Management and Technology Specialist
Lyle Wood, GIS Analyst
Darcy Persad, GIS/Database Technician

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Chris Hibberd, Director

Engineering & Flood Program
Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services
Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist
Josee Courtemanche, Water Resource Engineer
Megan Durkin, Water Resource Engineer
Michael Saunders, Engineering Technologist
Charles Springall, Engineering Technologist
Sheri Steiginga, Flood Operations Field Specialist

Watershed Science
Ryan Post, Manager, Watershed Science
Ian Ockenden, Acting Watershed Science Supervisor
Sarah Thompson, Acting Source Water Coordinator
Jennifer France, Watershed Monitoring Technician
Erin McLeod, Watershed Monitoring Technician
Alyssa Deurwaarder, Watershed Science Ecologist

Planning and Permits
Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits
Tyler Boswell, Planner
Meagan Kieferle, Senior Regulations Officer
Emma Perry, Planning Ecologist
Davin Metheral, Planner
Tyler Mulhall, Planner
Katelyn Wardlaw, Planner
Christine Wilcox, Development Review Assistant

CONSERVATION SERVICES
Kyra Howes, Director

Lands & Operations
Mike Bacon, Manager, Lands & Operations
Clint Collis, Lands & Operations Technician
Spencer Macdonald, Lands & Operations Technician
Elise Barr-Klouman, Event Facilitator
Reg Fraser, Custodian

Environmental Education
Naomi Saunders, Manager, Environmental Education
Stephanie Zsolnay, Environmental Education Senior Associate
Amanda McGibbon, Environmental Education Assistant
Environmental Education Associates:
- Jo-Ann White-McKenna
- Bob Cole
- Emma Maurice
- Kamryn Bishop,
- RJ Costello
- Kristin Pavey
- Jenny Taylor

Forestry
Rick Grillmayer, Manager

Stewardship
Fred Dobbs, Manager, Stewardship Services
Sarah Campbell, Aquatic Biologist
Shannon Stephens, Healthy Waters Program Coordinator
Laura Wensink, Restoration Biologist

8195 8th Line
Utopia ON L0M 1T0
705-424-1479 | admin@nvca.on.ca

nvca.on.ca

Member of
Conservation ONTARIO
Natural Champions

New O. Reg 41/24

Prohibited Activities, Exemptions, and Permits

Ben Krul, Manager of Development Planning and Permits &
Tyler Mulhall, Planner | March 22, 2024

Overview

New Legislative & Regulatory Changes

- New O. Reg 41/24
- Effective Date – April 1, 2024
- O. Reg 41/24 replaces all individual CA S. 28 Regulations
- Existing s.28 of the CA Act is repealed
- New O. Reg 42/24 – expectations for Annual Reporting
- **The enactment of O. Reg. 41/24 will also coincide with the proclamation of associated sections within the *Conservation Authorities Act.***

Key Changes

Regulatory "Tests" for Permit Approvals

- **Development Activities + Alteration Activities**

- The activity is not likely to:
  - Affect the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or **unstable soil or bedrock**;
  - Create conditions or circumstance that, in the event of a natural hazard, might jeopardize the **health or safety of persons** or result in the **damage or destruction of property**; and
  - Other requirements prescribed by the regulations are met

- Pollution & Conservation of Land have been removed from the "tests" of the regulation

Key Changes

Definitions and Regulated Limits

- Watercourse – A defined channel, having a bed and banks or sides, in which a flow of water regularly or continuously occurs
- Wetland "Other Areas" – Now 30m buffer from **all** wetlands
- Shoreline: other water related hazards – The 100-year flood level, plus the appropriate allowance for wave uprush, and, if necessary, for other water-related hazards, including ship-generated waves, ice piling and ice jamming.

Key Changes

Regulatory Maps

- At least once annually, the authority shall
  - Review & update maps
  - Make updated maps available to the public

- For significant updates (enlargements and reductions):
  - Stakeholders, municipalities and the public to be notified online at least 30 days prior to an Authority meeting during which the proposed changes are on the agenda
  - The authority shall promptly update maps

Key Changes

Exceptions

- A non-habitable accessory structure
- Unenclosed detached deck or patio
- Seasonal or floating docks
- Installation, maintenance or repair of tile drains
- Installation, maintenance, of an offline pond for watering livestock
- Installation of agricultural in-field erosion control
- Private lane or driveway, or public road maintenance or repair
- Maintenance or repair of municipal drains in accordance with the DART protocol
- Reconstruction of existing non-habitable garages

* Certain conditions must be met to be exempt (e.g., size restrictions, not located within a wetland or watercourse).

Key Changes

Pre-submission Consultation

- NVCA **must** pre-consult if requested by the applicant.

- Utilize a pre-consultation to confirm complete application requirements, which may include;
  - Project description and associated plans
  - Property details, plans, maps, surveys, technical reports
  - Meetings/site visits

Key Changes

Complete Application Requirements

- Most requirements are already requested when applying to NVCA (e.g., site plans, dates, permit fee, landowner authorization).

- What is new is listed below:
  - Proposed use/statement of purpose
  - Descriptions of construction methods used
  - Elevation, grading, and drainage plans and details
  - Description of fill proposed (if required)
  - Other technical information (studies, plans, drawings, etc.)

Key Changes

Limitation on Permit Conditions

- Conditions may be attached to a Permit, only if the conditions are related to the new “tests” and support the administration or implementation of the permit.

Key Changes

Administrative Review

- **New process** to undertake administrative review upon request if:
  - Applicant has submitted all information for a complete application and has not heard back from the NVCA (determination of complete application)
  - Applicant disagrees with NVCA decision that the application incomplete; or
  - Applicant believes NVCA requests for other information, studies or plans under are not reasonable

- **NVCA must undertake administrative reviews** within 30 days of receiving request.

- No appeal mechanism if Applicant disagrees with outcome of review

- **Best Practice:** Designate staff to complete administrative review

Key Changes

Permits & Hearings

- NVCA may delegate issuance **or cancellation of permits or to the holding of hearings in relation to the permits**, to the Authority's executive committee or to any other person or body, subject to any limitations or requirements that may be prescribed by regulation.

Key Changes

Period of Validity & Extensions, Refusal, and Hearings

- **Permits issued by delegate or Minister**
  - Maximum 60 months, including extension

- **NVCA to give notice of intent to refuse**
  - Applicant to request hearing, in writing, within 15 days of notice.

- **Hearing to be held in reasonable time**
  - If applicant requires hearing, NVCA to give at least 5 days notice of hearing date.

Key Changes

Review Timelines

- **21 Days** to confirm complete application (following receipt of all application requirements and fee)
- **90 Days** to make and give notice of decision for all applications (minor or major)

Key Changes

New Policy and Procedure Documents

- NVCA shall develop policy and procedure documents for permit applications and reviews that, **at a minimum**, include:
  - Pre-submission consultation, including additional details related to complete permit application requirements
  - Administrative reviews
  - Timelines for making permit application decisions following complete application notification
  - Other policies and procedures, as the authority considers advisable, for administering the issuance of permits
  - A process for periodic reviews and updating policy/procedure documents, including public/stakeholder consultation procedures during the review process

Key Changes

Reconsideration of Fees for Permit Applications

- Applicant can request a permit fee reconsideration. NVCA has 30 days to make decision.
- Applicant can appeal to the OLT if no decision is made within 30 days
- NVCA can decide to order the original amount to be paid or vary the fee.
- For fees made under protest, a person may:
  - Advise NVCA in writing that the fee is being made in protest
  - Appeal amount charged to the OLT within 30 days
- After hearing the appeal, the OLT may dismiss the appeal, vary the amount, or order that no fee be charged. OLT may order NVCA to issue a refund.

Key Changes

Cancellation of Permits

- The authority or its delegate has the ability to cancel a permit if it is of the opinion that the conditions of the permit have not been met **or that the circumstances prescribed by regulation exist.**
- Notice of intent to cancel **on a specified date** must be given to the permit holder.
- **Permit holder must submit written request for hearing within 15 days.**
- Hearing date to be set within a **reasonable timeframe**
- NVCA may confirm, rescind or vary the decision to cancel a permit.
- **Applicant can appeal to OLT within 90 days of receiving NVCA's decision.**

Key Changes

Enforcement and Offences

- Appointment of Officers
  - Moved from individual reg. to s. 30.1 of the Act (applies to both Section 28 and 29 officers)
- Changes to how Officers may enter private property without warrants
- Stop Orders
- What is remaining the same?
  - Enforcement by designated NVCA's Officers
  - Ability to obtain search warrants
  - Statute of Limitations period (2-years)

Ontario Regulation 42/24

Mandatory Programs and Services

- New O. Reg 42/24 amends O. Reg 686/21 with new s. 8.1
- Requires all Conservation Authorities to make public an annual report for statistics on permits

Questions?

01-24-BOD Minutes **(Draft)**
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
Jan 26, 2024 at 9:00 AM EST

Attendance

Present:
Mayor Scott W. Anderson, Adjala-Tosorontio (Township); Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); Cllr. Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City); Mayor Janet Horner, Mulmur (Township); Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, Essa (Township); Deputy Mayor Gail Little, Amaranth (Township); Cllr. Joel Loughead, Grey Highlands (Municipality); Cllr. June Porter, The Bule Mountains (Town); Cllr. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township); Cllr. Jonathan Scott, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township); Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town)

Absent:
Cllr. Christopher Baines, Collingwood (Town); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town); Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren, Clearview (Township)

NVCA Staff:
Sheryl Flannagan, Director, Corporate Services; Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer; Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services; Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services; Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant/Recorder

1. Call to Order

Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer Chaired the meeting until the elections were held.
Acting Chair Hevenor called the meeting to order at 10:22am.
Recommendation:
RES: 01-24
Moved by: Cllr. Joe Belanger
Seconded by: Cllr. Phil Fisher
RESOLVED THAT: Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer be appointed as Chair, Pro Tem until the election of the 2024 Officers.
Carried;

2. Declaration of Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest

3. Motion to Adopt the Agenda

Recommendation:
RES: 02-24

Moved by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink
Seconded by: Cllr. Nicole Cox
RESOLVED THAT: the agenda for the Board of Directors 64th Annual General Meeting 01-24-BOD dated January 26, 2024 be approved.
Carried;

4. Announcements

There were no announcements at this time.

5. Elections of NVCA Officers

Doug Hevenor, CAO reviewed the election procedures with Board Members.

6. Appointment of Scrutineers

Recommendation:
RES: 03-24
Moved by: Cllr. Kevin Eisses
Seconded by: Cllr. Gary Harvey
RESOLVED THAT: Sheryl Flannagan, Director Corporate Services and Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant be appointed as scrutineers for the duration of the NVCA 2024 elections; and
FURTHER THAT: the ballots be destroyed after the election process.
Carried;

7. Election of Board of Directors Chair and Vice-Chair

7.1. Conduct Election of Chair

Call for nominations for the position of Chair.
First Call Mover: Cllr. Jonathan Scott, Deputy Gail Little was nominated for Chair.
Second Call Mover: Cllr. Nicole Cox, no nominations.
Third Call Mover: Cllr. June Porter, no nominations.
Close Nominations
Moved by: Cllr. June Porter
Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan
Deputy Mayor Gail Little was acclaimed as Chair.

7.2. Conduct Election for Vice-Chair

Call for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.
First Call Mover: Cllr. June Porter, Cllr. Jonathan Scott was nominated.
Second Call Mover: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, no nominations.
Third Call Mover: Mayor Janet Horner, no nominations.
Close Nominations
Moved by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson
Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan
Cllr. Jonathan Scott was acclaimed as Vice-Chair.

7.3. Appointed NVCA Officers

Recommendation:
RES: 04-24
Moved by: Cllr. June Porter
Seconded by: Cllr. Joe Belanger
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors has elected and/or appointed for the year 2024 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Officers as follows:
Chair: Deputy Mayor Gail Little
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Jonathan Scott
Carried;

8. Acknowledgements

Elected Officers of the NVCA.
The newly elected Chair conducted the remainder of the meeting.

9. 2024 Borrowing Resolution

Recommendation:
RES: 05-24
Moved by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Eisses
RESOLVED THAT: for the fiscal year 2024, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority borrow, as required on credit, up to $500,000 for its purpose until payment to the Authority of grants from the Province of Ontario, and levies rom its member municipalities are received.
Carried;

10. Appointment of 2024 Authority Solicitors

Recommendation:
RES: 06-24
Moved by: Cllr. Rick Schell
Seconded by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson
RESOLVED THAT: the firms of HICKS Morley Hamilton Stewart Storie LLP, be appointed for Human Resources legal advice, as required for 2024 and;
FURTHER THAT: Hill Hunter Loswell Law Firm LLP, Beard Winter LLP, Barriston Law and Gardiner Roberts LLP be appointed to conduct the legal business of the Authority for 2024.
Carried;

11. Appointment of 2024 Authority Auditors

Recommendation:
RES: 07-24
Moved by: Mayor Janet Horner
Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan
RESOLVED THAT: the firm KPMG LLP be appointed to conduct the auditing functions of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority for 2024.
Carried;

12. Appointment of NVCA Representative to Conservation Ontario Council

Recommendation:
RES: 08-24
Moved by: Cllr. Nicole Cox
Seconded by: Cllr. Gary Harvey
RESOLVED THAT: the Chair be appointed as the NVCA voting delegate on Conservation Ontario Council for the year 2024; and
FURTHER THAT: the Vice-Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be appointed as alternates.
Carried;

13. Appointed of NVCA Board Representatives to the NVCA Agricultural Advisory Committee

Recommendation:
RES: 09-24
Moved by: Cllr. Nicole Cox
Seconded by: Cllr. Gary Harvey
RESOLVED THAT: the following Board members be appointed to the NVCA Agricultural Advisory Committee for 2024:
1). Cllr. Kevin Eisses
2). Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren
3). Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink
Carried;

14. Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

Recommendation:
RES: 10-24
Moved by: Cllr. Phil Fisher
Seconded by: Cllr. Gary Harvey
WHEREAS: members of the Board and Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority may designate an individual to act as Head of the Authority for purpose of the Municipal Freedom of Information of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c M.56, s. 3(1); 2002 C. 17, Schedule. F, Table; therefore
BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Sheryl Flannagan, Director, Corporate Services be designated as Head of the Authority for purposes of the Act.
Carried;

15. Adjourn

Recommendation:
RES: 11-24
Moved by: Cllr. Phil Fisher
Seconded by: Vice-Chair Jonathan Scott
RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors adjourn at 10:41am to meet again on February 23, 2024 or at the call of the Chair.
Carried;

12-23-BOD (2023 Business) Minutes **(Draft)**
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
Jan 26, 2024 at 9:00 AM EST

Attendance

Present:
Mayor Scott W. Anderson, Adjala-Tosorontio (Township); Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); Cllr. Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City); Mayor Janet Horner, Mulmur (Township); Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, Essa (Township); Deputy Mayor Gail Little, Amaranth (Township); Cllr. Joel Loughead, Grey Highlands (Municipality); Cllr. June Porter, The Bule Mountains (Town); Cllr. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township) *arrived at 9:12am*; Cllr. Jonathan Scott, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township); Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town)

Absent:
Cllr. Christopher Baines, Collingwood (Town); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town); Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren, Clearview (Township)

NVCA Staff:
Sheryl Flannagan, Director, Corporate Services; Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer; Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services; Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services; Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant/Recorder

1. Events

Elopement Giveaway:
NVCA has partnered with Lauren Andrew Events and a team of local vendors to giveaway elopement experience at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation Area. Couples can bring up to 2 guests to witness you tie the knot!
Date: February 22, 2024
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

Tiffin Nature Program (for preschoolers):
Tiffin Nature Program will help preschoolers gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural world and our amazing planet. Children learn about risky play, and develop a better understanding of their relationship with the land.
Half Day Dates: Tuesdays December 5, 2023 – March 5, 2024
Full Day Dates: Thursdays December 7, 2023 – March 7, 2024
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

PA/PD Day Camp Tiffin:
Camp Tiffin encourages outdoor exploration, guided excursions in the forest fueled by student interest. Every day will be guided by student inquiry, seasonal changes, and weather and program availability.
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Location: Tiffin Centre for Conservation

2. Call to Order

Chair Gail Little called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

3. Land Acknowledgement

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Board acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg. The Anishinaabeg include the Odawa, Saulteaux, Anishinaabeg, Mississauga and Algonquin who spoke several languages including Anishinaabemowin and Potawatomi. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect with all First Nation, Métis and Inuit people.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest

5. Motion to Adopt the Agenda

Recommendation:
RES: 77-23
Moved by: Cllr. Kevin Eisses
Seconded by: Vice-Chair Jonathan Scott
RESOLVED THAT: the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting #12-23-BOD dated on January 26, 2024 be approved.
Carried;

6. Announcements

Sheryl Flannagan, Director, Corporate Services provided an update regarding status of hiring within the Watershed Management Department.

7. Presentations

Chair Gail Little conducted a presentation regarding NVCA's 2023 Year in Review.

7.1. Our Forests, Our Future

Rob Keen, Executive Director of the Canadian Tree Nursery Association-Association Canadienne des Pépinières Forestières spoke regarding Our Forests, Our Future.

8. Deputations

There were no deputations at this time.

9. Hearings

There were no hearings at this time.

10. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Board members are requested to identify items from the Consent List that they wish to have considered for separate discussion.

11. Adoption of Consent List and Identification of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Recommendation:
RES: 78-23
Moved by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink
Seconded by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson
RESOLVED THAT: agenda item number(s), n/a was identified as requiring separate discussion, be referred for discussion under Agenda Item #12; and
FURTHER THAT: all Consent List Agenda Items not referred for separate discussion be adopted as submitted to the board and staff be authorized to take all necessary action required to give effect to same; and
FURTHER THAT: any items in the Consent List not referred for separate discussion, and for which conflict has been declared, are deemed not to have been voted on or discussed by the individual making the declaration.
Carried;

12. Consent List

12.1. Adoption of Minutes

Recommendation:
Approved by Consent
RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting 11-23-BOD dated on December 8, 2023 be approved.

12.1.1. Adoption of Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes

Recommendation:
Approved by Consent
RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting 03-23-AAC dated on December 7, 2023 be approved.

12.2. Staff Reports

12.2.1. Staff Report No. 57-12-23-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist

Recommendation:
Approved by Consent
RESOLVED THAT: Staff Report No. 57-12-23-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – *November 25, 2023 – January 12, 2024,* be received.

13. Other Business

There were no other business at this time.

14. Adjourn to Board of Directors 2024 Annual General Meeting and Elections

Recommendation:
RES: 79-23
Moved by: Vice-Chair Jonathan Scott
Seconded by: Mayor Janet Horner
RESOLVED THAT: this meeting adjourn at 10:03am and the position of the Chair be vacant.
Carried;

February 2024 NEWSLETTER

NOTTAWASAGA RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM

Achievements, Volunteer Opportunities and More!

The Nottawasaga River Restoration Program (NRRP), coordinated by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) and the Nottawasaga Futures – South Simcoe Streams Network (SSSN), was initiated in 2018 and is emerging as one of the largest river restoration and trout habitat improvement programs in southern Ontario. This large-scale river restoration has been achieved through a hybrid technique involving volunteer efforts supported by the work of a 20-tonne excavator machine. Learn more about the hybrid technique here!

In 2023, collaborative efforts resulted in:

- **Stabilizing 400 m of eroding stream bank** with woody trout habitats, floodplain construction and tree planting on two properties on Sheldon Creek (see Photo 1 below).

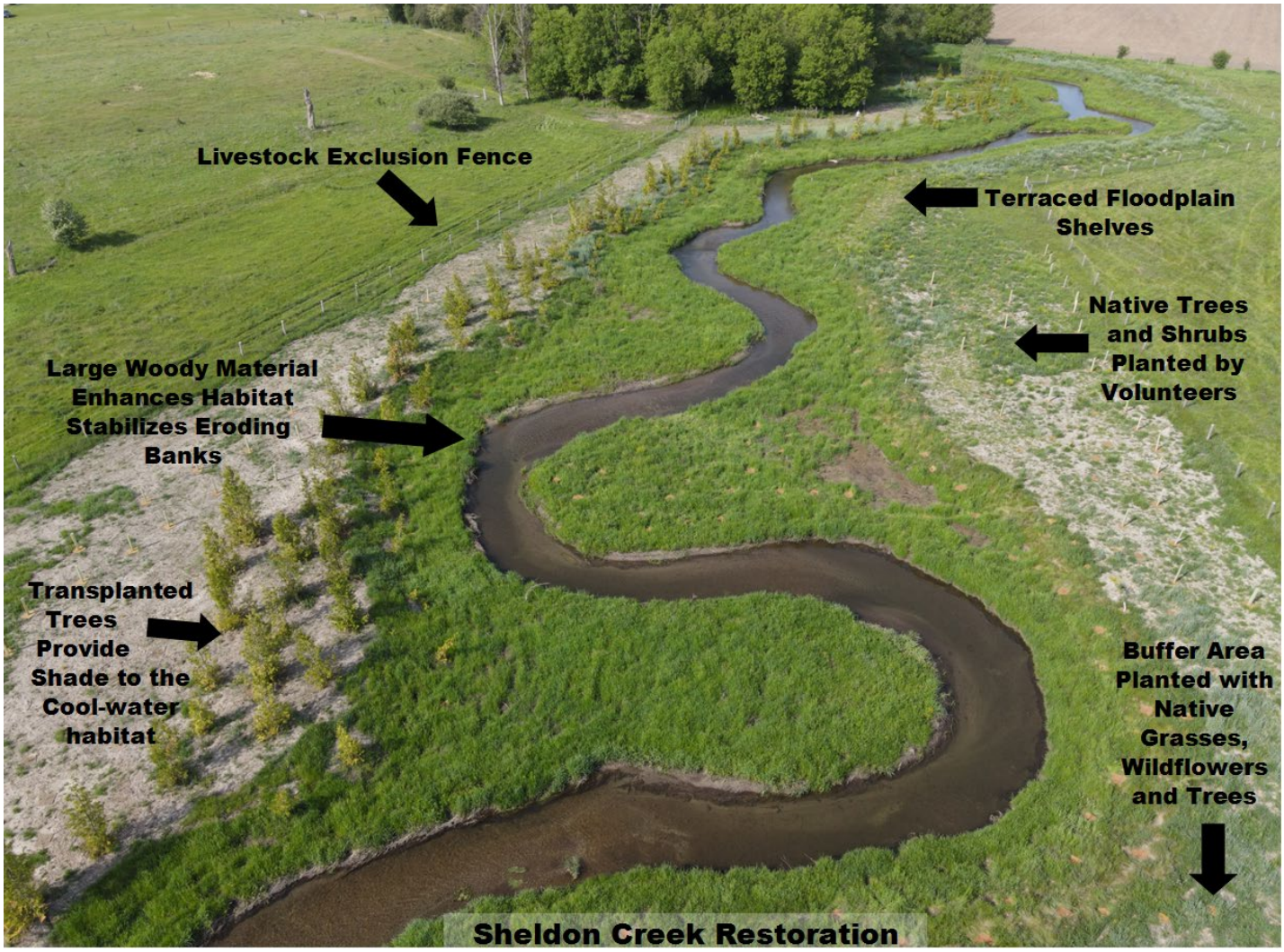


Photo 1 *Restored reach of Sheldon Creek where eroding banks were stabilized, trout cover habitats were anchored, livestock fencing was installed, native trees were planted and floodplain shelves were constructed.*

In 2023, collaborative efforts also resulted in:

- **Stabilizing an additional 150 m of eroding bank** with trout cover habitats on the Pine River. This is the second year of the emerging Pine River Enhancement Initiative.
- **Constructing a 40 m long vegetated rock bank stabilization wall** at the Carruthers Park as part of the new Mad River Enhancement Project lead by Friends of the Mad River.
- Planting **2,230 trees** in stream-side corridors.
- Installing **455 m of livestock exclusion fencing** along Sheldon Creek.
- Hosting **21 volunteer events** attended by **265 volunteers.**

These achievements were made possible thanks to our project funding partners who contributed **$250,000** including Bass Pro Shops-Cabela's Outdoor Fund, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Province of Ontario, World Wildlife Fund, Dufferin Simcoe Land Stewardship Network, H. John McDonald Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Thanks are also extended to participating landowners, community and school groups, Friends of the Mad River, Nottawasaga Steelheaders, Headwaters Streams Committee, Trout Unlimited Canada, Ontario Streams, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Rumball Excavation, GEO Morphix Ltd., Somerville Nurseries Inc., Township of Adjala-Tosorontio, Town of Mono and Credit Valley Conservation.

Background

The NRRP was developed with two major goals in mind:

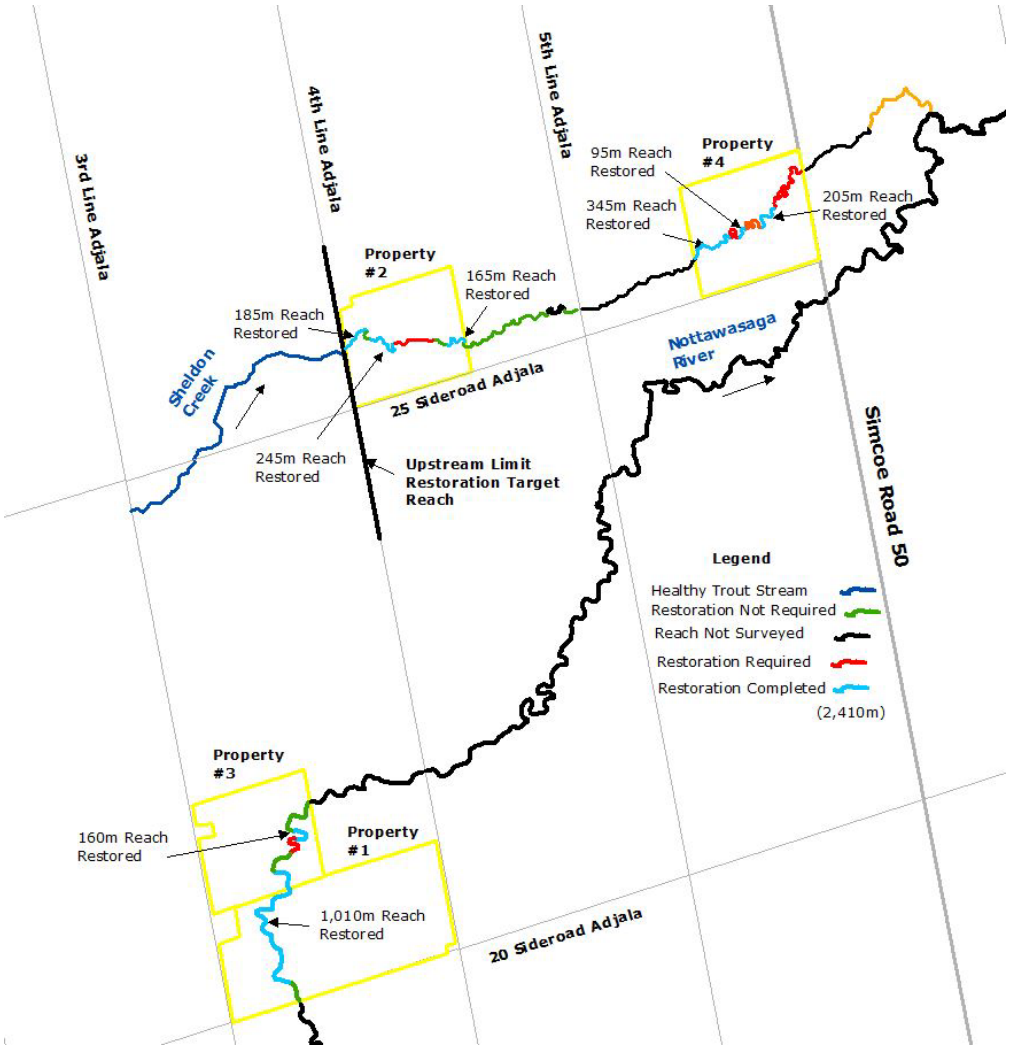
- Optimizing the abundance of fish species supporting a recreational sport fishery including rainbow trout, brown trout and Chinook salmon (Photo 2) as well as native species at risk including lake sturgeon and northern brook lamprey.
- Improving water quality in the Nottawasaga River.

Photo 2 Wild juvenile Chinook Salmon from the upper Nottawasaga River.

These goals will be realized through extending the high-quality trout habitat in the Nottawasaga River at the Village of Hockley, downstream to the river's confluence at Innisfil Creek near Alliston. This objective will be achieved by restoring **10 km** of degraded habitat within 30 km of the Nottawasaga River and 5 km of its Sheldon Creek tributary.

Progress to Date and Future Targets

A total of **2.4 km** of river habitat has been restored (see light blue lines on map below) between 2019 and 2023 at 2 properties on the Nottawasaga River and 2 on Sheldon Creek. In 2023 we restored 0.4 km of stream which is less than the 0.8 km/year pace we were able to sustain between 2020 and 2022 thanks to support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We are working to engage new partners in order to access the funding needed to reestablish the 0.8km/year pace that will allow us to reach our target of 10 km of habitat restored by 2031.



Map of restoration sites on Nottawasaga River and Sheldon Creek

Our goal in 2024 is to finish restoration of all of the remaining **200 m** of Sheldon Creek at Property #2, complete an additional **300 m** of restoration at Property #4 and recruit new landowner partners on the main Nottawasaga River where we will be focusing work in 2025.

This past summer provided our second opportunity to collect follow-up fish community data at Property #1 on the Nottawasaga River, where habitat restoration was completed in 2022. Numbers of juvenile rainbow trout documented in 2023 were similar to the numbers in the pre-restoration baseline surveys completed in 2018 and 2019. We were however very pleased to see a significant increase in numbers of young of the year Chinook salmon (Photo 2) in 2023! These young salmon utilize woody cover in pools and likely took advantage of the root wad structures that were installed to stabilize the eroding banks and provide habitat on this property!

2024 Volunteer Opportunities

Tree Planting - Community participation in native tree and shrub planting provides an opportunity to help establish forest cover along the restored river banks. Visit our website at nvca.on.ca for all SSSN "Trees for Streams" and NVCA tree plants.

In-Water Bank Stabilization – Join us in the river in July and August as we step into chest waders and help protect the river bank from erosion. Cut coniferous trees will be secured to the bank using soil anchors.

Media - Check out our short documentary on YouTube that showcases how the restoration efforts enhance recreational fishing opportunities for rainbow trout, brown trout and Chinook salmon on the Nottawasaga River as well as in Georgian Bay at Collingwood and Wasaga Beach.

River-side Tree Planting

Bank Stabilization Volunteer Event

Contact Information

For more information about the NRRP, volunteering opportunities or financial contributions, please contact:

- Fred Dobbs, Manager of Stewardship Services, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (705) 309-0522 or e-mail fdobbs@nvca.on.ca
- Laura Wensink, River Restoration Technician, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (705) 309-0522 or e-mail lwensink@nvca.on.ca
- Theresa Parent, Environmental Project Coordinator, South Simcoe Streams Network - Nottawasaga Futures 705-440-9129 or theresa@nottawasaga.com

Staff Report: 01-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Ian Ockenden
Manager, Watershed Science

SUBJECT: 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan: 2023 progress and 2024 goals

---

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 01-02-24-BOD regarding the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan summary of progress in 2023 and 2024 goals for information.

Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this Staff Report is to provide the Board of Directors with the summarized climate related actions from 2023 as related to the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan and outline the anticipated 2024 goals.

Background

The NVCA Board of Directors approved 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan outlines goals and associated actions that will drive the corporate direction of climate change forward for the period of 2022-2025. This allows alignment with the corporate strategic planning process, e.g. the NVCA strategic and business plans.

Under implementation and reporting, the Action Plan indicates that: "Departments will integrate the above targets into their workplans and continue to develop the steps to reach these goals. The goals and targets will be reviewed annually to provide an updated report on their progress to the Board of Directors."

Analysis

The Climate Change Action Plan emphasizes the importance of responding to climate change, supporting the NVCA partners' actions to reduce impacts of climate change, and strengthening the commitment to face the challenges it poses to the NVCA member municipalities and ecosystems. This document outlines seven goals and associated 34 actions encapsulating the prioritized corporate strategic directions and program self-identified objectives. The seven goals consist of:

1. Flooding and Erosion: Work with partners and stakeholders to increase knowledge of how climate change will impact flooding and erosion levels in Nottawasaga River watershed communities.
2. Monitor: Enhance knowledge of the Nottawasaga River watershed's natural environment and its response to a changing climate.
3. Communicate and Educate: Facilitate partnerships and connect people to the Nottawasaga River watershed in order to build awareness of climate change and capacity to adapt to climate impacts.
4. Natural Heritage: Protect and improve natural heritage systems in the Nottawasaga River watershed to build resilience and assist with adaptation and mitigation.
5. Stewardship and Land Conservation: Increase watershed resistance and resilience to climate change through conservation, restoration, and improvement of natural systems.
6. Partnerships: Be leaders in sustainability making NVCA the partner of choice for local climate change initiatives.
7. Corporate Practices: Build corporate capacity to adapt to future climate projections and reduce NVCA's corporate carbon footprint by embracing a culture of conservation through using best practices and solutions while measuring progress and effectiveness.

An internal Climate Change Action Plan Working Group was formed in 2023 with the purpose to aid and report on the implementation of climate change work items, focusing on the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan. The successful implementation of the climate change plan is occurring through interdepartmental integration and communication. As part of this initiative, the Working Group has collected the following information on 2023 and 2024 climate change related goals.

The completed 2023 actions and anticipated 2024 per program area to support the objectives of the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan are:

Watershed Science

2023 Actions	End of 2023 Results
Monitor (Action #2): Determine what key climate change indicators the NVCA should be using to monitor and track.	A draft report was written and will be reviewed and finalized in early 2024.
Monitor (Action #3): Identify healthy fish communities and sensitive fish species and habitats to be monitored as barometers of watershed health. In conjunction with land use-water quality modelling and in-field fish sampling, delineate key fish community locations that can be used to assist in the evaluating watershed health.	Sensitive fish communities and species highlighted in a fisheries brief. This brief in conjunction with the climate change indicators report and the Monitoring Strategy will scope fisheries monitoring.
Corporate Practices (Action #1): Complete annual reporting on the performance of the NVCA Climate Change Action Plan.	2023 updates were captured throughout the year through the Climate Change Action Working Group and finalized for this report.

2024 anticipated goals:

1) Finalizing the climate change indicators report.
2) The implementation of the climate change indicators into the Watershed Science monitoring program, as resources permit.
3) Establish relationships with climate change groups in the watershed to advice areas of mutual interest.

Engineering

2023 Actions	End of 2023 Results
Flooding and Erosion (Action #3): Redefine Intensity Duration Frequency using future climate change projections.	- NVCA does not set IDF curves for the watershed. Engineering is working on developing a strategy for how to engage municipalities within the watershed on the topic of IDFs and their update (Work plan to update IDF curves and engage local municipalities to be developed in Q1 2024). - Engineering is working on developing a work plan for updating IDF curves with climate considerations in mind; key work plan components include a formalized approach for engaging municipalities in the update of the IDF curves. (Work plan execution to commence in Q2 2024 and wrap up by Q4 2024.
Flooding and Erosion (Action #4): Enhance flood forecasting and real-time flood monitoring	- Ongoing replacing of rain and stream gauge data loggers to provide more timely/real time data (Replacement of rain and stream gauge data loggers will be ongoing for 2024 and 2025).

predication and warning systems to keep watershed residents more informed.	- Creation of internal MS Teams Flood Group (10 members) to discuss and evaluate potential flood conditions and warnings. - To be completed by Q3/Q4 2024: Updated watershed river flood thresholds using updated peak flow frequency graphs for 2 year and 5 year flood events.
Flooding and Erosion (Action #5): Work with municipalities to develop more detailed water budgets for the Nottawasaga River watershed.	- At this point in time, Engineering has yet to action this item. - As a first step, Engineering will engage Watershed Science to better determine how appropriate water budgets can be determined for each subwatershed, and how they can be used to inform local/municipal water budgets. (Develop strategy in coordination with Watershed Science in Q2 2024. Engage municipalities starting Q3/Q4 2024).
Flooding and Erosion (Action #6): Review drought response policies and procedures (i.e. Low Water Response Team).	- Re-established low response committee and its members in 2023. - By Q4 2024, Engineering will: - Review LWR methodology with SWMC to determine watershed-appropriate low flow thresholds; - Review and compare OLWR response with other CA's response; - Review previous NVCA LWR messages and conditions.

Stewardship

2023 Actions	**End of 2023 Results**
Stewardship and Land Conservation (Action #1): Program adjustment to restoration designs in order to optimize benefits for climate change, as well as water quality, habitat for species at risk and invasive species management, etc.	In 2023, we optimized our stream restoration designs to address the widest possible range of climate change impacts. We incorporated floodplain construction into 2 projects completed this year on Sheldon Creek and one on the Pine River in order to provide a CC adaptation to address more frequent and severe flooding events in the future. The constructed floodplains also provided areas where riparian vegetation has easy access to the water table close to the stream elevation. This provision provided the riparian vegetation with great resiliency to future drought conditions. Almost all of our river restoration work includes a strong tree planting component designed to shade the stream in order to

	improve coldwater fisheries habitat in the short-term and provide resiliency to climate change impacts in the long-term.
Stewardship and Land Conservation (Action #2): Similar to 2022, continued restoration work focused on improving the current health of coldwater fisheries habitats and uses a large temperature data set to identify priority reaches of stream for tree planting and bank stabilization, that exhibit rapid warming.	As noted above, almost all of our river restoration work in 2023 included a strong tree planting component designed to shade the stream and create a broad cool valley microclimate designed to improve coldwater habitat conditions in the short-term. This approach will also provide resiliency to the long-term effects of climate change.
Stewardship and Land Conservation (Action #3): continued shrub and native grassland plantings in addition to tree planting will contribute to climate change mitigation by sequestering carbon though ongoing stewardship projects and activities.	In 2023, the NVCA stewardship department planted approximately 8,000 native trees and seedlings working with partners and volunteers. The bulk of these were planted in riparian zones.
Stewardship and Land Conservation (Action #4)**:** Consider carbon offsetting opportunities on NVCA properties through restoration projects such as tree planting, wetland and grassland restoration. * not originally in 2023 BOD report but added in after *	Several of the tree planting projects in 2023 (see above) which play a carbon sequestration role were completed on NVCA lands in the Minesing Wetlands.

Anticipated 2024 goals: We anticipate continuing to address goals #1 though #4.

Lands

2023 Actions	**End of 2023 Results**
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Enhance and change corporate culture, business practices and operations to reduce GHG emissions (i.e. repair over replace philosophy and EV chargers installation).	With the repair over replace philosophy in mind, lands have conducted in house repairs on multiple high use pieces of maintenance equipment to keep them in use and avoid replacement. 2 major repairs were also completed on 2 fleet vehicles to keep them operational and in fleet circulation. EV charger installation has been completed at Tiffin CA. (deadline: Nov 2023)

Corporate Practices (Action #3): Increase employee awareness of NVCA's environmentally sustainable operating practices to promote cost-effective, sustainable behaviour that reduces our corporate carbon and environmental footprint.	Continue to support other departments in their efforts in fighting climate change and increase employee awareness of NVCA's environmentally sustainable operating practices. (Dec 2023)
Communicate and Educate (Action #6): Communicate high priority areas of our land securement strategy so landowners in those areas know. *added in after (not originally in 2023 BOD report)*	2 high priority properties in the Minesing Wetlands were secured through a tax sale in the town of Springwater. In discussions with a family about a 3rd property being secured through donation.

Corporate Services

2023 Actions	**End of 2023 Results**
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Introduced the new staff report format to include a climate change impact section.	Introduced the climate change section on BOD staff reports in January 2023.
Corporate Practices (Action #3): Continue to become a paperless organization.	Ongoing to becoming paperless, discovered the carbon savings by being a hybrid workplace.
Corporate Practices (Action #5): Conduct a Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) inventory of NVCA's operations	Discovered the carbon savings by being a hybrid workplace in 2022.
Communicate and Educate (Action #1): Develop interactive communication tools to engage the public about extreme weather events and watershed conditions.	2023 - Communications is leading the development of a community engagement plan and climate change will be part of it. (Completion expected Dec 2025) 2022 - 2023 - Communications worked with the Flood and Regulations departments to develop messaging regarding protection against extreme weather events and how to protect against watershed conditions.
Communicate and Educate (Action #2): Develop a climate change communications strategy to inform and engage staff and our stakeholders including but not limited to	**Flooding:** 2023 Emergency Preparedness Week: Complete. Communications and Flood teams to develop a communications plan for flood preparedness by 2024. **Communications:** Climate change communications strategy will be included in the Corporate

invasive species, drought, flood/emergency preparedness, and climate friendly property management.	Communications Plan, expected to be completed by 2025. **Media:** Column with Village Media regarding how NVCA works with partners and communities to adapt to climate change. **Watershed Science:** Supporting watershed monitoring efforts, such as watershed health checks. **Permits and Planning:** Ongoing communications about the importance of obtaining an NVCA permit, especially with more storms. **Education:** Supporting climate change programs in 2023 and 2024. **Other areas of work:** providing communications support as needed.
Communicate and Educate (Action #5): Educate staff, Board of Directors, and partners on the need for both mitigation and adaptation to climate change.	Implemented the climate change section on BOD staff reports.

Anticipated 2024 goals:

1. 2024 Emergency Flood Preparedness week.
2. Communications and Flood teams to develop a communications plan for flood preparedness by 2024.
3. Continue Village Media columns with a focus on climate change in 2024.
4. Continue to inform residents about the importance of obtaining NVCA permits.
5. Continuing pledge to become paperless.

<u>Education</u>

2023 Actions	**End of 2023 Results**
Communicate and Educate (Action #4): Developing a high school program which informs on the science and issues, focuses on positive action and includes eco-anxiety relief strategies.	We have delivered a CC Elementary program, which is currently in its third iteration of improvements. A shift towards addressing eco-anxiety in youth and reshaping the narrative around climate change. Our focus centres on our perspective about nature and highlighting its innate resilience and wisdom. 'Carbon Quest' is a dynamic program that turns climate education into an exciting opportunity to inspire hope and action. Students delve into key messages of iterative progress, collective impact, collaboration, and

	adaptability. Programming instills crucial problem-solving and critical thinking skills in the leaders of tomorrow. Carbon Quest will be adapted to be delivered to high school students in 2024.
Communicate and Educate (Action #4): Co-host a teacher workshop at the Tiffin Centre called 'Building Climate Resilience' for teachers in Simcoe County to received professional development, with a focus on climate change.	Working with Simcoe County District School Board Environment and Sustainability Coordinator, to co-host an Eco-School learning day for school 'Green Teams' and their leaders, to enhance their projects and assist them with their goals within their own schools. Waiting to hear back from a grant to make this free for participants. (Spring 2024)
Other	
added in after (not originally in 2023 BOD report)	Education CC program to be shared at the Conservation Authority Education workshop in 2023 called Rekindle the Sparks, with a strong focus on addressing eco-anxiety. (Nov 2023)
added in after (not originally in 2023 BOD report)	Teacher PD to be developed (2025) building on lessons learned through Eco-Team collaboration with in-school teachers and what their needs are.

Anticipated 2024 goals:

1. With the Elementary program now developed and improved, our push is to begin developing a comparable high school program which continues to share the resilience of nature, innovation and hope for our shared future, while focusing on their curriculum goals.
2. If we are successful with our grant proposal, begin developing relationships and programming options to support students and teachers with the EcoSchool projects, with climate change as the main focus.

Forestry

2023 Actions	**End of 2023 Results**
Stewardship and Land Conservation (Action #3): Tree planting numbers are still evolving, with 70,000 sold to date and Managed Forest plans at 16 with a target of 25.	-Trees have all been planted. Will be talking with partners in July. Bur oak seed collections in September/October. -Properties being assessed for 2024 planting. Site preparation of 2024 sites ongoing as well. -Audits of 2023, 2022, and 2019 planting sites underway.

Anticipated 2024 goals: Same as 2023

Information Management

2023 actions	End of 2023 Results
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Hardware purchases- make responsible hardware purchases to ensure that the equipment used is energy-efficient and has a low carbon footprint.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Small format hardware- opt for smaller hardware format which is more energy-efficient and has a lower carbon footprint.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Soft phone solutions- implement the use of soft phone solutions to reduce the need for physical hardware and minimize waste.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Supporting IT systems that enable work from home arrangements to reduce the carbon footprint from daily commutes.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Collaborate with other programs to support their efforts in reducing the carbon footprint and minimizing waste.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Electronic waste disposal - take proper steps to dispose of electronic waste in an environmentally friendly manner.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Responsible purchasing decisions - make informed purchasing decisions to minimize waste and seek sustainable equipment and products.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Paper-free office workflows - promote paperless workflows in the office to reduce paper waste and conserve natural resources.	
Corporate Practices (Action #2): Equipment repurposing - reuse and repurpose equipment to extend its lifespan and reduce waste.	

Planning and Regulations

2023 Actions	End of 2023 Results
GOAL: Review partner municipality's planning documents and encourage the inclusion of conservation best practices such as Low Impact Development.	The team has reviewed and responded to 3 Official Plans, which recommended including sections on BMP's such as LID's. We've also reviewed and responded to 8 Municipal wide Official

(Action #1): Review documents in a timely manner to meet deadlines for revisions. (Action #2): Serve as a resource for municipalities and encourage their planners to reach out with questions to foster a collaborative environment. *added in after (not originally in 2023 BOD report)*	Plan amendments and 5 Comprehensive Zoning By-Law amendments to ensure our interests have been considered and proposed changes reflect current standards. We are also working in collaboration with NVCA Engineering and the Town of Collingwood to develop a two-zone approach for the Oak Street Canal.
GOAL: Draw attention to the work done by Conservation Authorities via Planning. (Action #1): Highlight innovative practices such as rain gardens, the Hix Building, and other SWM practices. (Action #2): Create a webpage to direct stakeholders to as a starting point for LID best practices. *added in after (not originally in 2023 BOD report)*	Will focus on this in 2024.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The above noted project enables the Authority to move forward with implementation of components of the Integrated Watershed Management Plan and the 2020-2025 NVCA Strategic Plan and Business Plan. In addition, it will direct the annual workplan for the period of 2023-2025 and set a baseline for climate change work moving forward.

Impact on Authority Finances

Actions completed in 2023 and forecasted in 2024 are within the NVCA budget.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in green house gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Reviewed by:
Original Signed by
Chris Hibberd
Director, Watershed Management Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment 1: 2022-2025 Climate Change Action Plan

2022-2025 Climate Change Action Plan

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Contents

Message from the CAO

Climate change is a phenomenon that leads to changes in Earth's long-term weather patterns, which has many impacts that are felt globally and locally. It results from increased levels of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, which trap heat in our atmosphere.

The United Nations (UN) stated that in the last 150 years, human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels and clearcutting have increased the concentration of these greenhouse gases substantially. Many of these activities continue to be undertaken today, leading to impacts on wetlands, species and residents.

With the goal of achieving a more sustainable future, the UN has created 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to guide policymakers, organizations, and citizens as they address global challenges. SDG 13 is a goal called Climate Action, highlighting the need for confronting climate change and strengthening efforts to address its impacts.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's (NVCA) vision is to support a sustainable watershed that is resilient to the effects of climate change, urban growth and other stressors, and supports safe, healthy and prosperous communities. As climate change is recognized as a driver of change in our watershed, we have incorporated its threats into our core Integrated Watershed Management Plan and 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan and Business Plan.

The next few years are critical for slowing greenhouse gas emissions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change most recently indicated that to limit warming to 1.5°C, emission levels must reach a peak before 2025 and be reduced by over 40% by 2030. NVCA recognizes the importance of responding to climate change and is committed to supporting our partners' actions to reduce impacts of climate change.

The 2022-2025 Climate Change Strategy is a part of NVCA's continued response to climate change and our commitment to face the challenges it poses to our communities and ecosystems.

Doug Hevenor

Chief Administrative Officer

Context of Climate Change

In 2015, the Government of Canada signed the Paris Agreement along with nearly 200 other countries to limit the global average temperature rise to below 2°C. In Ontario, efforts are being taken by the province, counties, and municipalities towards addressing climate change and its impacts to air, land, and water.

There is also a lot being done at the local level.

- Counties in the Nottawasaga Watershed have developed their own Climate Change Strategy
- Several municipalities in the Nottawasaga Watershed have created an action plan or are working towards one
- Some municipalities have Climate Change Action Teams and encourages community carbon footprint challenges
- Residents are joining the conversation through sharing creative solutions, stories, and blogs

Trends and Impacts

According the UN, impacts of climate change are already being observed globally. Surface temperatures have risen, with 2011-2020 being the warmest decade on record. More heat waves are occurring, threatening public health. In many areas, storms and weather events have increased in frequency and intensity causing damages to people and nature. While in others, droughts have put stress on water and food availability.

Over the last decade, Canada has been warming at twice the global rate. Average annual temperatures in Canada have increased by 1.7°C between 1948 and 2016 and are projected to continue to increase between 1.8°C and 6.3°C by 2100. Future temperature increase is dependent on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted.

The Government of Canada has observed that temperature increases vary by region, with Northern Canada experiencing greater warming.

The average annual precipitation has increased across Canada, and future projections show that changes will vary based on region and season. From 2050-2100, a low emission scenario projects small precipitation increases across Canada, while under a high emission scenario, a larger increase of precipitation is projected annually in winter, with a small decrease in summer precipitation over much of Southern Canada. The amount of extreme, short-term precipitation is also projected to increase.

In the Nottawasaga Watershed, climate changes such as rising temperatures and more extreme weather events have been observed. Local projections in the Nottawasaga Valley watershed include:

- Increased average air temperatures
- Increase in precipitation
- Wetter, warmer winters and springs, and drier, hotter summers
- Higher intensity storms
- Increased stream temperature as air temperature rises
- Longer growing season
- Longer heat waves
- Less days of frost

These changes may have social, economical, ecological impacts in the Nottawasaga Watershed. Infrastructure, transportation systems, energy systems may also be affected.

Greater precipitation increases flood risk, while more frequent freeze thaw cycles impacts local infrastructure, rates of erosion and agriculture production, which may require increased maintenance.

Heat waves and severe storms affect the mental health and well-being of watershed residents by increasing heat-related illnesses, increasing emergency visits, and impacting their sense of security. Additional risks, such as increases in vector-borne diseases, like Lyme diseases from ticks will also put stress on the health of the residents.

Episodes of drought causes damages to crops and poses risk to drinking water sources. Lower water levels impact the presence of wetlands and wetland species, while warmer air and stream temperatures reduces suitable habitat for many organisms.

Native species will also face challenges due to increase of invasive species, population declines, forced migration or extirpation to find suitable habitat, and changes in their behaviour relating to temperature, such as earlier flowering of plants.

NVCA Actions and Next Steps

In recent years, NVCA has incorporated adaptation and mitigation actions to reduce the impact of climate change into its programs. Adaptation efforts aim to respond to the effects of climate change, while mitigation measures address the sources of climate change, such as greenhouse gas emissions.

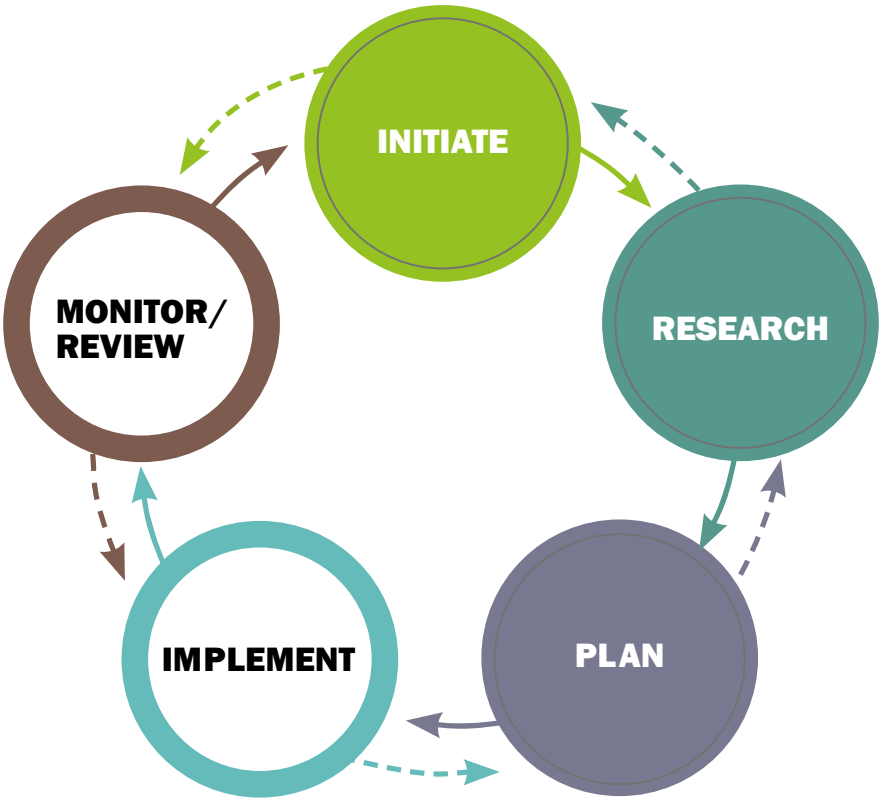
Monitoring biological and physical processes in the watershed (i.e., streamflow, precipitation, temperature and biological indictors) help us understand how ecosystems may be changing as a result of climate change. This information helps NVCA update our review guidelines and provide appropriate advisory comments to our partner municipalities.

NVCA staff and volunteers have planted trees across the Nottawasaga Watershed and incorporated climate change materials into education programs.

To have a better understanding of the corporate carbon footprint, NVCA has calculated the amount of greenhouse gas emissions reduced from staff working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NVCA has followed the 5-step milestone framework presented by the Local Governments for Sustainability. To date, NVCA has produced documents that correspond to the first 3 milestones of this framework: Initiate, Research, and Plan as well as developed the 2016-2018 Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. This plan includes adaptation and mitigation measures and identifies the goals and targets NVCA will work towards and the how progress will be reported on.

Basic Milestone Framework



Source: ICLEI Municipal Climate Change Adaptation Guide and Workbook

Flooding and Erosion

Goal

Work with partners and stakeholders to increase knowledge of how climate change will impact flooding and erosion levels in Nottawasaga Watershed communities.

Actions

1. Develop new hydraulic and hydrologic models and mapping that consider future climate projections, impacts on watershed, high risk areas, vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities.

2. Collaborate with other conservation authorities, municipalities and the Province of Ontario to ensure guidelines incorporate future climate projections to help enhance local flood capacity.

3. Redefine Intensity Duration Frequency (IDF) curves using future climate projections to reflect extreme events and changes in rainfall distribution.

4. Enhance flood forecasting and real-time flood monitoring prediction and warning systems to keep watershed residents more informed.

5. Work with municipalities to develop more detailed water budgets for the Nottawasaga watershed.

6. Review drought response policies and procedures, receive stakeholder input, and revise drought response guidelines including low water/ drought emergency response plans.

Monitor

Goal

Enhance knowledge of the Nottawasaga Watershed's natural environment and its response to a changing climate.

Actions

1. Integrate climate, groundwater and surface water monitoring and analysis systems to effectively track climate change and associated adaptation and mitigation measures including ambient conditions, changing trends in precipitation, temperature, hydrology and hydrogeology.

2. Report on key indicators of climate change and its impacts to help make science-based decisions, as well as recommend actions help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

3. Conduct research to identify vulnerable aquatic ecosystems, anticipated changes associated with climate change, and acceptable mitigation/adaptation approaches.

4. Incorporate anticipated climate impacts into programs and services through regular updates provided by the Watershed Science and Flood Departments. Updates can include information such as current climate projections, monitoring data and climate science.

Communicate and Educate

Goal

Facilitate partnerships and connect people to the Nottawasaga Watershed in order to build awareness of climate change and capacity to adapt to climate impacts.

Actions

1. Develop interactive communication tools to engage the public about extreme weather events and watershed conditions.

2. Develop a climate change communications strategy to inform and engage staff and our stakeholders including but not limited to invasive species, drought, flood / emergency preparedness, and climate friendly property management.

3. Provide landowners, property managers and other professionals with knowledge and resources to help them make informed decisions that contributes to building climate change resilient and environmentally sustainable communities.

4. Prepare educators so they can properly inform today's youth about climate change.

5. Educate staff, Board of Directors, and partners on the need for both mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

6. Communicate high priority areas of our land securement strategy so landowners in those areas know they have ecologically significant properties.

Natural Heritage

Goal

Protect and improve natural heritage systems in the Nottawasaga Watershed to build resilience and assist with adaptation and mitigation.

Actions

1. Review the minimum planting requirements to ensure that the recommended species lists include species that are expected to adapt to future climates.

7. Collaborate with partners to develop an invasive species strategy that considers climate change and includes elements such as a species watch list, education and outreach, response protocols, monitoring and citizen science.

8. Manage, sustain, and restore the natural heritage system, and features such as wetlands, to increase resiliency to future climate projections.

9. Enhance the current aquatic and terrestrial natural heritage program to record impacts of climate change, including ecological and hydrologic systems, community function utilizing technology and community/citizen science where possible.

Stewardship and Land Conservation

Goal

Increase watershed resistance and resilience to climate change through conservation, restoration, and improvement of natural systems.

Actions

1. Design restoration projects based on design guidelines, modelling, prioritized opportunities, long-term monitoring and watershed plans which consider the impact of climate change.

2. Maintain and improve the health of local watercourses and their aquatic communities by implementing targeted programs to remove and mitigate areas that contribute to stream warming. Install and maintain features that contribute to stream cooling.

3. Promote the reforestation and naturalization of riparian and upland areas to enhance aquatic habitats and organisms and to sequester carbon.

4. Consider carbon offsetting opportunities on NVCA properties through restoration projects such as tree planting, wetland and grassland restoration.

5. Create a stewardship prioritization mapping tool for terrestrial and aquatic projects, combining natural heritage system and stormwater considerations (permeability, level of development, existing stormwater infrastructure). This map will help staff allocate resources and can be shared with project implementation partners.

Partnerships

Goal

Be leaders in sustainability making NVCA the partner of choice for local climate change initiatives.

Actions

1. Develop tools with partners to guide climate change adaptation efforts and collectively manage environmental, social and human health.

2. Work with provincial and federal governments and other science-based organizations to develop and refine tools to improve climate change projections and forecasting for the Nottawasaga Watershed.

3. Collaborate with watershed stakeholders across all sectors to ensure individual climate change adaptation plans have a cohesive regional approach and demonstrate leadership by supporting external partners in adopting urban and rural best management practices to support watershed and human health resiliency.

4. Engage farmers, farming associations and OMAFRA through knowledge exchange meetings to learn how they are adapting to climate change and how NVCA can provide support to minimize the impacts of climate change on the environment.

Corporate Practices

Goal

Build corporate capacity to adapt to future climate projections and reduce NVCA's corporate carbon footprint by embracing a culture of conservation through using best practices and solutions while measuring progress and effectiveness.

Actions

1. Implementation of NVCA Climate Change Strategy will be reported annually to ensure that the objectives are being considered or implemented.

2. Enhance and change our corporate culture, business practices and operations to reduce GHG emissions.

3. Increase employee awareness of NVCA's environmentally sustainable operating practices to promote cost-effective, sustainable behaviour that reduces our corporate carbon and environmental footprint.

4. Complete a corporate risk assessment to identify locations, operations and assets that are vulnerable to extreme weather events. The assessment should then be used to develop and implement adaptation strategies to mitigate any identified risks.

5. Conduct a Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) inventory of NVCA's operations

Implementation and Reporting

Departments will integrate the above targets into their workplans and continue to develop the steps to reach these goals. The goals and targets will be reviewed annually to provide an updated report on their progress to the Board of Directors. Along with the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and the 2021-2025 Business Plan, this 2022-2025 Climate Change Strategy will be updated for the 2025 period.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

www.nvca.on.ca
admin@nvca.on.ca
705-424-1479

8195 8th Line
Utopia, ON
L0M 1T0

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA
@nottawasagaca

Staff Report: 02-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Ian Ockenden Manager, Watershed Science

SUBJECT: Appointment of Risk Management Official and Risk Management Inspectors for the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority as required under Sections 48 (1-3) of the *Clean Water Act*, *2006*.

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: the Staff Report No. 02-02-24-BOD regarding the appointment of Ian Ockenden as an alternate Risk Management Official and as a Risk Management Inspector as required under Sections 48 (1-3) of the *Clean Water Act, 2006* be approved; and

FURTHER THAT: a certificate of appointment be issued as required by Section 48(3) of the *Act.*

Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this Staff Report is to have Ian Ockenden designated as an alternate Risk Management Official and as a Risk Management Inspector as required under Sections 48 (1-3) of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

Background

The *Clean Water Act, 2006* (hereinafter referred to as the *Act*) enables municipalities to enter into an agreement with a Source Protection Authority (SPA) for the enforcement of Part IV of the *Act*. Once an agreement has been entered

into, the SPA is required to appoint Risk Management Official(s) (RMO) and Risk Management Inspector(s) (RMI) to carry out required Part IV power enforcement tasks. The individual appointed must hold valid certification as an RMO and RMI by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). Once appointed, the SPA shall also issue a certificate of appointment to each Risk Management Officer and Risk Management Inspector.

The Conservation Authority serves as the Source Protection Authority under regulation 284/07 of the *Act*, and hence the Conservation Authority is responsible for appointing the RMO and RMI when carrying out those duties.

The NVCA provides Part IV power enforcement services to the municipalities of Adjala-Tosorontio, Clearview, Collingwood, Essa, Innisfil, Melancthon, Mono, Mulmur, New Tecumseth, and Shelburne. Presently, Sarah Thompson is the Risk Management Official and Inspector for the NVCA. Section 48 (3) requires that once appointed, the RMO/RMI will be issued a certificate of appointment.

Issues/Analysis

The *Act* requires that the Conservation Authority serving as the Source Protection Authority under regulation 284/07 of the *Act* appoints a Risk Management Official and a Risk Management Inspector where Part IV delegation has occurred. The appointments will assist in the delivery of the program and avoid service interruptions should the RMO be unavailable. Ian Ockenden already holds a valid RMO and RMI certification from the MECP.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

NVCA is the lead agency for the Nottawasaga Valley Source Protection Authority under the *Clean Water Act*. Drinking Source Water Protection Part IV policies to be implemented are within the Source Protection Plan.

Impact on Authority Finances

All services will be completed on a cost recovery basis for the participating municipalities. Funds for completing these services will assist in retaining qualified staffing for the Risk Management and Source Water Protection program areas in the future.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in green house gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Reviewed by:
Original Signed by
Chris Hibberd
Director, Watershed Management Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Staff Report: 03-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Ben Krul
Manager, Development Planning and Permits

SUBJECT: Legislative and Regulatory Amendments Affecting Conservation Authorities

---

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors receive and approve Staff Report No. 03-02-24-BOD regarding legislative and regulatory proposals affecting Conservation Authorities.

Purpose of the Staff Report:

The purpose of this report is to update the Board of Directors on recent Provincial government decisions pertaining to legislative and regulatory changes impacting conservation authorities, and they are expected to become effective on April 1, 2024.

Background:

On February 16, 2024, a new Minister's regulation (Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits) under the Conservation Authorities Act was approved by the Province. This regulation will replace NVCA's existing individual "Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" regulation (172/06) and moving forward, Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 41/24 will be used by all Conservation Authorities (CAs). The regulation's effective date is April 1, 2024. The enactment of O. Reg. 41/24 will also coincide with the proclamation of associated sections within the Conservation Authorities Act. O. Reg. 41/24 represents a single regulation for all CAs, however much of the CA regulatory process remains the same. The administration of O. Reg. 41/24 is a Mandatory Program and Service of the Conservation Authorities as per Section 21.1.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act and as stipulated in O. Reg. 686/21: Mandatory

Programs and Services. Under section 8 of O. Reg. 686/21, Conservation Authorities shall provide programs and services to ensure that the Authority carries out its duties, functions and responsibilities to administer and enforce the provisions of Parts VI and VII of the Act and any regulations made under those Parts.

Issues/Analysis:

1. The key legislative proclamations expected to take effect on April 1, 2024, include:

    - **Regulatory Tests**: A change in the tests used by CAs in consideration of permit issuance removing "conservation of land" and "pollution", adding "unstable soils and bedrock" (while maintaining the control of "flooding", "erosion", and "dynamic beaches").

    - **Exemptions**: Enabling the exemption of the Certain development projects authorized under the *Planning Act* in specific municipalities, where conditions are met, as set out in regulation (*no implementing regulation to allow this is currently proposed)*; and certain low-risk development activities as set out in regulation.

    - **Minister Orders:** Requiring CAs to issue permits for: projects subject to Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator orders and allowing the Minister to review and amend any conditions.

    - **Enhanced Minister Orders**: Enhancing the Minister's powers with regards to permits issued where a zoning order has been made.

    - **Permit Appeal Process**: Additional review/appeal processes for permit fees and decisions to the Minister and/or the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) regarding permit fees; permit decision or lack of decision.

    - **Enhance Minister Powers**: Allowing the Minister to direct a CA to not issue a permit and enabling the Minister to issue a permit in place of that CA (with or without conditions); and not issue a permit for a specified period of time.

    - **Enhance CA Enforcement Powers:** pertaining to appointing officers; entering properties; issuing stop work orders; and enhanced penalties.

2. *Ontario Regulation 41/24* provisions expected to be effective April 1, 2024:

    - **Definitions:** New definition for 'watercourse'.

    - **Prohibited activities and areas where a CA permit is required:** Key changes include Removal of 120 metre 'other areas' (or 'regulated area') from PSWs (note: 30 metre regulated area from all wetlands maintained); and Allowance (or 'regulated area') from wave uprush or other water-related hazards (fore shoreline of great lakes) changed from 15 metres to an 'appropriate allowance'.

    - **Regulatory mapping**; Enhanced provisions requiring a CA to make regulation mapping publicly available; annually review and update maps; and notify stakeholders and promptly use the updated maps.

    - **Exemptions from a permit for certain low-risk activities** – new exceptions for low-risk activities outside of hazard/wetland such as non-habitable accessory.

- **Process for applying for a CA permit:** There are new requirements for Pre-submission consultations; and enhanced application requirements.

- **Service requirements for a CA in reviewing permit applications** – new customer service standards for CAs, including:
    - Deeming an application complete (or incomplete) within 21 days of receiving an application and associated fee; and
    - Limiting the ability for a CA to ask for additional studies, technical information or plans once an application has been deemed complete (unless applicant agrees).

  Note: it is expected the CA Act will require a CA to make a decision on a permit, once deemed complete, within 90 days.

- **Permit Conditions –** CAs can attach conditions to a permit only if the conditions:
    - Assist in preventing or mitigating effects on the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or unstable soil or bedrock or
    - Assist in preventing or mitigating any effects on human health or safety or any damage or destruction of property in the event of a natural hazard.

- **Request for Review**: New provisions allowing applicants to request the CA review if:
    - notice for deeming application complete (or incomplete) has not been received;
    - the applicant disagrees with the decision an application is incomplete; or
    - the applicant disagrees that the request for information, studies or plans is reasonable.

- **Policy and procedures documents for permits** – CAs to develop policy and procedure documents that include:
    - Details of pre-consultation processes and complete application requirements;
    - Procedures of the permit review process;
    - Standard timelines for a CA to make a decision for permit once deemed complete; and
    - A process for the periodic review of policies and procedures.

It is also expected that new provisions related to CA permitting reporting standards and requirements will come into effect April 1, 2024 (new provisions in Ontario Regulation 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services (under the CA Act)). These new provisions will require CAs to prepare and publish annual reports outlining performance statistics for permits – including level of compliance with prescribed review timelines.

Next Steps:

In keeping with the Conservation Ontario guidance material, the following are key

next steps:

- Prepare communications for municipal partners, stakeholders, and the public.
- Interim policies should be adopted by the NVCA until existing CA policy and procedure manuals are updated.
- Procedures should be adopted for transitioning from existing CA regs. to O. Reg. 41/42 to ensure permits and new applications are subjected to the appropriate procedures and guidelines, depending on their date of submission.
- To accommodate efficient timelines for permit review / issuance, administration reviews, permit cancellations, holding of hearings, etc. (legal counsel may be required)
- Appointment of officers under a new class designation will be required. MNRF to provide new class designation.
- Update Members on new requirements for mapping updates (revised regulation limits, requirements for posting, procedures for updating, etc.)
- Update regulatory and legislative references on applications, maps, website, etc.

Staff recommend that the Board approve the model Interim Policy Guidelines (Attachment 1) for the Administration and Implementation of O. Reg. 41/24. In addition, staff recommend that the Board approve Transitional Procedures & Guidelines (Attachment 2).

Please note that Delegation of Powers and Designation of a Provincial Offences Officer under Part VII Enforcement and Offences of the Conservation Authorities Act will be addressed under a separate report.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The actions noted in this report are intended to be consistent within the noted legislation that comes into effect April 1, 2024.

Impact on Authority Finances:

For 2024 it is expected that the legislative and regulatory amendments affecting Conservation Authorities will be implemented through the Board approved budget.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in greenhouse gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Chris Hibberd
Director Watershed Management Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments: Ontario Regulation 41/24
Ontario Regulation 42/24
Interim Policy Guidelines

Ontario

Français

ONTARIO REGULATION 41/24

made under the

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT

Made: December 5, 2023
Filed: February 16, 2024
Published on e-Laws: February 16, 2024
Published in The Ontario Gazette: March 2, 2024

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES, EXEMPTIONS AND PERMITS

CONTENTS [−]

Definitions

1. (1) In section 28 of the Act and in this Regulation,

"development activity" means,

(a) the construction, reconstruction, erection or placing of a building or structure of any kind,

(b) any change to a building or structure that would have the effect of altering the use or potential use of the building or structure, increasing the size of the building or structure or increasing the number of dwelling units in the building or structure,

(c) site grading, or

(d) the temporary or permanent placing, dumping or removal of any material, originating on the site or elsewhere; ("activité d'aménagement")

"hazardous land" means land that could be unsafe for development because of naturally occurring processes associated with flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or unstable soil or bedrock; ("terrain dangereux")

"watercourse" means a defined channel, having a bed and banks or sides, in which a flow of water regularly or continuously occurs; ("cours d'eau")

"wetland" means land that,

(a) is seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water or has a water table close to or at its surface,

(b) directly contributes to the hydrological function of a watershed through connection with a surface watercourse,

(c) has hydric soils, the formation of which have been caused by the presence of abundant water, and

(d) has vegetation dominated by hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants, the dominance of which have been favoured by the presence of abundant water. ("terre marécageuse")

(2) The definition of "wetland" in subsection (1) does not include periodically soaked or wet land used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibits a wetland characteristic referred to in clause (c) or (d) of that definition.

Prohibited activities, subparagraph 2 iii of s. 28 (1) of the Act

2. (1) For the purposes of subparagraph 2 iii of subsection 28 (1) of the Act, river or stream valleys include river or stream valleys that have depressional features associated with a river or stream, whether or not they contain a watercourse, the limits of which are determined as follows:

1. Where the river or stream valley is apparent and has stable slopes, the valley extends from the stable top of the bank, plus 15 metres, to a similar point on the opposite side.
2. Where the river or stream valley is apparent and has unstable slopes, the valley extends from the predicted long term stable slope projected from the existing stable slope or, if the toe of the slope is unstable, from the predicted location of the toe of the slope as a result of stream erosion over a projected 100-year period, plus 15 metres, to a similar point on the opposite side.
3. Where the river or stream valley is not apparent, the valley extends,
    (i) to the furthest of the following distances:
        A. the distance from a point outside the edge of the maximum extent of the flood plain under the applicable flood event standard to a similar point on the opposite side, and

        B. the distance from the predicted meander belt of a watercourse, expanded as required to convey the flood flows under the applicable flood event standard to a similar point on the opposite side, and

    (ii) an additional 15-metre allowance on each side, except in areas within the jurisdiction of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

(2) For the purposes of subparagraph 2 iv of subsection 28 (1) of the Act, areas adjacent or close to the shoreline of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System or to inland lakes that may be affected by flooding, erosion or dynamic beach hazards include,

(a) the area starting from the furthest offshore extent of the authority's boundary to the furthest of the following distances:

(i) the 100-year flood level, plus the appropriate allowance for wave uprush, and, if necessary, for other water-related hazards, including ship-generated waves, ice piling and ice jamming, except in respect of Wanapitei Lake in the Nickel District Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standard for that lake being the one set out in item 1 of Table 16 of Schedule 1,

(ii) the predicted long-term stable slope projected from the existing stable toe of the slope or from the predicted location of the toe of the slope as that location may have shifted as a result of shoreline erosion over a 100-year period, and

(iii) where a dynamic beach is associated with the waterfront lands, an allowance of 30 metres inland to accommodate dynamic beach movement, except in the areas within the jurisdictions of the Mattagami Region Conservation Authority, the Nickle District Conservation Authority and the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority where the allowance is 15 metres inland; and

(b) the area that is an additional 15 metres allowance inland from the area described in clause (a).

(3) For the purposes of subparagraph 2 v of subsection 28 (1) of the Act, other areas in which development activities are prohibited are the areas within an authority's area of jurisdiction that are within 30 metres of a wetland.

Applicable Flood Event Standards

3. The applicable flood event standards with respect to an authority, for the purposes of paragraph 3 of subsection 2 (1) and to determine the maximum susceptibility to flooding of lands or areas in the area of jurisdiction of an authority are the standards specified in Schedule 1 as those standards are described in Schedule 2.

Maps of regulated areas

4. (1) An authority shall develop maps depicting the areas within the authority's area of jurisdiction where development activities are prohibited under paragraph 2 of subsection 28 (1) of the Act which shall be filed at the head office of the authority and made available to the public on the authority's website, and by any other means that the authority considers advisable.

(2) At least once annually, the authority shall,

(a) review the maps referred to in subsection (1) and determine if updates to the maps are required;

(b) make and file such updates to the maps at its head office if required; and

(c) make the updated maps available to the public on its website and by any other means it considers advisable.

(3) Where new information or analysis becomes available that may result in significant updates to the areas where development activities are prohibited under paragraph 2 of subsection 28 (1) of the Act, including enlargements or reductions to such areas, the authority shall ensure that stakeholders, municipalities and the public are notified of the proposed changes in any manner that the authority considers advisable, including making any relevant information or studies available online at least 30 days prior to an authority meeting during which the proposed changes are on the agenda.

(4) Where significant changes to the areas where development activities are prohibited have been made in accordance with subsection (3), the authority shall promptly update the maps described in subsection (1).

(5) For greater certainty, in case of a conflict regarding the boundaries of the areas where development activities are prohibited under paragraph 2 of subsection 28 (1) of the Act, the description of those areas in that paragraph and in section 2 of this Regulation prevail over the depiction of the areas in the maps referred to in subsection (1) of this section.

Exceptions

5. Paragraph 2 of subsection 28 (1) of the Act does not apply to,

(a) the construction, reconstruction, erection or placement of,

(i) a seasonal or floating dock that,

(A) is 10 square metres or less,

(B) does not require permanent support structures, and

(C) can be removed in the event of flooding,

(ii) a rail, chain-link or panelled fence with a minimum of 75 millimetres of width between panels, that is not within a wetland or watercourse,

(iii) agricultural in-field erosion control structures that are not within and that do not have any outlet of water directed or connected to a watercourse, wetland or river or stream valley,

(iv) a non-habitable accessory building or structure that,

(A) is incidental or subordinate to the principal building or structure,

(B) is 15 square metres or less, and

(C) is not within a wetland or watercourse, or

(v) an unenclosed detached deck or patio that is 15 square metres or less, is not placed within a watercourse or wetland and does not utilize any method of cantilevering;

(b) the installation of new tile drains that are not within a wetland or watercourse, within 30 metres of a wetland or within 15 metres of a watercourse, and that have an outlet of water that is not directed or connected to a watercourse, wetland or river or stream valley, or the maintenance or repair of existing tile drains;

(c) the installation, maintenance or repair of a pond for watering livestock that is not connected to or within a watercourse or wetland, within 15 metres of a wetland or a watercourse, and where no excavated material is deposited within an area where subsection 28 (1) of the Act applies;

(d) the maintenance or repair of a driveway or private lane that is outside of a wetland or the maintenance or repair of a public road, provided that the driveway or road is not extended or widened and the elevation, bedding materials and existing culverts are not altered;

(e) the maintenance or repair of municipal drains as described in, and conducted in accordance with the mitigation requirements set out in the Drainage Act and the Conservation Authorities Act Protocol, approved by the Minister and available on a government of Ontario website, as it may be amended from time to time; and

(f) the reconstruction of a non-habitable garage with no basement, if the reconstruction does not exceed the existing footprint of the garage and does not allow for a change in the potential use of the garage to create a habitable space.

Pre-submission consultation

6. (1) Prior to submitting an application for a permit under section 28.1 of the Act, an authority and the applicant may engage in pre-submission consultation for the purposes of confirming the requirements of a complete application to obtain a permit for the activity in question, which may include,

(a) requests by the authority to the applicant for,

(i) initial information on the proposed activity such as a description of the project and any associated plans, or

(ii) details about the property upon which the activities are proposed to be carried out, including copies of plans, maps or surveys; or

(b) meetings between the authority and the applicant prior to the submission of an application, including any site visits to the property where the activities are proposed to be carried out.

(2) If the applicant requests a pre-submission consultation under subsection (1), the authority is required to engage in the pre-submission consultation.

Application for permit

7. (1) An application for a permit under section 28.1 of the Act shall be submitted to an authority and shall include,

(a) a plan of the area showing the type and location of the proposed development activity or a plan of the area showing plan view and cross-section details of an activity to straighten, change, divert or interfere with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse, or change or interfere with a wetland;

(b) the proposed use of any buildings and structures following completion of the development activity or a statement of the purpose of an activity to straighten, change, divert or interfere with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse or to change or interfere with a wetland;

(c) the start and completion dates of the development activity or other activity;

(d) a description of the methods to be used in carrying out an activity to straighten, change, divert or interfere with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse, or change or interfere with a wetland;

(e) the elevations of existing buildings, if any, and grades and the proposed elevations of any buildings and grades after the development activity or other activity;

(f) drainage details before and after the development activity or other activity;

(g) a complete description of any type of fill proposed to be placed or dumped;

(h) a confirmation of authorization for the proposed development activity or other activity given by the owner of the subject property, if the applicant is not the owner; and

(i) any other technical information, studies or plans that the authority requests including information requested during pre-submission consultations between the authority and the applicant.

(2) Upon receipt of the information required under subsection (1) and payment by the applicant of the fee charged by the authority under subsection 21.2 (4) of the Act, the authority shall notify the applicant in writing, within 21 days, whether or not the application complies with subsection 28.1 (3) of the Act and is deemed to be a complete application.

(3) If the authority notifies an applicant under subsection (2) that the application is complete, the authority shall not require new studies, technical information or plans under clause (1) (i) from the applicant to make a determination on the application, unless agreed to by the authority and the applicant. For greater certainty, the authority may ask the applicant for clarification or further details regarding any matter related to the application.

Request for review

8. (1) An applicant may request a review by the authority if,

(a) the applicant has not received a notice from the authority within 21 days in accordance with subsection 7 (2);

(b) the applicant disagrees with the authority's determination that the application for a permit is incomplete; or

(c) the applicant is of the view that a request by the authority for other information, studies or plans under clause 7 (1) (i) is not reasonable.

(2) A review requested by an applicant under subsection (1) shall be completed by the authority no later than 30 days after it is requested and the authority shall, as the case may be,

(a) confirm that the application meets the requirements of subsection 7 (1) and is complete or provide reasons why the application is incomplete; or

(b) provide reasons why a request for other information, studies or plans under clause 7 (1) (i) is reasonable or withdraw the request for all or some of the information, studies or plans.

Conditions of permits

9. (1) An authority may attach conditions on a permit issued under section 28.1 of the Act only if, in the opinion of the authority, the conditions,

(a) assist in preventing or mitigating any effects on the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or unstable soil or bedrock;

(b) assist in preventing or mitigating any effects on human health or safety or any damage or destruction of property in the event of a natural hazard; or

(c) support the administration or implementation of the permit, including conditions related to reporting, notification, monitoring and compliance with the permit.

(2) In addition to the conditions referred to in subsection (1), the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority may attach conditions to a permit that relate to designated policies and other policies in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan that apply to the issuance of the permit.

Lake Simcoe Protection requirements

10. For the purpose of clause 28.1 (1) (c) of the Act, a decision to issue a permit within the area of jurisdiction of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority shall,

(a) conform with any designated policies in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan that apply to the issuance of the permit; and

(b) have regard to any other policies in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan that apply to the issuance of the permit.

Period of validity of permits and extensions

11. (1) The maximum period of validity of a permit issued under sections 28.1, 28.1.1 and 28.1.2 of the Act, including any extension, is 60 months.

(2) If a permit is issued for less than the maximum period of validity, the holder of a permit may, at least 60 days before the expiry of the permit, submit an application for an extension of the permit to,

(a) the authority that issued the permit, in the case of permits issued under section 28.1 or 28.1.2 of the Act; or

(b) the Minister, in the case of permits issued under section 28.1.1 of the Act.

(3) An authority or the Minister, as the case may be, may approve an extension of the period of validity of a permit that was issued for a period of less than 60 months but the total period of validity of the permit, including the extension, shall not exceed 60 months.

(4) If an authority intends to refuse a request for an extension, the authority shall give notice of intent to refuse to the holder of the permit, indicating that the extension will be refused unless the holder requests a hearing under subsection (5).

(5) Within 15 days of receiving a notice of intent to refuse a request for an extension, the holder of the permit may submit a written request for a hearing to the authority.

(6) If a request for hearing is submitted under subsection (5), the authority shall hold the hearing within a reasonable time, and shall give the holder at least five days notice of the date of the hearing.

(7) After holding a hearing under subsection (6), the authority may,

(a) confirm the refusal of the extension; or

(b) grant an extension for such period of time as it deems appropriate, as long as the total period of validity of the permit does not exceed the applicable maximum period specified in subsection (1).

Policy and procedure documents re permits

12. Each authority shall develop policy and procedure documents with respect to permit applications and reviews that, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Additional details regarding the pre-submission consultation process described in section 6 as well as additional details related to complete permit application requirements.
2. Procedures respecting the process for a review under section 8.

3. Standard timelines for the authority to make a decision on permit applications following a notification that an application is complete under subsection 7 (2), as the authority determines advisable.
4. Any other policies and procedures, as the authority considers advisable, for the purpose of administering the issuance of permits under Part VI of the Act.
5. A process for the periodic review and updating of the authority's policy and procedure documents, including procedures for consulting with stakeholders and the public during the review and update process, as the authority considers advisable.

Commencement

13. This Regulation comes into force on the later of the day subsection 25 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020* comes into force and the day this Regulation is filed.

SCHEDULE 1
FLOOD EVENT STANDARDS

1. For the following conservation authorities, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 1 below:

1. Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority.
2. Catfish Creek Conservation Authority.
3. Credit Valley Conservation Authority.
4. Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority.
5. Grand River Conservation Authority.
6. Halton Region Conservation Authority.
7. Kettle Creek Conservation Authority.
8. Maitland Valley Conservation Authority.
9. Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority.
10. Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

TABLE 1

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard, the 100 Year Flood Event Standard and the 100-year flood level plus wave uprush

2. For the following conservation authorities, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 2 below:

1. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.
2. Long Point Region Conservation Authority.
3. Quinte Region Conservation Authority.
4. Raisin Region Conservation Authority.
5. South Nation River Conservation Authority.

TABLE 2

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards

1.	All areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard and the 100-year flood level plus wave uprush

3. For the following conservation authorities, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 3 below:

1. Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority.
2. Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

TABLE 3

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard

4. For the following conservation authorities, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 4 below:

1. Mattagami Region Conservation Authority.
2. Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.
3. Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority.

TABLE 4

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard, the Timmins Flood Event Standard, and the 100-year flood level plus wave uprush

5. For the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 5 below:

TABLE 5

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard, the Timmins Flood Event Standard, the Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard and the 100-year flood level

6. For the Kawartha Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 6 below:

TABLE 6

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard and the Timmins Flood Event Standard

7. For the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 7 below:

TABLE 7

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Pringle Creek and Darlington	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard
2.	Lake Ontario in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard

8. For the Essex Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 8 below:

TABLE 8

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	The main branch and the east branch (Silver Creek) of the Ruscom River, and its tributaries within the Town of Lakeshore and the Town of Kingsville and the main and north branch of Canard River in the Town of LaSalle, Concessions I and II, and on the main branch of the Canard River in the Town of Amherstburg, Concessions I, II, III and IV	The March 1985 Flood Event Standard

2.	All other areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard

9. For the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 9 below:

TABLE 9

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	The Sauble River Watershed	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard
2.	Lake Huron and Georgian Bay in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other watersheds	The Timmins Flood Event Standard

10. For the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 10 below:

TABLE 10

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Watercourses WCO, WCI, WC2, 3, 4, 5.0, 5.1, 6.0, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7.0, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0, 10.1, 10.2, 11.0 and 12.0 as indicated on Map Figure 1 of Project 98040-A, Stoney Creek, Stormwater Management Assessment, prepared by Philips Engineering and located at the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority head office and Hamilton Harbour in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level

2.	Lake Ontario in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard

11. For the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 11 below:

TABLE 11

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Bunker's Creek and Sophia Creek	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard
2.	Talbot River and the Trent-Severn waterway	The Timmins Flood Event Standard
3.	Lake Simcoe	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
4.	All other areas	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard

12. For the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 12 below:

TABLE 12

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	The main channel of the Kaministiquia River	The 100 Year Flood Event
2.	Lake Superior in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	Timmins Flood Event Standard

13. For the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 13 below:

TABLE 13

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 1937 Regulatory Flood Event Standard and the 100-year flood level plus wave uprush

14. For the Lower Trent Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 14 below:

TABLE 14

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	The main channels of Rice Lake and Trent River	The rainfall, snowmelt, or a combination of rainfall and snowmelt, that would produce the water surface elevations above Canadian Geodetic Datum described in Table 1 of Schedule 3
2.	Lake Ontario in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The Timmins Flood Event Standard

15. For the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 15 below:

TABLE 15

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	The watersheds associated with Shriner’s Creek, Ten Mile Creek and Beaverdam Creek (including Tributary W-6-5) in the City of Niagara Falls	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard

2.	Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard

16. For the Nickel District Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 16 below:

TABLE 16

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Wanapitei Lake	The maximum flood allowance elevation of 267.95 metres Canadian Geodetic Datum (in accordance with Ontario Power Generation's Licence of Occupation Agreement #6168)
2.	All other areas	The Timmins Flood Event Standard and the 100 Year Flood Event Standard

17. For the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 17 below:

TABLE 17

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Chippewa Creek and its tributaries below the North Bay Escarpment, Parks Creek, the Mattawa River in the Town of Mattawa and the La Vase River	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard
2.	Lake Nipissing	100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The Timmins Flood Event Standard

18. For the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 18 below:

TABLE 18

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Rice Lake, Stony Lake, Clear Lake, Lovesick Lake, Deer Bay, Buckhorn Lake, Chemong Lake, Pigeon Lake, Katchiwanooka Lake and Lower Buckhorn Lake	The rainfall, snowmelt, or a combination of rainfall and snowmelt, that would produce the water surface elevations above Canadian Geodetic Datum described in Table 2 of Schedule 3.
2.	All other areas	The Timmins Flood Event Standard

19. For the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 19 below:

TABLE 19

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	Perch Creek	The 100 Year Flood Event Standard
2.	Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair and St. Clair River in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System	The 100-year flood level plus wave uprush
3.	All other areas	The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard

20. For the Upper Thames Region Conservation Authority, the applicable flood event standards are those specified in Table 20 below:

TABLE 20

Item	Areas	Applicable Flood Event Standards
1.	All areas	The 1937 Flood Event Standard

SCHEDULE 2
DESCRIPTION OF STANDARDS

1. The Hurricane Hazel Flood Event Standard means a storm that produces over a 48-hour period,

(a) in a drainage area of 25 square kilometres or less, rainfall that has the distribution set out in Table 1; or

(b) in a drainage area of more than 25 square kilometres, rainfall such that the number of millimetres of rain referred to in each case in Table 1 is modified by the percentage amount shown in Column 2 of Table 2 opposite the corresponding size of the drainage area set out Column 1 of Table 2.

TABLE 1

73 millimetres of rain in the first 36 hours
6 millimetres of rain in the 37th hour
4 millimetres of rain in the 38th hour
6 millimetres of rain in the 39th hour
13 millimetres of rain in the 40th hour
17 millimetres of rain in the 41st hour
13 millimetres of rain in the 42nd hour
23 millimetres of rain in the 43rd hour
13 millimetres of rain in the 44th hour
13 millimetres of rain in the 45th hour
53 millimetres of rain in the 46th hour
38 millimetres of rain in the 47th hour
13 millimetres of rain in the 48th hour

TABLE 2

Column 1 Drainage Area (square kilometres)	Column 2 Percentage
26 to 45 both inclusive	99.2
46 to 65 both inclusive	98.2
66 to 90 both inclusive	97.1
91 to 115 both inclusive	96.3
116 to 140 both inclusive	95.4
141 to 165 both inclusive	94.8
166 to 195 both inclusive	94.2
196 to 220 both inclusive	93.5
221 to 245 both inclusive	92.7
246 to 270 both inclusive	92.0
271 to 450 both inclusive	89.4
451 to 575 both inclusive	86.7
576 to 700 both inclusive	84.0
701 to 850 both inclusive	82.4

851 to 1000 both inclusive	80.8
1001 to 1200 both inclusive	79.3
1201 to 1500 both inclusive	76.6
1501 to 1700 both inclusive	74.4
1701 to 2000 both inclusive	73.3
2001 to 2200 both inclusive	71.7
2201 to 2500 both inclusive	70.2
2501 to 2700 both inclusive	69.0
2701 to 4500 both inclusive	64.4
4501 to 6000 both inclusive	61.4
6001 to 7000 both inclusive	58.9
7001 to 8000 both inclusive	57.4

2. The Timmins Flood Event Standard means a storm that produces over a 12-hour period,

(a) in a drainage area of 25 square kilometres or less, rainfall that has the distribution set out in Table 3; or

(b) in a drainage area of more than 25 square kilometres, rainfall such that the number of millimetres of rain referred to in each case in Table 3 is modified by the percentage amount shown in Column 2 of Table 4 opposite the corresponding size of the drainage area set out in Column 1 of Table 4.

TABLE 3

15 mm of rain in the 1st hour
20 mm of rain in the 2nd hour
10 mm of rain in the 3rd hour
3 mm of rain in the 4th hour
5 mm of rain in the 5th hour
20 mm of rain in the 6th hour
43 mm of rain in the 7th hour
20 mm of rain in the 8th hour
23 mm of rain in the 9th hour
13 mm of rain in the 10th hour
13 mm of rain in the 11th hour
8 mm of rain in the 12th hour

TABLE 4

Column 1 Drainage Area (km^2)	Column 2 Percentage
26 to 50 both inclusive	97
51 to 75 both inclusive	94

76 to 100 both inclusive	90
101 to 150 both inclusive	87
151 to 200 both inclusive	84
201 to 250 both inclusive	82
251 to 375 both inclusive	79
376 to 500 both inclusive	76
501 to 750 both inclusive	74
751 to 1000 both inclusive	70
1001 to 1250 both inclusive	68
1251 to 1500 both inclusive	66
1501 to 1800 both inclusive	65
1801 to 2100 both inclusive	64
2101 to 2300 both inclusive	63
2301 to 2600 both inclusive	62
2601 to 3900 both inclusive	58
3901 to 5200 both inclusive	56
5201 to 6500 both inclusive	53
6501 to 8000 both inclusive	50

3. The 100 Year Flood Event Standard means rainfall, snowmelt, or a combination of rainfall and snowmelt, producing at any location in a river, creek, stream or watercourse a peak flow that has a probability of occurrence of one per cent during any given year.

4. The 100-year flood level means the peak instantaneous still water level plus an allowance for wave uprush and other water-related hazards for inland lakes and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System that has a probability of occurrence of one per cent during any given year.

5. The March 1985 Flood Event Standard means the flood levels observed, surveyed and mapped, and located at the Essex Region Conservation Authority head office, along portions of the relevant prescribed watercourses that exceeded the 100 Year Flood Event Standard.

6. The 1937 Flood Event Standard means the historical observed 1937 flood on the Thames River. This event is equivalent to the combination of events that caused the flood event on the Thames River in April of 1937. The 1937 flood event is estimated to be equivalent to a 1 in 250-year return flood.

7. The 1937 Regulatory Flood Event Standard means the historical observed 1937 flood on the Thames River. This event is equivalent to a flow of 1,540 cubic metres per second (cms) commencing at Delaware and proportionately reducing until 1,160 cms at Thamesville and 1,125 cms at Chatham. The 1937 flood event is estimated to be equivalent to a 1 in 250-year return flood.

SCHEDULE 3
WATER SURFACE ELEVATIONS

1. The water surface elevations above Canadian Geodetic Datum applicable to Item 1 in Table 14 of Schedule 1 are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
LOWER TRENT REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Location	Water Surface Elevation
Rice Lake	187.9 metres
Trent River below Dam #1 (Trenton)	77.2 metres
Trent River below Dam #2 (Sidney)	81.3 metres
Trent River below Dam #3 (Glen Miller)	87.7 metres
Trent River below Dam #4 (Batawa)	95.7 metres
Trent River below Dam #5 (Trent)	101.7 metres
Trent River below Dam #6 (Frankford)	107.9 metres
Trent River below Dam #7 (Glen Ross)	113.5 metres
Trent River below Dam #8 (Meyers)	117.9 metres
Trent River below Dam #9 (Hagues Reach)	128.1 metres
Trent River below Dam # 10 (Ranney Falls)	143.4 metres
Trent River below Dam #11 (Campbellford)	148.3 metres
Trent River below Dam #12 (Crowe Bay)	154.3 metres
Trent River below Dam #13 (Healy Falls)	175.5 metres
Trent River below Dam #14 (Hastings)	186.7 metres

2. The water surface elevations above Canadian Geodetic Datum applicable to Item 1 in Table 18 of Schedule 1 are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
OTONABEE REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Water Body	Water Surface Elevation
Rice Lake	187.90 metres
Stony Lake	235.95 metres
Clear Lake	235.95 metres
Lovesick Lake	242.16 metres

Deer Bay	244.31 metres
Buckhorn Lake	247.12 metres
Chemong Lake	247.12 metres
Pigeon Lake	247.12 metres
Katchiwanooka Lake	233.68 metres
Lower Buckhorn Lake	244.31 metres

Made by:
Pris par :

Le ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts,

GRAYDON SMITH

Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

Date made: December 5, 2023
Pris le : 5 décembre 2023

Français

Ontario

Français

ONTARIO REGULATION 42/24

made under the

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT

Made: February 15, 2024
Filed: February 16, 2024
Published on e-Laws: February 16, 2024
Published in The Ontario Gazette: March 2, 2024

AMENDING O. REG. 686/21

(MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES)

1. Ontario Regulation 686/21 is amended by adding the following section:

Standards and requirements, Part VI

8.1 (1) The programs and services provided by an authority related to ensuring that the authority satisfies its duties, functions and responsibilities to administer Part VI of the Act shall be provided in accordance with the following requirements:

1. The authority shall prepare and publish an annual report that outlines statistics on permits, including reporting on its level of compliance with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits), made under the Act, respecting the application for and issuance of permits, including any associated timelines.

Commencement

2. This Regulation comes into force on the later of the day subsection 15 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020* comes into force and the day this Regulation is filed.

Français

Attachment 2

Interim Policy Guidelines for the Administration and Implementation of Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits)

Effective Date:
April 1, 2024

Summary

On April 1, 2024, Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits) and Part VI of the *Conservation Authorities Act* came into effect. This regulation replaces the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) previous "Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" regulation (172/06).

The proclamation of the new legislative and regulatory framework necessitates updates to existing Conservation Authority policies and procedures, including (but not limited to) the Procedures for the Implementation of Ontario Regulation 172/06.

Interim Policy Guidance

As of April 1, 2024, the NVCA will review and make decisions on applications for permits in accordance with Part VI of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 41/24. Amendments to the noted procedures will be forthcoming to reflect this new framework. Per section 12 of O. Reg. 41/24, the NVCA will consult with stakeholders and the public during the review and update process as the authority considers advisable. Where discrepancies exist between the text of the legislation or regulation and the information provided within the existing guidelines/procedures and these Interim Policy Guidelines, the text of the legislation and regulation will prevail.

Key variances from the processes in the existing guidelines and procedures of the NVCA include, but are not limited to:

1) Assessing permit applications made under Section 28.1 of the *Conservation Authorities* Act to determine if the proposed works will affect the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, and **unstable soil or bedrock**.
2) Assessing applications to determine whether the proposed activity would create conditions or circumstances that, in the event of a natural hazard, might

jeopardize the **health or safety of persons** or result in the **damage or destruction of property.**

3) Attaching conditions to a permit only if the conditions (1) assist in preventing or mitigating any effects on the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or unstable soil or bedrock or (2) assist in preventing or mitigating any effects on human health or safety or any damage or destruction of property in the event of a natural hazard.
4) Reducing the regulated area surrounding provincially significant wetlands or wetlands greater than 2 hectares in size from 120 m to 30 m. The other areas in which development activities are prohibited are within 30 m of all wetlands in the NVCA area of jurisdiction.
5) Exceptions from CA permits for specific activities outlined in section 5 of O. Reg. 41/24, when carried out in accordance with the regulation.
6) Updated complete application requirements (as outlined in section 7 of O. Reg. 41/24), including requirements for landowner authorization and payment of applicable fee.
7) A new process for applicants to request an administrative review of an application (circumstances outlined in section 8 of O. Reg. 41/24).
8) Updated definition of *watercourse* to a "defined channel, having a bed and banks or sides, in which a flow of water regularly or continuously occurs".
9) New requirement (as outlined in subsection 7(2) O. Reg. 41/24) to notify the applicant of whether an application is complete within 21 days and provide the applicant notice of a decision within 90 days following confirmation of a complete application (as outlined in 28.1(22) of the *Conservation Authorities Act)*.
10) A new process for pre-submission consultation (circumstances outlined in section 6 of O. Reg. 41/24).
11) Enforcement procedures, appeals and hearing processes described in Parts VI and VII of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Staff Report: 04-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services
Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services

SUBJECT: Delegation of Powers and Appointment of Officers under the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors Approve Staff Report No. 04-02-24-BOD and;

FURTHER THAT: the identified staff positions in the report be delegated the recommended powers for permit issuance, cancellations, and hearings, and;

FURTHER THAT: the identified staff persons in the report be appointed as officers for the NVCA under the Conservation Authorities Act.

Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this report is to request the Board's approval for the appointment of officers under the *Conservation Authorities Act.*

Background

On April 1, 2024, the *Conservation Authorities Act* (the Act) will be amended, including the proclamation of Part VI (Regulation of Areas Over Which Authorities Have Jurisdiction). Included in this proclamation is the enactment of section 28.4 (Delegation of Power). Through this subsection, an Authority may delegate any of its powers related to the issuance or cancellation of permits under the Act or the regulations, or to the holding of hearings in relation to the permits, to the Authority's executive committee or to any other person or body, subject to any limitations or requirements that may be

prescribed by regulation. Prior to April 1, 2024, subsection 28(2) of the Act (to be repealed) provided that a Conservation Authority regulation could delegate any of the Authority's powers or duties under the regulation to the Authority's executive committee or any other person or body, subject to regulatory limitations and requirements. NVCA delegation of powers to staff will need to be updated further to the enactment of Part VI of the Act.

Also on April 1, 2024, Part VII Enforcement and Offences of the Act will be proclaimed, resulting in a need to re-appoint all existing Conservation Authority Provincial Offences Officers and any new officers consistent with the updated legislation. Ontario Regulation 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services under the Act requires that Conservation Authorities provide programs and services to ensure that the Authority satisfies its duties, functions, and responsibilities to administer and enforce the provisions of Parts VI and VII of the Act and any regulations made under those Parts.

Issues/Analysis

Delegation of Powers:

Previously, NVCA delegated approval power to staff under Ontario Regulation 172/06. As noted above, after April 1, 2024, section 28(4) of the Act will address this matter. The ability to delegate powers related to the issuance and cancellation of permits, as well as holding of hearings and complete application reviews, presents an opportunity to streamline administrative components of the permit review and decision-making process. Staff provides the following recommendations and rationale for delegation of powers related to permit issuance, cancellation, and holding of hearings.

Activity	Recommended Delegation	Rationale
Issuance & Extension of Permits (up to the maximum period of validity)	Staff Listed below (*Issuance and Extension*) Board (*Hearings*)	• Delegation of powers to staff for affirmative permitting decisions consistent with current CA policies and guidelines • Expediency to review and issue permits within legislated and regulated timeframes (new requirement) • Hearings further to an Authority's notice of intent to refuse an extension request would be subject to the *Statutory Powers and Procedure Act*

Cancellation of Permits	CAO / Director/Manager (*Notice of Intent to Cancel*) Board (Hearing)	• Cancellation of permits involves opportunity for a hearing before the Authority or its delegate • Hearings would be subject to the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act* • Decisions from the hearing process are subject to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal
Hearings i. 28.1 (Permits) ii. 28.1.2 (Mandatory permits, zoning orders) iii. 30.4 (Stop Order)	Board	• Hearings prior to April 1, 2024, were held before the Board • Hearings would be subject to the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act* • Decisions are subject to appeal via a request for Minister's review or to the Ontario Land Tribunal
Administrative Reviews (Requests for Review)	CAO/Director/Manager	• Limited timeframe (30-days) to complete a review • Reviewer should have knowledge of CA application process and familiarity with CA development policies/guidelines • Decision is related to confirmation of complete application /administrative processes only and not a decision about whether the permit should be issued • No mechanism within the *CA Act* for appeal
Customer Service Concerns	CAO/Director/Manager	• Addressing concerns, not decision making (lower risk)

The following is a list of positions delegated to Issuance & Extension of Permits (up to the maximum period of validity):

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Director Watershed Management Services
- Manager Development Planning and Permits
- Senior Planner
- Senior Regulations Officer
- Planning Ecologist
- Planner

Appointment of Officers:

Previously, CAs may appoint officers under Section 10 of Ontario Regulation 172/06 (enforcement of Section 28) and under Section 14 of Ontario Regulation 127/90 (enforcement of Section 29). After April 1, 2024, as per section 30.1 of the Act, an authority may appoint officers for the purposes of ensuring compliance with this Act and the regulations for enforcing sections 28 and 29 (s.28, s.29) of the Act. The following criteria shall be satisfied when re-appointing an employee as an "officer" for enforcing s. 28 and /or s. 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*:

- The officer is adequately trained (Level 1 Provincial Offences Officer training or equivalent) in the legislation they are to enforce (i.e. the *Conservation Authorities Act, Provincial Offences Act*, and the *Trespass to Property Act*).
- A clean criminal record check.
- Board of Directors approval.

In addition to the above appropriate training and qualifications are required in order to perform the duties of a Provincial Offences Officer in a professional and competent manner. Legislation and qualifying criteria have been established since 1999 to set a professional standard in this regard. Additionally, when appearing before the court, CA staff may be asked to provide proof of their designation and training as confirmation of their credibility as an officer.

The Provincial Offences Act (POA), the Act and the Class Designation, sets out how a Provincial Offences Officer is appointed. Specifically:

- Subsection 1(3) of the POA states, "A minister of the Crown may designate in writing any person or class of persons as a provincial offences officer for the purposes of all or any class of offences".
- Subsection 30.1 of the Act states, "An authority may appoint officers for the purposes of ensuring compliance with this Act and the regulations."

- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Class Designation regarding the appointment of a class of persons as officers under the Conservation Authorities Act and the Trespass to Property Act. (Currently under review by MNRF).

It has been the practice of the NVCA to specifically name NVCA staff members who will be Officers to enforce the provisions of Sections 28 and 29 of the Act. The staff persons that we request be appointed include:

- Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning and Permits
- Meagan Kieferle, Senior Regulations Officer
- Tyler Mulhall, Planner
- Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services
- Mike Bacon, Manager, Lands and Operations
- Clint Collis, Land and Operation Technician
- Spencer MacDonald, Land and Operation Technician

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

Conservation Authorities Act section 28.4 (Delegation of Power) allows an authority to delegate any of its powers related to the issuance or cancellation of permits under the Act or the regulations, or to the holding of hearings in relation to the permits. Also as per section 30.1 of the Act, an authority may appoint officers for the purposes of ensuring compliance with this Act and the regulations for enforcing sections 28 and 29 of the Act.

Impact on Authority Finances

The implement of the recommendations contain in this report will be addressed through the Board approved 2024 Budget.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications related to this report.

Reviewed by:
Original Signed by
Chris Hibberd
Director, Watershed Management Services
Kyra Howes
Director, Conservation Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Staff Report: 05-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Sheryl Flannagan
Director, Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Updated Agricultural Committee Terms of Reference

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors approve Staff Report No. 05-02-24-BOD regarding the updated Agricultural Committee Terms of Reference, and;

FURTHER THAT: the terms of reference be implemented.

Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this Staff Report is to obtain approval from the Board of Directors with the updated terms of reference for the Agricultural Committee.

Background

The NVCA started the Agricultural Committee in 2013. At that point, a Terms of Reference was created. The last time they were updated was in 2014.

Analysis

Only some minor changes are being requested. The first is the updating of the Director titles under staff resources to the correct titles. The second is under composition, under other agricultural groups there was the name under it specifically related to 2014 so it has been updated to remain general as additional representatives. Finally, under the reporting section, the title of administrative assistant was added to replace executive assistant. As well, it was amended to have the meeting minutes attached to the Board agenda as has been done in the

past. Previously, it stated to have the Chair of the committee attend Board meetings to report, however, that has never taken place.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

Updated Terms of References are important in ensuring that committees run smoothly and follow the NVCA's policies, procedures, and mandate.

Impact on Authority Finances

Staff time to complete this report are accounted for in the 2024 budget.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in green house gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Reviewed by:
Original Signed by
Sheryl Flannagan
Director, Corporate Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment 1: Updated Terms of Reference

NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
AGRICULTURAL AD-HOC COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE
Approved by the NVCA BOD: April 25, 2014
Last Revision: March 22, 2024

Purpose:

- The purpose of the Ad-Hoc committee is to:
- Improve communications with a diverse agricultural representation group,
- Identify areas of common interest/issues and or concerns with respect to NVCA programs as they relate to the agricultural community.
- Act as a discussion group to bring forward communication and recommendations to the NVCA Board of Directors.

Mandate:

The mandate of the Agricultural Ad-Hoc Committee shall be to act as an information sharing body to:

1. Increase communications with a diverse agricultural committee, representing a broad range of agricultural interests within the NVCA watershed.
2. Provide input/recommendations on matters referred to it by the agricultural community regarding areas of interest to the community that are relevant to NVCA programs including but not limited to; NVCA stewardship programs, land programs, regulations, and plan review policies.

Composition:

The Agricultural Ad-Hoc Committee shall be composed generally of 11 members, who live, farm or work or represent an organization within the NVCA watershed. It will be the responsibility of the individual Organizations to appoint annually in writing their representatives, by January 30th to the NVCA Chief Administrative Officer from the following organizations:

Ontario Federation of Agriculture:

3 representatives from Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture

1 representative from Dufferin County Federation of Agriculture

1 representative from Grey County Federation of Agriculture

Other Agricultural Groups:

1 representative from Christian Farmers Association

2 additional representatives from the Agricultural Community (selected annually by the Advisory Committee through an open/by invitation selection process).

NVCA Representatives:

3 members from the Board of Directors appointed at large.

Staff Resources:

Depending on the topics to be discussed, the CAO and/or any of the following Directors could take the meeting lead:

Director, Conservation Services

Director, Watershed Management Services

Meetings:

The committee will meet up to 4 times per year subject to agenda content and need. Additional meetings will be at the call of the chair if required for timely matters.

The Committee will set the meeting agenda annually at the first meeting of the year.

Meetings will be generally held during regular business hours at the NVCA Tiffin Administration Centre, 8195 8th Line, Utopia.

Procedural Rules:

The committee will follow the administrative procedural policies of the NVCA. In the case where the policy is silent, Roberts Rules of Order will take precedent.

The agenda will be developed by the NVCA staff with input from the Committee Chair.

The Committee does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities

of NVCA staff and will communicate through the NVCA CAO/Secretary-Treasurer.

Committee Chair/Vice-Chair:

The committee will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its membership annually at the first meeting of the year.

Decision Making:

Consensus based decisions will be encouraged for all matters, however if required\, normal simple majority rules will be implemented. Each Ad-Hoc Committee member shall have full voting rights, excluding NVCA CAO/staff.

Remuneration:

Remuneration will be pursuant to the policies established by the NVCA.

Reporting:

The Committee's meeting minutes will be made part of the NVCA's Board of Directors agendas. When required, the Committee may appoint a representative who best represents the topic of discussion to speak. Any reports/documents to be given to the NVCA Board of Directors, other than the minutes, must be circulated through the CAO and Administrative Assistant.

Resources:

NVCA staff and other resource experts will be invited as required, to provide additional input to the Committee. NVCA will provide administrative support, including the preparation of reports to the NVCA Board of Directors, distribution of agendas and the general administrative.

Staff Report: 06-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Flood Structures: Workplan for 2024 and Key Near-Term Considerations

---

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 06-02-24-BOD regarding the 2024 workplan and key near-term considerations for NVCA's flood structures.

Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of the Staff Report is to:

1. Inform the Board of Directors about the 2024 workplan for the flood structures which NVCA is responsible for managing;
2. Provide a summary of key near-term considerations for the flood structures.

Background

NVCA is responsible for managing a total of six flood structures within the watershed. The structures are listed below along with the municipalities in which they are located.

- New Lowell Dam, Clearview Township
- Tottenham Dam, Town of New Tecumseth
- Utopia Dam, Essa Township
- Tiffin Pond Dam ("Poppa Bear Pond Dam"), Essa Township
- Pretty River Dike, Town of Collingwood

- Black Ash Creek Floodway, Town of Collingwood

Over the years, the flood structures have received varying degrees of attention. Most recently, the New Lowell Dam and Tottenham Dam have had formal Safety Reviews completed (in 2019 and 2021, respectively).

A Dam Safety Review (DSR) is a periodic and systematic process, typically completed by an independent and qualified professional engineer. The overall objectives of a DSR are to comprehensively assess the condition of the dam that is being reviewed, and produce a conclusive set of recommendations to address any deficiencies or defects found as a result of the review. A critical aspect of DSR's is the in-depth assessment of the consequence of a potential dam breach or failure. The results of that assessment dictate the classification of the dam, and also the frequency at which DSR's must be completed. Typically, dams with a high Hazard Potential Classification require that DSR's be completed at more frequent intervals.

Issues/Analysis

Table 1 lists the date of the most recent Safety Reviews conducted for each of NVCA's flood structures as well as the cost of addressing recommendations arising from the latest Safety Review, where applicable.

Table 1. Summary of most recent flood structure Safety Reviews, along with the cost of the resulting recommendations

Structure	Date of Last Safety Review (if applicable)	Estimated Cost of Recommendations	Estimated Cost of High Priority Recommendations
Tottenham Dam	January 2021	$414,700	$86,600
Utopia Dam	January 2008	$60,600	$60,600
Tiffin Pond Dam[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Lowell Dam	March 2019 (updated with results of emergency inspection submitted in October 2023)	$765,000	$110,000
Pretty River Dike	February 2024 (Phase 1 only)	Up to $1,332,500	Up to $1,220,000
Black Ash Creek Floodway[2]	N/A	N/A	N/A

[1]Last formal inspection conducted in June 2014 to evaluate potential structural damage following the tornado that impacted the John Hicks Conservation Administration Centre.

The inspection concluded that the dam is stable and provided direction for remedying the sink holes that had formed at the time.

[2]Last formal inspections conducted following the construction of channel improvements by NVCA. Throughout 2007 and 2008, post-construction monitoring was completed for Black Ash Creek to meet the requirements of the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) permit for the works. The monitoring reports concluded that the habitat compensation and mitigation measures were constructed, maintained and functioning as intended. In May 2018, NVCA engineering staff completed a formal inspection of the floodway and found no major concerns structurally. The inspection concluded that (1) NVCA should inspect the structure every 2 years for in-stream and bank erosion and for apparent structural stability, and (2) in future, NVCA should identify any areas that may require immediate repairs.

A summary of the high priority recommendations made in each of the Safety Reviews listed in Table 1 is provided in Appendix A.

For structures where no Safety Review has been conducted in recent years (Tiffin Pond Dam and Black Ash Creek Floodway), NVCA engineering staff recommend that a formal Safety Review be coordinated as soon as practicable to better understand whether any issues exist which may pose a risk to public health and safety, as well as legal/reputational risk and liability for NVCA.

Proposed 2024 Workplan for Flood Structures

The Asset Management Plan for the Flood Forecasting and Warning Program notes that $140,000 is available in 2024 for capital expenditures on flood structures. In addition, NVCA engineering staff plan to rely heavily on the Water Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) funding program administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF). The WECI program provides a 50% match for locally-funded projects pertaining to flood and erosion structures. Applicable projects include those that address public safety, structure maintenance/repairs, and assessments or studies that address public safety and structural integrity elements.

NVCA staff anticipate that the call for applications for the 2024-2025 WECI program will be announced in late March or April. In the meantime, engineering staff are working on developing a 2024 workplan that prioritizes the flood structure projects listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Proposed projects for flood structures with 2024 allocations in NVCA's Asset Management Plan

Structure	Asset Management Plan Budget, 2024	Anticipated WECI Program Match	Total Anticipated Budget for 2024	Proposed Projects
Tottenham Dam	$5,000	$5,000	$10,000	Begin to address high priority recommendations from the last Dam Safety Review (January 2021).
Utopia Dam	$55,000	$55,000	$110,000	Begin to address high priority recommendations from the last Dam Safety Review (January 2008)
Tiffin Pond Dam	$10,000	$10,000	$20,000	Conduct a scoped structural inspection by an independent and qualified professional engineer.
New Lowell Dam	$40,000	$40,000	$80,000	Begin to address high priority recommendations from the last Dam Safety Review (March 2019).
Black Ash Creek Floodway	$30,000	$30,000	$60,000	Conduct a formal Safety Review of the floodway.

Proposed Path Forward for Flood Structures

In the near future, engineering staff will develop a sustainable funding plan for NVCA's flood structures. The annual funding available through the Asset Management Plan is currently poorly matched to the extensive and costly maintenance requirements of these flood structures.

The financial and resource requirements of NVCA's aging flood structures require that the organization weigh the cost of perpetual maintenance/repairs with the cost of decommissioning certain flood structures that no longer serve a direct flood-related function. For example, neither Tottenham nor New Lowell Dam serve a direct flood-related function, but both dams are rated as having a high Hazard

Potential Classification. As a result, both structures require that a Dam Safety Review be completed once every 10 years. The most recent Safety Review for Tottenham Dam recommended $414,700 of repairs, and the most recent one for New Lowell recommended $765,000 of repairs. At this point in time, it is important for NVCA to consider the lifecycle costs of maintaining each flood structure that does not serve a direct flood-related function, and weigh those against the costs of decommissioning these structures. The components that comprise a structure's lifecycle are illustrated in Figure 1.

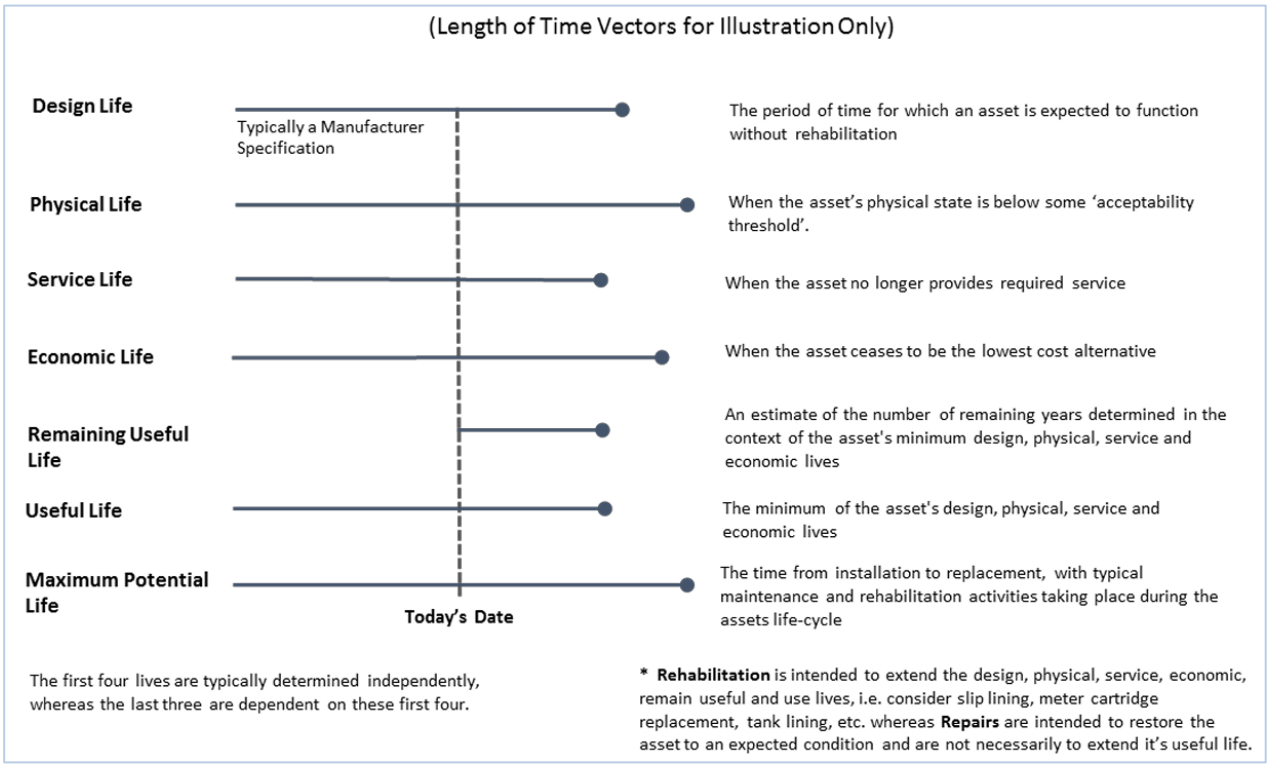


Figure 1. Illustration of typical lifecycle considerations for infrastructure assets based on the American Water Works Association's Asset Management Definitions Guidebook (source: https://www.awwa.org/Portals/0/AWWA/ETS/Resources/Technical%20Reports/AWWA%20AM%20Definition%20Guidebook%20Final%20Draft%20Jan%2016%202018%20V2.pdf?ver=2021-05)

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The operation/management of flood and erosion infrastructure is considered a vital aspect the Flood Forecasting & Warning Program, which is a mandatory program (Category 1) as defined by the Conservation Authorities Act.

Impact on Authority Finances

At this point in time, the 2024 workplan for flood structures proposes to spend only the allocated funding under NVCA's Asset Management Plan for Flood Forecasting & Warning assets. As a result, no unexpected impacts to NVCA's finances are anticipated for this year's proposed flood structure projects.

In the near-term, financial impacts will need to be carefully balanced with legal and reputational risk and liability potentially arising from the mismanagement or failure of flood structures.

Engineering staff will develop a long-term strategic plan for NVCA's flood structures, which will include an assessment of potential funding sources. The long-term strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Directors later this year.

Climate Change Implications

The NVCA assesses climate implications in all staff reports using the Clean Air Partnership's 'Municipal Climate Lens Tool' to consider climate impacts or benefits associated with any project, program, or initiative. The following is a summary of the results.

Municipal Climate Lens Tool	**Results**
Mitigation	Project will not result in the production of green house gases
Temperature	Project can not be affected by temperature
Precipitation	Project can not be affected by precipitation

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by
Chris Hibberd
Director Watershed Management Services

Approved for submission by:

Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment:

- *Appendix A – High Priority Recommendations from Safety Reviews*

Appendix A
High Priority Recommendations from Safety Reviews

Table A1. Summary of the high priority recommendations resulting from the Safety Reviews recently completed for NVCA's flood structures

Structure	Date of Last Dam Safety Review	High Priority Recommendations
Tottenham Dam	January 2021	• Undertake a detailed dam breach analysis using an unsteady flow HEC-RAS model to confirm the High HPC for the sunny day and flood dam failure scenarios (estimated cost: $7,500) • Depending on the results of the detailed dam breach analysis referenced above, review the selection of the IDF and update the hydraulic capacity and freeboard assessments (estimated cost: $2,500) • Upon confirmation of the HPC and IDF, update the structural stability assessment for the emergency spillway weir, based on the revised IDF headwater elevations (estimated cost: $2,500) • If, after completing the updates to the hydraulic capacity and freeboard assessments for the dam, the dam is found to have insufficient hydraulic capacity and freeboard, undertake a process by which the dam can be brought into compliance with the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act (LRIA) Technical Bulletins (estimated cost: $15,000) • Upon confirmation of the HPC and IDF, undertake a geotechnical field investigation and slope stability assessment to determine if the earth embankment dam meets the requirements of the LRIA Technical Bulletins (estimated cost: $25,000)

		• Monitor the wet area downstream of the toe of the dam to confirm the cause of the standing water. Undertake remedial measures, as appropriate (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Undertake routine dam inspections throughout all seasons (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Add a separate section on the routine inspection form for documenting public and operator safety (fencing, railings, safety boom, etc.) (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Consider preparing separate routine inspection forms for each dam site (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Consider adding a separate section to the annual inspection form dedicated to summarizing the recommendations and requirements for follow-up action (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Develop a process and form for undertaking special inspections following unusual or extreme events (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Upon confirmation of the HPC and IDF, update the EPP to meet the recommendations of the Technical Bulletin: Emergency Management for Dam Safety (estimated cost: $7,500) • Prepare a Public Safety Risk Assessment (PSRA) in advance of any changes to the public safety measures, which should be completed in accordance with the Guidelines for Public Safety Around Dams (estimated cost: $5,000) • Subject to the results of the PSRA, prepare a Public Safety Plan to address the hazards identified as part of the PSRA (estimated cost: $5,000) • Subject to the results of the PSRA and PSP, implement specific changes to the public safety measures at the site, as outlined in

		the 2020 Dam Safety Review by D.M. Wills (estimated cost: $16,600)
Utopia Dam	January 2008	• Rehabilitation of key components as noted in report section 8.5, including stop log replacement, concrete repairs, expansion joint repair, and road deck drainage (estimated cost: $60,600) • Review the Hazard Potential Classification of the Utopia Dam by 2017 (estimated cost: TBD)
New Lowell Dam	March 2019 (updated with results of emergency inspection submitted in October 2023)	• Investigate opportunities to address the significant deficiency in discharge capacity and freeboard (estimated cost: $50,000) • Restore the functionality of the low flow valve if it is required for operations (estimated cost: $20,000) • Investigate opportunities to provide additional sliding resistance for the dam (estimated cost: $15,000) • Review the ability of the earth embankment to withstand the erosive forces associated with the Inflow Design Flood and provide permanent erosion protection on the embankment, as required (estimated cost: $0 – assumed to be addressed internally by NVCA) • Review the latest survey data, or complete new topographic survey, to determine if the emergency spillway and drainage swale are still adequately defined and have sufficient capacity to convey the Inflow Design Flood (estimated cost: $10,000) • Investigate opportunities to improve the stability of the earth embankment sections (estimated cost: $10,000) • Carry out a video inspection of the North Well C piezometer to determine if it is still in working condition and if the results recently recorded by the NVCA are representative data (estimated cost: $5,000)

Pretty River Dike	February 2024 (Phase 1 only)	• Establish a regular frequency for engineering inspections (i.e., five years) as well as routine inspections by staff (estimated cost: $20,000) • Complete Phase 2 of the Dike Safety Review. NVCA to retain a • qualified engineering consultant to complete this work (estimated cost: $200,000) • The NVCA should continue the ongoing tree removal program for the dike system. This should include removal of all trees and woody vegetation, restoration of the embankment slopes, and restoration stable vegetative ground cover or rock protection. All woody debris should be cleaned up and removed from the site. Ongoing removal of trees and other woody vegetation will need to be undertaken my NVCA staff once the tree removal program is completed (estimated cost: $650,000 to $1,000,000)*

*Note: The geotechnical engineering consultant made the following recommendations with respect to tree removal and vegetation management from a slope stability perspective:

- If tree root systems are to be removed from the dike slope surfaces, the resulting cavities are to be appropriately restored prior to re-vegetating the slopes and/or placing surficial erosion protection measures. The backfill of cavities created by the removal of tree roots should generally include key-in excavations into the existing dike to ensure that new backfill material is placed on horizontal, stepped surfaces and that no pre-determined surficial sloughing/failure planes are created in the backfill areas.
- Backfill material imported to restore cavities in the dike created by the removal of vegetation, and to regrade dike slope surfaces during re-vegetation works, should be similar in composition and plasticity to the existing embankment fill material. Cambium can assist in providing backfill and compaction recommendations during future project phases upon request, based on representative laboratory test results for both the existing dike fill material (as obtained from a geotechnical investigation) and for material proposed to be imported for backfill/regrading purposes.
- It is recommended to confirm excavation requirements for key-in excavations extending into the dike slopes based on the results of a geotechnical investigation. At minimum, a geotechnical engineer should be retained during any

excavation works to provide guidance on maximum slope inclinations and key-in excavation geometry from a slope stability perspective.

- The removal of vegetation is generally unfavourable from a slope stability and erosion protection perspective, as such, provisions should be made to re-vegetate slopes as soon as possible following removal of undesired vegetation. The amount of time that slope surfaces are in an unvegetated/bare state should be limited. As such, consideration should be given to conducting vegetation removal works during periods in which re-vegetation (i.e., seeding and subsequent growth of grass/planted vegetation) can reasonably occur in short order. To avoid erosive effects due to high water levels in the river, vegetation removal and subsequent re-vegetation work should be conducted during seasons where river water levels are expected to be lower, and vegetation removal should not be conducted where high flow volumes in the river are expected to occur shortly following the work.

Staff Report: 07-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer (CA0)

SUBJECT: Final Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Cost Apportioning Agreement Programs and Services for Legislative Compliance

---

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive and approve Staff Report No. 07-02-24-BOD regarding the Final of MOU Cost Apportioning Agreement Programs and Services and;

FURTHER THAT: the CAO will provide final changes to this staff report and the final transition report (attached) concerning Springwater and Oro-Medonte MOUs for the Chair's approval prior to the March 31, 2024 submission to the Minister and Office of the MNRF.

Purpose of the Staff Report

This Staff Report provides the Board with a final report on the Inventory of Programs and Services (IP&S) 2024.

Background

The Conservation Authorities Act recent regulatory changes require the NVCA to prepare Transition Plans outlining steps and timelines for the preparation of an IP&S and for the development and execution of funding agreements with participating municipalities.

On December 5, 2020 the Conservation Authorities Act was amended. This was followed by three new regulations on October 1, 2021. These changes require Conservation Authorities (CAs) to:

- Complete a Transition Plan by December 31, 2021
- Complete a Program Inventory by February 28, 2022
- Complete Cost Apportioning Agreements by January 1, 2024

Transition Plans require conservation authorities to:

- Outline the timeline and steps they will follow to prepare a program inventory and enter into cost apportioning agreements with participating municipalities Program

Inventories then require conservation authorities to:
List their current programs and services

- Categorize their programs and services into three categories
  o Category 1 – prescribed as mandatory by the province
  o Category 2 – delivered on behalf of municipalities
  o Category 3 – those that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources
- Identify the cost of delivering each program and service
- Identify the revenue source(s) of each program and service Cost-Apportioning

Agreements then require conservation authorities to:

- Enter into cost apportionment agreements with participating municipalities for any category 2 or 3 programs that are support by municipal levy.

Issues/Analysis/Activity

All Municipal Partners are supportive of either an MOU or a Cost Apportionment Agreement between the municipality and the NVCA.

- Adjala-Tosorontio executed and signed
- Grey Highland executed and signed
- Mono executed and signed
- Amaranth executed and signed
- Shelburne executed and signed
- Melancthon executed and signed
- New Tecumseth executed and signed
- Innisfil Approved executed and signed
- Bradford West Gwillimbury executed and signed
- Collingwood executed and signed
- Wasaga Beach executed and signed
- Essa executed and signed
- Mulmur executed and signed

- Barrie executed and signed
- Town of Blue Mountains executed and signed
- Clearview Cost Apportionment Agreement approved with Clerk to be signed
- Oro-Medonte Indicated Support to date; to be executed March 28
- Springwater Indicated Support to date; before Council March 20, 2024

Attached, please find our letter to Minister Smith (MNRF) confirming completion of the 18 MOU/Cost Apportionment Agreements with our municipal partners.

Also, attached is a copy of the Final Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Inventory of Programs and Services showing average annual costs from 2017-2021.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The NVCA and all 18 participating municipal partners should be compliant with the recent changes to the CA Act by March 31, 2024.

Impact on Authority Finances

Costs will follow as prescribed in our 2024 NVCA Budget for Category One, Category 2 and Category 3 operational and capital costs.

Each year, the costs will be as prescribed in the yearly annual budget associated with the Board approved programs and services shown in the pdf attachment provided with this staff report.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in green house gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Reviewed Approved for submission *and Signed by:*
Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer

Nottawasaga Valley
Conservation Authority

March 31, 2024
The Honourable Brandon Smith,
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF)
5th Floor 99 Wellesley St.,
Toronto, ON M7A 1W3

Toronto, ON, M7A 2J3

SUBJECT: Final Transition Report for Submission to Ministry Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) from the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA)

Purpose of this Document

The *Conservation Authorities Act* requires conservation authorities to prepare Transition Plans outlining steps and timelines for the preparation of an Inventory of Program and Services and for the development and execution of funding agreements with participating municipalities.

The passage of Regulation 687/21 "Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services Under Section 21.1.2 of the Act" requires the development of Transition Plans by each Conservation Authority. The Transition Plans are to outline the process and timelines for the development of cost apportioning agreements with municipalities within their jurisdiction for non-mandated programs and services.

The NVCA Transition Plan set out the process and timelines for the development and execution of memorandum of understandings MOU/Cost Apportionment Agreements between NVCA and Municipal Partners located in Simcoe, Dufferin and Grey Counties enabling funding of board approved program and services that are not deemed to be provincially mandatory core services outlined in the *Conservation Authorities Act* and associated regulations.

Workplan

NVCA staff reviewed the Regulatory Proposal Consultation Guide released by MECP on May 13, 2021, which included discussion with the board of directors to provide initial information on the proposed changes to the Act and the regulatory consultation guide.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
8195 8th Line, Utopia, ON L0M 1T0
T: 705-424-1479
admin@nvca.on.ca ● nvca.on.ca

Phase 1 Part 1 Workplan

The following workplan laid out steps to taken by NVCA and the associated timelines to develop and enter into funding agreements with the Municipal Partners for non-mandatory programs and services at the request of a municipality with municipal funding through a MOU and programs and services an authority determines are advisable where municipal funding is needed.

With the final Phase 1 regulations released from MECP on October 7, 2021, NVCA staff has developed a Transition Plan based on the transition period and requirements provided by MECP.

This Original Transition Plan was completed and submitted on time (December 31, 2021) and was distributed to Minister Piccini, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and to NVCA member CAOs of the 18-municipalities within our watershed.

Prior to this distribution, the NVCA Board of Directors received and approved the plan noted approval below:

Staff Report No. 46-10-21-BOD from Doug Hevenor, Chief Administrative Officer regarding Transition Plan for Submission to Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP). RES: 67-21

Moved by: Cllr. Shirley Boxem
Seconded by: Cllr. Rob Nicol
RESOLVED THAT: *Staff Report No. 46-10-21-BOD regarding the Transition Plan for the MECP in accordance with Section 21.1.4 of the Conservation Authorities Act be approved for submission by the Board of Directors. Carried November 26, 2021.*
Carried;

The Transition Plan was circulated to the Minister MECP, all 18-Municipal Partners and posted on the NVCA website before November 29, 2021.

Part 2 Phase 1 Inventory of Programs and Services

NVCA utilized Conservation Ontario template to complete inventory of programs and services which was required to be completed by February 28, 2022, then circulated to member municipalities and posted on the NVCA website.

Prior to this distribution, the NVCA Board of Directors received and approved the inventory. The inventory of programs and services were each classified as either:

- Category 1 Mandatory,
- Category 2 Municipal or
- Category 3 Other.

These categories were identified in Section 21 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

The original inventory included an estimate of the annual cost of the service, sources of funding and the percentage attributed to each funding source. In addition, a record of the municipal distribution of the inventory was forwarded to the MECP. No changes were made to the inventory after February 28, 2022.

Transition Plan

Timeline	Action	Status
October 2021	Review existing MOUs and Agreements to set the stage for future budget submissions, timing of subsequent meetings, preliminary concerns with deadlines	Completed
October 25-November 10, 2021	Development of Transition Plan	Completed
November 26, 2021	Presentation of Transition Plan to NVCA Board (*Staff Report No. 46-10-21-BOD)*	Completed 11/26/21
December 1, 2021	Submission of Transition Plan to Ministry of Environment and Conservation and Parks (MECP) and Municipal Partners	Completed 12/01/2021
December 1, 2021	Post Transition Plan on NVCAs website	Completed 11/29/2021

Phase 1 of Transition Period

Timeline	Action	Status
September 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022	Development of Inventory of Program and Services - identification of category classification, funding sources, using average annual costs 2017-2021	Completed
January 1, 2022 - February 18 2022	Ongoing work to complete Inventory including co-ordination/consultation with adjacent CAs and Municipal Partners as required	Completed
February 25, 2022	Presentation of Inventory of Program and Services to NVCA Board	Completed
February 28, 2022	Submit Inventory of Programs and Services and record of consultation to MECP and Partner Municipalities	Submitted February 28, 2022

Phase 2 of the Transition Period

Timeline	Action	Status
March 2022 - June 2023	Ongoing discussions with Municipal Partners regarding timing, form, and content of MOUs/agreements	Completed

July 1, 2022	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
October 1, 2022	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
January 1, 2023	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
April 1, 2023	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
July 1, 2023	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
October 1, 2023	Submit Progress Report to MECP	Completed on time
June 2023	NVCA Board approval of 2024 preliminary levy submission	Completed on time
September/November 2023	NVCA Board endorsement of Funding MOU/agreement and 2024 levy submission	Completed on time
November/December 2023	Municipal Partners Approval of MOU/ Cost Apportionment Agreement	Not completed
January/March 31 2024	Extension Granted by MNRF to completed Municipal Partners Approval of MOU/Cost Apportionment Agreement	Completed Posted on NVCA website

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The Plan has allowed NVCA Staff to complete the associated body of work allowing the organization to become fully compliant under the CA Act by March 31, 2024.

Impact on Authority Finances

The 2024 Budget has accommodated all of the necessary legislative changes culminating with a 2024 budget that is fully compliant to the recent regulatory changes.

Original Signed and approved by:

Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer/
Secretary Treasurer

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
Inventory of Programs and Services

CATEGORY 1

Natural Hazard Management Program

Program Description: Conservation Authorities (CAs) are the lead provincial agencies on Natural Hazard issues. The goal is to protect life and property from flooding and erosion. This watershed-wide, comprehensive program includes development applications and permits, municipal plan input and review, environmental planning and policy, flood forecast and warning, flood and erosion control infrastructure, technical studies, ice management, education, and public awareness.

Category 1

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
Section 28.1 Permit Administration and compliance activities	Respond to property inquiries. Reviewing and processing of permit applications and associated technical reports under O.Reg., 172/06, site inspections to confirm compliance, communication with applicants, agents, consultants, and legal representatives.	CA Act Reg. 686/21 s.8
Municipal Plan Input and Review	Provide technical input and advice to municipalities on circulated municipal land use planning applications (Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, Subdivisions, Consents, Minor Variances). Provide input into municipal land-use planning documents (OP, Comprehensive ZB, Secondary plans) related to natural hazards, on behalf of Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), delegated to CAs in 1995 and as outlined the 2001 MOU between MNRF, Ministry Municipal Affairs and Housing and Conservation Ontario. Provide input into the review and approval processes under other applicable law, with comments principally related to natural hazards, wetlands, watercourses, and Sec. 28 permit requirements.	CA Act O. Reg. 686/21 s.6/7
Flood & Low Water Forecasting and Warning	Daily data collection and monitoring of weather forecasts, provincial and local water level forecasts, watershed conditions, snow course, flood event	CA Act 21.1

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
	forecasting, flood warning, communications and response and equipment maintenance. Annual meeting with municipal flood emergency coordinator. Low water conditions monitoring and analysis. Technical and administrative support to the Water Response Team representing major water users and decision makers, who recommend drought response actions. Data collection, mapping, data sets, watershed photography. Development and use of systems to collect and store data and to provide spatial geographical representations of data.	O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 2 Sec 3
Flood and Erosion Control Infrastructure Operation and Management	Flood and erosion control infrastructure operations. (routine activities related to the operation of the structures). Includes five flood control projects and 13 erosion control projects that are annually inspected, and routine maintenance work completed.	CA Act 21.1 O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 2 Sec 5
Flood and Erosion Control Infrastructure Major Maintenance	Routine and preventative maintenance on flood and erosion control structures as required. Projects are eligible for the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) funding from the province.	CA Act 21.1 O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 5
Ice Management Services	Preventative measures associated with the control of ice in areas where there is a chronic problem occurring annually, where there is an increase in the risk to life and property and where there is a method to reduce the possible adverse effects of the ice. The Ice Management Plan is being updated.	CA Act 21.1 O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 4
Technical Studies and Policy Review	Studies and projects to inform natural hazards management programs including floodplain management, watershed hydrology, regulations areas mapping update, flood forecasting system assessment, floodplain policy, Georgian Bay shoreline management. These projects often last one to two years and are distributed over time as human resources and funding is available.	CA Act 21.1 O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 1
Natural Hazards Communications,	Promoting public awareness of natural hazards including flooding, drought, and erosion. Public events, materials. Social media services. Media relations.	CA Act 21.1

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Outreach and Education		O. Reg. 686/21 Sec 1(2)(3

Provincial Water Quality & Quantity Monitoring

Program Description: The NVCA, in partnership with Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Parks (MECP), has established long term sites to monitor surface and ground water conditions.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN)	A long-standing (50+ year) CA/MECP partnership for stream water quality monitoring at 18 sites. CA takes water samples and MECP does lab analysis and data management. Information is used for watershed report cards and stewardship project prioritization.	CA Act 21.1.1 O. Reg. 686/21 12 (1) 2
Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN)	A long-standing CA/MECP partnership for groundwater level and quality monitoring at 16 stations. Costs include equipment, data collection, analysis, data management and reporting. MECP funded network installation and continues to fund equipment replacements. Data collected supports flood forecast and warning, low water response, and water quality monitoring.	CA Act 21.1.1 O. Reg. 686/21 12 (1) 1

Drinking Water Source Protection

Program Description: The protection of municipal drinking water supplies in the NVCA through the development and implementation of the Source Protection Plans.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP)	Source Protection Area/Region, technical support, Source Protections Committee support, Source Protection Authority reports and meetings. Activities required by the Clean Water Act and regulations.	CA Act 21.1.1

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
		O.Reg. 686/21 Sec. 13

Natural Heritage

Program Description: The NVCA completes natural heritage monitoring, delineation of natural heritage systems, data analysis and wetland regulation mapping to support municipalities, other NVCA departments and inter-agency and NGO partnerships.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Wetland & Natural Heritage Evaluations	Complete wetland evaluations and natural heritage evaluations of NVCA properties.	CA Act 21.1.1
Wetland Regulation Mapping	Maintain and update NVCA wetland regulation mapping.	CA Act 21.1.1

Conservation Authority Lands and Conservation Areas

Program Description: NVCA owns 5,240 hectares of land which includes conservation areas, management areas, conservation forests, farmland and flood control structures and surrounding land. NVCA property is essential to watershed management, environmental protection, helps implement the Watershed Management Strategy and provides areas for passive recreation.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Section 29 Minister's regulation for Conservation Areas	Undertake Conservation areas regulations enforcement and compliance initiatives within Conservation areas to prevent unlawful activity and protect the Authority from exposure to liability under the *Occupiers' Liability Act*.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 28(1)(d); 28(1)(e); 29(1)
NVCA forests and management areas (not Conservation Areas)	Management and maintenance of CA owned lands. Includes forest management, signage, gates, passive recreation, stewardship/ restoration, carrying costs such as taxes and insurance.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 27(1); 29(1)
Conservation Areas	Management and maintenance of 11 conservation areas and over 30km of recreational trails. Includes passive recreation, risk management program, hazard tree management, gates, fencing, signage, brochures, communications, pedestrian bridges, trails, parking lots, picnic tables, pavilions, roadways, stewardship/ restoration, carrying costs such as taxes and insurance.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 27(1); 29(1)
Conservation Area Major Maintenance	Major maintenance and capital improvements to support public access, safety, and environmental protection such as parking lots, pedestrian bridges, boardwalks, trails.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 25(1); 27(1)
Inventory of Conservation Authority lands	The land inventory will include the following information: location as well as date, method and purpose of acquisition, land use. One time project with updates as properties are acquired or disposed of and details of agreement and/or tax programs (if applicable) (MFTIP, CLTIP).	CA Act 21.1(1)(i)
Strategy for CA owned or controlled lands and management plans	This strategy will include the management and use of CA-owned or controlled properties including guiding principles, objectives, land use, natural heritage, classifications of lands, mapping, identification of programs and services on the lands, public consultation, publish on website. One-Year Project.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i)
Land Acquisition and Disposition Strategy	A policy to guide the acquisition and disposition of land in order to fulfill the objects of the authority. Current Land Securement Strategy runs from 2020 to 2030.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i)

Watershed Stewardship and Restoration (Urban, rural & agricultural)

Program Description: The stewardship and restoration program has three key components: one-on-one technical and financial assistance to watershed landowners, coordination of target river restoration initiatives based on watershed science, and the reforestation program. Projects reduce the risk to life and property from natural hazards, protect water quality and quantity, improve forest conditions, increase biodiversity and make the watersheds more resilient to climate change.

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
CA owned Land Stewardship Program	Work to mitigate flood and erosion hazards, protect water quality, restore floodplains, reduce nutrient contamination, restore wetlands, manage non-native invasive species, protect groundwater, improve aquatic species at risk habitat and promote climate change mitigation and adaptation on CA owned lands. Coordinate targeted river restoration and fish habitat improvement initiatives using information generated by the Watershed Science department to identify priority sites and restoration techniques.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)

Enabling Services:

Program Description: Key assistance provided to all departments of the conservation authority, board of directors, member municipalities and the general public to enable the NVCA to operate in an accountable, efficient and effective manner.

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
Corporate Services	Administrative, human resources, financial, operating and capital costs which are not directly related to the delivery of any specific program or service, but are the overhead and support costs of a conservation authority. Includes health and safety program, overseeing programs and policies.	CA Act 20
Financial Services	Annual budget, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, financial analysis, financial audit, administration of reserves and investments, financial reports for funding agencies, preparing, and submitting reports to CRA, benefits program administration.	CA Act 20
Legal Expenses	Costs related to agreements/contracts, administrative by-law updates.	CA Act 20

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Governance	Supporting CA Boards, Advisory Committees, Office of CAO and Senior Management.	CA Act Part IV
Communications and Outreach	Informing public of NVCA programs and projects through media, open houses, public meetings, website administration, responding to inquiries from the public, crisis communications.	CA Act 20
Administration Buildings	Office buildings and workshop used to support NVCA staff, programs, and services. Includes utilities, routine and major maintenance, property taxes.	CA Act 20
Information Technology Management/GIS	Data management, records retention. Development and use of systems to collect and store data and to provide spatial geographical representations of data.	CA Act 20
Vehicle and Equipment	A fleet of vehicles and equipment to support the work of the NVCA, including capital purchases, fuel, licenses, repairs, and maintenance. Programs and projects are charged for the use of the vehicles and equipment.	CA Act CA Act 20
ALL	Asset Management Services.	CA Act 25/26

CATEGORY 2

Drinking Water Source Protection

Program Description: The protection of municipal drinking water supplies in the NVCA through the development and implementation of the Source Protection Plans.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
DWSP Risk Management Official	Carrying out Part IV duties of the Clean Water Act on behalf of municipalities through service agreements.	CA Act 21.1.1

Conservation Authority Lands and Conservation Areas

Program Description: NVCA owns 5,240 hectares of land which includes conservation areas, management areas, conservation forests, farmland and flood control structures and surrounding land. NVCA property is essential to watershed management, environmental protection, helps implement the Watershed Management Strategy and provides areas for passive recreation.

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
Tottenham Conservation Area	Long-term lease with municipal partner to operate a campground and associated facilities at Tottenham Conservation Area.	CA Act Non-passive recreation 21.1.1(1)(4); 29(1)
Riverdale Park	Long-term lease with municipal partner for the management of Riverdale Park.	CA Act/ Passive Recreation 21.1.1(1)(4); 29(1)

CATEGORY 3

Local Water Quality Monitoring

Program Description: The NVCA, in partnership with community organizations, municipalities, and federal and provincial agencies has established sites to monitor surface water quality and quantity.

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
Surface Water Quality/ Stream Health Monitoring Program	Surface water quality monitoring for Benthic macroinvertebrates at an average of 65 sites per year, water temperature monitoring at an average of 57 sites per year, electrofishing at an average of 20 sites per year, and around 100 sites per year for flows. Responding to local spills events at the request of MECP. Costs include sampling, analysis, and reporting.	CA Act 21.1 (a)

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Simcoe Groundwater monitoring program	In partnership with the OGS the NVCA monitors groundwater level and quality at 29 locations. Costs include equipment, data collection, analysis, data management and reporting.	CA Act 21.1 (a)
Watershed Report Card	Conservation Authorities report on local watershed conditions every five years, led by Conservation Ontario's Watershed Report Cards. The NVCA watershed is divided into 9 subwatersheds. Measuring increases understanding of the watershed, focuses efforts and tracks progress.	CA Act 21.1 (a)

Natural Heritage

Program Description: The NVCA completes natural heritage monitoring, delineation of natural heritage systems, data analysis and wetland regulation mapping to support municipalities, other NVCA departments and inter-agency and NGO partnerships.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Natural Heritage Systems	Development of natural heritage systems supporting watershed management objectives. Field based monitoring of terrestrial flora and fauna including bird monitoring and invasive species and species at risk.	CA Act 21.1 (a)

Conservation Authority Lands and Conservation Areas

Program Description: NVCA owns 5,240 hectares of land which includes conservation areas, management areas, conservation forests, farmland and flood control structures and surrounding land. NVCA property is essential to watershed management, environmental protection, helps implement the Watershed Management Strategy and provides areas for passive recreation.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
New Lowell Campground	Long-term lease with a private party to operate a campground and associated facilities at New Lowell Conservation Area.	CA Act Non-passive recreation 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Utopia Conservation Area	Short-term lease (5-year) with community partner for management of the Utopia Conservation Area.	CA Act Passive recreation 21.1(1)(i); 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Beeton Creek Property	Short-term lease (5-year) with community partner to lease residence.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Mayer's Marsh	Agricultural lease (annual).	CA Act 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Petun Conservation Area	Short-term lease (5-year) with community partner to lease portions of the property for fish hatchery operations.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Utopia Conservation Area	Short-term lease for commercial access through the Utopia Conservation Area.	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Black Ash Creek	Formalized agreement for commercial access through Black Ash Creek (NVCA-owned property).	CA Act 21.1(1)(i); 21.1.2 (1); 29(1)
Land acquisition	Strategic acquisition of environmentally significant properties as per NVCA's 2020 Land Securement Strategy.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)
Events	Includes weddings, corporate events, private gatherings, etc.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Festivals	Includes public events (ex. Spring Tonic, Festival at the Fort, etc.).	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)

Watershed Stewardship and Restoration (Urban, rural & agricultural)

Program Description: The stewardship and restoration program has three key components: one-on-one technical and financial assistance to watershed landowners, coordination of target river restoration initiatives based on watershed science, and the reforestation program. Projects reduce the risk to life and property from natural hazards, protect water quality and quantity, improve forest conditions, increase biodiversity and make the watersheds more resilient to climate change.

Program/Service and Subservices	Description	Category Rationale
Private Land Stewardship Program	Work with property owners and environmental groups to mitigate flood and erosion hazards, protect water quality, restore floodplains, reduce nutrient contamination, restore wetlands, manage non-native invasive species, protect groundwater, improve aquatic species at risk habitat and promote climate change mitigation and adaptation. Coordinate targeted river restoration and fish habitat improvement initiatives using information generated by the Watershed Science department to identify priority sites and restoration techniques. Apply for and manage external funding, promote private land stewardship, provide technical advice and design support and funding assistance.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)
Tree Planting and Forestry Services on Private Land	Forestry services including planting plan development, site preparation, tree and shrub planting, and survival assessments. Private woodlot stewardship, technical assistance, link to funding programs to maintain form and function of watershed forest cover.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1

Conservation Education and Community Outreach

Program Description: Education and outreach programs increase knowledge and awareness in children and adults about local environmental issues, watersheds and ecosystems and conservation actions they can implement.

Program/Service and Subservices	**Description**	**Category Rationale**
School programs	Curriculum-based education programs for pre-school, elementary and secondary students. These programs focus on local watersheds, ecosystems, and environmental issues. Programs take place in school yards, schools, field trips to conservation areas, community parks and through online learning opportunities.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)
Community programs and events	Education, day camp, outreach programs and community events to assist in achieving the objectives of the conservation authority. Some of these programs are open to people of all ages.	CA Act 21.1.2 (1)

Staff Report: 08-02-24-BOD

Date: 22/03/2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Maria Leung
Senior Communications Specialist

SUBJECT: Communications Report – January 14, 2024 – March 8, 2024

Recommendation

RESOLVED THAT: Staff Report No. 08-02-24-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – January 14, 2024 – March 8, 2024, be received.

Purpose of the Staff Report
This staff report presents a summary of NVCA media coverage and public outreach during the period of November 25, 2023 – January 12, 2024.

The following outlines the communications and media coverage during the period.

1. Flood Messages

Watershed Condition Statement: Flood Watch, issued on January 15, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date
FLOOD WATCH ISSUED BY NVCA	Barrie 360	January 15, 2024
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issues flood watch	Barrie Advance	January 16, 2024
Conservation authority says watch for flooding due to 'frazil ice'	Barrie Today	January 16, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date
A flood watch in winter? NVCA issues warning as ice accumulates	Bradford Today	January 16, 2024
Cold nights could bring frazil ice and flooding: conservation authority	Collingwood Today	January 16, 2024
Flood Watch Issued	FM 101 Milton	January 16, 2024
A flood watch in winter? NVCA issues warning as ice accumulates	Innisfil Today	January 16, 2024
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issues winter safety message	New Tecumseth Times	January 25, 2024

Spring Safety: Be careful near waterways, issued on March 6, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date
Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA	Barrie Today	March 6, 2024
NVCA Warns Public to Steer Clear of Waterways Amid Spring Thaw Hazards	BNN Breaking News	March 6, 2024
Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA	Bradford Today	March 6, 2024
Conservation Authority urges caution around waterways during thaws	Collingwood Today	March 6, 2024
Water Unsafe with Melting Snow and Ice	Country 105	March 6, 2024
Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring	CTV Barrie	March 6, 2024
Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring	iHeart Radio	March 6, 2024
Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA	Innisfil Today	March 6, 2024
Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring	Pure Country 106	March 6, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date
Stay Away From the Water	FM 101 Milton	March 7, 2024

2. Media coverage of NVCA news releases

Column: Knowledge is our best tool for protecting cold water streams, issued on January 19, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams	Barrie Today	January 22, 2024	Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science
COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams	Bradford Today	January 22, 2024	Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science
COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams	Collingwood Today	January 22, 2024	Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science
COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams	Innisfil Today	January 22, 2024	Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science
COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams	Orillia Matters	January 22, 2024	Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science

Gail Little and Jonathan Scott continue to lead NVCA Board of Directors, issued on January 29, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
Gail Little and Jonathan Scott continue to lead NVCA Board of Directors	Aware Simcoe	January 29, 2024	Chair Little Vice Chair Scott
Bradford councillor appointed vice chair of NVCA	Bradford Today	January 29, 2024	Chair Little Vice Chair Scott
Gail Little and Jonathan Scott continue to lead NVCA Board of Directors	Simcoe & Main	January 29, 2024	Chair Little Vice Chair Scott

NVCA and the Township of Clearview launch public consultation on Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study, issued on February 15, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
NVCA and Clearview Township launch public consultation on Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study	Stayner – Wasaga Beach Sun	February 21, 2024	CAO Hevenor
Flood mapping update will inform planning decisions	Creemore Echo	February 23, 2024	CAO Hevenor

Column: Forecasting flood risks with snow surveys, issued on February 28, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk	Barrie Today	February 29, 2024	Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist
COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk	Collingwood Today	February 29, 2024	Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist
COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk	Innisfil Today	February 29, 2024	Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist
Conservation authorities survey snow to forecast flood risk	Midland Today	February 29, 2024	Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist
COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk	Orillia Matters	February 29, 2024	Taryn Arsenault, Flood Operations Field Specialist

Residents reminded to stay away from Pretty River Dike maintenance work, issued on March 4, 2024

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
Stay clear of Pretty River Dike this month while crews clear shrubs, small trees	Collingwood Today	March 4, 2024	Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services

All other media releases can be found on NVCA website under "News."

3. Other Media Coverage

Title	Media Outlet	Date	Reference
Restoring Ontario's lost grasslands is as important as planting trees	The Narwhal	January 16, 2024	Shannon Stephens, Healthy Waters Coordinator
Spring melt makes local waterways dangerous: Conservation Halton	Flamborough Today	March 1, 2024	
Ontario weakens watershed protections (again) as natural resources minister gets new powers	Fatima Syed	March 7, 2024	CAO Hevenor
Mapping helps partners understand flood risks	Creemore Echo	March 8, 2024	Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services

DISCLAIMER: NVCA does not allege that the information provided in the media articles depicts accurate statements or testimonies on behalf of any individual named, and is not responsible for any misinterpretation of information or misquoted statement(s).

2. Other Communication/Media Outreach

- Ongoing – social media outreach (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)

3. Presentations/Displays/Key Events by NVCA staff

- January 25, 2024 – Laura Wensink, River Restoration Technician gave a present about the Nottawasaga River Restoration Project (NRRP) to the South Simcoe Streams Network.
- February 21, 2024 – Laura Wensink gave a presentation to Headwater Streams Committee about 2022-2023 Coldwater fish study and upcoming project collaboration.
- February 22, 2024 – Elopement Giveaway at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation.
- February 26, 2024 – Laura Wensink and Fred Dobbs, Manager, Stewardship Services delivered project proposal presentation to Friends of the Mad River.
- February 28, 2024 – CAO Hevenor and Rick Grillmayer, Manager, Forestry attended the Forests Ontario annual conference.
- February 29, 2024 – Laura Wensink gave a presentation about the Nottawasaga River Restoration Project to the South Simcoe Streams Network.

Issues/Analysis

The media coverage and public outreach/communications in this reporting period was positive with regard to NVCA work and programs. There are no issues of concern at this time.

Impact on Authority Finances

Staff time to prepare this report is addressed in the 2024 budget.

Climate Change Implications

This staff report does not result in an increase in green house gases, temperature or precipitation exposure.

Reviewed by:
Original Signed by
Sheryl Flannagan
Director, Corporate Services

Approved for submission by:
Original Signed by
Doug Hevenor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment 1 – Media Clippings for the period

FLOOD WATCH ISSUED BY NVCA

January 15, 2024

Barrie 360

News release – Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Flood Potential: Moderate

Ice Jam Potential: Moderate

Weather Conditions

The weather forecast is calling for the low air temperature, as low as -20°C overnight, during the next five days. The sustained westerly winds in the range of 25-30 km/hour are also expected, producing wind chill temperatures of -20 to -30°C.

Many of the watercourses within the NVCA are currently experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week's rainfall and still do not have an established ice cover.

Issues

Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18°C can trigger the formation of frazil ice. This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise. Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur.

Actions

Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should be on alert and are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for frazil ice generation, and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all waterbodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all waterbodies.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority continues to monitor river and stream conditions and will issue additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4:00 p.m., Friday January 19, 2024.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issues flood watch

Cold weather, rainfall and lack of ice cover means many area watercourses are experiencing elevated flows.

January 16, 2024

Barrie Advance

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has issued a flood watch for areas under its jurisdiction.

With the weather forecast calling for temperatures as low as -20 C overnight this week, and wind chill temperatures between -20 to -30 C, the NVCA is warning that many local watercourses are experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week's rainfall and the lack of established ice cover.

"Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18 C can trigger the formation of frazil ice," the NVCA said in an advisory. "This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise. Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur."

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issued a flood watch on Jan. 15.

NVCA

Municipalities, emergency services and landowners in flood-prone areas should be vigilant and watch for frazil ice generation and fluctuating water levels and take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding, the NVCA said.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all water bodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all water bodies.

The NVCA continues to monitor river and stream conditions and will issue additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 19, 2024.

Conservation authority says watch for flooding due to 'frazil ice'

NVCA says frazil ice can accumulate rapidly on bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing water flow

January 16, 2024

Barrie Today

Where a frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur, NVCA says / File photo

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issued a flood watch on Monday due to the potential for ice accumulation on local waterways that could obstruct water flow.

In a news release, the NVCA noted the weather forecast is calling for temperatures as low as -20°C overnight over the next five days.

Sustained westerly winds in the range of 25-30 km/hr are also expected, producing wind chill temperatures of -20 to -30°C.

"Many of the watercourses within the NVCA are currently experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week’s rainfall and still do not have an established ice cover," the release states.

Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18°C can trigger the formation of frazil ice, the NVCA said.

"This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise," according to the conservation authority.

"Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur."

Frazil ice typically forms as chunks in cold water but doesn't attach to a bank, so it flows with the river and can jam in sections of the river, causing the water to overflow.

The NVCA said municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should be on alert and are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for frazil ice generation, and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all water bodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all water bodies.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority continues to monitor river and stream conditions and will issue

additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4 p.m. Friday.

For additional information, go to www.nvca.on.ca.

A flood watch in winter? NVCA issues warning as ice accumulates

NVCA says frazil ice can accumulate rapidly on bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing water flow

January 16, 2024

Bradford Today

Where a frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur, NVCA says / File photo

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issued a flood watch on Monday due to the potential for ice accumulation on local waterways that could obstruct water flow.

In a news release, the NVCA noted the weather forecast is calling for temperatures as low as -20°C overnight over the next five days.

Sustained westerly winds in the range of 25-30 km/hr are also expected, producing wind chill temperatures of -20 to -30°C.

"Many of the watercourses within the NVCA are currently experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week’s rainfall and still do not have an established ice cover," the release states.

Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18°C can trigger the formation of frazil ice, the NVCA said.

"This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise," according to the conservation authority.

"Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur."

Frazil ice typically forms as chunks in cold water but doesn't attach to a bank, so it flows with the river and can jam in sections of the river, causing the water to overflow.

The NVCA said municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should be on alert and are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for frazil ice generation, and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all water bodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all water bodies.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority continues to monitor river and stream conditions and will issue

additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4 p.m. Friday.

For additional information, go to www.nvca.on.ca.

Cold nights could bring frazil ice and flooding: conservation authority

NVCA says frazil ice can accumulate rapidly on bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing water flow

January 16, 2024

Collingwood Today

Where a frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur, NVCA says / File photo

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issued a flood watch on Monday due to the potential for ice accumulation on local waterways that could obstruct water flow.

In a news release, the NVCA noted the weather forecast is calling for temperatures as low as -20°C overnight over the next five days.

Sustained westerly winds in the range of 25-30 km/hr are also expected, producing wind chill temperatures of -20 to -30°C.

"Many of the watercourses within the NVCA are currently experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week's rainfall and still do not have an established ice cover," the release states.

Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18°C can trigger the formation of frazil ice, the NVCA said.

"This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise," according to the conservation authority.

"Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur."

Frazil ice typically forms as chunks in cold water but doesn't attach to a bank, so it flows with the river and can jam in sections of the river, causing the water to overflow.

The NVCA said municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should be on alert and are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for frazil ice generation, and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all water bodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all water bodies.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority continues to monitor river

and stream conditions and will issue additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4 p.m. Friday.

For additional information, go to www.nvca.on.ca.

Flood Watch Issued

January 16, 2024 by Adrianne Proceviat

FM 101 Milton

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority is advising that a flood watch has been issued for the area.

Environment Canada is calling for extremely low temperatures over the next couple of days along with gusty winds.

The NVCA indicates that many of the local watercourses are experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week's rainfall and do not have an established ice cover.

The rapid freezing of fast moving water can accumulate quickly on structures in the water such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow and causing the
level to rise….Leading to flooding upstream.

Municipalities, emergency services and individuals in flood-prone areas are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for ice jams and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damage due to potential flooding.

Residents are also advised to keep children and pets away from all bodies of water at this time, as it is very cold, there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls in.

For more information

A flood watch in winter? NVCA issues warning as ice accumulates

NVCA says frazil ice can accumulate rapidly on bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing water flow

January 16, 2024

Innisfil Today

Where a frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur, NVCA says / File photo

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issued a flood watch on Monday due to the potential for ice accumulation on local waterways that could obstruct water flow.

In a news release, the NVCA noted the weather forecast is calling for temperatures as low as -20°C overnight over the next five days.

Sustained westerly winds in the range of 25-30 km/hr are also expected, producing wind chill temperatures of -20 to -30°C.

"Many of the watercourses within the NVCA are currently experiencing elevated flows as a result of last week's rainfall and still do not have an established ice cover," the release states.

Lack of ice cover, turbulent flows and exposure of the water surface to air temperatures below -18°C can trigger the formation of frazil ice, the NVCA said.

"This type of ice can accumulate rapidly on water structures such as bridge abutments, piers, riverbanks, and channels, obstructing the flow of water and causing the water level to rise," according to the conservation authority.

"Where the frazil ice jam forms, elevated water levels and flooding upstream of the jam can occur."

Frazil ice typically forms as chunks in cold water but doesn't attach to a bank, so it flows with the river and can jam in sections of the river, causing the water to overflow.

The NVCA said municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should be on alert and are strongly encouraged to keep a close watch for frazil ice generation, and fluctuating water levels, and to take action to limit or prevent damages due to potential flooding.

Hazardous conditions may exist around all water bodies, as there is a high risk of life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water. The public and especially children are advised to stay away from all water bodies.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority continues to monitor river and stream conditions and will issue

additional messages as conditions warrant. This Flood Watch Statement will be in effect until, or updated before, 4 p.m. Friday.

For additional information, go to www.nvca.on.ca.

Restoring Ontario's lost grasslands is as important as planting trees

Most of the grasslands that once dotted Ontario have been lost to development and agriculture. Bringing back these carbon-rich landscapes would be good for birds, bees, butterflies and people

January 16, 2024 by Emma McIntosh

The Narwhal

Many old farm fields in southern Ontario look a lot like this one, which last November was a vast expanse of waist-high grasses the colour of washed-out gold, rippling in the breeze.

On a sunny, mild late fall day, a few green leaves persisted close to the not-yet frozen ground. Dried-out stems crunched underfoot. Birds called out from the trees surrounding the field while grazing horses looked on from the property next door. Over the fence and down the road were more fields, rolling on and on in the distance. But something made this particular meadow different from the others — the line of people walking through it with bright orange buckets in hand, lifting out handfuls of seeds and allowing the wind to waft them away.

The people scattering seeds were part of a push to transform this former farm field into a tallgrass prairie, a type of habitat that has all but disappeared from southern Ontario. When most people imagine what this region looked like before European settlers cleared land for farming and development, they tend to think of thick forest. Many don't know grasslands were also part of the mosaic of the landscape — meadows, prairies and savannas, maintained by different Indigenous communities and teeming with life.

Grasslands store a ton of carbon, but unlike forests, they mostly hold it underground. The roots of some plants can be several storeys deep below the soil. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

Resurrecting grasslands is good for the increasingly imperiled species who rely on them, like meadowlarks and the rare Karner blue butterfly. Bringing back native plants is even better: they're naturally well-adapted to survive here without human help, and also provide the best food and shelter for native animal species who evolved to rely on them. Prairies and meadows also absorb carbon, storing most of it underground, and soak up floodwater. Plus, when frost melts and wildflowers start popping up in a giant bouquet of leaves and petals, the whole thing looks pretty spectacular.

"Right now everything's brown and going dormant, but if you come here in July and August, that's when the prairies are blooming and just

humming with bees and butterflies," said Shannon Stephens of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, which is leading the effort.

"In the spring, you've got the grassland birds singing."

The three-hectare property is in Shelburne, about an hour and a half's drive from Toronto in an area of Ontario's Greenbelt dotted with provincial parks, nature reserves, rolling hills and farms. A lot of the Greenbelt lies on rich agricultural land, but not this site: a tenant farmer tried to grow crops here for years, but found the soil too acidic, sandy and compacted. So, the landowner asked the conservation authority — an agency overseeing conservation and development in the lands surrounding the nearby Nottawasaga River — for help to do some kind of habitat restoration. Together, they settled on grassland and got to work in 2021.

Although the Shelburne project is young, it's already changed the land. The soil is looser and able to absorb more water, nurturing more native grasses and flowering plants. But the site is still not as lush as Stephens hoped it would be by now — even weeds weren't as big as she'd expected, held back by the acidic soil. "I was like, 'Oh my god, even the weeds are having trouble here,' " she said with a chuckle.

So the conservation authority, with support from World Wildlife Fund Canada's nature and climate grant program and a gaggle of volunteers, went back in November to plant some more.

One hectare at a time, grassland restoration adds up

For millennia before European colonization, Indigenous Peoples in what's now known as North America managed grasslands to keep them healthy, harvesting food and medicines there. Often, communities used fire to renew the ecosystem and encourage new growth. Fire is a part of nature — so are people.

As settlers dispossessed Indigenous nations of the land and started farming and building, however, they often began by clearing meadows and savannas, which are less valued than forests and easier to plough. Many thought of grasslands as an intermediate type of landscape — something that springs up when a forest is cut down or farmland is abandoned, instead of a distinct landscape with its own ecological importance. Somewhere between 75 to 90 per cent of the grasslands that once existed in Canada are now gone, lost to agriculture and development.

Hopefully grassland birds, bees and butterflies might move onto the

Shelburne site where seed scattering took place. It usually takes a few years for a restored tallgrass prairie to really take off. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

Even today, not everyone sees the point of grassland. Just last April, Ontario Premier Doug Ford famously described one piece of the Greenbelt as an "empty field with weeds in it," arguing it should be used for housing instead. But in recent years, Western scientists have started to clue in to something Indigenous Knowledge held true all along: grasslands are vital and humans can be a force for good in keeping them healthy.

More and more, international consensus is pointing to restoring nature, not just conserving what's left, as a vital way to sequester carbon and counteract climate change. And although planting trees tends to be the popular choice for habitat restoration, grasslands have advantages that shouldn't be overlooked. Over the course of many years, they store an enormous amount of carbon in their roots, which extend metres underground. They're hubs of biodiversity, too. Every hectare matters.

"It all adds up," Ryan Godfrey, a botanist with World Wildlife Fund Canada who helped sow seeds at the Shelburne site in November, said. "It has to add up."

The idea of grassland restoration can spread. Stephens has seen landowners become interested after watching a neighbour have their land planted, which is what happened with the Shelburne site. Beyond property lines, this field is connected to the land that surrounds it and the waters flowing through it. Wind and birds carry seeds in all directions. Various conservation organizations, First Nations and environmental groups across Ontario, Canada and even the continent are doing grassland restoration too.

Native wildflower seeds are tiny and difficult to spread evenly. To make them easier to scatter, Shannon Stephens, right, and staff from the local conservation authority mixed them with heaps of oat seeds. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

The oat seeds in the mix die off over the winter, leaving room for native grasses and wildflowers to grow. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

Many people think of spring as the best time to plant seeds, but late fall can be great for species that are adapted to go through a period of cold, wet weather before they sprout. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

Maybe, with enough work and time, a patchwork of restored places can reconnect to form a healthier landscape. A day of sprinkling seeds can seem small, but the ripple effects can grow. "How big? A great question," Godfrey said. "But definitely, definitely way bigger than this. It cascades out."

At the centre, Godfrey said, is the need for many people to fundamentally change the way they see nature and their place in it. Generations of settlers have been taught that nature is something to be fenced off in parks because humans ruin natural places.

"Actually, what we needed to learn was how to touch things in a nicer way," Godfrey said.

In grasslands and beyond, people and landscapes are 'intertwined with each other'

Last fall in Shelburne, the renaturalization team used a technique called overseeding, where people scatter grass and wildflower seeds by hand on top of existing plants, filling in gaps without disturbing what's already in the ground.

Seeds for native plants are often miniscule and, especially for wildflowers, expensive. In the palm of your hand, some look like tiny grains of sand. To make it easier to spread them evenly and maximize their odds of survival, Stephens mixed them with heaps of smooth, oblong oat seeds, which will die off over winter and leave room for the native plants to grow. Row by row and handful by handful, the team emptied their buckets, the sun beaming down.

Many people think of spring as the time for sowing seeds, but Stephens said there's also a window in late fall. Some native species, including plenty of wildflowers, don't just sprout as soon as they're planted: they need to go through a cold, moist period to germinate. Humans can replicate it artificially, but it's easier to let winter do the work.

As the months go by, snow will press the seeds into the ground, getting them ready to sprout in spring. It takes a little while, but once they mature, flowers will start to bloom and the grasses could be nearly two metres tall.

Ryan Godfrey of the World Wildlife Fund Canada says, although grassland restoration project might seem small, it all adds up. Photo: Kevin Lamb / WWF-Canada

"The first couple of years, you don't see much," Stephens said. "It looks pretty weedy to be honest. But then the second year, you start to see some of the wildflowers bloom. Third year, you're usually seeing grasses." Eventually, the team hopes grassland birds — like meadowlarks and bobolinks, both threatened species in Ontario — will take up residence, along with butterflies and native bees.

Meanwhile, magic is happening below the surface. As more plants grow, they add more organic material to the soil, making it looser and better able to support life. Less compact soil also means the ground can absorb more water — a handy quality when rain pours down or snow starts melting — helping to control floodwater and making not just the site but the area around it more resilient to extreme weather events, which are increasing with climate change. Native grasses also have far deeper root systems than crops, making the ground more stable and less susceptible to erosion.

Just like the native grasslands that existed in the region hundreds of years ago, this one will still need care and stewardship in the future. It might need to be burned, mowed or have animals graze on it to replicate the natural processes that would prevent it from becoming overgrown. But if they can do it right, people can sustain the land and the land can help sustain them, too.

"In southern Ontario, there's really not a lot of ecosystem that hasn't had incredible human influence," Stephens said.

"We're so intertwined with each other."

COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams

Data gathered by NVCA help with effective watershed protection

January 22, 2024 by Ian Ockenden

Barrie Today

1 / 3 Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown after the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority removed the Petun Dam. Volunteers installed dogwood stakes to help stabilize the stream bank. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 3 The Petun Dam on Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown before it was removed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The pond supported algae growth and increased summer stream temperatures by 7 degrees Celsius. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 3 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority watershed science staff measure brook trout as part of the monitoring program. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

It’s early morning with the sun still rising, dew on the grass and mist rising off the water.

A sudden splash, lightning-fast reflexes, and another brook trout gets pulled out of the stream. This fish is not destined for the dinner table — it will be counted, measured and weighed before being released back into the stream.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority’s (NVCA) monitoring crew is conducting routine fish sampling of this elusive cold-water species. This work is part of the NVCA watershed science program’s efforts to track the health of sensitive river environments across the watershed.

The data show brook trout in the Nottawasaga River watershed are abundant in several areas, but overall, the number and quality of cold-water

streams are decreasing. Similar results are being felt across southern Ontario, mainly due to the loss of natural habitat, a warming climate, and competition from non-native species all putting stress on brook trout populations.

In the Nottawasaga River watershed, one big culprit is the abundance of on-stream ponds in the Niagara Escarpment and our local moraines on small headwater creeks. These are man-made ponds that are directly connected to a stream. People often think damming and digging a small pond off a natural creek that runs through their property creates a little slice of nature in their backyard and improves the habitat. In reality, it is damaging to our remaining cold-water streams.

Native cold-water fish species, like brook trout, require these cold-water streams and are very sensitive to temperature change, and a small change of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius can often limit local populations or eliminate them entirely. On-stream ponds slow the flow of water and increase the surface area of the waterways, allowing more sunlight to warm the water, increasing the temperature to up to 10 C. This can drastically affect the downstream environment that thrives in colder conditions. The dams built to create online ponds are barriers to fish migration, disrupting their ability to reproduce.

The construction of online ponds is regulated by the NVCA for the protection of groundwater resources and from river hazards, but this regulation has the added benefit of protecting these sensitive cold-water species. Contact the NVCA's regulation program before you do any work around water to avoid causing further harm to our sensitive cold-water streams.

The NVCA's stewardship program works with interested landowners to disconnect ponds from streams or to remove the unwanted dam associated with the pond. If you have an on-stream pond, you can help improve the fate of our remaining cold-water streams and the fish that live in them.

Fish community monitoring is just one of the various techniques the NVCA uses to score the health of the watershed's forests, wetlands, rivers and groundwater. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we collect and produce data of the highest quality grounded in science so the NVCA can protect these ecosystems. The results of this monitoring are shared with the public through our watershed health checks.

Visit nvca.on.ca/our-watershed to learn more about what the NVCA is doing to protect the Nottawasaga watershed and all the species that rely on it.

Ian Ockenden is the watershed science supervisor with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams

Data gathered by NVCA help with effective watershed protection

January 22, 2024 by Ian Ockenden

Bradford Today

1 / 3 Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown after the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority removed the Petun Dam. Volunteers installed dogwood stakes to help stabilize the stream bank. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 3 The Petun Dam on Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown before it was removed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The pond supported algae growth and increased summer stream temperatures by 7 degrees Celsius. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 3 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority watershed science staff measure brook trout as part of the monitoring program. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

It’s early morning with the sun still rising, dew on the grass and mist rising off the water.

A sudden splash, lightning-fast reflexes, and another brook trout gets pulled out of the stream. This fish is not destined for the dinner table — it will be counted, measured and weighed before being released back into the stream.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority’s (NVCA) monitoring crew is conducting routine fish sampling of this elusive cold-water species. This work is part of the NVCA watershed science program’s efforts to track the health of sensitive river environments across the watershed.

The data show brook trout in the Nottawasaga River watershed are abundant in several areas, but overall, the number and quality of cold-water

streams are decreasing. Similar results are being felt across southern Ontario, mainly due to the loss of natural habitat, a warming climate, and competition from non-native species all putting stress on brook trout populations.

In the Nottawasaga River watershed, one big culprit is the abundance of on-stream ponds in the Niagara Escarpment and our local moraines on small headwater creeks. These are man-made ponds that are directly connected to a stream. People often think damming and digging a small pond off a natural creek that runs through their property creates a little slice of nature in their backyard and improves the habitat. In reality, it is damaging to our remaining cold-water streams.

Native cold-water fish species, like brook trout, require these cold-water streams and are very sensitive to temperature change, and a small change of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius can often limit local populations or eliminate them entirely. On-stream ponds slow the flow of water and increase the surface area of the waterways, allowing more sunlight to warm the water, increasing the temperature to up to 10 C. This can drastically affect the downstream environment that thrives in colder conditions. The dams built to create online ponds are barriers to fish migration, disrupting their ability to reproduce.

The construction of online ponds is regulated by the NVCA for the protection of groundwater resources and from river hazards, but this regulation has the added benefit of protecting these sensitive cold-water species. Contact the NVCA's regulation program before you do any work around water to avoid causing further harm to our sensitive cold-water streams.

The NVCA's stewardship program works with interested landowners to disconnect ponds from streams or to remove the unwanted dam associated with the pond. If you have an on-stream pond, you can help improve the fate of our remaining cold-water streams and the fish that live in them.

Fish community monitoring is just one of the various techniques the NVCA uses to score the health of the watershed's forests, wetlands, rivers and groundwater. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we collect and produce data of the highest quality grounded in science so the NVCA can protect these ecosystems. The results of this monitoring are shared with the public through our watershed health checks.

Visit nvca.on.ca/our-watershed to learn more about what the NVCA is doing to protect the Nottawasaga watershed and all the species that rely on it.

Ian Ockenden is the watershed science supervisor with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams

Data gathered by NVCA help with effective watershed protection

January 22, 2024 by Ian Ockenden

Collingwood Today

1 / 3 Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown after the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority removed the Petun Dam. Volunteers installed dogwood stakes to help stabilize the stream bank. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 3 The Petun Dam on Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown before it was removed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The pond supported algae growth and increased summer stream temperatures by 7 degrees Celsius. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 3 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority watershed science staff measure brook trout as part of the monitoring program. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

It’s early morning with the sun still rising, dew on the grass and mist rising off the water.

A sudden splash, lightning-fast reflexes, and another brook trout gets pulled out of the stream. This fish is not destined for the dinner table — it will be counted, measured and weighed before being released back into the stream.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority’s (NVCA) monitoring crew is conducting routine fish sampling of this elusive cold-water species. This work is part of the NVCA watershed science program’s efforts to track the health of sensitive river environments across the watershed.

The data show brook trout in the Nottawasaga River watershed are abundant in several areas, but overall, the number and quality of cold-water

streams are decreasing. Similar results are being felt across southern Ontario, mainly due to the loss of natural habitat, a warming climate, and competition from non-native species all putting stress on brook trout populations.

In the Nottawasaga River watershed, one big culprit is the abundance of on-stream ponds in the Niagara Escarpment and our local moraines on small headwater creeks. These are man-made ponds that are directly connected to a stream. People often think damming and digging a small pond off a natural creek that runs through their property creates a little slice of nature in their backyard and improves the habitat. In reality, it is damaging to our remaining cold-water streams.

Native cold-water fish species, like brook trout, require these cold-water streams and are very sensitive to temperature change, and a small change of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius can often limit local populations or eliminate them entirely. On-stream ponds slow the flow of water and increase the surface area of the waterways, allowing more sunlight to warm the water, increasing the temperature to up to 10 C. This can drastically affect the downstream environment that thrives in colder conditions. The dams built to create online ponds are barriers to fish migration, disrupting their ability to reproduce.

The construction of online ponds is regulated by the NVCA for the protection of groundwater resources and from river hazards, but this regulation has the added benefit of protecting these sensitive cold-water species. Contact the NVCA's regulation program before you do any work around water to avoid causing further harm to our sensitive cold-water streams.

The NVCA's stewardship program works with interested landowners to disconnect ponds from streams or to remove the unwanted dam associated with the pond. If you have an on-stream pond, you can help improve the fate of our remaining cold-water streams and the fish that live in them.

Fish community monitoring is just one of the various techniques the NVCA uses to score the health of the watershed's forests, wetlands, rivers and groundwater. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we collect and produce data of the highest quality grounded in science so the NVCA can protect these ecosystems. The results of this monitoring are shared with the public through our watershed health checks.

Visit nvca.on.ca/our-watershed to learn more about what the NVCA is doing to protect the Nottawasaga watershed and all the species that rely on it.

Ian Ockenden is the watershed science supervisor with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams

Data gathered by NVCA help with effective watershed protection

January 22, 2024 by Ian Ockenden

Innisfil Today

1 / 3 Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown after the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority removed the Petun Dam. Volunteers installed dogwood stakes to help stabilize the stream bank. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 3 The Petun Dam on Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown before it was removed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The pond supported algae growth and increased summer stream temperatures by 7 degrees Celsius. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 3 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority watershed science staff measure brook trout as part of the monitoring program. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

It’s early morning with the sun still rising, dew on the grass and mist rising off the water.

A sudden splash, lightning-fast reflexes, and another brook trout gets pulled out of the stream. This fish is not destined for the dinner table — it will be counted, measured and weighed before being released back into the stream.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority’s (NVCA) monitoring crew is conducting routine fish sampling of this elusive cold-water species. This work is part of the NVCA watershed science program’s efforts to track the health of sensitive river environments across the watershed.

The data show brook trout in the Nottawasaga River watershed are abundant in several areas, but overall, the number and quality of cold-water

streams are decreasing. Similar results are being felt across southern Ontario, mainly due to the loss of natural habitat, a warming climate, and competition from non-native species all putting stress on brook trout populations.

In the Nottawasaga River watershed, one big culprit is the abundance of on-stream ponds in the Niagara Escarpment and our local moraines on small headwater creeks. These are man-made ponds that are directly connected to a stream. People often think damming and digging a small pond off a natural creek that runs through their property creates a little slice of nature in their backyard and improves the habitat. In reality, it is damaging to our remaining cold-water streams.

Native cold-water fish species, like brook trout, require these cold-water streams and are very sensitive to temperature change, and a small change of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius can often limit local populations or eliminate them entirely. On-stream ponds slow the flow of water and increase the surface area of the waterways, allowing more sunlight to warm the water, increasing the temperature to up to 10 C. This can drastically affect the downstream environment that thrives in colder conditions. The dams built to create online ponds are barriers to fish migration, disrupting their ability to reproduce.

The construction of online ponds is regulated by the NVCA for the protection of groundwater resources and from river hazards, but this regulation has the added benefit of protecting these sensitive cold-water species. Contact the NVCA's regulation program before you do any work around water to avoid causing further harm to our sensitive cold-water streams.

The NVCA's stewardship program works with interested landowners to disconnect ponds from streams or to remove the unwanted dam associated with the pond. If you have an on-stream pond, you can help improve the fate of our remaining cold-water streams and the fish that live in them.

Fish community monitoring is just one of the various techniques the NVCA uses to score the health of the watershed's forests, wetlands, rivers and groundwater. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we collect and produce data of the highest quality grounded in science so the NVCA can protect these ecosystems. The results of this monitoring are shared with the public through our watershed health checks.

Visit nvca.on.ca/our-watershed to learn more about what the NVCA is doing to protect the Nottawasaga watershed and all the species that rely on it.

Ian Ockenden is the watershed science supervisor with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: Knowledge best tool for protecting cold-water streams

Data gathered by NVCA help with effective watershed protection

January 22, 2024 by Ian Ockenden

Orillia Matters

1 / 3 Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown after the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority removed the Petun Dam. Volunteers installed dogwood stakes to help stabilize the stream bank. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 3 The Petun Dam on Black Ash Creek in Collingwood is shown before it was removed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The pond supported algae growth and increased summer stream temperatures by 7 degrees Celsius. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 3 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority watershed science staff measure brook trout as part of the monitoring program. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

It’s early morning with the sun still rising, dew on the grass and mist rising off the water.

A sudden splash, lightning-fast reflexes, and another brook trout gets pulled out of the stream. This fish is not destined for the dinner table — it will be counted, measured and weighed before being released back into the stream.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority’s (NVCA) monitoring crew is conducting routine fish sampling of this elusive cold-water species. This work is part of the NVCA watershed science program’s efforts to track the health of sensitive river environments across the watershed.

The data show brook trout in the Nottawasaga River watershed are abundant in several areas, but overall, the number and quality of cold-water

streams are decreasing. Similar results are being felt across southern Ontario, mainly due to the loss of natural habitat, a warming climate, and competition from non-native species all putting stress on brook trout populations.

In the Nottawasaga River watershed, one big culprit is the abundance of on-stream ponds in the Niagara Escarpment and our local moraines on small headwater creeks. These are man-made ponds that are directly connected to a stream. People often think damming and digging a small pond off a natural creek that runs through their property creates a little slice of nature in their backyard and improves the habitat. In reality, it is damaging to our remaining cold-water streams.

Native cold-water fish species, like brook trout, require these cold-water streams and are very sensitive to temperature change, and a small change of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius can often limit local populations or eliminate them entirely. On-stream ponds slow the flow of water and increase the surface area of the waterways, allowing more sunlight to warm the water, increasing the temperature to up to 10 C. This can drastically affect the downstream environment that thrives in colder conditions. The dams built to create online ponds are barriers to fish migration, disrupting their ability to reproduce.

The construction of online ponds is regulated by the NVCA for the protection of groundwater resources and from river hazards, but this regulation has the added benefit of protecting these sensitive cold-water species. Contact the NVCA's regulation program before you do any work around water to avoid causing further harm to our sensitive cold-water streams.

The NVCA's stewardship program works with interested landowners to disconnect ponds from streams or to remove the unwanted dam associated with the pond. If you have an on-stream pond, you can help improve the fate of our remaining cold-water streams and the fish that live in them.

Fish community monitoring is just one of the various techniques the NVCA uses to score the health of the watershed's forests, wetlands, rivers and groundwater. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we collect and produce data of the highest quality grounded in science so the NVCA can protect these ecosystems. The results of this monitoring are shared with the public through our watershed health checks.

Visit nvca.on.ca/our-watershed to learn more about what the NVCA is doing to protect the Nottawasaga watershed and all the species that rely on it.

Ian Ockenden is the watershed science supervisor with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issues winter safety message

January 25, 2024 by Brian Lockhart

New Tecumseth Times

With the colder weather here, freezing ponds and waterways are creating a hazard as they begin to freeze over.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is reminding residents of the inherent danger near streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes during the winter months.

NVCA is urging people to exercise caution and keep family and pets away from the edges of all waterways.

While temperatures have gone down after December's unseasonably mild weather, there are now frequent freeze-thaw cycles and winter storms that are bringing wet and mixed precipitation. This is expected to continue through the next couple of months.

Fluctuations in temperature and precipitation can increase runoff and contribute to higher water levels and faster flows in local watercourses. Once rivers and waterbodies become ice-covered, periods of rainfall and snowmelt can result in the weakening, shifting, and melting of that ice cover – making it unsafe.

Residents living next to watercourses are encouraged to secure loose objects, such as lawn furniture and watercraft that are in the flood plain in preparation for the spring snowmelt and rains that can increase the risk of flooding downstream.

To keep safe, residents are encouraged to keep family and pets away from all bodies of water, avoid all recreational activities in or around water, including skating in unsanctioned areas, and limit winter outdoor activities to trails at local parks and conservation areas.

Stormwater ponds/facilities were not built for ice skating and should not be used.

Rescuing a person or pet from ice is dangerous.

If you see anyone who has fallen through the ice, call 9-1-1 for help.

Bradford councillor appointed vice chair of NVCA

Jonathan Scott named to conservation authority's 2024 board of directors last week

January 29, 2024

Bradford Today

Jonathan Scott and Gail Little have been acclaimed vice-chair and chair, respectively, of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's board of directors. Supplied photo

NEWS RELEASE
NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
****

UTOPIA - Last Friday, Gail Little, deputy mayor for the Township of Amaranth; and Jonathan Scott, councillor for the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury were acclaimed to lead the 2024 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) Board of Directors as chair and vice chair.

"I'm honoured to carry on as the chair of the 2024 NVCA Board of Directors," said Little. "Staff at NVCA are dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable about protecting and enhancing the rivers, streams, forests, groundwater and wetlands in the Nottawasaga Watershed. I look forward to working with my fellow board members to support the work that this amazing group people does in coming year."

A healthy watershed supports resident's health, homes, farms businesses and drinking water. NVCA works with many partners, funders and volunteers to maintain a healthy Nottawasaga Watershed. They also lead efforts in restoring rivers, wetlands, forests and grasslands, as well as inspiring youth to protect our environment.

"Friday was a day to celebrate the hard work that NVCA's staff did in the past year to protect our local environment, fight climate change and protect our natural heritage," said Scott. "I look forward to working with our board members to ensure this work continues to be a priority in the Nottawasaga Watershed."

To learn about NVCA's accomplishments, watch this Year in Review video.

Gail Little and Jonathan Scott continue to lead NVCA Board of Directors

January 29, 2024

Simcoe & Main

Last Friday, Gail Little, Deputy Mayor for the Township of Amaranth, and Jonathan Scott, Councillor for the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury were acclaimed to lead the 2024 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) Board of Directors as Chair and Vice Chair.

"I'm honoured to carry on as the Chair of the 2024 NVCA Board of Directors. Staff at NVCA are dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable about protecting and enhancing the rivers, streams, forests, groundwater and wetlands in the Nottawasaga Watershed. I look forward to working with my fellow board members to support the work that this amazing group people does in coming year."

Gail Little, Deputy Mayor for the Township of Amaranth

A healthy watershed supports resident's health, homes, farms businesses and drinking water. NVCA works with many partners, funders and volunteers to maintain a healthy Nottawasaga Watershed. They also lead efforts in restoring rivers, wetlands, forests and grasslands, as well as inspiring youth to protect our environment.

"Friday was a day to celebrate the hard work that NVCA's staff did in the past year to protect our local environment, fight climate change and protect our natural heritage," said Scott. "I look forward to workingwith our board members to ensure this work continues to be a priority in the Nottawasaga Watershed."

To learn about NVCA's accomplishments, watch this Year in Review video.

NVCA and Clearview Township launch public consultation on Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study

Study looks at flooding hazards in the Creemore area

Public information session will be held at Creemore Community Centre on Feb. 29.

February 21, 2024

Stayner – Wasaga Beach Sun

Clearview Township and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority are hosting a public information centre on a draft study that looks at flooding in the upper Mad River area.

NVCA photo

A public hearing on a draft study of flooding in the Creemore area will be held Feb. 29.

The Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study examines flooding dynamics and flood hazards, and sets out areas within the Creemore settlement area that are safe from natural hazards such as flooding.

The public information centre will be held at the community centre in Creemore from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., and will include a live demonstration of flood model results.

Staff from Clearview Township, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), and the consulting firm Aquafor Beech Limited will be on hand to answer questions.

The study will be available on the NVCA's website at www.nvca.on.ca/floodstudy on Feb. 22.

Said Clearview Township Mayor Doug Measures, "This study will greatly improve our knowledge of the Mad River and support our planning for future growth in an area that many longtime residents know too well the damage that can come from a flood."

"The community of Creemore in the Township of Clearview has had a history of flooding since the early 1900s," said Doug Hevenor, CAO of NVCA. "Thanks to funding from the Province of Ontario, Natural Resources Canada and the Township of Clearview, we can now update and refine the flood hazard mapping through the Creemore settlement area."

The commenting period will be open until March 15, 2024. For comments on the Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study, email NVCA engineering services manager Dalia Al-Ali at dal-ali@nvca.on.ca.

Flood mapping update will inform planning decisions

February 23, 2024 by Trina Berlo

Creemore Echo

As part of a process of updating and refining flood hazard mapping in Creemore, the public is invited to comment on the findings of an Upper Mad River Flood Hazard Study led by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA).

Officials say the main objective of the project is to produce new flood hazard maps for the community of Creemore in accordance with current provincial and federal mapping guidelines through the detailed analysis of flooding dynamics and flood hazards.

Several years ago, the NVCA initiated a watershed-wide flood risk assessment, which identified and prioritized 'flood damage centres' within the Nottawasaga watershed based on flood event warning time, population impacts, affected roads for pedestrian access and vehicle access, and expected annual damages.

NVCA partnered with the Government of Canada (Natural Resources Canada) and the Province of Ontario (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) as part of the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP) to develop flood hazard maps for municipalities and territories. The Township of Clearview provided the remaining 50 per cent of funding to match the funding received through FHIMP.

The study provides NVCA and the township with detailed analysis of flooding dynamics and flood hazards, and further establishes the areas in the settlement of Creemore that are safe from natural hazards such as flooding.

"Our council is pleased to support the work being done to update flood hazard mapping through the Creemore settlement area," said Mayor Doug Measures. "This study will greatly improve our knowledge of the Mad River and support our planning for future growth in an area that many long-time residents know too well – the damage that can come from a flood."

Creemore has had a history of flooding since the early 1900s, said NVCA CAO Doug Hevenor.

Staff say model results are well-supported by documented historical flooding events observed by the NVCA at the south limits of the village of Creemore between Mill Street and Mary Street, in the fields located between County Road 9 and Edward Street, Edward Street to Concession 3 as well as within the village of Avening.

The Mad River subwatershed drains an area of 252 km2. The subwatershed study area extends 26 km from its farthest headwaters to its outlet point upstream of Glencairn. The primary

reach within the study area passes through the villages of Creemore and Avening.

The draft study will be available on NVCA's website on Feb. 22 for public review and comment. A Public Information Centre (PIC) will be held at the Creemore arena from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 29. The PIC will feature a live demonstration of the flood model results and will provide additional information on the project. Staff from the township, NVCA and the consulting firm Aquafor Beech Limited will be available to answer questions.

The commenting period will be open until March 15.

To comment on the Flood Hazard Study, please email Dalia Al-Ali, manager, engineering services at NVCA at dal-ali@nvca.on.ca.

For more information, visit www.nvca.on.ca.

NVCA photo: Flooding in east Creemore, south of County Road 9.

NVCA board of directors – news release

February 2, 2024

Aware Simcoe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gail Little and Jonathan Scott continue to lead NVCA Board of Directors

UTOPIA, Ontario (January 29, 2024) – Last Friday, Gail Little, Deputy Mayor for the Township of Amaranth, and Jonathan Scott, Councillor for the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury were acclaimed to lead the 2024 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) Board of Directors as Chair and Vice Chair.

"I'm honoured to carry on as the Chair of the 2024 NVCA Board of Directors," said Little. "Staff at NVCA are dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable about protecting and enhancing the rivers, streams, forests, groundwater and wetlands in the Nottawasaga Watershed. I look forward to working with my fellow board members to support the work that this amazing group people does in coming year."

A healthy watershed supports resident's health, homes, farms businesses and drinking water. NVCA works with many partners, funders and volunteers to maintain a healthy Nottawasaga Watershed. They also lead efforts in restoring rivers, wetlands, forests and grasslands, as well as inspiring youth to protect our environment.

"Friday was a day to celebrate the hard work that NVCA's staff did in the past year to protect our local environment, fight climate change and protect our natural heritage," said Scott. "I look forward to working with our board members to ensure this work continues to be a priority in the Nottawasaga Watershed."

To learn about NVCA's accomplishments, watch this Year in Review video.

About NVCA: The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority is a public agency dedicated to the preservation of a healthy environment through specialized programs to protect, conserve and enhance our water, wetlands, forests and lands.

Media contact: Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist, 705-424-1479 ext.254, mleung@nvca.on.ca

Maria Leung (she/her/hers)
Senior Communications Specialist
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
8195 8th Line, Utopia, ON L0M 1T0
T 705-424-1479, ext. 254
mleung@nvca.on.ca | nvca.on.ca

COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk

Specialists measure depth and density of snow twice a month from November to April

February 29, 2024 by Taryn Arsenault

Barrie Today

1 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist collects samples from a snowpack. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist weighs the snow samples.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 7 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialists take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

While many of us would agree winter has not been 'normal,' we've certainly seen snow accumulate and then disappear during a warm spell.

Where does the snow go when it melts? Is there a way to measure that? The answer is yes.

Twice each month, from November to April, flood specialists from across Ontario head out to conservation areas to measure and report on the depth and density of the snow. They do this with weigh scales and metal tubes called snow survey tubes.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) sends its own specialists out to drive their snow survey tubes into the snowpack and weigh the results. The information helps NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team estimate how much snowmelt we'll get, how much of it will flow into the rivers and streams, and whether people who live in low-lying areas and flood plains will be impacted by overflowing water courses.

There is a specific process in recording data for snow surveys. Samples are taken as close to at the same time as possible, which means the flood specialists from across the province co-ordinate to take samples on the same days. NVCA's specialists collect samples from nine properties. At each property, they take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent. Each sample area is exactly 30 metres away from the last.

The snow samples collected are measured and weighed, and calculations are done to find out how much water is held inside the snow. Other conditions, like whether the ground is frozen or if there is an icy crust on the snow, are noted as well, since they contribute to the area's ability to mitigate flooding. The reports are submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Each day, NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team completes an assessment of the potential for flooding in the Nottawasaga watershed. Snow surveys are one of many methods the team uses to determine potential for flooding. They also monitor weather forecasts, rainfall, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed.

If the potential of flooding is high, a flood message will be sent to organizations such as municipalities, schools, first responders, media and residents to take the appropriate action.

There are three flood messages that can be issued. Watershed conditions statements are issued when weather conditions can pose a risk to personal safety or have the potential to lead to flooding. Flood watches and flood warnings are issued when there is a possibility of flooding.

In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message. In January 2024, one water safety statement and one flood outlook were issued.

Learn more about NVCA's flood statements at nvca.on.ca.

Taryn Arsenault is a flood specialist with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk

Specialists measure depth and density of snow twice a month from November to April

February 29, 2024 by Taryn Arsenault

Collingwood Today

1 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist collects samples from a snowpack. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist weighs the snow samples.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 7 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialists take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

While many of us would agree winter has not been 'normal,' we've certainly seen snow accumulate and then disappear during a warm spell.

Where does the snow go when it melts? Is there a way to measure that? The answer is yes.

Twice each month, from November to April, flood specialists from across Ontario head out to conservation areas to measure and report on the depth and density of the snow. They do this with weigh scales and metal tubes called snow survey tubes.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) sends its own specialists out to drive their snow survey tubes into the snowpack and weigh the results. The information helps NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team estimate how much snowmelt we'll get, how much of it will flow into the rivers and streams, and whether people who live in low-lying areas and flood plains will be impacted by overflowing water courses.

There is a specific process in recording data for snow surveys. Samples are taken as close to at the same time as possible, which means the flood specialists from across the province co-ordinate to take samples on the same days. NVCA's specialists collect samples from nine properties. At each property, they take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent. Each sample area is exactly 30 metres away from the last.

The snow samples collected are measured and weighed, and calculations are done to find out how much water is held inside the snow. Other conditions, like whether the ground is frozen or if there is an icy crust on the snow, are noted as well, since they contribute to the area's ability to mitigate flooding. The reports are submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Each day, NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team completes an assessment of the potential for flooding in the Nottawasaga watershed. Snow surveys are one of many methods the team uses to determine potential for flooding. They also monitor weather forecasts, rainfall, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed.

If the potential of flooding is high, a flood message will be sent to organizations such as municipalities, schools, first responders, media and residents to take the appropriate action.

There are three flood messages that can be issued. Watershed conditions statements are issued when weather conditions can pose a risk to personal safety or have the potential to lead to flooding. Flood watches and flood warnings are issued when there is a possibility of flooding.

In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message. In January 2024, one water safety statement and one flood outlook were issued.

Learn more about NVCA's flood statements at nvca.on.ca.

Taryn Arsenault is a flood specialist with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk

Specialists measure depth and density of snow twice a month from November to April

February 29, 2024 by Taryn Arsenault

Innisfil Today

1 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist collects samples from a snowpack. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist weighs the snow samples.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 7 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialists take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

While many of us would agree winter has not been 'normal,' we've certainly seen snow accumulate and then disappear during a warm spell.

Where does the snow go when it melts? Is there a way to measure that? The answer is yes.

Twice each month, from November to April, flood specialists from across Ontario head out to conservation areas to measure and report on the depth and density of the snow. They do this with weigh scales and metal tubes called snow survey tubes.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) sends its own specialists out to drive their snow survey tubes into the snowpack and weigh the results. The information helps NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team estimate how much snowmelt we'll get, how much of it will flow into the rivers and streams, and whether people who live in low-lying areas and flood plains will be impacted by overflowing water courses.

There is a specific process in recording data for snow surveys. Samples are taken as close to at the same time as possible, which means the flood specialists from across the province co-ordinate to take samples on the same days. NVCA's specialists collect samples from nine properties. At each property, they take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent. Each sample area is exactly 30 metres away from the last.

The snow samples collected are measured and weighed, and calculations are done to find out how much water is held inside the snow. Other conditions, like whether the ground is frozen or if there is an icy crust on the snow, are noted as well, since they contribute to the area's ability to mitigate flooding. The reports are submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Each day, NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team completes an assessment of the potential for flooding in the Nottawasaga watershed. Snow surveys are one of many methods the team uses to determine potential for flooding. They also monitor weather forecasts, rainfall, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed.

If the potential of flooding is high, a flood message will be sent to organizations such as municipalities, schools, first responders, media and residents to take the appropriate action.

There are three flood messages that can be issued. Watershed conditions statements are issued when weather conditions can pose a risk to personal safety or have the potential to lead to flooding. Flood watches and flood warnings are issued when there is a possibility of flooding.

In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message. In January 2024, one water safety statement and one flood outlook were issued.

Learn more about NVCA's flood statements at nvca.on.ca.

Taryn Arsenault is a flood specialist with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

Conservation authorities survey snow to forecast flood risk

Specialists measure depth and density of snow twice a month from November to April

February 29, 2024 by Taryn Arsenault

Midland Today

1 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist collects samples from a snowpack.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist weighs the snow samples.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 7 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialists take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

While many of us would agree winter has not been 'normal,' we've certainly seen snow accumulate and then disappear during a warm spell.

Where does the snow go when it melts? Is there a way to measure that? The answer is yes.

Twice each month, from November to April, flood specialists from across Ontario head out to conservation areas to measure and report on the depth and density of the snow. They do this with weigh scales and metal tubes called snow survey tubes.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) sends its own specialists out to drive their snow survey tubes into the snowpack and weigh the results. The information helps NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team estimate how much snowmelt we'll get, how much of it will flow into the rivers and streams, and whether people who live in low-lying areas and flood plains will be impacted by overflowing water courses.

There is a specific process in recording data for snow surveys. Samples are taken as close to at the same time as possible, which means the flood specialists from across the province co-ordinate to take samples on the same days. NVCA's specialists collect samples from nine properties. At each property, they take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent. Each sample area is exactly 30 metres away from the last.

The snow samples collected are measured and weighed, and calculations are done to find out how much water is held inside the snow. Other conditions, like whether the ground is frozen or if there is an icy crust on the snow, are noted as well, since they contribute to the area's ability to mitigate flooding. The reports are submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Each day, NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team completes an assessment of the potential for flooding in the Nottawasaga watershed. Snow surveys are one of many methods the team uses to determine potential for flooding. They also monitor weather forecasts, rainfall, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed.

If the potential of flooding is high, a flood message will be sent to organizations such as municipalities, schools, first responders, media and residents to take the appropriate action.

There are three flood messages that can be issued. Watershed conditions statements are issued when weather conditions can pose a risk to personal safety or have the potential to lead to flooding. Flood watches and flood warnings are issued when there is a possibility of flooding.

In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message. In January 2024, one water safety statement and one flood outlook were issued.

Learn more about NVCA's flood statements at nvca.on.ca.

Taryn Arsenault is a flood specialist with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

COLUMN: NVCA surveys snow to forecast flood risk

Specialists measure depth and density of snow twice a month from November to April

February 29, 2024 by Taryn Arsenault

Orillia Matters

1 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist collects samples from a snowpack.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2 / 7 A Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialist weighs the snow samples.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

3 / 7 Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority flood specialists take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent.Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

While many of us would agree winter has not been 'normal,' we've certainly seen snow accumulate and then disappear during a warm spell.

Where does the snow go when it melts? Is there a way to measure that? The answer is yes.

Twice each month, from November to April, flood specialists from across Ontario head out to conservation areas to measure and report on the depth and density of the snow. They do this with weigh scales and metal tubes called snow survey tubes.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) sends its own specialists out to drive their snow survey tubes into the snowpack and weigh the results. The information helps NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team estimate how much snowmelt we'll get, how much of it will flow into the rivers and streams, and whether people who live in low-lying areas and flood plains will be impacted by overflowing water courses.

There is a specific process in recording data for snow surveys. Samples are taken as close to at the same time as possible, which means the flood specialists from across the province co-ordinate to take samples on the same days. NVCA's specialists collect samples from nine properties. At each property, they take 10 samples from marked areas to ensure the data is consistent. Each sample area is exactly 30 metres away from the last.

The snow samples collected are measured and weighed, and calculations are done to find out how much water is held inside the snow. Other conditions, like whether the ground is frozen or if there is an icy crust on the snow, are noted as well, since they contribute to the area's ability to mitigate flooding. The reports are submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Each day, NVCA's flood forecasting and warning team completes an assessment of the potential for flooding in the Nottawasaga watershed. Snow surveys are one of many methods the team uses to determine potential for flooding. They also monitor weather forecasts, rainfall, and lake and stream water levels across the watershed.

If the potential of flooding is high, a flood message will be sent to organizations such as municipalities, schools, first responders, media and residents to take the appropriate action.

There are three flood messages that can be issued. Watershed conditions statements are issued when weather conditions can pose a risk to personal safety or have the potential to lead to flooding. Flood watches and flood warnings are issued when there is a possibility of flooding.

In 2023, NVCA issued five water safety messages and one flood outlook message. In January 2024, one water safety statement and one flood outlook were issued.

Learn more about NVCA's flood statements at nvca.on.ca.

Taryn Arsenault is a flood specialist with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

Spring melt makes local waterways dangerous: Conservation Halton

Lower-than-normal snowfall and mild temperatures this year mean the ground is saturated and slippery

March 1, 2024

Flamborough Today

Exercise caution around local waterways, warns Conservation Halton.Garry Flood photo

NEWS RELEASE
CONSERVATION HALTON
****

Conservation Halton reminds residents of dangers that can exist near streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. As spring approaches with warmer temperatures, rain, melting snow and shifting ice can contribute to higher, faster flowing water in local watercourses.

Conservation Halton's watershed received a lower-than-normal snowfall this winter. In addition, periods of warm temperatures in January and February resulted in an early snowmelt. The ground within our watershed remains saturated in many places. During periods of intense rain, there could be higher amounts of runoff in short intervals. Slippery, unstable streambanks, and extremely cold water temperatures can lead to hazardous conditions close to waterbodies.

Spring safety tips for residents:

- Keep people and pets away from the edges of all bodies of water.
- Avoid all recreational activities in or around water, especially waterbodies with ice cover.
- Do not attempt to walk on ice-covered waterbodies.
- Do not attempt to drive through flooded roads or fast-moving water.
- If you live close to water, move objects such as chairs or benches away from the edge to avoid losing them during potential high waters.
- Avoid walking close to or across riverbanks and ice-covered water to prevent falling through. Riverbanks can become unstable due to snowmelt and erosion.
- Rescuing anyone from icy water is dangerous. If you see a person or pet that has fallen through the ice, call 911 immediately.

For more information, contact your local Conservation Authority.

- Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (905) 895-1281
- Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (416) 661-6514

- Conservation Halton (905) 336-1158
- Credit Valley Conservation (905) 670-1615
- Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (905) 579-0411
- Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (905) 885-8173
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (705) 424-1479
- Kawartha Conservation (705) 328-2271

About Conservation Halton's Flood Forecasting and Operations Program

Conservation Halton provides a flood forecasting and operations program to reduce the risk of property damage and loss of life due to flooding.

When flooding is possible or about to occur, Conservation Halton issues flood messages to municipal emergency management officials, school boards, police, EMS, and the media. Municipal officials take action to warn local residents. Residents are also encouraged to subscribe to Conservation Halton's Flood Messages via email.

Conservation Halton is responsible for the maintenance and operation of four major flood control dams (Kelso, Hilton Falls, Scotch Block and Mountsberg) and over 12 kilometers of flood conveyance channels (Sixteen Mile Creek through Milton, Morrison-Wedgewood diversion in Oakville and the Rambo-Hager diversion in Burlington).

Stay clear of Pretty River Dike this month while crews clear shrubs, small trees

Maintenance work continues as the town and conservation authority open up the path for water to flow quickly into the bay and prevent flooding

March 4, 2024

Collingwood Today

The Pretty River is flowing fast and high today after days of heavy rainfall in the region. Erika Engel/CollingwoodToday

Crews will be at work again along the Pretty River Dike corridor this month clearing out some of the overgrown shrubs and small trees.

The latest work will be done along the section of the Pretty River Dike from Hume Street to Pretty River Parkway, so the trails will be closed in that area.

Residents are asked to stay away from the work zones.

"As crews work to remove this vegetation, residents are reminded to stay well away from Section 4 of the dike," said Dalia Al-Ali, senior engineer at the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, in a news release. "Machinery such as wood chippers, chainsaws and excavators will be used and pose a hazard to unauthorized personnel."

To get around the machines and crews working, trail users can follow the concrete multi-use pathway (sidewalk) along the Pretty River Parkway or follow Raglan Street as a detour.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has been working with the Town of Collingwood since 2021 on a large clean out of the dike after 20 years of little-to-no maintenance.

Without regular maintenance since the 2000s, the vegetation along the river has grown so thick it's impacting the volume of water that can flow through the dike, increasing the potential for flooding because the vegetation slows the flow of the water, allowing it to rise higher and overflow.

The two-kilometre dike was built in the 1970s to reduce the flooding risks in Collingwood's urban areas. At the time it was a sparse cement structure.

The maintenance work underway will not significantly change the tree canopy over the dike that has grown since it was installed, as large trees will be left in place while small trees and shrubs will be removed to make room at the bottom of the banks for the water.

Funds set aside by the Town of Collingwood were matched by provincial funding from the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure

program to cover the costs of the 2024 dike maintenance.

"When maintained properly, it can protect residents and properties including homes and businesses, the Collingwood Public Library, Collingwood Museum and Central Park from flood waters," states the NVCA news release.

"To strike a balance between community safety, water quality and habitat protection, groundcover such as grasses and wildflowers will not be removed. These plants are important habitats for pollinators, including Monarch butterflies, which are a species of concern. Groundcover is also a great foraging source for many birds. Low shrubs such as dogwood and willows along the edge of the water will not be removed to continue to support fish and wildlife habitat."

Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA

Conservation authority says unsafe ice, slippery banks already exist in the region

March 6, 2024

Barrie Today

Stock image. Photo by Baskin Creative Studios via Pexels

With spring-like temperatures arriving early, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is reminding everyone to stay well back from waterways, ditches, ponds and lakes this time of year.

In a news release, the conservation authority says unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist in the area.

"The onset of spring will bring rain and melting snow, which will cause the breakup of remaining ice along watercourses and lakes as well as high stream flows," the NVCA warned. "These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water."

Conservation authorities across the region remind residents to keep family and pets away from all waterbodies, including streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

"Especially during this transitional season, it is important to supervise children and help them understand the dangers of playing near creeks and streams," states the release. "Anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters and other recreational users need to be aware of the dangerous conditions that could pose a risk to personal safety."

They offered the following timely tips:

- Keep family and pets away from the edges of all bodies of water
- Avoid all recreational activities in or around water, especially near ice jams or ice-covered watercourses and waterbodies — including municipally managed stormwater ponds
- Do not attempt to walk on ice-covered waterbodies or drive through flooded roads or fast-moving water
- If you live close to the water, move objects such as chairs or benches away from the water's edge to avoid losing them during potential spring high water
- Avoid walking close to and across riverbanks and ice-covered water to prevent falling through.

The NVCA says it continues to monitor waterways and will issue flood messages as conditions warrant, but flooding is not expected at this time.

NVCA Warns Public to Steer Clear of Waterways Amid Spring Thaw Hazards

As spring arrives, the NVCA cautions against the dangers near water bodies, urging community members to stay vigilant and prioritize safety.

March 6, 2024 by Sakchi Khandelwal

BNN Breaking News

As warmer weather heralds the arrival of spring, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has issued a timely caution against the dangers lurking near water bodies. With an expected surge in temperatures, rain, and melting snow poised to disrupt the icy calm of winter, the NVCA's advisory underscores the life-threatening risks of the ensuing conditions.

Urgent Warning for Early Spring

Anticipating the swift break-up of ice along rivers, lakes, ponds, and streams, the NVCA's statement serves as a stark reminder of the precariousness of these environments. "These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water," the NVCA emphasized, aiming to raise awareness among the community's recreational users. Anglers, canoeists, hikers, and hunters, among others, are advised to exercise extreme caution around these areas to prevent accidents.

Protective Measures and Recommendations

In addition to avoiding direct contact with ice-covered surfaces, the NVCA advises residents living near water bodies to relocate outdoor furniture away from the water's edge. This preventive step is aimed at safeguarding personal property from being swept away during the expected high-water conditions of spring. The safety of children and pets is also a paramount concern, with the NVCA recommending that they be kept at a safe distance from all bodies of water during this unpredictable period.

Continuous Monitoring and Community Support

The NVCA has committed to vigilant monitoring of waterways and will issue flood messages as conditions warrant. This proactive approach not only ensures the safety of the community but also facilitates timely interventions to mitigate the risks associated with the spring thaw. Residents seeking more information or guidance are encouraged to contact their local Conservation Authority, reinforcing the NVCA's dedication to public safety during this transitional season.

As the community braces for the changes brought on by the spring thaw, the NVCA's advisory serves as a crucial reminder of the inherent dangers and the collective responsibility to prioritize safety. The shift in weather patterns, while a welcome sign of warmer days ahead, also presents significant challenges that require preparedness and vigilance from everyone living near or planning to visit water bodies in the coming weeks.

Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA

Conservation authority says unsafe ice, slippery banks already exist in the region

March 6, 2024

Bradford Today

Stock image. Photo by Baskin Creative Studios via Pexels

With spring-like temperatures arriving early, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is reminding everyone to stay well back from waterways, ditches, ponds and lakes this time of year.

In a news release, the conservation authority says unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist in the area.

"The onset of spring will bring rain and melting snow, which will cause the breakup of remaining ice along watercourses and lakes as well as high stream flows," the NVCA warned. "These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water."

Conservation authorities across the region remind residents to keep family and pets away from all waterbodies, including streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

"Especially during this transitional season, it is important to supervise children and help them understand the dangers of playing near creeks and streams," states the release. "Anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters and other recreational users need to be aware of the dangerous conditions that could pose a risk to personal safety."

They offered the following timely tips:

- Keep family and pets away from the edges of all bodies of water
- Avoid all recreational activities in or around water, especially near ice jams or ice-covered watercourses and waterbodies — including municipally managed stormwater ponds
- Do not attempt to walk on ice-covered waterbodies or drive through flooded roads or fast-moving water
- If you live close to the water, move objects such as chairs or benches away from the water's edge to avoid losing them during potential spring high water
- Avoid walking close to and across riverbanks and ice-covered water to prevent falling through.

The NVCA says it continues to monitor waterways and will issue flood messages as conditions warrant, but flooding is not expected at this time.

Conservation Authority urges caution around waterways during thaws

Stay back from waterways and keep kids and pets away from water as banks are unstable and any remaining ice is unsafe

March 6, 2024

Collingwood Today

Photo from Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Facebook page. Contributed photo

NEWS RELEASE
NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
****

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority reminds everyone to stay well back from waterways, ditches, ponds and lakes this time of year.

With spring-like temperatures arriving early, unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist.

The onset of spring will bring rain and melting snow, which will cause the breakup of remaining ice along watercourses and lakes as well as high stream flows. These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water.

Conservation Authorities across the region remind residents to keep family and pets away from all bodies of water, including streams, rivers, ponds and lakes. Especially during this transitional season, it is important to supervise children and help them understand the dangers of playing near creeks and streams.

Anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters and other recreational users need to be aware of the dangerous conditions that could pose a risk to personal safety.

Play it safe and stay well back from waterways as the snow and ice melts. Help make this a safe and enjoyable spring.

- Keep family and pets away from the edges of all bodies of water.
- Avoid all recreational activities in or around water, especially near ice jams or ice-covered watercourses and waterbodies, including municipally managed stormwater ponds.
- Do not attempt to walk on ice-covered waterbodies or drive through flooded roads or fast-moving water.
- If you live close to the water, move objects such as chairs or benches away from the water’s edge to avoid losing them during potential spring high water.

- Avoid walking close to and across riverbanks and ice-covered water to prevent falling through.

The NVCA continues to monitor waterways and will issue flood messages as conditions warrant.

****

Water Unsafe with Melting Snow and Ice

March 6, 2024 by Phil DeLand

Country 105

People are being reminded to be safe around waterways as the warm weather continues.

A release from the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority says everything from ditches, ponds and lakes this time of year can be dangerous.

They say unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist and will only get worse.

With an early onset of spring mixed with rain and melting snow, ice along watercourses and lakes are going to continue to breakdown.

Officials say these hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water.

Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring

March 6, 2024 by Julianna Balsamo

CTV Barrie

Ice conditions on Lake Simcoe on Wed., Feb. 28, 2024. (Source: York Regional Police)

Due to spring-like temperatures, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) advises people to avoid waterways, ditches, ponds, and lakes.

As spring approaches, rain and melting snow are expected to break up ice along watercourses, lakes, ponds and streams.

"These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water," the NVCA stated in a release.

Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring

March 6, 2024

iHeart Radio

Ice conditions on Lake Simcoe on Wed., Feb. 28, 2024. (Source: York Regional Police)

Due to spring-like temperatures, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) advises people to avoid waterways, ditches, ponds, and lakes.

As spring approaches, rain and melting snow are expected to break up ice along watercourses, lakes, ponds and streams.

"These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water," the NVCA stated in a release.

Recreational users, such as anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters, and others, should be cautious around waterways because of the potential risk.

The NVCA recommends keeping children and pets away from bodies of water and avoid walking in any ice-covered areas.

If you live near a body of water, move objects like chairs or benches away from the edge to prevent them from being swept away during spring high water.

The NVCA will continue monitoring waterways and issue flood messages as conditions permit. For more information, call your local Conservation Authority.

Spring-like conditions prompt water safety warning from NVCA

Conservation authority says unsafe ice, slippery banks already exist in the region

March 6, 2024

Innisfil Today

Stock image. Photo by Baskin Creative Studios via Pexels

With spring-like temperatures arriving early, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is reminding everyone to stay well back from waterways, ditches, ponds and lakes this time of year.

In a news release, the conservation authority says unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist in the area.

"The onset of spring will bring rain and melting snow, which will cause the breakup of remaining ice along watercourses and lakes as well as high stream flows," the NVCA warned. "These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water."

Conservation authorities across the region remind residents to keep family and pets away from all waterbodies, including streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

"Especially during this transitional season, it is important to supervise children and help them understand the dangers of playing near creeks and streams," states the release. "Anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters and other recreational users need to be aware of the dangerous conditions that could pose a risk to personal safety."

They offered the following timely tips:

- Keep family and pets away from the edges of all bodies of water
- Avoid all recreational activities in or around water, especially near ice jams or ice-covered watercourses and waterbodies — including municipally managed stormwater ponds
- Do not attempt to walk on ice-covered waterbodies or drive through flooded roads or fast-moving water
- If you live close to the water, move objects such as chairs or benches away from the water's edge to avoid losing them during potential spring high water
- Avoid walking close to and across riverbanks and ice-covered water to prevent falling through.

The NVCA says it continues to monitor waterways and will issue flood messages as conditions warrant, but flooding is not expected at this time.

Avoid the dangers of waterways this spring

March 6, 2024

Pure Country 106

Photo: Ice conditions on Lake Simcoe on Wed., Feb. 28, 2024. (Source: York Regional Police)

Due to spring-like temperatures, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) advises people to avoid waterways, ditches, ponds, and lakes.

As spring approaches, rain and melting snow are expected to break up ice along watercourses, lakes, ponds and streams.

"These hazardous conditions can cause life-threatening injury if a person falls into the extremely cold water," the NVCA stated in a release.

Recreational users, such as anglers, canoeists, hikers, hunters, and others, should be cautious around waterways because of the potential risk.

The NVCA recommends keeping children and pets away from bodies of water and avoid walking in any ice-covered areas.

If you live near a body of water, move objects like chairs or benches away from the edge to prevent them from being swept away during spring high water.

The NVCA will continue monitoring waterways and issue flood messages as conditions permit. For more information, call your local Conservation Authority.

Stay Away From the Water

March 7, 2024 by Adrianne Proceviat

FM 101 Milton

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority is reminding everyone to use caution near waterways at this time.

The NVCA says the warm weather has brought rain and melted much of the ice.

Any remaining ice is expected to melt and break up along local bodies of water and lead to higher than usual stream flows.

These conditions can cause life-threatening injury if someone falls into the extremely cold water.

The NVCA reminds residents to keep children and pets away from all bodies of water, including streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

Ontario weakens watershed protections (again) as natural resources minister gets new powers

New rules for conservation authorities reduce buffer zones between development and wetlands and empower Doug Ford's cabinet to issue permits without their say

March 7, 2024 by Fatima Syed

The Narwhal

Ontario's minister of natural resources will soon have the power to overrule — or bypass — environmental oversight bodies to greenlight development.

The powers are codified in new regulations governing conservation authorities, which are unique to Ontario: for nearly 80 years, they have overseen and protected the province's southern watersheds, in part by ensuring development occurs sustainably.

Released last month, the new Conservation Authorities Act rules do broaden some conservation authority powers by allowing them to stop development that threatens to worsen the impacts of a natural hazard such as floods, droughts and wildfires. But the changes also weaken their ability to protect water quality, reduce the distance between development lands and wetlands, and eliminate the need to acquire permits before building certain small structures.

Notably, the new rules strip away some of their powers by authorizing Natural Resources Minister Graydon Smith to issue development permits without conservation authority review. This is the second time in five years the Doug Ford government has attempted to weaken conservation authorities through legislation — although it hasn't always been successful.

The minister is now empowered to direct conservation authorities to issue, or not issue, permits for development. Smith will also be able to change conditions a conservation authority might place on a permit — such as altering construction plans to better manage water intake or requiring regular reports. Developers will gain new mechanisms to appeal conservation authority decisions, including asking the minister to review them.

The goal, according to the rules, is to create "a clear and streamlined permitting process." But experts say the minister's new powers, combined with these changes, could do the opposite.

Ontario Natural Resources Minister Graydon Smith oversees conservation authorities, the province's unique watershed management bodies. He said the use of his new powers to overrule them will be "extremely

limited.” Photo: Graydon Smith / Facebook

“It’s a pretty strange choice,” Laura Bowman, a lawyer with Ecojustice, told The Narwhal. “Conservation authorities have very detailed expertise in the management of their watershed. To take that out of their hands and put it in the hands of a minister and his staff who don’t know anything about the environment … it’s just going to cause chaos.”

The new Conservation Authorities Act regulations don’t clearly define when and how the minister could use these powers. Minister Smith told The Narwhal these powers would “of course, be extremely limited.”

“Conservation authorities do a great job at protecting people and keeping them safe,” he said at the Ontario legislature on Tuesday. “We really just wanted to streamline that regulation down.”

But the broadness of the regulations makes many nervous, especially when considered in light of other environmental oversight changes made by the Ford government. Along with the previous weakening of conservation authorities, the Ministry of Natural Resources has been stripped of its responsibility for evaluating how development proposals could affect wetlands: that job has been outsourced to private experts when needed and the criteria have been watered down.

Many conservation authority staff say this means the minister doesn’t have access to the environmental expertise needed to use these powers appropriately.

Storms caused flooding along western Lake Erie’s northern shore in April 2018. Windsor-Essex is Ontario’s most flood-prone region, and the head of its conservation authority worries the Ford government’s new rules will complicate mitigation efforts. Photos: Essex Region Conservation Authority / Flickr

“The minister better staff up if he wants to tell us what to do,” Tim Byrne, head of Essex Region Conservative Authority in-between Lake Erie and the Detroit River, told The Narwhal. “And as for overruling us or appealing our decisions, well fuck you, minister. Based on what?”

“When you’re dealing with property issues, you have to balance private interests with public and environmental safety. Will the minister do that or weigh one over the other? We can all guess the answer.”

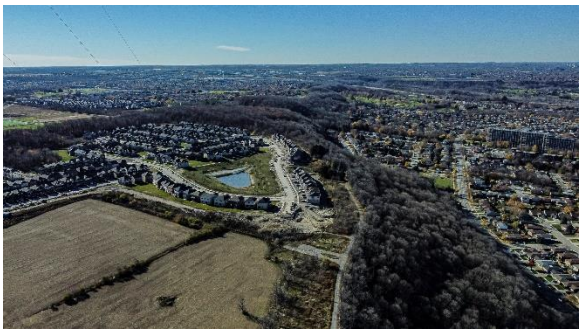
After this story was published, Byrne sent The Narwhal a statement to "sincerely apologize" for his comments. "Having devoted 38 years to ensuring that people and property are protected from flooding and erosion, I was extremely upset to learn that Conservation Authorities' ability to continue doing this important work had been further eroded," he said in an email. "Notwithstanding, I regret my use of inappropriate language and any embarrassment it has caused the Minister, my Board of Directors, fellow conservation authorities, and staff."

Issuing a permit without conservation authority review "would open the [minister's] door to requests," Rob Baldwin, head of Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, said. "Do they want that? It all comes down to how they use it and for what." Last year, two watchdog reports on the Greenbelt scandal found the government had prioritized developer requests over environmental and technical considerations.

The Narwhal spoke to several experts — including 13 conservation authority staff — who say this move is especially concerning because it is part of a bigger trend, in which the Ford government appears to be devaluing expert opinions to make unilateral decisions. Many described this new power as similar to minister's zoning orders — a mechanism Ford's Housing Ministry has used more often than any other previous government to override planning regulations. The Ford government has also given the mining minister powers to approve exploration and closures, decisions that used to be made by technical experts.

"What is reflected here is still a lack of understanding of conservation authority expertise and a lack of appreciation for them," Bowman said.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority told The Narwhal in an email that it "will continue to offer scientific and policy advice to the minister if we are made aware that the use of such powers is being considered."



The Ford government says its new rules for conservation authorities will "streamline" the development process but experts worry they could make decisions more complicated, leading to delays in construction. Photo: Christopher Katsarov Luna / The Narwhal

A 'mixed bag' of changes, including policies that will 'squeeze' wetlands between development: experts

These new regulations close the chapter on an early Ford government promise. Conservation authorities, which are staffed by ecologists, biologists, hydrologists, species-at-risk specialists and other experts, have been bracing for new rules since Ford took power in 2018

and vowed to streamline the planning process. Over the last six years, the authorities have tried to work with the government to maintain environmental oversight of development. Instead, the Progressive Conservatives have subjected these bodies to a series of legislative changes that have gone forward despite great pushback.

The government has proposed empowering the minister of natural resources to approve development applications twice: in 2020, with Bill 229, and again in 2022 with Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act. Bill 23 led the head of Ontario's species-at-risk agency to resign in protest. Even developers expressed concerns, warning of "unintended consequences" if the industry can't depend on conservation authority expertise to help protect homes and cities from natural hazards.

Still, the new regulations take effect on April 1 and seemingly ignore some of these concerns to present what many say is a "mixed bag" of changes.

One new rule causing significant worry is a change to the distance required between development lands and wetlands. Known as a "setback," such buffer zones are important to protect property from flooding and habitat from pollution or erosion. Ontario's historical minimum of 120 metres will be changed to just 30 metres. The impacts of the reduced setback on water and the surrounding environment will now be determined on a case-by-case basis, likely creating additional work for many authorities.

Patricia Chow-Fraser, a biologist and professor at McMaster University, believes this "shortsighted" move will harm species at-risk, some of which move 50 metres or more between water and land daily. Breaking apart wetlands endangers them, she said. "Under these rules, we'll be squeezing them in an urbanized centre and that is the wrong way to go," she told The Narwhal.

New Conservation Authorities Act rules reduce the mandatory distance between development and wetlands. These buffer zones, like between Carruthers Creek and surrounding housing in Ajax, Ont., help protect property from flooding and water from being polluted. Photo: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

The new rules also exempt minor construction — docks, patios, decks, hot tubs and garages — from conservation authority permit requirements for the very first time, even in flood zones. Minister Smith told The Narwhal the change is meant to allow people "to do very low-risk activity and get a permit."

But Geoff Cade, water and planning manager at Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority — Ontario's first, on the southeastern shores of Lake Huron — worries too many small structures built on shorelines without oversight could become a problem. "[The new] regulation allows these structures to be built in areas that were underwater a couple of years ago" when high water levels caused severe flooding, he said.

The government hasn't provided reasoning or risk assessment for its new exemptions, but Byrne, whose region is the most flood-prone in the province, has his own opinion.

"These exemptions have nothing to do with the natural environment but to help build things for people's enjoyment and in the long term increase the threat of flooding," Byrne said. "Why would you allow additional kinds of development in flood zones? Even if it's small, it just doesn't make sense."

Still, most conservation authority staff who spoke to The Narwhal are "pleasantly surprised" that the government has walked back its broad-scale attack. On paper, the rules give authorities greater powers to stop development that is likely to have harmful impacts, including the power to independently ("and responsibly," Baldwin said) stop development in a floodplain, a provincially significant wetland or on sensitive river banks — though it is unclear if the minister can intervene in such decisions.

The rules also empower conservation authorities to enforce greater fines for those egregiously harming the environment during construction. "It changes the playing field of deterrence," Baldwin said.

"These regulations aren't as dramatic as we all feared," Bowman said. "But [conservation authorities'] role has been severely undermined and all for what end? To have a slightly more constrained and environmentally limited permitting process?"

"This is just setting the stage for a bunch of new problems rather than addressing the problem the government has been talking about — slow development."

Developers can now request the natural resources minister review permit denials or conditions. They can use appeals to dispute studies used by conservation authorities in deciding the environmental impacts of construction. Photo: Christopher Katsarov Luna / The Narwhal

New Conservation Authorities Act rules give developers more power to appeal permit denials

Before Bill 23, each of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities was governed by its own regulations. The Ford government consolidated those regulations to ensure consistency, limiting the authorities' focus to natural hazard prevention instead of overall watershed health. Cade said this one-size-fits-all approach doesn't consider that rural and urban conservation authorities have different environmental landscapes and issues.

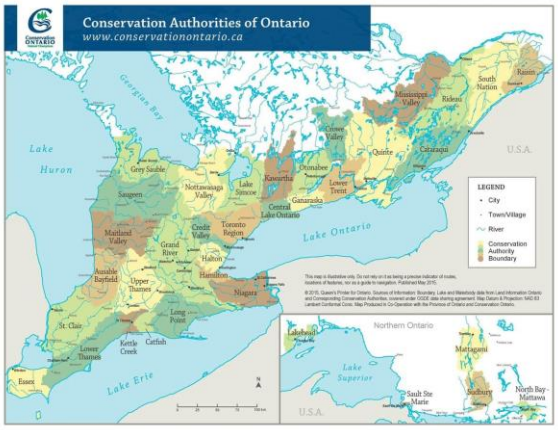
"As we try to create some ubiquitous landscape in terms of legislation, you risk losing local knowledge and scientific expertise and local characteristics of the natural world each of us is regulating," Cade told The Narwhal.

"What I oversee is very different than the Greater Toronto Area.The development pressures are different." His current concerns include gentrification, as small cottages on the Lake Huron shoreline morphing into big, permanent homes, and increased construction of large-scale migrant worker housing on farms.

The Narwhal reached out to all 36 authorities and heard back from 11, all of which were scrambling to understand the impacts of this latest round of changes and quickly implement them over the next three weeks. That includes redoing public maps to show the new buffer zones and identify floodplains, as well as revamping permit applications.

It's a hefty job, they all say.

"We accept the changes but April 1 is a pipe dream," Doug Hevenor, head of Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, which oversees the region south of Georgian Bay, said. "Five years, we've played a changing game: reload and reunderstand. And we're still playing it now."



Ontario's 36 conservation authorities are spread mostly across the southern part of the province, with five located further north. Each used to be governed by individual regulations: staff say the Ford government's consolidation ignores the difference in rural and urban landscapes. Map: Conservation Ontario

In addition to empowering the minister to greenlight development, the new Conservation Authorities Act regulations have changed the scope of what an authority can consider in reviewing development applications. It also speeds up their timeline.

The regulations still allow conservation authorities to consider the impacts of development on flooding, erosion and beaches to minimize harm to people and property. However, they can no longer consider the impact of development on water pollution at all,

even though a key function of healthy wetlands is water filtration.

And while some conservation authority powers have increased, developers also have new powers: they can request a minister's review on a permit denial or conditions. They can also appeal decisions, or the failure to make one within 90 days, at the Ontario Land Tribunal. Appeals can now centre on disputing studies used by conservation authorities in making a decision.

While some disputes might be handled more efficiently now, authority staff say, others could delay development instead of speeding it up. Altogether, the changes may make decision-making "more piecemeal and arbitrary," Bowman said. "It's going to result in a weirdly arbitrary, narrow process."

Still, many conservation authority heads are trying to stay "cautiously optimistic."

"Hopefully this was the last change for a while," Baldwin said. "We've never been against the government trying to facilitate infrastructure or building homes. Our mandates are supportive of each other."

"These regulations might be a new status quo. And we'll figure it out — because we have to."

— With files from Emma McIntosh

Update March 7, 2024, at 3:53 p.m.: This story has been updated to include additional comments from Tim Byrne, head of Essex Region Conservation Authority.

Mapping helps partners understand flood risks

March 8, 2024 by Bonnie MacPherson

Creemore Echo

The question is not if Creemore will face massive flooding at some point in the future, but rather when.

Tim Koen of Aquafor Beech, the consultant who did flood hazard mapping for the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), says the entire east side of Creemore is prone to flooding due to the annual spring freshette as melting snow and rainfall cause the Mad River to strain its banks.

"The Creemore situation is somewhat unusual," said Koen, "because of the very wide, shallow nature of the floodplain."

Consultants used a two-zone floodplain approach to determine a floodway where there is high risk of property damage and injury, and a fringe where flooding will be less intense in terms of depth and velocity.

NVCA undertook the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program in cooperation with Natural Resources Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, with the Township of Clearview providing 50 per cent of the funding.

The NVCA and Clearview Township held a Public Information Centre (PIC) on March 4 to present preliminary results and invite comment before the information is eventually incorporated into the township's Official Plan. Kohen says residents attending PICs are typically concerned with the specific impact on their property. They often say, "I've lived here my whole life and I've never seen flooding that bad." That may be, says Koen, but climate change is moving us ever closer to a major weather event.

Dalia Al-Ali, the NVCA's manager of engineering services, says one of the key findings of the mapping project is that there are significant wetlands upstream of Creemore that have major flow attenuating effects. It is essential, she says, that these areas be protected.

"The goal of floodplain mapping is not so much to mitigate potential damage as to learn how to live with the risk safely," said Al-Ali.

The study identifies areas within the Creemore settlement that are safe from natural hazards such as flooding, and will inform future planning and development. Generally, springtime flooding is a problem at the south end of Creemore between Mill Street and Mary Street, in the fields located between County Road 9 and Edward

Street and from Edward Street to Concession 3, as well as in the village of Avening.

Nine flood damage centres were initially identified by the MacLaren Plansearch watershed hydrology study. The NVCA analyzed and prioritized these centres in 2017-2018 and ranked them based on factors including flood event warning time, population impacted, affected roads for pedestrian access and vehicle access, and expected annual damages. The Mad River through Creemore ranked fifth worst for flooding risk. The Batteaux River in Collingwood topped the list, followed by the Pretty River and Silver Creek, also in Collingwood. Lamont Creek through Stayner came in at number four. Spring Creek in Alliston/New Tecumseth; Beslea Drain and Walter Creek in Shelburne; the Wye River in Elmvale and the Nottawasaga, Pine and Mad Rivers in the Angus area posed lower flood risks.

The draft study is available at www.nvca.on.ca/floodstudy. Public comment is invited before March 15.

NVCA photo: Flooding south of Creemore in April of 1975