

## **03-25-BOD**

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Friday, March 28, 2025 at 9:00 AM EDT to Friday, March 28, 2025 at 12:00 PM EDT

## **Agenda**

### **1. Events**

#### **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 can 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! Ending the tour with a pancake and sausage breakfast with fresh maple syrup. Prices for most activities are included in the admission fee.

**Date:** April 5 – 6, 2025

**Location:** Tiffin Centre for Conservation

#### **Tiffin Nature School**

At Tiffin Nature School, children aged 2.5 to 10 are invited to explore and connect with the natural world. We nurture their innate curiosity, offering immersive outdoor experiences that inspire discovery and growth.

**Dates:** Tuesdays & Thursdays until May 29, 2025

**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 #03-25-BOD dated on March 28, 2025 be approved as amended.

### **6. Chairs Update**

Chair Scott will share his updates.

## **7. Announcements**

- a) The NVCA is pleased to announce that our 2024 Annual Report is now available and posted on our website.
- b) Director, Conservation Services, Kyra Howes will introduce to the Board of Directors NVCA's new Manager, Stewardship & Restoration Services, Paul Tripodo.

## **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 02-25-BOD, 01-25-NVSPA and 04-25-BOD Special Meeting dated on February 28, 2025 and March 17, 2025 be approved.

### **12.2. Staff Reports**

#### **12.2.1. Staff Report No. 07-03-25-BOD from Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services regarding Lease Renewal**

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 07-03-25-BOD regarding a short-term lease renewal with Quality Sod Farms Ltd be approved as presented.

#### **12.2.2. Staff Report No. 08-03-25-BOD from Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services regarding Life & Security Upgrades**

Recommendation:



**RESOLVED THAT:** NVCA's Board of Directors approve the use of up to \$18,000 from the Capital Assets Reserve for required Life & Security Upgrades

**12.2.3. Staff Report No. 09-03-25-BOD from Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services regarding Interim CAO Workplan Update**

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 09-03-25-BOD regarding the Interim CAO workplan update.

**12.2.4. Staff Report No. 11-03-25-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communication Specialist regarding Communications Report**

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** Staff Report No. 10-03-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025, be received.

**13. Other Business**

**14. Adjourn**

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting adjourn at \_\_\_\_\_ to meet again on April 25, 2025 or at the call of the Chair.

**To:** Board of Directors

**Submitted by:** Jonathan Scott

**Re:** NVCA Chair's Report for March 2025 Board Meeting

**Date:** 21 March 2025

Below please find my Chair's Report for March 2025 highlighting activities undertaken in recent weeks.

## **1. Addressing Municipal Concerns and Strengthening Relationships**

Over the past month, we have continued to engage with our municipal partners to ensure that NVCA remains responsive to their needs. Vice-Chair Gail Little, Interim CAO Sheryl Flanagan and I had a productive meeting with Essa Township to discuss their priority files and concerns, and I am pleased to report that we have made progress in addressing their issues.

Additionally, we had the opportunity to present a deputation to Wasaga Beach Council on our year-in-review highlights and to address the proposed amalgamation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). It was gratifying to see that our efforts to improve timeliness, transparency and collaboration have helped earn back their support, as reflected in the kind words from both the mayor and deputy mayor.

To date, four municipal councils within our watershed have formally opposed the proposed merger with LSRCA, reinforcing the position that local watershed-based conservation authorities remain the best approach for effective environmental management and service delivery. Several other Councils in our watershed and in the Lake Simcoe watershed have also expressed their reservations about this proposal moving forward, especially without any analysis.

## **2. Planning, Permitting and Engineering Improvements**

Vice-Chair Little and I met with our planning, permitting and engineering teams, and our Interim CAO, to review monthly planning and permitting applications. As mentioned in last month's report, this new tracking system and meeting is intended to improve accountability and ensure a close link between operational staff and governance oversight.

Staff are moving ahead on clearing low-risk or routine files more expeditiously while ensuring we maintain rigorous environmental oversight. They are also going to reach out to permitting applications that are over a year old where staff have not heard back from the applicant, to either revisit or close these applications. Staff are also peer-reviewing some files and undertaking a strategy to clear the full queue of outstanding applications by the end of July. This initiative will help us provide faster service to municipalities, developers and residents while upholding our regulatory responsibilities. These measures are further addressed in the Interim CAO's report later in the agenda.

### **3. Exploring Opportunities for Increased Collaboration**

NVCA continues to work with Conservation Ontario and our neighbouring conservation authorities on ideas for increased collaboration, sharing best practices, standardization and exploring potential shared services or procurement opportunities. This approach will allow us to strengthen service delivery while maintaining cost efficiency.

### **4. Conclusion**

I appreciate the continued dedication of our board members and staff as we work to improve service delivery, strengthen municipal partnerships and ensure NVCA remains a trusted, effective conservation authority.

I welcome any questions or feedback.

Jonathan Scott  
Chair, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority





# **2024** **Annual Report**



**Nottawasaga Valley**  
Conservation Authority



# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Adapting to the Changing <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i></b> | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Environmental Education</b>                                      | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Conservation Lands &amp; Operations</b>                          | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Stewardship</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Forestry</b>   | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Watershed Science</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Engineering</b>  | <b>26</b> |
| <b>Development Planning &amp; Permits</b>                           | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Corporate Services</b>   | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Information Management</b>                                       | <b>36</b> |

## Message from the CAO

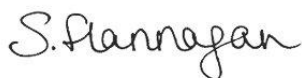
2024 marked the 70th anniversary of Hurricane Hazel. In this devastating storm, 81 people lost their lives. Across the Nottawasaga Watershed, 18 bridges and dams were damaged or destroyed. This anniversary date is a stark reminder of why conservation authorities like NVCA exist.

Every day, NVCA staff worked tirelessly to protect and improve the health of our watershed so that our communities, economies, and wildlife could thrive. They worked with our municipalities, partners, funders, landowners, and volunteers to manage the watershed so that it is resilient to climate change and urban growth.

In 2024, they navigated through changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and created strategies and ideas that would lead the organization forward. They embraced these changes and became more, innovative, efficient, and impactful.

Together, the NVCA team protects and preserves the rivers, streams, forests and wetlands deeply connected to the economic and social well-being of the communities we serve. Whether by safeguarding agricultural land, mitigating flooding or maintaining the natural beauty that attracts residents and visitors, their work has a positive impact across the entire watershed.

The coming years will be a transformational period for Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) as we welcome a new CAO. Together, we will find solutions, improve customer service and explore new ways to exceed expectations.



Sheryl Flannagan

Interim CAO

# **Adapting to the Changing *Conservation Authorities Act***

## **Developing Strategies**

Through the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, all conservation authorities in Ontario were directed to produce five strategies: Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy, Conservation Areas Strategy and Land Inventory, Ice Management Plan, Natural Hazard Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and Natural Hazard Infrastructure Operational Management Plan.

Over the last few years, NVCA has appointed individuals and established working groups to complete these strategies. All of them were complete by December 31, 2024.

The Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy identifies the risks, issues and challenges in the watershed along with mitigation strategies to address these concerns through an integrated watershed management approach. NVCA will use the information from this strategy to identify current priorities and future direction.

The Conservation Areas Strategy is intended to inform the decision-making related to the lands NVCA owns and controls, including decisions related to the acquisition and disposition of these lands. The Land Inventory captures specific information for each parcel of land owned or controlled by NVCA. It is directly linked to the Conservation Areas Strategy as the land use categories established in the strategy will be applied to each parcel of land in the Inventory.

The Ice Management Plan includes how ice within NVCA's jurisdiction may increase the risk of natural hazards and the necessary steps to mitigate risk. This includes identifying the equipment and resources needed to carry out these steps.

The Natural Hazard Infrastructure Asset Management Plan supports mandatory programs and services related to flood control, low flow augmentation, and erosion control infrastructure. This plan provides details of the flood infrastructures that NVCA manages, as well as an assessment of the structures, processes, and systems.

The Natural Hazard Infrastructure Operational Management Plan summarizes the operation, maintenance, repair, and decommissioning of any water control infrastructure.

## More Changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*

In February 2024, NVCA received notification from the Ministry of Natural Resources that the final changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* were to be enacted on April 1, 2024.

These changes included:

- Removal of pollution and conservation of land tests in permit application reviews
- Regulation buffer around wetlands reduced from 120 metres to 30 metres
- Annual update of regulations mapping
- Additional exceptions to the types of developments that are regulated
- Reviewing applications within 21 days for completeness and give notice of decision within 90 days for all applications
- Permits may be issued for up to 60 months, including any extensions
- Updates to hearing procedures
- Implementation of stop orders

As soon as NVCA staff received notification of these changes, a transition plan was implemented to ensure legislative requirements were met.

## Public Consultations

There were many components of the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* that required public consultation. These included 30-day public consultations for the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy, the Conservation Areas Strategy and updates to NVCA's planning and regulations fee policy and regulation procedures.



## Environmental Education

2024 was a year of growth for NVCA's Education department. From family-oriented programming to lessons geared towards youth from Junior Kindergarten to grade 12, their programs continued to inspire curiosity and a connection with nature. NVCA remained a trusted educational community partner, working with organizations like the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB), and Georgian Bay Forever (GBF) and the Rotary Club of Barrie.

In 2024, the Education team engaged with over 12,500 students from 16 municipalities in our watershed—and beyond! Summer Camp Tiffin saw enrolment grow to 80 youth per week, an increase of 20 from last year. Our commitment to bilingual education also expanded, with three French-language educators now on staff, increased French-language training, translated materials, and new course offerings in French. Now, students can enjoy some of our most beloved activities, like our Maple Syrup tours, in both official languages and word is spreading as we grew 44 percent from the previous year.

As we look ahead, the Environmental Education team is eager to build on this momentum. With growing interest in our programs, new partnerships on the horizon, and exciting opportunities to expand our offerings, we're excited for what's to come in 2025.

## Tiffin Nature School: A New Chapter

This year, the Tiffin Nature Program took a big step forward, officially becoming the Tiffin Nature School! With our submission of a 'Notice of Intention to Operate an Uninspected Private School' to the Ministry of Education, we've expanded to serve more age groups, offering full-day programming on both Tuesdays and Thursdays.

And it's not just students who are learning—our team also hosted educational events for community organizations, sharing the wonders of nature with even more people.



# Georgian Bay Forever: Hands-on Learning for a Healthier Watershed

Thanks to funding from Georgian Bay Forever (GBF), NVCA expanded our hands-on education programs focused on water quality and pollution prevention. The Environmental Education team helped students learn about our local waterways and their impact on them through three key initiatives.

## Yellow Fish Road

While participating in Yellow Fish Road, students painted yellow fish near storm drains to remind their communities that only rain should go down the drain. Educators inform students of the importance and limitations of our wastewater systems, and the stencils become a mark of proactivity the students can see as an impact beyond just their time with NVCA.



## Microplastics

With more and more news coming out about the impact of microplastics, students had the opportunity to investigate microplastics firsthand. Through this program, students collected water and soil samples, then analyzed them under microscopes to see for themselves the pervasiveness of microplastics in our aquatic ecosystems.



## Enviroscape

Enviroscape is a 3D model that helps students get hands-on experience with how our watershed functions. This model helps students visualize how water flows through the landscape and how pollution spreads. Participation in the Envirosapes program increased by 84% in 2024.

## Community Support & Recognition

The Rotary Club of Barrie also partnered with GBF and NVCA, offering a pizza lunch to the first school to sign up for one or more programs—congratulations to Ardagh Bluffs Public School for winning this tasty prize!

Furthermore, Georgian Bay Forever helped expand access to environmental education by offering free programming to all municipalities in our watershed.

## Salmon Run in Collingwood

Once again, NVCA joined the See the Salmon Run in the Town of the Blue Mountains, hosted by the Blue Mountain Watershed Trust. Students had the opportunity to witness the incredible salmon migration and gain a deeper appreciation for local fish populations, their habitats, and the importance of conservation efforts.

## Adding French-Language Programming

A bilingual expansion saw NVCA's Environmental Education staff receive French-language training, thanks to the support of a retired French principal. This led to the introduction of new fully French programs, and the translation of materials—including the beloved Tiffin Scavenger Hunt—ensuring even more students can engage with nature in their preferred language.

## Far-Reaching Education: Inspiring Students Across the Watershed and Beyond

NVCA's Education Team connected with students from 16 municipalities in our watershed—with plans in place for the outstanding two in 2025. Highlights from the year included Grey Highlands students taking part in an overnight environmental education camp at Tiffin, where they explored nature firsthand.

Students from Toronto Christian High School combined adventure with learning when they took NVCA's "Amazing Race" challenge, blending outdoor education, teamwork, and problem-solving.





## Camp Tiffin

Camp Tiffin had its most successful year ever, growing from 60 to 80 campers per week! This success was made possible by a dedicated team of staff and counsellors, who led engaging outdoor adventures and encouraged campers to connect with nature in creative ways—like making gifts for the fairies of the forest!

## Indigenous Learning

Our relationships with Indigenous partners deepened this year as we began working alongside Indigenous educators who came to the Tiffin Centre, to assist us with programming to more than 900 Grade 5 students from Simcoe County District School Board. Introducing a traditional way of life for the Indigenous peoples who have called Simcoe County their home, predominately Anishinaabe Nations, students learned about opening ceremony and were invited to participate in a smudging with sage to help them move forward in a good way for the day. They also learned about the importance of living respectfully with the land, the importance of sacred plants, Indigenous practical skills like shelter building and fire starting with natural materials, and using flint and steel and bow drills.

## Challenges & Looking Ahead

Despite many successes, 2024 also brought challenges for NVCA's Environmental Education team. High staff turnover due to low wages created a knowledge gap, requiring increased training and mentorship for new staff.

To sustain and expand programming, the Environmental Education team diversified and created new revenue streams, offering more specialized, versatile programs. Despite these hurdles, our team remains committed to adapting, innovating, and inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards. With the continued support of our partners and communities, the team looks forward to an exciting future for outdoor education in the Nottawasaga Watershed!







## Conservation Lands & Operations

NVCA's Conservation Lands Department is vital in maintaining and improving our Conservation Areas, ensuring they remain safe, accessible, and welcoming for visitors. In 2024, NVCA's Conservation Areas saw an estimated 45,000 visitors. To keep our Conservation Areas safe and inviting, the Lands team worked tirelessly to keep trails maintained, facilities in top shape, and natural spaces thriving.

They also conducted Conservation Area inspections and enforcement to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all. From everyday upkeep to major restoration projects, the team worked year-round to protect the natural beauty of our watershed. Additionally, they oversaw a robust schedule of facility rentals which catered to both community organizations and private events, including weddings, while they organized special events like the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival and Festival at Fort Willow.



## Managing Edenvale Conservation Area

In 2024, NVCA's Conservation Lands Department took over maintenance of the Edenvale Conservation Area, one of our most popular sites. As part of a long-term improvement plan, the team upgraded the parking area and introduced paid parking. They also removed an aging pavilion that had reached the end of its lifespan. Once known primarily as a paddling launch, Edenvale has now been transformed into a welcoming picnic area for families, offering a more enjoyable and scenic spot to relax and connect with nature.



## Developing New Visitor Experiences at the Fort Willow Conservation Area

Fort Willow Conservation Area is a National Historic Site with a rich past dating back to before European settlement of the area. Located on the Nine Mile Portage, the site was once a vital location used in the transportation of goods and people between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay. Today, visitors can explore scenic trails, and educational displays that bring history to life.

In 2024, the Conservation Lands team began developing interactive signs to help visitors visualize what the Conservation Area looked like during its operation as a supply depot in the early 1800s. With support from Tourism Simcoe County, the team designed the first five signs. This project will continue into 2025, with five more signs planned to enhance the visitor experience further.



## Refreshing Buildings in Petun Conservation Area

At Petun Conservation Area, the Conservation Lands team supported the Georgian Triangle Anglers' Association to improve the building on the property. Upgrades included refreshed decking, repaired siding, and regraded driveway, ensuring the space remains functional and well-maintained for years to come. NVCA helped fund some materials, but most of the project was paid for through fundraising efforts and volunteer labour.





## Restoration Work for Utopia Grist Mill Continues

At Utopia Conservation Area, NVCA's Conservation Lands team continued to partner with the Friends of the Utopia Grist Mill to support ongoing restoration efforts at the historic gristmill. Thanks to the dedication of Friends of the Utopia Grist Mill Chair Susan Antler and volunteers, exterior tiles were sourced from Quebec to maintain the mill's original character. With funding from the Rural Economic Development Program through the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs the mill's exterior was successfully restored, preserving this local landmark for future generations.



## New Boardwalk Coming to Minesing Wetlands

In 2024, NVCA launched a multi-year project in partnership with the Rotary Club of Barrie to install a low-impact boardwalk at the Harold Parker Memorial Trail in the Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area. With the help of Rotary volunteers, NVCA's Conservation Lands team began the assembly of the first 10 sections of the boardwalk.

This boardwalk will extend from the parking area on George Johnston Road on an existing hiking trail. This boardwalk will make the wetlands more accessible, while keeping visitors' feet dry. Over the coming years, NVCA plans to raise additional funds to extend the boardwalk to the end of the trail and install an elevated platform.



## Spring Tonic and Festival at Fort Willow

Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival and the Festival at Fort Willow returned in 2024 and continued to offer meaningful opportunities for NVCA to connect with the community. Spring Tonic welcomed families to the Tiffin Centre, where they enjoyed maple syrup tastings, pancake breakfasts, and hands-on activities celebrating this sweet Canadian tradition.

Meanwhile, the Festival at Fort Willow transported visitors back to the 1800s, bringing history to life through interactive displays and reenactments. Together, these events fostered a deeper appreciation for Ontario's natural and cultural heritage while strengthening public engagement with NVCA's mission.





## Providing Space to Gather in Nature

In 2024, NVCA's Conservation Areas served as vibrant community hubs, hosting a diverse range of events that brought people together, supported important causes, and showcased the versatility of our natural spaces. From educational gatherings like Girl Guides Canada's World Think Day to outdoor adventures with the Barrie Canoe and Kayak Club and Disc Golf Tournaments, NVCA's spaces welcomed visitors of all ages and interests.

The Conservation Lands team was proud to host fundraisers and awareness events, including Ducks Unlimited Canada's 'Duck and Run' fundraiser for conservation, Down Syndrome awareness walks, and Barrie SPCA's inaugural "Petoberfest," which drew 300 attendees and 30 vendors.

Cultural and recreational experiences flourished, with ongoing live-action role-playing events, dinner theatre performances, and a Hallmark movie filming on-site. Conservation-minded groups, including the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association and Bruce Trail Conservancy, also held meetings and special hikes in our protected areas.

NVCA hosted wedding rentals and ceremony-only bookings year-round, continuing to provide couples with a stunning natural backdrop for their special day. This year, we introduced enhanced wedding packages, ensuring an even more memorable experience. A standout addition was our fire-tending service for outdoor campfires, which quickly became a favourite among couples. To further elevate the ambiance, we also installed string lights in the courtyard outside the Jose Building, adding a warm and inviting glow to evening celebrations.

Seasonal celebrations rounded out the year, with Haunted Halloween, Christmas Markets, and Music Hikes adding a festive touch. Whether for corporate meetings, training sessions, or milestone celebrations, NVCA's Conservation Areas continue to be sought-after destinations for connection, learning, and outdoor experiences.







## Stewardship

The Stewardship team plays a crucial role in restoring and enhancing the health of our watershed. Through tree planting, stream rehabilitation, and strong community partnerships, they work to protect and improve our natural spaces for future generations. In 2024, the Stewardship team's efforts led to 101 projects that resulted in 16,594 trees planted and 7.6 km of streams and rivers rehabilitated, helping to reduce erosion, improve flood abatement opportunities, restore forests, improve wildlife habitat, improve water quality and aquatic ecosystems, and increase climate resilience across our watershed.





## A Legend Retires

After three decades of dedicated service, Fred Dobbs, Manager of Stewardship Services, retired from NVCA at the end of 2024. Throughout his career, Fred played a pivotal role in shaping the health of our watershed. He coordinated the natural channel design for the Black Ash Creek Floodway in Collingwood, restored floodplains along Beeton Creek, and led multiple dam removal projects to improve aquatic habitat. His most ambitious initiative, the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program, set out to restore 10 km of the river, a project that has grown into one of the largest river habitat enhancement efforts in southern Ontario. Fred's impact on conservation will be felt for generations to come, and we wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement!



# Tiffin Corridor Grasslands Project

At Tiffin Conservation Area, NVCA's Stewardship team has partnered with Hydro One to transform the hydro corridor into a thriving ecological space while balancing the electrical infrastructure maintenance requirements of the corridor. While Hydro One's priority is maintaining a stable energy system, its infrastructure spans hundreds of acres that hold untapped potential for conservation.

This pilot project explores how grassland restoration can be integrated into Hydro One's standard operating procedures, potentially shaping future land management practices. To measure its impact, NVCA's Stewardship team is monitoring Bear Creek and tracking bird populations, terrestrial species, and water infiltration, gathering critical data on how the site responds to restoration efforts.



# Report on the Nottawasaga River Restoration Project

In 2024, the Stewardship team stabilized a total of 387metres of the river banks through the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program! This was made possible with the help of Nottawasaga Futures/South Simcoe Streams Committee, Friends of the Mad River other partners, volunteers and funders. Additionally NVCA completed 200m of bank stabilization and floodplain enhancement on Willow Creek.

In the six years the Nottawasaga River Restoration Project has been running, the team has restored and stabilized a total of 3.2km of banks.

## Saving Sheldon Creek – a Triple Bypass Project!

Rivers and streams are like the critical circulatory systems of our watersheds, transporting not only water but also nutrients and sediments across the landscape. The following describes a “Triple Bypass” project designed to improve the health of Sheldon Creek.

Rivers and streams naturally form meanders which are important features for the health of these watercourses. One important function of meanders is to help reduce the energy and speed of water travelling through rivers. When a river is too straight, water moves too quickly and carries too much energy.

Meanders help reduce the speed and energy of the water travelling through a river and decrease the potential for bank erosion and hazardous conditions further downstream. Meanders are also important for habitat diversity with the outside of meander bends supporting deep pools for fish and invertebrates, while the inside of meanders form shallow slow-flowing sand bars which provide nursery habitat for smaller fish.

Along parts of Sheldon Creek, stream banks were historically overgrazed by livestock, which stripped away vegetation and the roots that stabilized the bank and prevented erosion. The resulting rapid erosion of the creek banks in multiple directions created very exaggerated meander curves resulting in the development of a very long, flat stream channel. The flat portions of the creek do not move quickly enough to scour away eroded sediment which builds up on the stream bed and buries the gravelly and rocky portions of the stream bed which provide spawning habitat for fish and crevice habitat for aquatic insects. The lack of shade due to vegetation removal by livestock and the slow-moving water currents in the long flat sections also contributed to increases in summer water temperatures. Parts of Sheldon Creek became too warm to provide good cool-water fish habitat!

To restore this section of Sheldon Creek, NVCA’s Stewardship team completed a two-year project to move the creek to its natural, gently meandering form. The team also worked with volunteers to stabilize the creek banks to reduce erosion. This work involved reducing the length of the creek by bypassing three exaggerated meanders and creating new bypass channels with a gently meandering form. The old meanders were converted into oxbow wetlands designed to provide habitat for amphibians, reptiles and birds. Volunteers and NVCA staff helped stabilize creek banks by anchoring cut Christmas trees at the bottom of the slopes, flattening the bank profile with a 20-ton excavator machine, re-applying natural on-site sod mats and planting trees.



## Taming the Mad River Continues

In 2023, NVCA's Stewardship team partnered with the Friends of the Mad River to start stabilizing an 85-meter-long eroding bank to protect the adjacent access road and parking lot at the Carruthers Park in Clearview Township. The bank stabilization project was accomplished through the installation of a 40-meter long boulder wall which incorporated topsoil and live vegetation to also improve habitat conditions. In 2024, the pilot project sought improve mid-channel habitat for fish and aquatic insects by installing large granite boulders in the middle of the river. The boulders provided feeding habitats for trout by creating slow moving pockets where these fish can easily hold position while hunting for food. The boulders also provided overhead and lateral cover that protects fish from predators.

The site was identified as a priority location for restoration based on a study completed in 2022. This study documented warm stream temperatures and low trout abundance at this location that would benefit from a targeted restoration project. A fish community survey will be completed in future years to better quantify changes in trout abundance.

## Restoring Mono Centre Creek

Mono Centre Creek is a stream in the Niagara Escarpment in the rural Town of Mono that supports native brook trout and other cold-water fish species. At the Bruce Trail Conservancy's Whitetail Refuge property, a man-made pond constructed several decades ago provides a large stagnant water surface area that warms the water flowing out of the pond into Mono Centre Creek. Thanks to funding from the Mono Headwater Streams Committee, NVCA's Stewardship team in partnership with the Bruce Trail Conservancy and GSS Engineering, is developing a restoration plan for the pond that will reduce temperatures in Mono Centre Creek while retaining wildlife habitat provided by the pond. The restoration plan will be based on topographical survey information and an analysis of stream flows and temperature data collected in 2024, thanks to support from the Mono Headwaters Streams Committee.





## New Partnership Restores Water Quality and Habitat in Willow Creek

NVCA's Stewardship team partnered with Napoleon and Midhurst Landowners Group to complete phase 1 of the largest stream restoration project that NVCA has ever completed in the Township of Oro-Medonte.

The coordination of this project took several years. Napoleon gave permission to NVCA to restore Willow Creek on their property, while Midhurst Landowners Group contributed funding to stabilize eroding stream banks and control phosphorus. The Government of Ontario also provided funding for the project for the construction of floodplain wetlands adjacent to the creek.

Volunteers secured Christmas trees to the bottom of the eroding banks to create habitat for small fish and stabilize the base of the eroding slopes. An excavator reduced the height of the eroding bank to create a shelf where large cut tree roots with 3-meter long logs attached were installed to further stabilize the creek bank and provide in-water habitat for aquatic species. Live sod mats, shrubs and larger caliper trees were added to the stream bank to create 'instant' habitat. The excavator also created floodplain wetlands along Willow Creek to improve habitat for amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds, as well as storing excess water and reducing local flooding.





A photograph of a young, vibrant green pine tree standing in a field of tall, dry grass. In the background, there are more pine trees and a white car parked on a road. The sky is overcast.

## 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 2024, 74,840 trees were planted on 24 properties.

Depending on the location and scale of the project, NVCA may be able to cover 25% – 88% of tree plantings for private landowners. In 2024 Tree planting was supported by grants from Forests Canada, Tree Canada, The County of Simcoe, The Town of New Tecumseth, World Wildlife Fund, EcoAction, and a donation from a watershed resident.



## Planting Trees is Very Popular, but can be a Tough Sell

In the early 1900s, as settlers established communities in the Nottawasaga Watershed, they started to clear land for farming. Topsoil quickly eroded and the sand underneath was exposed, creating inhospitable conditions for farming and residents. Between the 1960s and early 1990s, the Province of Ontario planted millions of trees to restore lost forests. Fast forward to today, NVCA is the only organization in the watershed that offers large scale tree planting services.

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.

To qualify for NVCA's tree planting program, properties must have at least 2 acres of planting space and be in the Nottawasaga Watershed. The vast majority of planting sites are privately owned, so the plantings must meet the needs and long-term property management goals of the landowner. Participation is not only voluntary, but landowners are required to assist financially. Grants can be used to encourage landowners to host plantings that meet NVCA priorities like wetland and riparian buffers. If financial resources allowed providing a 100% grant would greatly increase targeted plantings.

Planting sites are arranged 1 year in advance of planting. In 2024, 1/3 of the properties that NVCA's Forester visited were suitable for NVCA's Forestry Program. The rest of the sites were too wet, stoney, or the proposed planting was unaffordable to the landowner.

In the coming year, the Forestry department is exploring new opportunities to plant wetland buffers to enhance the watershed through flood water retention, improve water quality and habitat diversity.





## **Watershed Science**

NVCA's Watershed Science team monitors the rivers, streams, groundwater, wetlands, and forests in the Nottawasaga Watershed to identify stressors impacting the local environment. The information this team collects can measure the effectiveness of environmental restoration projects, the impacts of new development or other changes impacting the landscape.

Their work can help shape land use planning and policy decisions and determine if these policies are working.

NVCA's Watershed Science team provides cost-effective monitoring for municipalities, gathering local data and watershed-wide insights into human impacts. Collecting information on a watershed scale reduces redundancy and informs effective management.



# Development of the Watershed Monitoring Strategy

In 2023, the Watershed Science team began developing a Watershed Monitoring Strategy to improve efficiency while aligning with NVCA's Strategic Plan. The first section completed was the surface water discipline.

In 2024, the Watershed Science team began using the surface water discipline in their work. They determined the long-term monitoring sites and began implementing effective collection methods.

The team also incorporated a climate change lens to the monitoring strategy. Although this is a new discipline, the team incorporated many parameters that they already measure. These include stream health and groundwater monitoring. Currently, the team analyzes the data to extract information about temperature change, water quality and impacts on fish. Additional analysis will be completed to measure the impacts of climate change, including change in air temperature and the flow of water in streams and rivers.

The Watershed Science team will complete the groundwater and natural heritage components of the Watershed Monitoring Strategy in the following years.



## What lives in Petun Conservation Area?

Since 1960, NVCA has secured over 5,300 hectares of mostly environmentally sensitive areas within the watershed. While NVCA operates 11 active conservation areas, the majority of these lands are closed to the public to protect environmentally significant and natural hazard features.

To support ongoing and future management planning for these properties, staff ecologists are conducting biological surveys to determine the significance and sensitivity of each property. These surveys will contribute to the development of management plans that will guide future use and development of the properties.

In 2024, NVCA's watershed ecologist visited Petun Conservation Area to conduct a review and inventory of various features, including rivers, escarpment slopes, vegetation communities, and plant and wildlife diversity.

A secondary benefit of these biological inventories is their use as local indicators of climate change. The Watershed Science team will be starting a pilot project in 2025 to monitor the impacts of climate change on vegetation communities of select NVCA properties.

## Auditing the Wetland Offsetting Program

In 2021, NVCA introduced the *Achieving Net Gains through Ecological Offsetting* guidelines. These guidelines aim to ensure that further losses of regulated natural heritage features within the Nottawasaga Watershed are limited and, where appropriate, are offset with equal or greater gains in area, value, and function.

Starting in 2024, NVCA's Stewardship team used the funds collected through these guidelines to establish new wetlands to help improve flood water retention, resiliency to drought, water quality and habitat diversity. To ensure these new features develop as wetlands with all their watershed benefits, the Watershed Science team initiated a 10-year monitoring project. If the wetlands are not performing as expected, the data gathered will provide NVCA staff with information to improve the habitats and functionality of these wetlands.

The Watershed Science team also worked to refine the *Net Gains* policy to ensure the process will use the ecological offsetting funds for the greatest watershed benefit.

## Report on NVCA's Climate Change Action Plan

In 2022, NVCA's Board of Directors approved the 2022 – 2025 NVCA Climate Action Plan. The plan 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.

Encompassing all NVCA departments, this plan outlines seven goals and 34 actions that capture the corporate strategic directions and program objectives.

An internal Climate Change Action Plan working group was formed in 2023 to aid and report on the implementation of climate change work items. As part of this initiative, the working group produced the Climate Change Action Plan Report: Measuring Our Progress to summarize NVCA's work to date.

Overall, NVCA has completed 11 of 41 tasks, with five marked as ongoing.

## Source Water Protection

Source Water Protection refers to the protection of lakes, rivers and aquifers that provide municipal drinking water from overuse or contamination.

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<sup>2</sup>, 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.

In 2024, NVCA reviewed source water protection plans for a new well in the Town of Shelburne and initial planning for wells or well upgrades in Clearview, New Tecumseth and Oro-Medonte. This work is funded under a newly renewed agreement with the province of Ontario.

NVCA continues to perform its delegated responsibilities as the Risk Management Official and Inspector for 10 of our member municipalities for implementing the regulations of Source Water Protection under the *Clean Water Act*.





## Engineering

NVCA's Engineering Department is made up of the Flood Management team and the Plan Review team.

Every day, NVCA's Flood Management team works closely with partners to monitor key watercourses and weather stations in the watershed. They combine this information with the weather forecast to determine the chance of flooding in the next two or three days.

If there is a chance of flooding, a flood message will be issued to our emergency management partners including municipalities, school boards, emergency agencies, health units and the media to help them prepare for a possible flood.

They also support the Planning and Regulations team reviewing development applications to ensure development plans meet requirements under the *Conservation Authorities Act* to avoid loss of life and damage to property due to flooding and erosion.



## Hurricane Hazel

In 2024, the Flood Management team marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hurricane Hazel, an event that continues to serve as a pivotal reminder of the risks associated with urban flooding. It is a time for reflection on the evolving nature of stormwater management in our watershed, particularly the need to evaluate stormwater both pre- and post-development.

Prior to *Conservation Authority Act* changes, NVCA was responsible for both stormwater quantity and quality management. Today, municipalities focus on the quality of stormwater, while NVCA's role centers around its quantity. As development continues across the watershed, it is crucial that stormwater management in both urban and rural areas are thoroughly reviewed and carefully managed.



## Creemore Flood Study

In 2024, the Engineering and Information Management teams completed the Phase 1 of the Creemore Flood Study, which involved running simulations to assess how a severe storm could impact the Town of Creemore.

The study focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the Mad River in removing water from the town during heavy rainfall, as well as examining how development and increasing hard surfaces have affected water flow and drainage. The findings from this study will help guide future flood management strategies and improve Creemore's resilience to extreme weather events.

## Pretty River Dike

The Pretty River Dike cleanup and maintenance project has been an ongoing effort for the Flood team since 2021. The Flood team has been focused on removing vegetation and smaller trees from the dike to ensure its integrity and improve its effectiveness in managing flood risks. This work has been supported by Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) funding.

In 2023, vegetation and smaller trees were removed on the east side of 'Section 4', from Hume St and Pretty River Parkway. In 2024, the remaining portions of Section 4 were completed, marking the end of Stage 1 of the project. Larger trees were left intact to avoid compromising the dike's structure, as their roots could potentially undermine its stability.

Stage 2 of the project will begin in 2025, with a focus on geo-technical inspections to assess the dike's clay core and determine if it continues to function as designed. This will be the first investigation of the dike's core since its construction in the 1970s, and the findings will guide future maintenance and necessary repairs to ensure the dike remains effective in protecting the community from flooding.

## Flood Structures

NVCA is responsible for managing four dams in the Nottawasaga Watershed. To ensure they are functioning properly and do not pose a public safety risk, the Engineering team recently completed Dam Safety Reviews for Tottenham Dam and New Lowell Dam. In 2024, the Engineering team applied for funding through the WECI Program to address the high priority recommendations.

Over the next few years, the Engineering team plans to review the lifecycle costs of maintaining dams and weigh those against the costs of decommissioning these structures.



## Reviewing the Engineering Review Process

Between 2022 and 2024, the Engineering team received over 5,500 permit application review requests and inquiries.

In August 2024, the Manager of Engineering Services brought forward a staff report to the Board of Directors summarizing her observation and assessment of why the engineering team has been having a bottleneck and suggested a plan to incrementally improve the broader review process.

The Board of Directors provided incredible support and provided \$200,000 in the 2025 budget to add two staff members to the Engineering team. As this was an urgent matter, the Board also approved staff to begin the hiring process in October 2024.



An aerial photograph of a landscape featuring a mix of green fields, brown patches, and a winding road. The terrain appears to be a combination of agricultural land and natural areas. A white text box is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

## **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.

## Updating the Permit Review Process

In February 2024, NVCA's Planning and Regulations team was notified that new changes to the permit review process would be enacted on April 1, 2024. Staff worked diligently to implement changes to meet the requirements of the new legislation.

In March, the Regulations and Planning Services team informed municipal partners of the changes and established a temporary policy to support the transition.

Over the next month, the Regulations and Planning Services team implemented a series of changes for the transition. They attended over 30 Conservation Ontario webinars to learn and prepare for the changes.

In 2024, the Regulations and Planning Services team updated planning procedures and guidelines to reflect new regulations, including creating an internal committee to ensure that permit applications will be reviewed for completeness within 21 days.

One of the largest changes in the legislation update is reducing the buffer around wetlands from 120 metres to 30 metres. As a result, the amount of land regulated in the Nottawasaga Watershed decreased 18.6%.

Through this process, the Information Management team updated NVCA's regulation mapping, while Communications staff updated NVCA's website to inform and guide property owners of the upcoming changes.

## Changes to *Conservation Authorities Act* provided the opportunity for program review

Navigating the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* was also a good opportunity for the Regulations and Planning team to adjust operations to become more efficient and more solutions oriented.

In 2023, the Regulations and Planning teams were merged. This transition continued in 2024 as senior planner and development review assistant positions were added to the team.

The team also established a prescreening process and adopted templates developed by Conservation Ontario to update relevant documents and procedures. The team also developed multiple standard operation procedures to process permits. Staff also started a process to call or email applicants to let them know when a file is in review and added a start and stop clock in internal software to improve timeline tracking.

Since establishing these processes, staff have already been able to cut down on permit review time as most applications did not require additional studies, allowing them to focus on more complex files.

The team has also launched a new e-permitting platform that will further decrease administrative work and help staff focus on helping property owners and review files more efficiently.

## Supporting Large Development Projects

Many municipalities in the Nottawasaga Watershed started to plan new infrastructure projects for their communities. This includes the Honda plant expansion in the Town of New Tecumseth, a new high school in the Town of Wasaga Beach and the Town of Collingwood Grain Terminal revitalization project.

NVCA's Planning and Regulations team prioritizes files such as these to support these projects. They reviewed proposals to ensure flooding, erosion and other natural hazards were considered. The team also provided the best available scientific information to support these decisions.



## Regulations Mapping

Under the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, NVCA must now annually update regulation mapping to show the areas in the Nottawasaga Watershed where development is prohibited.

In 2024, the Regulations and Planning, Engineering, and Information Management teams began updating NVCA's regulation mapping. The updated mapping includes approved flood hazard studies, 2017 shoreline hazard studies, and slope hazard identification. Staff also used modern technologies and collection techniques and visited properties to update the mapping.

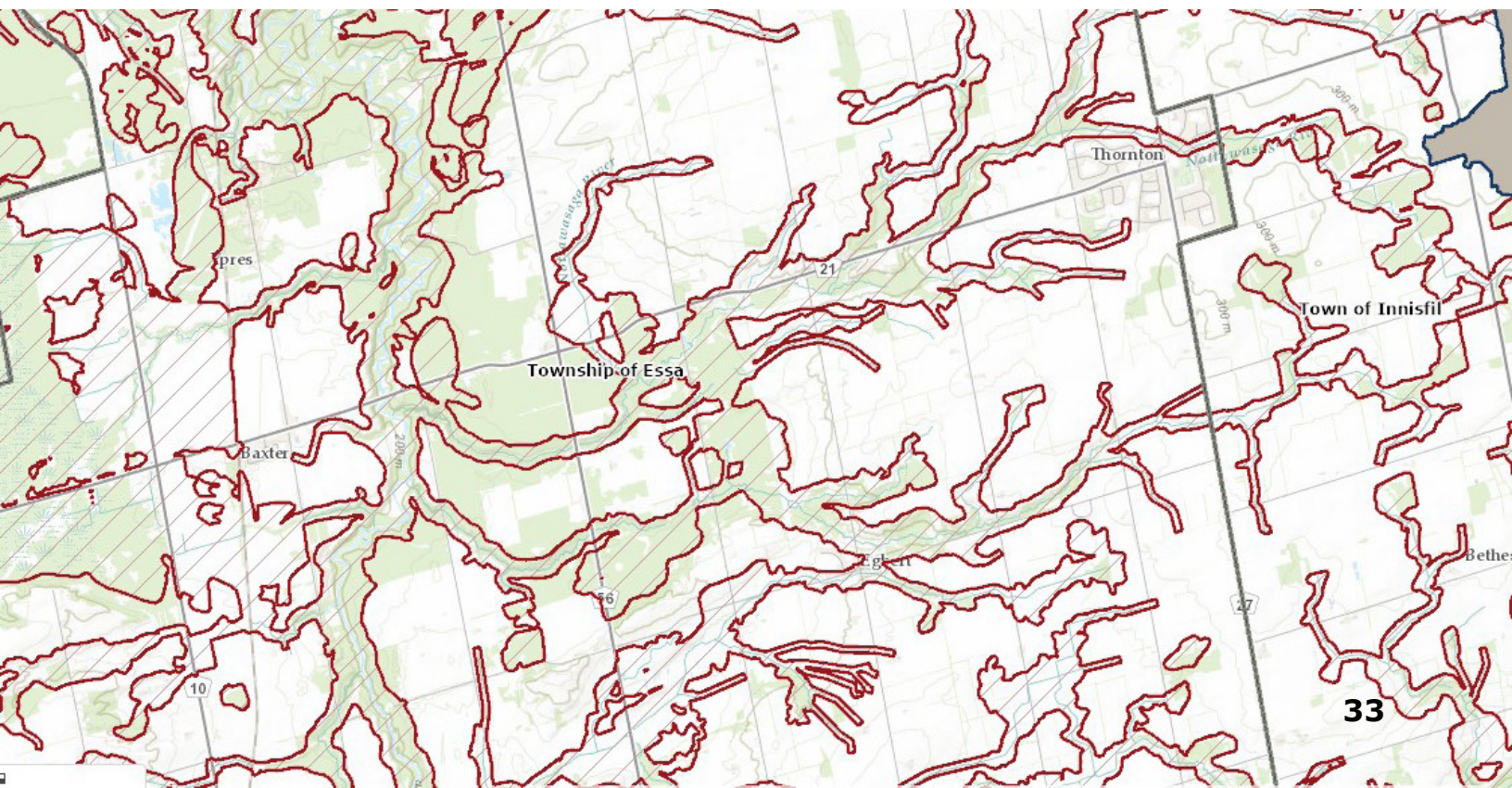
In total, 5,800 wetland boundaries, 580 hectares of slope stability hazard and 42 kilometres of shoreline were updated.

As public consultation is required for major updates to NVCA's regulation mapping, the Regulations and Planning team worked with the Communications team to launch a two-part public consultation process. In 2024, member municipalities were consulted. Once this feedback is incorporated in 2025, NVCA will invite the public to participate in a 30-day public consultation process.

## Report on Permit Timelines

Under the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, NVCA must review permit applications within 21 days and notify property owners if their applications are complete or if there is missing information. Regardless of the type of permit, NVCA staff have 90 days to issue a decision on permit applications, once they have been deemed complete.

In 2024, NVCA's Regulations and Planning staff issued 523 permits with an average timeline of 20 days. Major permits were issued within 90 days 95% of the time, and Minor permits were issued within 90 days 100% of the time.







## 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 2024, NVCA's Communications team attended more than 15 community events to connect with residents and communities to share local information about the watershed. Attendees were eager to learn about how their community is connected to the watershed, about invasive species and the environmental health of their local communities.

The Communications team also began working with the Ontario Resource Centre for Climate Adaptation to create a corporate communications strategy to help watershed residents understand the issues facing the Nottawasaga Watershed and engage with NVCA's services. The strategy will be completed in 2025.

## Supporting the Changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*

As NVCA prepared for the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, Corporate Services supported other teams in this transition.

The Communications team prepared simplified resources to inform NVCA's municipal partners and property owners of the upcoming changes.

The Communications team also supported the development of the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy, which identifies the risks, issues, and challenges the Nottawasaga Watershed faces, as well as the mitigation strategies to address these concerns. The Information Management team worked with the Engineering and Regulation and Planning teams to update regulation mapping to ensure it follows the requirements of the updated *Conservation Authorities Act*.

The Finance team presented a new budget format that captures the legislated requirements for Categories 1, 2 and 3. Category 1 are mandatory programs and services under the *Conservation Authorities Act*; Category 2 are municipal programs and services provided at the request of a municipality; and Category 3 programs are other programs and services an authority determines are advisable.

## Information Management

NVCA's Information Management Department is responsible for making sure NVCA staff have access to accurate information systems. This includes maintaining our internal datasets and storage, working with departments to update their systems, and developing applications that create efficiencies for workflows.

## Digital Information Upgrades

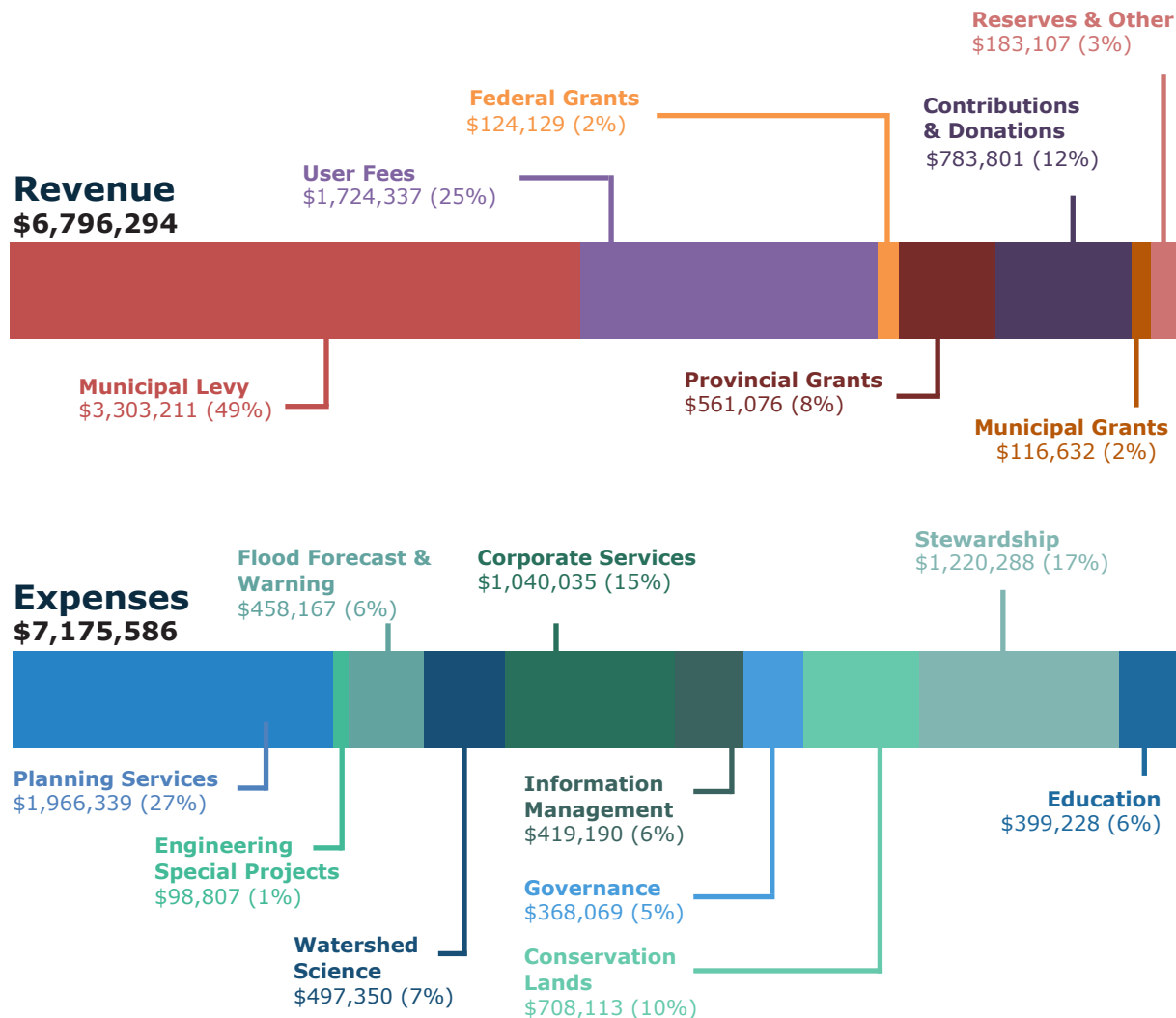
In 2024, NVCA's Information Management team made key upgrades to enhance efficiency, security, and data accessibility. They continued IT infrastructure replacements, installing new servers, backup hardware, and a centralized storage network to improve communication and data management.

A new GIS platform using Open GIS was introduced, supporting NVCA's business units with specialized mapping projects. The team also worked on developing an Open Data platform, ensuring greater transparency and accessibility of information. In line with updates to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, they maintained and updated core datasets to meet new regulations. Additionally, they made progress on NVCA's new e-permitting platform, set to launch in March 2025, streamlining the permitting process for landowners and developers.



# Financial Report

NVCA's total 2024 operational budget was \$6,444,677. 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 \$6,796,294 while operational expenses for the year came in at \$7,175,586. In 2024, NVCA purchased \$153,310 in capital assets (from an approved capital budget of \$467,870), 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, 2024, will be posted on the NVCA website at [nvca.on.ca](http://nvca.on.ca) once approved by the Board of Directors.



# NVCA Staff as of December, 31 2023

## **INTERIM CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Sheryl Flannagan

## **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  
Chris Parker, Communications Assistant

## **Information Management & Technology**

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

## **CONSERVATION SERVICES**

Kyra Howes, Director

## **Lands & Operations**

Mike Bacon, Manager, Lands & Operations

Lands & Operations Technicians:

- Clint Collis,
- Spencer Macdonald
- Dylan Allen

Elise Barr-Klouman, Community Engagement Facilitator

Reg Fraser, Custodian

## **Environmental Education**

Naomi Saunders, Manager, Environmental Education

Environmental Education Assistants

- Susan Hall
- Amanda McGibbon

Environmental Education Associates:

- Bob Cole
- Katherine Herington
- Katie Johnson
- RJ Costello
- Nicole Vankooten

## **Forestry**

Rick Grillmayer, Manager

## **Stewardship**

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

## **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Chris Hibberd, Director

## **Engineering & Flood Program**

Dalia Al-Ali, Manager  
Sheri Steiging, Flood Operations Specialist  
Will Flavelle, Flood Operations Specialist  
Josée Courtemanche, Water Resource Engineer  
Megan Durkin, Water Resource Engineer  
Michael Saunders, Engineering Technologist  
Charles Springall, Engineering Technologist

## **Watershed Science**

Ian Ockenden, Manager  
Taryn Arsenault, Watershed Resources Technician  
Anna McClymont, Watershed Monitoring Specialist  
Sheri Steiging, Source Water Coordinator

## **Planning and Permits**

Ben Krul, Manager  
Greg Marek, Senior Planner  
Meagan Kieferle, Senior Regulations Officer  
Emma Perry, Planning Ecologist  
Mike Francis, Watershed Ecologist

Development Review Assistants:

- Christine Wilcox,
- Mariella Kaczmarczyk

Planners:

- Tyler Boswel
- Davin Metheral
- Tyler Mulhall
- Justin Dodds
- Katelyn Wardlaw





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Member of





02-25-BOD Amended Agenda Minutes (Draft)  
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority  
Friday February 28, 2025 9:00 AM EST

**Attendance**

**Present:**

Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); Cllr. June Porter, The Blue Mountains (Town); Vice-Chair Jonathan Scott, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Town); Cllr. Joel Loughhead, Grey Highlands (Municipality); Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, Essa (Township); Mayor Scott W. Anderson, Adjala-Tosorontio (Township); Cllr. Christopher Baines, Collingwood (Town); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township); Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren Clearview (Township) – *departed at 11:00am*; Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township); (Town); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City); Cllr. Patricia Clark, Mulmur (Township) – *departed at 10:20am*; Chair Gail Little, Amaranth (Township)

**NVCA Staff:**

Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services; Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services; Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services; Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science; Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services; Tyler Mulhall, Planner; Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits; Naomi Saunders, Manager, Environmental Education – *departed at 10:20am*; Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant/Recorder

**Absent:**

Cllr Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township)

**1. Events**

**March Break Camp Tiffin**

Led by NVCA's environmental educators, Camp Tiffin is an outdoor camp designed to enhance your child's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural world and our amazing planet.

Activities may include wilderness survival skills, kick sledding, wildlife discovery and learning how maple syrup is made!

Our staff have been excited to plan some winter camp activities which will be full of outdoor adventures.



**Date:** March 10 – 14, 2025

**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 5 – 6, 2025

**Location:** Tiffin Centre for Conservation

### **Tiffin Nature School**

At Tiffin Nature School, children aged 2.5 to 10 are invited to explore and connect with the natural world. We nurture their innate curiosity, offering immersive outdoor experiences that inspire discovery and growth.

**Dates:** Tuesdays & Thursdays until May 29, 2025

**Location:** Tiffin Centre for Conservation

## **2. Call to Order**

Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 9:02am.

## **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:

*RES: 12-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Joe Belanger

Seconded by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

**RESOLVED THAT:** the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting #02-25-BOD dated on February 28, 2025 be approved as amended.

**Carried;**

## **6. Chair's Update**

Chair Scott shared his updates.

## **7. Announcements**

## **8. Presentations**

### **8.1. Environmental Education Program from Naomi Saunders, Manager, Environmental Education**

Naomi Saunders, Manager, Environmental Education conducted a presentation regarding NVCA's Environmental Education Program.

Recommendation:

*RES: 13-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

Seconded by: Mayor Darren White

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive this presentation as presented.

**Carried;**

### **8.2. Program Overview from Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services**

Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services conducted a presentation regarding Program Overview.

Recommendation:

*RES: 14-25*

Moved by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

Seconded by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive this presentation as presented.

**Carried;**

## **9. Deputations**

There were no deputations at this time.

## **10. Hearings**

There were no hearings at this time.

## **11. 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.

## **12. Adoption of Consent List and Identification of Items Requiring Separate Discussion**

Recommendation:

*RES: 15-25*

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren

Seconded by: Cllr. Joel Loughead



**RESOLVED THAT:** agenda item number(s), 13.2, 13.5.1, 13.5.2, 13.5.4 and 13.5.5 was identified as requiring separate discussion, be referred for discussion under Agenda Item #13; 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;**

### **13. Consent List**

#### **13.1. Adoption of Minutes**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings 10-24-BOD and 01-25-BOD dated on January 24, 2025 be approved.

#### **13.2. Correspondence**

Correspondence dated January 22, 2025 provided by Township of Oro-Medonte regarding a resolution that was passed at Council regarding amalgamation between NVCA and LSRCA.

#### **13.3. In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 16-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

Seconded by: Cllr. Ralph Manktelow

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting of the Board of Directors No. 02-25-BOD move into closed session at 10:25am to address matters pertaining to:

A position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the Authority; and,

**FURTHER THAT:** Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services Sheryl Flannagan; Director, Watershed Management Services Chris Hibberd; Director, Conservation Services Kyra Howes and Administrative Assistant, Kerry Jenkins to remain for discussion and recording purposes.

**Carried;**

#### **13.4. Out of In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 17-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan

Seconded by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors rise from in-camera at 11:35am and report progress.

**Carried;**

**13.4.1. Out of In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 18-25*

Moved by: Cllr. June Porter

Seconded by: Cllr. Gary Harvey

**WHEREAS:** the Board of Directors is in receipt of correspondence from Oro-Medonte Council that seeks to start the amalgamation process between the NVCA and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) as outlined in Section 11 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*; and

**WHEREAS:** NVCA and LSRCA serve distinct and separate watersheds, each with unique ecological, planning and regulatory considerations, including LSRCA's additional responsibilities under the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act*; and

**WHEREAS:** no independent, expert analysis has been conducted to determine whether an amalgamation would improve efficiency and service delivery or whether it may instead result in increased costs, governance challenges, operational inefficiencies or dilution of focus on the needs of the individual watersheds; and

**WHEREAS:** Conservation Ontario has generally supported maintaining the current structure of thirty-six Conservation Authorities across Ontario, recognizing the value of locally focused watershed management; and

**WHEREAS:** the NVCA is actively collaborating with other Conservation Authorities and through a customer centric focus, has been making improvements to processes and procedures, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED:** that the NVCA Board of Directors opposes the proposed amalgamation of NVCA and the LSRCA, as it has not been demonstrated that such a change would benefit watershed management, municipalities or the public; and

**FURTHER THAT:** the Board supports continued and enhanced collaboration between NVCA and LSRCA to standardize processes and procedures where feasible, particularly to assist development and permit applicants whose activities fall within municipalities that straddle both watersheds; and

**FURTHER THAT:** remains committed to working constructively with Oro-Medonte and all NVCA member municipalities to address and resolve any challenges, including planning and permitting, in a fair, transparent and efficient manner; and

**FURTHER THAT:** a copy of this resolution with a letter from the Chair be sent to all NVCA and LSRCA member municipalities, the LSRCA Board and Conservation Ontario Council.

**Carried;**



### **13.5. Staff Reports**

#### **13.5.1. Staff Report No. 01-02-25-BOD from Tyler Mulhall, Planner regarding Permits**

Recommendation:

*RES: 19-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Ralph Manktelow

Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan

**RESOLVED THAT:** NVCA Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 01-02-25-BOD that summarizes the permits issued by staff for the period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

**Carried;**

#### **13.5.2. Staff Report No. 02-02-25-BOD from Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science regarding 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Action Plan**

Recommendation:

*RES: 20-25*

Moved by: Mayor Darren White

Seconded by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

**RESOLVED THAT:** The Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 02-02-25-BOD regarding the 2022-2025 NVCA Climate Change Action Plan summary of progress in 2023 and 2024 goals for information.

**Carried;**

#### **13.5.3. Staff Report No. 03-02-25-BOD from Tyler Boswell, Planner and Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning and Permits regarding Procedures for the Implementation of Ontario Regulation 41/24 Update**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** The Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 03-02-25-BOD regarding proposed updated policies for *Procedures for the Implementation of Ontario Regulation 41/24*.

#### **13.5.4. Staff Report No. 04-02-25-BOD from Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services regarding Interim CAO Workplan**

Recommendation:

*RES: 21-25*

Moved by: Cllr. June Porter

Seconded by: Cllr. Patricia Clark

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 04-02-25-BOD regarding the Interim CAO workplan.

**Carried;**

**13.5.5. Staff Report No. 05-02-25-BOD from Tyler Boswell, Planner and Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning and Permits regarding Planning and Regulations**

Recommendation:

*RES: 22-25*

Mover: Cllr. Gary Harvey

Seconder: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

**RESOLVED THAT:** The Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 05-02-25-BOD regarding the proposed NVCA Planning and Regulation Guidelines Update, as information.

**Carried;**

**13.5.6. Staff Report No. 06-02-25-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist regarding Communications Report**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** Staff Report No. 06-02-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – January 10, 2025 – February 14, 2025, be received.

**14. Other Business**

**15. In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 23-25*

Moved by: Patricia Clark

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting of the Board of Directors No. 02-25-BOD move into closed session at 11:47am to address matters pertaining to: Labour relations or employee negotiations and;

**FURTHER THAT:** no NVCA Authority staff be in attendance.

**Carried;**

**16. Out of In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 24-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

Seconded by: Cllr. Joe Belanger

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors rise from in-camera at 11:51am and report progress.

**Carried;**

**17. Adjourn**



Recommendation:

*RES: 25-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Gary Harvey

Seconded by: Mayor Darren White

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting adjourn at 11:52am to meet again on March 28, 2025 or at the call of the Chair.

**Carried;**



01-25-NVSPA Agenda Minutes (Draft)  
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority  
Friday February 28, 2025 11:52 AM EST

**Attendance**

**Present:**

Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); Cllr. June Porter, The Blue Mountains (Town); Vice-Chair Jonathan Scott, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Town); Cllr. Joel Loughhead, Grey Highlands (Municipality); Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, Essa (Township); Mayor Scott W. Anderson, Adjala-Tosorontio (Township); Cllr. Christopher Baines, Collingwood (Town); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township); Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren Clearview (Township); Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township); (Town); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town)

**NVCA Staff:**

Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services; Chris Hibberd, Director, Watershed Management Services; Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services; Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science; Kerry Jenkins, Administrative Assistant/Recorder

**Absent:**

Cllr. Patricia Clark, Mulmur (Township); Chair Gail Little, Amaranth (Township); Cllr Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City)

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 11:52am.

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

Recommendation:

*RES: 01-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Kevin Eisses

Seconded by: Cllr. Rick Schell

**RESOLVED THAT:** the agenda for the Nottawasaga Valley Source Protection Authority 01-25-NVSPA dated February 28, 2025 be approved.

**Carried;**

**3. Declarations of Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest**



#### 4. Minutes

Recommendation:

*RES: 02-25*

Moved by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

Seconded by: Cllr. Joel Loughead

**RESOLVED THAT:** The Minutes of the Nottawasaga Valley Source Protection Authority 02-24-NVSPA dated September 27, 2024 be approved.  
**Carried;**

#### 5. Reports

##### 5.1. Staff Report No. 01-01-25-NVSPA from Ian Ockenden, Manager, Watershed Science regarding Appointment of Risk Management Official and Risk Management Inspectors

Recommendation:

*RES: 03-25*

Moved by: Cllr. June Porter

Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Staff Report No. 01-01-25-NVSPA regarding the appointment of Sheri Steiging as a 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*.

**Carried;**

#### 6. Other Business

#### 7. Adjourn

Recommendation:

*RES: 04-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

Seconded by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Nottawasaga Valley Source Protection Authority meeting adjourn at 11:54am, to meet again at the call of the Chair.

**Carried;**



04-25-Special Meeting Minutes (Draft)  
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority  
Monday March 17, 2025 5:00 PM EDT

## **Attendance**

### **Present:**

Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); Cllr. June Porter, The Blue Mountains (Town); Chair Jonathan Scott, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Town); Cllr. Joel Loughead, Grey Highlands (Municipality); Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink, Essa (Township); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township)-*departed at 6:04pm*; Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren Clearview (Township); Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City)-*departed at 5:28pm*; Cllr. Patricia Clark, Mulmur (Township); Vice-Chair Gail Little, Amaranth (Township)

### **Absent:**

Cllr Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township); Mayor Scott W. Anderson, Adjala-Tosorontio (Township); Cllr. Christopher Baines, Collingwood (Town); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town)

## **1. Call to Order**

Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

## **2. Motion to Adopt the Agenda**

Recommendation:

*RES: 26-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Gary Harvey

Seconded by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Special Meeting agenda for the Board of Directors meeting dated on March 17, 2025 be approved.

**Carried;**

## **3. In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 27-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Gary Harvey

Seconded by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting of the Board of Directors Special Meeting move into closed session at 5:03pm to address matters pertaining to:  
Labour relations or employee negotiations and;



**FURTHER THAT:** no NVCA Authority staff be in attendance.  
**Carried;**

**4. Out of In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 28-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Joe Belanger

Seconded by: Cllr. June Porter

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors rise from in-camera at 6:16pm and report progress.

**Carried;**

**4.1. Out of In-Camera**

Recommendation:

*RES: 29-25*

Moved by: Vice-Chair Gail Little

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren

**WHEREAS:** the board confirm its decision to hire a new CAO as discussed, and

**FURTHER THAT:** the name of the successful candidate be kept confidential until announced by the chair.

**Carried;**

**5. Adjourn**

Recommendation:

*RES: 30-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink

Seconded by: Cllr. Nicole Cox

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting adjourn at 6:17pm.

**Carried;**



Staff Report: 07-03-25-BOD

Date: 28/03/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Kyra Howes  
Director, Conservation Services

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**SUBJECT: Short-Term Lease Renewal – “Quality Sod Farms Ltd.”**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 07-03-25-BOD regarding a short-term lease renewal with Quality Sod Farms Ltd be approved as presented.**

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Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this report is to seek support from the Board of Directors to enter into a 5-year lease agreement with Quality Sod Farms Ltd. for the portion of the Utopia Conservation Area (east) formally known as 8609 6<sup>th</sup> Line, Utopia, Ontario, and legally described as Lot 29, Concession 6, Township of Essa, County of Simcoe.

Background

This lease agreement is intended to support the operations of Quality Sod Farms Ltd. by providing overland access to Bear Creek through NVCA-owned property for the purpose of agricultural irrigation.

Issues/Analysis

As a tenant, Quality Sod Farms Ltd. has proven to be a professional and reliable tenant. Our current lease arrangement (January 2019 – December 2024) was approved by NVCA’s Board of Directors and included a 3% annual rent increase. Staff recommend the annual increase remain in place for the duration of this short-



term lease agreement. The proposed short-term lease is included with this report as Attachment A.

For the lease agreement to be in place, Quality Sod Farms Ltd. must also hold a valid Permit to Take Water Agreement with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks. The current agreement is in place until December 30, 2025, upon which a new agreement will be required (Attachment B).

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

Section 21(c) of the Conservation Authorities Act gives Conservation Authorities the power to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land.

Impact on Authority Finances

The amount payable for 2025 shall be \$5,536.94 plus HST, and on each anniversary thereof the 3% increase will be applicable.

Rental fees collected through this lease support the annual operations of NVCA’s Conservation Lands Program.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications related to this report.

Reviewed by:

*Original Signed by*

Kyra Howes

Director, Conservation Services

Approved for submission by:

*Original Signed by*

Sheryl Flannagan

Interim Chief Administrative

Officer/Director, Corporate Services

Attachments:

Attachment A - Lease agreement

Attachment B - Permit to take water agreement

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**LEASE AGREEMENT**  
**THIS LEASE** made this day of:

March 28, 2025

**BETWEEN:**  
**NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
(hereinafter called the "Lessor")  
-and-  
**QUALITY SOD FARMS LTD.**  
(hereinafter called the "Lessee")

**WHEREAS:**

- A. The Lessor owns and manages the lands described in Schedule "A" hereto called the 'NVCA Lands'.
- B. The Lessee owns the adjoining lands described in Schedule "B" hereto called the 'QSF Lands' upon which it grows and harvests sod.
- C. The Lessee has requested a lease for passage and repassage (Schedule C) over and across NVCA Lands for the purpose of pumping water from Bear Creek, which flows through the NVCA Lands for the irrigation of the QSF Lands, and the Lessor has agreed to grant such lease upon and subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this Lease Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH that in consideration of the premises and the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged by the parties hereto, the parties hereto covenant and agree as follows:

- 1. Upon and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set out, the Lessor hereby grants to the Lessee a lease to use the NVCA Lands in the location described in "Schedule A" for the following specific purposes:
  - a. For the passage and repassage of people and, if required, vehicles, from the QSF Lands to and from Bear Creek, which flows through NVCA Lands;
  - b. For the placement of above-ground hoses over and across NVCA Lands for the purpose of transporting water from Bear Creek to the QSF Lands; and
  - c. For the installation, operation and maintenance of a water pump and related equipment at or near the banks of Bear Creek for pumping water from Bear Creek at that location specified on "Schedule C" that is required for the irrigation of the QSF Lands.



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2. The Lessee shall pay to the Lessor for each and every year throughout the Term, beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (as hereinafter defined) an annual lease fee increase of 3%. The amount payable in advance of the Commencement Date for 2025 shall be \$5,536.94 plus HST, and on each anniversary thereof the 3% increase will be applicable.
  3. This Agreement shall be for a term (the "Term") of five (5) years, commencing January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (the "Commencement Date"). The Lessor shall have the right to terminate this Lease Agreement at any time upon, not less than sixty (60) days, prior written notice to the Lessor.
  4. The Lessee shall, at its sole discretion, cost and expense:
    - a. Comply with all the terms and conditions of the Permit to Take Water – Reference Number 6375-BFVP8L, issued by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks (MECP) to the Licensee;
    - b. Comply with all directives and orders of the MECP in relation to any activities of the Lessee that may be conducted upon NVCA Lands;
    - c. Submit annual reports to the Lessor detailing the water withdrawals from Bear Creek;
    - d. Permit the Lessor, its employees, agents, and consultants access to and over QSF Lands to inspect the irrigation activities conducted thereon.
  5. The Lessee shall, at its own expense, place and maintain public liability and property damage insurance in respect of its use of and activities to be conducted upon NVCA Lands. All such insurance shall include the Lessor as a named insured and shall have limits of no less than \$5 million. All such insurance shall furnish to the Lessee, certificates of the insurance and coverage of the insurance policies.
  6. The Lessor shall not be liable in any way for the death of or personal injury suffered by any employee, consultant, or contractor of the Lessee while entering upon or utilizing NVCA Lands, or for loss of or damage or injury to property belonging to the Lessor or its employees, consultants, or contractors while such property is located upon NVCA Lands.
  7. The Lessee agrees to indemnify the Lessor in respect of all liabilities, costs, expenses, fines, suits, claims, demands and actions of any kind for which the Lessor may suffer or incur or become liable in respect of any occurrence upon NVCA Lands resulting from the act, omission or negligence of the

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Lessor, its employees, agents or others for whom the Lessee is in the law responsible.

8. Any rights or obligations of the parties arising in respect of any matter or thing arising during the Term shall survive the expiration or termination of this Agreement.
9. Any notice to be given under this Agreement shall be in writing and may be given either by personal delivery to the party or email to the party or parties to whom such notice is to be given at the following addresses:

if to the Lessor:

8195 Line 8, Utopia, ON, L0M1T0  
Khowes@nvca.on.ca

if to the Lessee:

30 Rockview Gardens, Concord, ON, L4K2J6

10. This agreement, the Schedules and the agreements herein contemplated constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. Save and except as expressly set forth herein, there are not and there shall not be deemed to be any statements, representations, warranties, undertakings of agreements between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof.
11. The Lessee shall have the right to assign this Lease Agreement to a purchaser of the QSF Lands provided the prior written consent of the Lessor to such assignment is obtained, which consent may not be unreasonably withheld.
12. This Lease Agreement is conditional upon compliance by the Lessee with the requirements of MECP. Order number XXXXXX issued on XXXXXX failing which the Lessor may at its option terminate this Agreement unless the Lessee has rectified any non-compliance within ninety (90) days of notice from the Lessor to do so.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Agreement has been executed by the parties hereto as of the day and year first written above.



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QUALITY SOD FARMS LTD.

Per:

Name:

Title:

NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Per:

Name:

Title:

Ministry of the Environment,  
Conservation and Parks

Central Region  
Technical Support Section  
Water Resources  
8th Floor  
5775 Yonge St  
Toronto ON M2M 4J1  
Fax: (416) 325-6347  
Tel: (416) 326-3323

Ministère de l'Environnement, de la  
Protection de la nature et des  
Parcs

Direction régionale du Centre  
8e étage  
5775 rue Yonge  
Toronto ON M2M 4J1  
Télécopieur: (416) 325-6347  
Tél: (416) 326-3323



January 13, 2020

Quality Sod Farms Ltd.  
1255 St. Clair Ave W 2nd Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M6E 1B8

Attention: Frank Converso

**RE:** Permit to Take Water for agricultural irrigation purposes

Bear Creek

Lot: 29, Concession: 6

Essa, County of Simcoe

Reference Number 6375-BFVP8L

Dear Mr. Converso,

Please find attached **Permit to Take Water No. 5347-BJRM45** issued to **Quality Sod Farms Ltd.**, which authorizes the withdrawal of water in accordance with the application for this Permit to Take Water, dated August 8, 2019 and signed by Frank Converso.

This Permit cancels and replaces Permit to Take Water Number 3110-9Q7LWN, issued on January 15, 2015.

This Permit is valid until **December 30, 2025**, and shall be kept available on site for inspection by Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks staff.

Section 9(3) of Ontario Regulation 387/04 (Water Taking and Transfer) requires all holders of a permit to report daily water taking amounts annually, in a manner and form approved by the Director (<https://www.lrcsde.lrc.gov.on.ca/wtrs/>). For the purpose of s. 9(3), such reports shall be submitted electronically to the Water Taking Reporting System (WTRS) electronic database or via hard copy, as described in the Technical Bulletin entitled "Permit to Take Water Program Monitoring and Reporting of Water Takings", dated November 2006, PIBs 6003e (<http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/16000/269521.pdf>).

If you have questions about reporting requirements, please call the WTRS Help Desk at 416-235-6322 (toll free: 1-877-344-2011) or by email, [WTRSHelpdesk@ontario.ca](mailto:WTRSHelpdesk@ontario.ca). It is



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preferred that you submit your data directly and electronically to the WTRS. Where this is impracticable, please use the Water Taking Submission Form (included as Appendix C of the *Technical Bulletin: Permit To Take Water (PTTW) - Monitoring and Reporting of Water Takings* ), which can be downloaded from the above web site, and fax your completed forms to 416-235-6549 or mail them to: Water User Reporting Section, 125 Resources Rd. Toronto, ON M9P 3V6. Daily water taking must be reported on a calendar year basis. If no water is taken, then a "no taking" report must be entered. Please consult the Regulation and Section 4 of this Permit for monitoring requirements.

Take notice that in issuing this Permit to Take Water, terms and conditions pertaining to the taking of water and to the results of the taking have been imposed on **Quality Sod Farms Ltd.** The terms and conditions have been designed to allow for the development of water resources, while providing reasonable protection to the surrounding natural environment, existing water uses and users. One of the purposes of the issuance of a Permit is to ensure that the permitted taking(s) will not cause negative impacts to the surrounding natural environment or other water supplies which were in use prior to the date of this Permit. If the taking of water should result in any negative impacts, the Permit Holder, **Quality Sod Farms Ltd.**, will be required to restore the water supplies of those affected in a manner acceptable to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks or to reduce the rate and amount of taking until any negative impacts are eliminated.

Any change of address or ownership of the property for which this Permit is issued must be reported immediately to the Director. The issuance of this Permit to Take Water does not relieve you from compliance with the legislative requirements of this Ministry or any other agencies.

It is the responsibility of **Quality Sod Farms Ltd.** to ensure that any person taking water under the authority of this Permit is familiar with and complies with the terms and conditions.

Yours truly,



---

Ellen Klupfel  
Central Region

File Storage Number: SI-SI-ES-C6-220  
JM

E-Copy: David Marshall, B.A. Sc., P.Eng. of Tatham Engineering Limited  
(dmarshall@tathameng.com)



Staff Report: 08-03-25-BOD

Date: 28/03/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Kyra Howes  
Director, Conservation Services

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**SUBJECT: Request use of Capital Reserves for Life & Security Upgrades**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT: NVCA's Board of Directors approve the use of up to \$18,000 from the Capital Assets Reserve for required Life & Security Upgrades**

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Purpose of the Staff Report

The purpose of this staff report is to request access to the capital reserve fund for up to \$18,000 for required upgrades to the Life & Security Systems at the Tiffin Conservation Area as per the breakdown below. This includes accessing \$16,000 that was allocated, but not used in the 2024 budget (not deferred) and an additional \$1,055.76 for system improvements and upgrades.

Background

Through the 2024 capital budget process, NVCA's Board of Directors approved \$16,000 for improvements and upgrades required for the Life and Security systems for the John L. Jose Education Building, the John Hix Conservation Administration Centre and the workshops located at the Tiffin Conservation Area.

In addition, through the 2025 capital budget process, NVCA's Board of Directors approved \$6,000 for security camera upgrades for the Tiffin Conservation Area.



Required upgrades include installing a security system in the tractor shop, installing emergency heat sensors in the basement of the education building, upgrades to the emergency lighting system in the education building and a review of required upgrades to the security panel.

#### Issues/Analysis

In 2024, NVCA staff contacted our current security provider to receive a cost to provide these services. After making several attempts to coordinate these services from our regular provider, staff finally received a valuation which far exceeded the anticipated cost, and it was believed that we were not receiving the best value for the investment. After receiving the work estimate, staff decided to open the project up for public bid, through the standard RFQ process, in 2025.

In early 2025, the RFQ was posted through standard channels, and staff received 3 submissions, one of which was disqualified for being an incomplete submission.

NVCA is recommending changing Life and Security Services providers to Classic Fire and Life Safety Inc. (CFLS), including ongoing annual inspections (5-year term) and withdrawing our services from Huronia Alarms. The new system will ensure we are up to current compliance requirements, will be able to be monitored remotely and will also reduce the potential of false alarms through an improved system.

#### Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

Under Section 21 (1) (f), an authority has the power to enter into agreements for the purchase of materials, employment of labour and other purposes as may be necessary for the due carrying out of any project or to further the authority's objects; and (q) generally to do all such acts as are necessary for the due carrying out of any project or as may be desirable to further the objects of the authority.

#### Impact on Authority Finances

CFLS's RFQ submission was for \$23,055.76 (\$22,657 + HST).

There is currently \$6,000 available for security camera upgrades in the 2025 Capital Assets Budget. In 2024, staff did not spend the \$16,000 that was allocated for security system upgrades and would like to apply the use of these reserves to this year's upgrades. These funds are available in the Capital Asset Reserve but were not allocated to be used in 2025.

When combining the 2024 & 2025 allocated capital reserve funds, difference in value that would be requested in addition is \$1,055.76, however the full difference (\$17,055.76) is required to be requested to be used from reserves and requires BOD approval.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| CFLS (no HST)  | \$22,657.00 |
| CFLS (with HST)  | \$23,055.76 |
|  |             |
| Allocated in 2025 (camera upgrades – Capital Reserves) | \$6,000.00  |
| Total  | \$23,055.76 |
|  |             |
| Difference (requested from Capital Reserve)            | \$17,055.76 |

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications related to this report.

Reviewed by:  
*Original Signed by*  
Kyra Howes  
Director, Conservation Services

Approved for submission by:  
*Original Signed by*  
Sheryl Flannagan  
Interim Chief Administrative  
Officer/Director, Corporate Services



Staff Report: 09-03-25-BOD

Date: 28/03/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Sheryl Flannagan  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer/Director, Corporate Services

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**SUBJECT: Interim CAO Workplan - Update**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT: the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 09-03-25-BOD regarding the Interim CAO workplan update.**

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**Purpose of the Staff Report**

The purpose of this Staff Report is to update the Board on the Interim CAO's workplan during this transitional period and to update the Board on progress and commitments moving forward.

**Background**

The NVCA is going through a transformative time with the departure of the previous CAO and the upcoming recruitment of a new CAO. To ensure stability and continuity, the Interim CAO has implemented a focused workplan that addresses current challenges while positioning the organization for success under new leadership. This report is to update the Board on steps taken and to receive approval to continue with others.

**Issues/Analysis**

The following is a list of the four key priorities and commitments.



## 1. Strengthening Municipal relationships

The Interim CAO, Chair, and Vice-Chair have prioritized engaging with partner municipalities to foster collaboration and address concerns.

Progress since February 2025 Board meeting:

- Engaged with two additional municipalities, Essa & Springwater to discuss development priorities and address concerns.
- Continued with 48-hour response protocol for issues raised by municipal partners.
- Scheduled an on-site meeting with Wasaga Beach CAO to review the beachfront redevelopment proposal.
- Chair and Interim CAO presented the AGM video to Wasaga Beach council and participated in their discussion about amalgamation.
- Sent letters to the re-elected MPP's congratulating them and asking for a meeting.

Previous Progress:

- Engaged with three municipalities (Wasaga Beach, New Tecumseth, Oro-Medonte) to discuss development priorities and address concerns.
- Implemented a 48-hour response protocol for issues raised by municipal partners.
- Issued a Chair's introductory letter inviting all municipalities to meet or connect with the NVCA.

## 2. Restoring and Enforcing Customer Service Standards

The NVCA's customer service strategy and charter, implemented in 2013, lapsed in practice due to high workloads during the COVID-19 pandemic. In January 2025, the Interim CAO reinstated compliance with the customer service strategy and reminded all staff of their obligations to meet service standards.

Progress since February 2025 Board meeting:

- Customer service strategy compliance was reviewed with senior staff and no issues of concern were identified at that time and believe that full strategy compliance goal has been met within the Q1 timeframe given to the Board at the February meeting.
- The workplan identified that the Board was to receive updates at the end of Q2 and that will occur on time.

Previous Progress:

- Customer Service Strategy compliance was reinstated in January 2025.
- All staff have been instructed to comply with service timelines as outlined in the charter.

3. Evaluating Planning, Permitting, and Engineering processes

The NVCA recognizes the need for a comprehensive evaluation of planning, permitting, and engineering process to ensure efficiency and alignment with legislative changes. The Interim CAO is currently consulting with other CAO's to identify the best approach for this review.

Progress since February 2025 Board meeting:

- Spoke to other CA CAO's to get recommendations or doing a peer CA or consultant to do the reviews and get referrals for consultants that have done process reviews at other CA's.
- Determined that since each watershed is unique and have different needs, it was recommended by other CAO's that a consultant complete the review rather than a peer CA.
- Reached out to some recommended consultants and found one that has done this exact type of review for not only several of CA's but also municipalities.
- Interim CAO's goal was to start this process review by March 31<sup>st</sup> of this year, however, given the cost and the consultants desire to work with one person throughout the project (CAO), this will be placed on hold until the new CAO starts, and they will come back to the Board for approval for use of reserves.

Previous Progress:

- Initiated discussions with other conservation authorities to evaluate process review options
- Solicited recommendations for consultants experienced in conservation authority process evaluations.

4. Developing a backlog reduction strategy for Planning, Permitting, and Engineering

The NVCA is exploring immediate and long-term solutions to address the backlog in planning, permitting and engineering files. While process improvements from item 3 will drive long-term efficiency, short-term solutions are also under review.

Progress since February 2025 Board meeting:

- The following is the backlog reduction strategy:
  - Staff were unable to find a qualified contract engineering technician as was budgeted for and have redirected those funds to the use of peer reviews to assist with the backlog instead of the contract position. While it does not cover the total approximate cost of \$100,000, \$60,000 of that has been allocated to peer reviews to address the backlog.
  - Continuing to explore internal measures such as triage and risk management to reduce the workload on engineering staff without compromising the service standards. Below are some examples of what has been implemented:
    - Weekly triage meetings to discuss files to see if they can be moved through quicker
    - Septic systems are generally low risk and planning staff can condition most items for the approval. This approach would not be applied for proposals within a slope hazard. A permit condition would be included by Planning staff it be designed and implemented by a qualified professional (P.Eng, Architect (BCIN), OLS or Septic Installation Company including excavating companies as long as they are licensed).
    - Pools – same criteria as above – to be designed/installed by a qualified professional (which includes a licensed POOL company). This is for projects located outside slope hazards, where the existing grades are maintained, and where excess material is removed from natural hazard areas (e.g. flood prone areas). Planning/Engineering staff may prepare standard operating procedures to assist with this approach.
    - ARU's within the 30m of the wetland (and outside of other natural hazards) if they are within the existing dwelling and there is no expansion of the existing footprint.
    - Erosion and sediment control plans (excluding subdivisions and large site plans) could be addressed through permit conditions. This would require increased inspections by NVCA enforcement staff.
    - Directional drilling/telecom/utilities – Where the applicant is maintaining an appropriate depth of cover (e.g. 2.5 m or greater) and qualified professional (e.g. directional drilling company) is doing the works. Also, NVCA could condition a frac out plan be available on site to be implemented if required, appropriate



additional ESCs be available to be utilized if needed and we condition a notification requirement prior to commencing any works.

- Issuing a letter to any permit applicants where staff are waiting on the applicant to submit documentation, where the file is dated pre-Q1 2024.
- Committed to eliminating the planning backlog by the end of July 2025 and continued meeting of the 90 day permit requirements.
- Completing the process review with the consultant once the new CAO starts.

Previous Progress:

- Considering third-party consultants to expedite peer reviews but cost estimates (approximately \$100,000) raise concerns due to budget constraints.
- Exploring internal measures to reduce workload on engineering staff without compromising service standards.

Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

The workplan directly supports the NVCA's mandate under the *Conservation Authorities Act* by ensuring efficient operations, enhancing customer service and fostering productive relationships with partner municipalities.

Impact on Authority Finances

Staff time to prepare this report is addressed in the 2025 budget. Any additional costs related to external consultants for process reviews or backlog reduction will be brought to the Board for approval with a clear cost-benefit analysis.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications related to this report.

Reviewed by:  
*Original Signed by*  
Sheryl Flannagan  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer/  
Director, Corporate Services

Approved for submission by:  
*Original Signed by*  
Sheryl Flannagan  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer/  
Director Corporate Services



Staff Report: 10-03-25-BOD

Date: 28/03/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Maria Leung  
Senior Communications Specialist

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**SUBJECT: Communications Report – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT: Staff Report No. 10-03-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025, be received.**

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Purpose of the Staff Report

This staff report presents a summary of NVCA media coverage and public outreach during the period of February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025.

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

1. Flood Messages

Spring Safety: Caution advised near waterways, issued on March 13, 2025

| Title   | Media Outlet   | Date           |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Early spring-like temps mean unsafe conditions near waterways: NVCA | Barrie Today   | March 13, 2025 |
| NVCA warns residents to 'stay well back' of watercourses, lakes     | Bradford Today | March 13, 2025 |

| Title   | Media Outlet   | Date            |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| NVCA warns residents to 'stay well back' of watercourses, lakes   | March 13, 2025 | Innisfil today  |
| Be wary around local lakes, streams, warns conservation authority | March 13, 2025 | Orillia Matters |

## 2. Media coverage of NVCA news releases

NVCA launches e-permitting platform for permit applications, issued on February 25, 2025

| Title  | Media Outlet        | Date              | Reference   |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform | Bradford Today      | February 26, 2025 | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |
| Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform | Orillia Matters     | February 26, 2025 | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |
| NVCA launches e-permitting platform for applications                     | New Tecumseth Times | March 6, 2025     | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |
| Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform | Barrie Today        | February 27, 2025 | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |
| Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform | Collingwood Today   | February 27, 2025 | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |



Communications Report – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025  
Staff Report No. 10-03-25-BOD

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| Title  | Media Outlet   | Date              | Reference   |
|--|----------------|-------------------|---|
| Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform | Innisfil Today | February 27, 2025 | Ben Krul, Manager, Development Planning & Permits |

NVCA announces Interim CAO's work plan to deliver continuous improvement, issued on March 3, 2025

| Title   | Media Outlet   | Date          | Reference                     |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Interim CAO plans to 'deliver continuous improvement': NVCA | Bradford Today | March 3, 2025 | Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO |
| NVCA vows to make its 'important work' more 'expeditious'   | Barrie Today   | March 4, 2025 | Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO |
| Interim CAO plans to 'deliver continuous improvement': NVCA | Innisfil Today | March 3, 2025 | Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO |

Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival is Back for 2025!, issued on March 7, 2025

| Title  | Media Outlet      | Date           | Reference                                   |
|--|-------------------|----------------|---|
| Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April | Collingwood Today | March 8, 2025  | Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services |
| Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April | Barrie Today      | March 10, 2025 | Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services |
| Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April | Innisfil Today    | March 10, 2025 | Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services |

| Title  | Media Outlet   | Date           | Reference                                   |
|--|----------------|----------------|---|
| Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April | Bradford Today | March 10, 2025 | Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services |
| Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April | Midland Today  | March 12, 2025 | Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services |

NVCA Column - Groundwater: Nature's Hidden Drinking Water, issued on February 28, 2025

| Title  | Media Outlet      | Date          | Reference |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-----------|
| COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected | Bradford Today    | March 2, 2025 |           |
| COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected | Collingwood Today | March 1, 2025 |           |
| COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected | Orillia Matters   | March 1, 2025 |           |
| COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected | Innisfil Matters  | March 2, 2025 |           |

All other media releases can be found on [NVCA website under "News."](#)

### 3. Other Media Coverage

| Title  | Media Outlet      | Date              | Reference              |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| City hosting variety of events to celebrate Family Day weekend | Barrie Today      | February 14, 2025 |                        |
| TBM councillors wary of conservation authorities merging       | Collingwood Today | February 19, 2025 | Councillor June Porter |

Communications Report – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025  
Staff Report No. 10-03-25-BOD

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| Title  | Media Outlet       | Date              | Reference   |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Dumping snow in parking lot near Nottawasaga River raises alarm        | Barrie Today       | February 24, 2025 |             |
| Dumping snow in parking lot near Nottawasaga River raises alarm        | Hamilton Spectator | February 24, 2025 |             |
| Dumping snow in parking lot near Nottawasaga River raises alarm        | Penticton Herald   | February 24, 2025 |             |
| Conservation authority urges caution near water bodies amid thaw       | Barrie Today       | March 5, 2025     |             |
| LSRCA urges residents to keep family members, pets away from waterways | Innisfil Today     | March 5, 2025     |             |
| NVCA official poo-poops call to amalgamate conservation authorities    | Bradford Today     | March 5, 2024     | Chair Scott |
| Official poo-poops call to amalgamate conservation authorities         | Orillia Matters    | March 5, 2025     | Chair Scott |
| LSRCA urges residents to keep family members, pets away from waterways | Bradford Today     | March 5, 2025     |             |
| Mild weather, rain may lead to hazards around local rivers, streams    | Orillia Matters    | March 5, 2025     |             |
| NVCA official poo-poops call to amalgamate conservation authorities    | Bradford Today     | March 6, 2024     | Chair Scott |
| Bradford councillors, appointees paid \$421.5K last year: Report       | Bradford Today     | March 7, 2025     | Chair Scott |
| Springwater receives report to keep master trails plan on track        | Barrie Today       | March 10, 2025    |             |



Communications Report – February 15, 2025 – March 14, 2025  
Staff Report No. 10-03-25-BOD

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| Title   | Media Outlet      | Date                 | Reference                             |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| TBM council opposes conservation authority amalgamation                   | Collingwood Today | March 11, 2025       | Chair Scott<br>Councillor June Porter |
| Barrie police urge drivers to be wary of hydroplaning amid warm weather   | Barrie Today      | March 12, 2025       |                                       |
| Ever seen a yellow-bellied sapsucker? March break could be your chance    | Bradford Today    | March 12, 2025       |                                       |
| Ever seen a yellow-bellied sapsucker? March break could be your chance    | Innisfil Today    | March 12, 2025       |                                       |
| Talk of merging conservation authorities called 'unnecessary distraction' | March 14, 2025    | Hamilton Spectator   | Chair Scott<br>Councillor June Porter |
| Talk of merging conservation authorities called 'unnecessary distraction' | March 14, 2025    | Niagara Falls Review | Chair Scott<br>Councillor June Porter |
| Talk of merging conservation authorities called 'unnecessary distraction' | March 14, 2025    | Orillia Matters      | Chair Scott<br>Councillor June Porter |
| Local Municipalities Oppose Conservation Authority Amalgamation           | March 15, 2025    | Pinnacle Gazette     | Chair Scott<br>Councillor June Porter |

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

- February 28, 2025 – Shannon Stephens, Healthy Waters Coordinator attended the Acknowledge Forum
- March 10 – 14, 2025 – March Break Camp

Issues/Analysis

The majority of media coverage in this reporting period focused on NVCA working to continue the culture of excellence and the amalgamation of NVCA and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. Other coverage included safety around rivers and streams and the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival. There are no issues of concern at this time.

Impact on Authority Finances

Staff time to prepare this report is addressed in the 2025 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*  
Sheryl Flannagan  
Chief Administrative Officer/Director,  
Corporate Services

Attachment 1 – Media Clippings for the period

## City hosting variety of events to celebrate Family Day weekend

Events include Family Day Winter Adventure, Nature in Winter, drop-in activities

February 14, 2025

Barrie Today



The city's 10th annual Family Day Winter Adventure returns Feb. 17. | BarrieToday files

### NEWS RELEASE CITY OF BARRIE

\*\*\*\*\*

Barrie has plenty of events and activities happening this Family Day weekend. Here's what residents need to know:

Family Day weekend events and programs:

- The City of Barrie is hosting its 10th annual Family Day Winter Adventure on Feb. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Barrie Community Sports Complex (2100 Nursery Rd., Midhurst).

The event is free and offers an opportunity for families to be active together outdoors.

Activities will include horse-drawn wagon rides, crafts, broomball, axe throwing, a bonfire warming zone, circus and fire performers at 11 a.m., 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.

Visit [barrie.ca/FamilyDay](http://barrie.ca/FamilyDay) for more information.

- There is plenty of indoor fun available with a full schedule of drop-in activities taking place at the city's recreation/community centres, including public skates and swims, available via [barrie.ca/RecDropIns](http://barrie.ca/RecDropIns). All three centres will be open regular operating hours on Feb. 17.
- Residents are encouraged to get out and experience the beauty of Barrie as a winter city at the [Nature in Winter](#) event at Sunnidale Park from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15. Join wildlife enthusiast Jason George for an engaging and interactive presentation, check out the Barrie Public Library's Library of Things, and take part in forest bathing with Beth. As well, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, artist Monica Loney, and Nature Barrie will offer a variety of activities for attendees. You can also stay cozy by the fire while exploring the Nature Play Trailer.
- [Hello Winter](#) programming is happening throughout February. Participate in the outdoor, arts,



culture and community events  
going on all month.

Family Day affected services:

- City hall will be closed Monday, Feb. 17.
- Barrie Transit will operate according to a Sunday service schedule on Feb. 17. Riders are encouraged to visit [MyRideBarrie.ca](http://MyRideBarrie.ca) to plan their trips.

Reminders:

- Curbside collection: There will be no change to waste collection on Family Day in Barrie. Collection during the week of this holiday will occur as regularly scheduled for the week.  
Visit [barrie.ca/CurbsideCollection](http://barrie.ca/CurbsideCollection) for more information on curbside collection services.
- Parking: Downtown parking (on-street and lots) is free on statutory holidays. Waterfront parking is enforced 24/7/365. View the [municipal parking map](#) to see parking areas and rates, and [barrie.ca/parking](http://barrie.ca/parking) for more parking information.

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## **TBM councillors wary of conservation authorities merging**

Coun. Gail Ardiel, former chair of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority board of directors, said she could not support the merger idea

February 19, 2025 by Chris Fell

Collingwood Today



*The Blue Mountains Town Hall Chris Fell/CollingwoodToday*

Members of The Blue Mountains council have expressed skepticism about the possible merger of Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

At its meeting on Feb 18, council briefly considered a letter it received from Randy Greenlaw, Mayor of the Town of Oro-Medonte. The letter advised The Blue Mountains that Oro-Medonte council had [passed a resolution directing staff to call a meeting to discuss the potential merger of the two conservation authorities](#).

"The Conservation Authorities Act of Ontario, Part III, Section 11 provides for a participating municipality to call a meeting to consider the establishment of one authority to have jurisdiction over the areas that are under separate jurisdictions," the [resolution](#) stated. "Now and therefore, be it resolved that the council of the township of Oro-Medonte hereby directs staff to call the meeting to consider amalgamating the authorities."

Coun. June Porter, who represents the Blue Mountains council on Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, brought the resolution to council's attention at the meeting. Porter kept her comments about the situation largely neutral and explained that Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's board of directors would be considering the issue at its meeting on Feb. 28.

"It would be an extremely large conservation authority if it was to go through," Porter noted, adding that The Blue Mountains is one of the smaller members of Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

Should the meeting happen, the merger discussions will impact dozens of municipalities. The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority includes the cities of Barrie, Kawartha Lakes and Orillia, the County of Simcoe, the regional municipalities of Durham and York, the towns of Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Innisfil, Newmarket, New Tecumseth,

Whitchurch-Stouffville and the townships of Brock, King, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Scugog and Uxbridge.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority includes the City of Barrie, the Municipality of Grey Highlands, the towns of The Blue Mountains, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Collingwood, Innisfil, Mono, Shelburne and Wasaga Beach and the townships of Adjala-Tosorontio, Amaranth, Cleaview, Essa, Melancthon, Mulmer, New Tecumseth, Oro-Medonte and Springwater.

Coun. Gail Ardiel, a former chair of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, said the merger idea had been raised in the past and she said she did not support that option.

"Amalgamating the two, I don't think is in the best interest of (Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority)," said Ardiel. "Hopefully this does not happen. I just don't think this is a good merger."



## Dumping snow in parking lot near Nottawasaga River raises alarm

Owner of landscaping company hired to remove snow in Angus calls experience 'complete misunderstanding'

February 24, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Barrie Today



**Editor's note:** *The following story has been updated from its original version to reflect that the nearby watercourse is the Pine River. The river had previously been misidentified. BarrieToday regrets the error and any confusion it may have caused.*

Protecting the Pine River as it flows through Angus is a priority for some of the village's residents.

So, when one of them saw a snow-removal contractor dropping one dump truck load of snow after another in the back parking lot of the plaza at 17 King St., Friday night, just a few metres from the banks of the Pine as it meanders behind the plaza, he jumped into action because he was concerned that something nefarious was on the go.

The resident said he approached the workers with his concerns and was told they were doing the job they were assigned to do. They told the concerned resident they had the property owner's permission to dump the snow in the plaza parking lot and that's all they were doing.

The resident then escalated his concerns and alerted Essa Township officials to what was going on.

Mayor Sandie Macdonald was notified around 9:30 p.m. and went to investigate. She said she had a conversation with the workers on-site.

According to Macdonald, the workers were co-operative and willing to relocate the piles of snow, once they were made aware of the potential impacts it could have on the river and flooding in the immediate area.

"I was thankful for the resident notifying me," Macdonald told *BarrieToday* on Monday morning. "(The workers) stopped what they were doing instantly."

According to Tyler Colby, owner of CCL Landscaping, the company moved its snow drop zone immediately after talking with Mayor Macdonald.

They started a mound in the front near an existing pile of snow that was already well over two metres high. It was at least 100 metres from the river's edge.

"It was a complete misunderstanding," Colby told *BarrieToday* on Monday.

"We thought we were doing the right thing. We had permission to dump there. But after talking with the township officials and understanding their concerns with the river, we moved the snow to another location.

"It wasn't a big deal," he added.  
"Nothing crazy."

Michael Mikael, the township's chief administrative officer, also visited the site Friday night.

"I think they were just confused and weren't aware of the contamination and flooding risks," he said. "We explained the risks and we have notified the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

"I am waiting to hear back from both agencies," Mikael added.

## Dumping snow in parking lot near Nottawasaga River raises alarm

February 24, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Hamilton Spectator



Snow is piled up a few metres away from the banks of the Nottawasaga River where it winds behind the plaza at 17 King St., in Angus.

Protecting the Nottawasaga River as it flows through Angus is a priority for some of the village's residents.

So, when one of them saw a snow-removal contractor dropping one dump truck load of snow after another in the back parking lot of the plaza at 17 King St., Friday night, just a few metres from the banks of the Nottawasaga as it meanders behind the plaza, he jumped into action because he was concerned that something nefarious was on the go.

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February 24, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Penticton Herald



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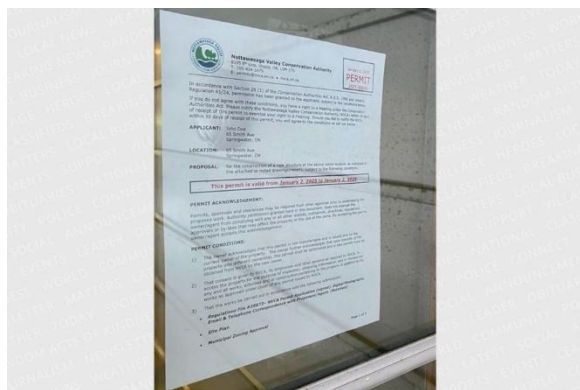


## **Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform**

Goal is to 'improve efficiency and permit review timelines,' says NVCA official

Bradford Today

February 26, 2025



*The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority encourages people to submit permit applications early to avoid delays in development projects. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority*

### **NEWS RELEASE**

#### **NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

\*\*\*\*\*

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is pleased to announce the launch of a new e-permitting platform.

Through this new tool, property owners in the Nottawasaga watershed can easily submit inquiries about their property or proposed development,

book pre-consultations and submit permit applications.

"In the last few years, NVCA has made changes to our operations to improve efficiency and permit review timelines," said Ben Krul, NVCA's manager of development planning and permits. "We hope this platform will help us deliver continuous improvement by reducing manual administration work, allowing staff to focus on processing permit applications and responding to requests."

The e-permitting platform can be accessed on [NVCA's website](#). To assist users, information about submitting general inquiries, pre-consultations and the permitting process is available on the landing page before they begin their formal request.

NVCA is responsible for regulating activities in natural and hazardous areas to avoid the loss of life and damage to property caused by flooding and erosion. Property owners looking to develop near a watercourse, river, stream, pond, wetland, steep slope, floodplain or the Georgian Bay shoreline may need a permit from NVCA before they start their project.

To save time and money, NVCA advises property owners to book a pre-consultation with NVCA's regulations and planning staff before submitting. Staff will let property owners know if they are in a regulated area, review project plans, and outline

the information required to submit a complete permit application.

Property owners are encouraged to use the e-permitting platform to submit inquiries about their property or proposed development, book pre-consultations and submit permit applications for a more streamlined experience.

“Since this is a new system, we are looking for user feedback to improve usability for everyone in the watershed,” continued Krul. “It is important that property owners of all abilities can navigate and efficiently use this platform.”

To access NVCA’s e-permitting platform or submit feedback, please visit [nvca.on.ca](https://nvca.on.ca).

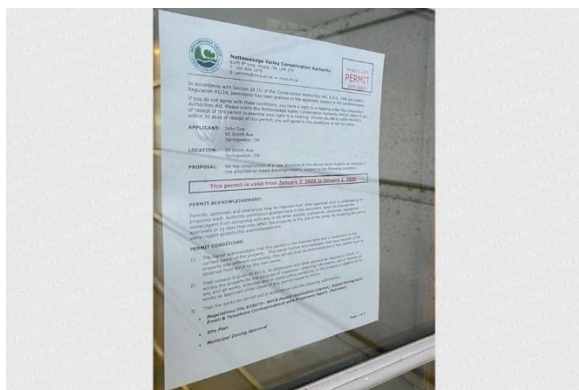
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Goal is to 'improve efficiency and permit review timelines,' says official

February 26, 2025

Orillia Matters



The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority encourages people to submit permit applications early to avoid delays in development projects. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

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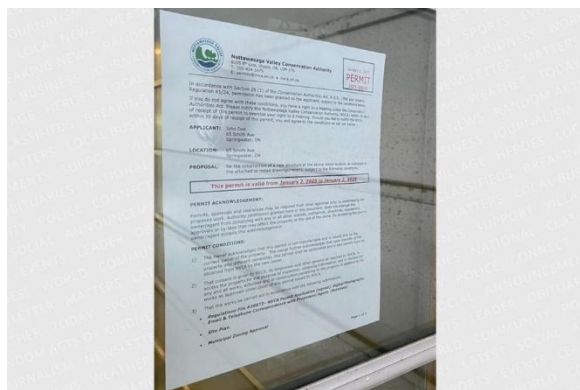
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February 27, 2025

Barrie Today



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"In the last few years, NVCA has made changes to our operations to improve efficiency and permit review timelines," said Ben Krul, NVCA's manager of development planning and permits. "We hope this platform will help us deliver continuous improvement by reducing manual administration work, allowing staff to focus on processing permit applications and responding to requests."

The e-permitting platform can be accessed on [NVCA's website](#). To assist users, information about submitting general inquiries, pre-consultations and the permitting process is available on the landing page before they begin their formal request.

NVCA is responsible for regulating activities in natural and hazardous areas to avoid the loss of life and damage to property caused by flooding and erosion. Property owners looking to develop near a watercourse, river, stream, pond, wetland, steep slope, floodplain or the Georgian Bay shoreline may need a permit from NVCA before they start their project.

To save time and money, NVCA advises property owners to book a pre-consultation with NVCA's regulations and planning staff before submitting. Staff will let property owners know if they are in a regulated area, review project plans, and outline

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Property owners are encouraged to use the e-permitting platform to submit inquiries about their property or proposed development, book pre-consultations and submit permit applications for a more streamlined experience.

"Since this is a new system, we are looking for user feedback to improve usability for everyone in the watershed," continued Krul. "It is important that property owners of all abilities can navigate and efficiently use this platform."

To access NVCA's e-permitting platform or submit feedback, please visit [nvca.on.ca](https://nvca.on.ca).

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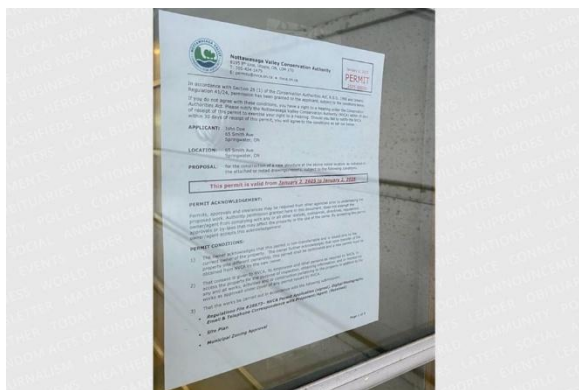


## Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority launches e-permitting platform

Goal is to 'improve efficiency and permit review timelines,' says NVCA official

February 28, 2025

Innisfil Today



*The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority encourages people to submit permit applications early to avoid delays in development projects. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority*

### NEWS RELEASE

#### NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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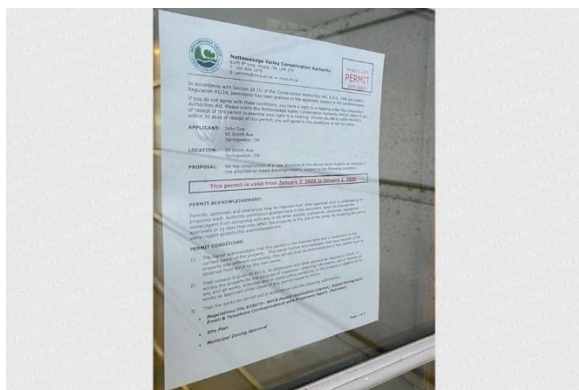
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February 27, 2025

Collingwood Today



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## **COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected**

Not only the main source of drinking water for many, groundwater is also necessary for farming and industry

March 2, 2025

Bradford Today



1 / 3 A staff member with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority collects groundwater samples. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority



2 / 3 Everything in a watershed is connected. Image supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority



3 / 3 A drinking water protection zone is shown. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Have you ever wondered where the water we drink comes from? Most of the water we see in rivers and lakes isn't used for drinking. Instead, in many places, including the Nottawasaga River watershed, the majority of our drinking water comes from an unseen source, deep underground, called groundwater.

This precious resource is the water that fills the tiny spaces between soil, sand, and rocks beneath the Earth's surface. It plays a key role in the water cycle, the process by which water moves around the Earth.

Imagine the ground as a giant sponge. When it rains, the water soaks into the ground, filling the gaps between dirt and rocks. This stored water is called groundwater. In fact, as the water soaks through the soil and rock, many impurities are filtered out, making most groundwater cleaner than some surface water sources. When it rains, not all the water runs off into streams and rivers. Some of it travels into the

ground and fills up spaces in porous rock and soil. This process is called recharge. Recharge happens slowly over time and fills up large underground reservoirs called aquifers. Aquifers act like giant, underground water tanks, storing water for long periods.

In places like the Nottawasaga River watershed, groundwater recharge doesn't only come from rain. A lot of it also comes from melting snow. As the temperature rises, the water from the melting snow seeps into the ground, replenishing the aquifers. Without this important snowmelt, rivers and wells might dry up during the dry summer months.

Groundwater is the main source of drinking water for many people living in the Nottawasaga River watershed, especially those outside of Collingwood. In urban areas, municipalities use wells to pump groundwater to the surface, where it is treated and made safe to drink. In rural areas, many families have their own wells, depending on groundwater for drinking, cooking, and cleaning.

Groundwater is also essential for farming and industry. Many farms use groundwater to irrigate crops, while many industries depend on it for their operations. Nature also depends on groundwater. It helps keep streams, rivers, wetlands, and lakes full. Cold groundwater that seeps to the surface is the main source of water for many streams in the watershed.

In Ontario, the safety of drinking water is protected through a multi-barrier approach. The first barrier focuses on preventing contaminants from entering municipal drinking water systems. The second barrier involves making sure municipal water treatment systems are well-operated and that workers are properly trained. Municipal staff work hard to provide some of the safest drinking water possible.

In rural areas, the quality of groundwater can vary. People with private wells are encouraged to regularly check the quality of their water. Local health units can provide information and advice on how to keep well water safe.

How can we protect groundwater?

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Groundwater is an invisible treasure that helps keep our communities healthy and our farms productive. By understanding how groundwater works and how to protect it, everyone can play a part in keeping this precious resource clean and safe for future generations.

Next time you take a sip of water, remember it might have travelled through the Earth for years before reaching your glass. Groundwater is nature's unseen gift to us — one we must care for and protect.

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## **COLUMN: Nature's hidden drinking water must be protected**

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March 1, 2025

Collingwood Today



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March 2, 2025

Innisfil Today



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March 1, 2025

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## **Interim CAO plans to 'deliver continuous improvement': NVCA**

Sheryl Flannagan, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's interim CAO, shared a work plan to improve operations with the NVCA board of directors at its recent meeting

March 3, 2025

Bradford Today



The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's Sheryl Flannagan, then-director of corporate services, listens as former CAO Doug Hevenor speaks during a regular meeting of council in November 2023. Michael Owen/BradfordToday

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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The plan consists of four key priorities and commitments:

1. Strengthening Municipal Relationships;
2. Restoring and Enforcing Customer Service Standards;
3. Improving Planning, Permitting and Engineering Processes; and
4. Developing a Strategy for Planning, Permitting and Engineering to Complete Existing Files.

"NVCA is going through a transformative time with the upcoming recruitment of a new CAO," said Flannagan. "To ensure stability and continuity of our organization, we have implemented a focused work plan that addresses feedback from our stakeholders and member municipalities, while positioning the organization for success under new leadership."

To date, NVCA has engaged with several municipalities to discuss development priorities and address concerns. The organization reinstated a customer service strategy that lapsed in practice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Last week, NVCA also launched a new e-permitting system, to help residents and businesses better navigate NVCA approval processes. Further, NVCA is initiating an external review to evaluate the planning, permitting and engineering processes in order to identify efficiencies and improvements.

"Conservation authorities do important work to protect people, property and

our environment, but we also must ensure this work is efficient, expeditious and meets the high standards of our customers,” added Jonathan Scott, Chair of NVCA. “Our goal is to ensure concerns raised in recent months are addressed and the organization meets its commitments to our member municipalities. I am confident this plan represents a thorough approach to achieve these important goals.”

Staff at NVCA works with many partners across the Nottawasaga Watershed to avoid the loss of life and damage to property due to flooding and erosion. They restore rivers, streams, wetlands and forests, and provide environmental education opportunities to watershed residents to help them connect with our natural world and become the future stewards of our watershed. NVCA staff ensure visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience at NVCA’s 11 conservation areas, and also identify stressors that are impacting the local environment.

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March 4, 2025

Barrie Today



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Staff at NVCA works with many partners across the Nottawasaga Watershed to avoid the loss of life and damage to property due to flooding and erosion. They restore rivers, streams, wetlands and forests, and provide environmental education opportunities to watershed residents to help them connect with our natural world and become the future stewards of our watershed. NVCA staff ensure visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience at NVCA's 11 conservation areas, and also identify stressors that are impacting the local environment.

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## Conservation authority urges caution near water bodies amid thaw

'As temperatures begin to climb, melting ice and potential rain will contribute to higher water levels and increased velocities in local rivers and streams,' says LSRCA

March 5, 2025

Barrie Today



*File photo. Image supplied by Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority*

### NEWS RELEASE

### LAKE SIMCOE REGION

### CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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March 5, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

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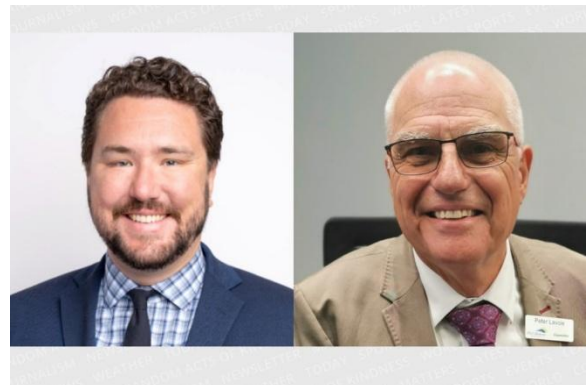
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March 5, 2025

Bradford Today



Stock image

NEWS RELEASE

LAKE SIMCOE REGION

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## **Mild weather, rain may lead to hazards around local rivers, streams**

Melting ice and potential rain will contribute to higher water levels and hazardous conditions, officials warn

March 5, 2025

Orillia Matters



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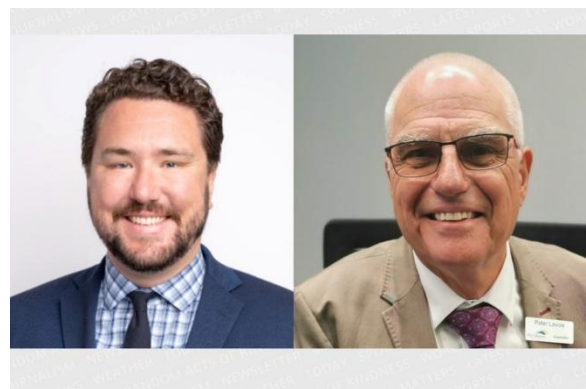
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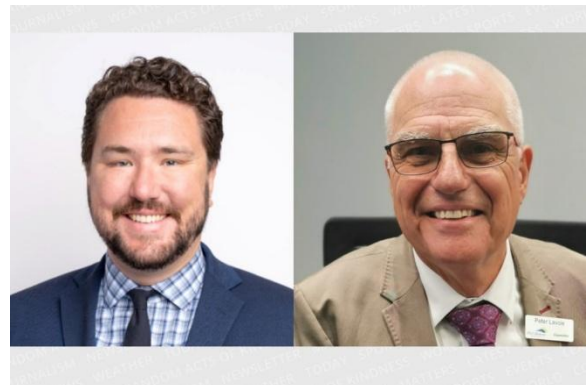
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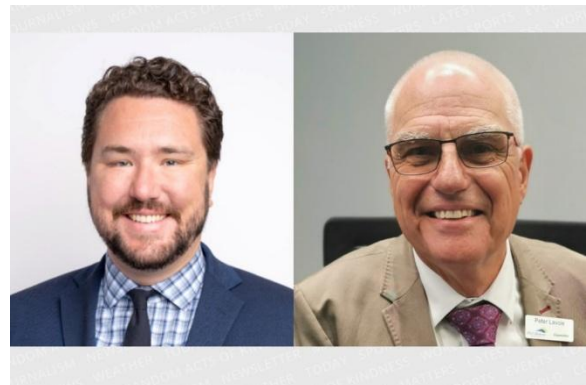
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## **NVCA launches e-permitting platform for applications**

March 6, 2025 by Brian Lockhart

New Tecumseth Times

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority has announced the launch of a new e-permitting platform that allows property owners in the Nottawasaga Watershed to easily submit inquiries about their property or proposed development, book pre-consultations and submit permit applications.

"In the last few years, NVCA has made changes to our operations to improve efficiency and permit review timelines," said Ben Krul, NVCA's manager of development planning & permits. "We hope this platform will help us deliver continuous improvement by reducing manual administration work, allowing staff to focus on processing permit applications and responding to requests."

The e-permitting platform can be accessed on NVCA's website.

To assist users, information about submitting general inquiries, pre-consultations and the permitting process is available on the landing page before a formal request is made.

NVCA is responsible for regulating activities in natural and hazardous areas to avoid the loss of life and damage to property caused by flooding and erosion. Property owners

looking to develop near a watercourse, river, stream, pond, wetland, steep slope, floodplain, or the Georgian Bay shoreline may need a permit from NVCA before they start their project.

To save time and money, NVCA advises property owners to book a pre-consultation with NVCA's regulations and planning staff before submitting. Staff will let property owners know if they are in a regulated area, review project plans, and outline the information required to submit a complete permit application.

Property owners are encouraged to use the e-permitting platform to submit inquiries about their property or proposed development, book pre-consultations and submit permit applications for a more streamlined experience.

"Since this a new system, we are looking for user feedback to improve usability for everyone in the watershed," said Krul. "It is important that property owners of all abilities can navigate and efficiently use this platform."

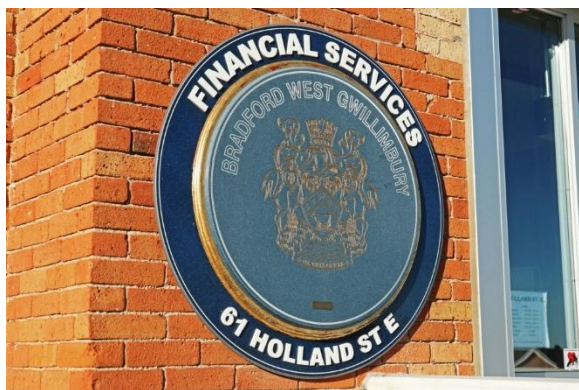
To access NVCA's e-permitting platform or submit feedback, visit [www.nvca.on.ca](http://www.nvca.on.ca).

## **Bradford councillors, appointees paid \$421.5K last year: Report**

Wages and expenses shared by town, County of Simcoe and conservation authorities

March 7, 2025 by Michael Owen

Bradford Today



The crest is seen on Bradford's financial services building at 61 Holland St. E. in Bradford on Feb. 6, 2024. Michael Owen/BradfordToday

The numbers are in and local members of council, committees and boards were paid about \$397,297 in combined wages and roughly \$24,271 in expenses in Bradford during 2024 — increases of about 6.62 and 24.42 per cent, respectively, [over 2023](#).

A report on the council remuneration for 2024 prepared by deputy treasurer Nathalie Carrier breaks down the pay for members of council and other local representatives compensated for serving on boards or committees, and council received the report for information without discussion during its regular meeting on March. 4.

Those amounts include wages, benefits paid by the employer, per diems (daily compensation) for special meetings or conferences, allocation for mileage, phones, internet access, compensation for workshops/seminars and any other remuneration paid by external boards — including the County of Simcoe and two conservation authorities.

In 2024, each of the seven councillors received a base wage of about \$26,760, with roughly \$33,496 for Deputy Mayor Raj Sandhu and about \$52,958 for Mayor James Leduc for a total of \$273,771, about seven per cent more than the \$256,148 paid in 2023.

That follows council's decision from May 7 to [give themselves raises](#) pro-rated for the second half of 2024. Their wages were set to increase again at the beginning of this year, before council decided to cut this year's raises from the [2025 budget](#).

Each of the seven councillors received \$1,500 for mileage, with \$2,000 for the deputy mayor and \$3,000 for the mayor.

Compensation for phones ranged between \$216 and \$970, with an average of \$380 and a total of \$3,417, about 21 per cent less than the \$4,314 paid in 2023. All nine received \$540 for internet, the same as 2023.

Benefit claims varied from \$2,121 to as much as \$5,593, with an average of \$3,617 and a total of \$32,555,



about five per cent more than the \$31,066 covered in 2023.

Local per diems for councillors ranged between \$100 and \$1,200, with an average of \$681 and a total of \$6,125, about 133 per cent more than the \$2,625 paid in 2023.

Library board honorariums were \$1,000 for each of the four members and two councillors totalling \$6,000, the same as 2023.

Compensation for the nine members of the Holland Marsh Drainage System Joint Municipal Services Board varied between \$400 and \$600, with an average of \$488 and totalling \$4,300, about five per cent more than the \$4,100 paid in 2023.

Compensation for the five members of the committee of adjustment varied between \$300 and \$480, with an average of \$372 totalling \$1,860, about 57 per cent less than the \$3,240 paid in 2023. Additional costs for the committee included \$135 each for memberships totalling \$675, about 10 per cent less than the \$750 covered in 2023.

As members of county council, the deputy mayor received \$20,357, about 13 per cent more than the \$18,053 paid in 2023, while the mayor received \$23,966, down about two per cent from \$24,488 in 2023.

As a member of the Bradford West Gwillimbury/Innisfil Police Services Board, the mayor also received

\$3,950, about 23 per cent more than the \$3,208 paid in 2023.

As a member of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Ward 5 Coun. Peter Ferragine received \$1,307, about 69 per cent less than the \$4,196 paid in 2023.

As a member of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Ward 2 Coun. Jonathan Scott received \$2,747, about 15 per cent more than the \$2,385 paid in 2023.

The cost for registration, accommodation, meals, mileage and parking to send members of council to conferences for the Ontario Good Roads Association, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, as well as other conferences and workshops totalled \$23,596, about 27 per cent more than the \$18,590 covered in 2023.

*Editor's note: Amounts in this article are rounded to the nearest dollar.*

## **Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival returning to region in April**

Annual celebration taking place April 5 and 6 at Tiffin Conservation Area

March 8, 2025

Collingwood Today



The Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival will take place April 5 and 6 at the Tiffin Conservation Area. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

### **NEWS RELEASE NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

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This April 5 and 6, experience maple syrup season at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation.

The Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival is the place to be for families looking for activities beyond maple syrup.

Admission includes a pancake and sausage breakfast with fresh maple syrup. Visitors can also learn

traditional and modern methods of making maple syrup, interact with exotic animals, watch dog agility demonstrations, and ride a tractor wagon through the forest.

Enjoy learning outdoor skills with cadets, live music, meet-and-greets with firefighters, paramedics, conservation officers, and much more. It's also a great day to purchase Tiffin maple syrup.

For more than 30 years, the festival has celebrated maple syrup as an important aspect of Canadian heritage. It is a fundraising event for NVCA and the Rotary Club of Barrie.

Volunteers generously donate their time to organize Spring Tonic and manage different stations during the event.

"All proceeds from the festival go towards Rotary community projects and maintaining Tiffin Conservation Area," added Darren Robinson, chairperson of the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival at the Rotary Club of Barrie. "Funds help support the Royal Victoria hospital, Salvation Army, affordable housing and many other community enhancement projects throughout Simcoe County."

This year marks an exciting milestone for the festival with the introduction of new sponsors.

"We're thrilled to welcome Brad's Tree Service as our golden syrup sponsor," said Kyra Howes, director of conservation services at the

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## **Springwater receives report to keep master trails plan on track**

Township hopes to develop collaborative partnership with land owners/managers for the benefit of extensive network

March 10, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Barrie Today



*Springwater Township council received the 2025 trails master plan update at last week's council meeting. Wayne Doyle/BarrieToday*

While there is no practical difference between adopting a plan in principle and receiving a report, Springwater council opted for the latter last week so staff could continue working on the township's 2025 trails master plan update.

Up for adoption-in-principle at last week's council meeting, the trail master plan has been a work in progress since the original trails master plan was adopted in 2008, and updated in 2023.

Unlike many municipalities, Springwater's trails master plan is a stand-alone item, which elevates its

value to the municipality and the people who use it.

According to the report presented to council, a trails master plan is often embedded within a parks and recreation master plan, as off-road trails can be seen as linear parks, or it may occupy a portion of transportation master plan due to the role of trails in active transportation.

"When a trails master plan stands alone, it signifies a distinct commitment to the value and opportunities associated with trail systems in a community," Dean Collver, the township's director of recreation, parks and facilities, wrote in the report.

"In the case of Springwater, this is justified against the expanse, interest and variety of uses enjoyed by residents and stakeholders who utilize these assets," he added.

However, Collver noted, many of the assets that are recognized as 'Springwater trails' are not owned entirely by the municipality, but by a number of landowners and the township, which has a distinct impact on the management of the entire trails network, and especially on a master plan for the development of the network.

While the staff recommendation was to adopt the trails master plan update "in principle", receiving it will also allow staff to:

- Implement those parts of the plan which can positively influence or impact the portions of the trails network within the township jurisdiction, subject to budget approvals and resourcing
- Seek and develop a collaborative partnership with the adjoining land managers (currently the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), Simcoe County, and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) where trails also exist within the municipality
- Through this collaboration, seek to co-ordinate the recommendations of the trails master plan for the benefit of landowners and the public, wherever possible, and where the collective mandate for trails is aligned.

"This is a roadmap — it's supposed to be providing a guide moving forward," Coun. Danielle Alexander said of the trails master plan update. "I have an issue adopting something in principle so we can go and have those meetings and collaborations and understand how we need to move forward when this really should have been done from the very beginning.

"We should have not only the answer, but the framework of how we're moving forward with all these partners before adopting a plan," she added. "I think it's something we should not be adopting in principle but be comfortable with as a report."

Collver, who started with the township after the trails master plan update was initiated, agreed with Alexander in principle, but also provided some clarity to her comments.

"You used the word 'partner' and the reality is that we actually aren't partners, and I don't mean that in any disparaging way," Collver said. "We don't have memorandums of understanding, we don't have agreements with property owners.

"We really don't have an established understanding of how the trail system in Springwater Township functions from a legal, liability, functionality, wayfinding policy perspective at all," he added.

Collver said township staff are working with landowners, or land managers, in an effort to develop those legal and liability relationships that would allow staff to look at the trail system in Springwater holistically.

Deputy Mayor George Cabral agreed with receiving the report and offered suggestions on how to move forward. He suggested council receive the report and direct it back to staff so staff can report back to council on key points and objectives that the township can achieve on its own.

Cabral added the memorandums of understanding and other legal agreements can be put in place while staff move forward with other items.

"That would be my suggestion to at least get this back to staff so that you

could then be in a position to come back to us and say here are seven things staff are prepared to move forward with and here's how we're going to achieve them," he said. "You get council go ahead on that piece while you work on other things in the background."

Council voted to receive the report.



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Bradford Today

March 10, 2025



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### **NEWS RELEASE NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

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March 10, 2025

Innisfil Today



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NEWS RELEASE  
NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY  
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## **TBM council opposes conservation authority amalgamation**

Coun. June Porter calls the possible merger of two conservation authorities an 'unnecessary distraction' with no solid business case

March 11, 2025 by Chris Fell

Collingwood Today



The Town of The Blue Mountains logo.  
Chris Fell

The Blue Mountains council does not support an amalgamation of two area conservation authorities.

At its meeting on March 10, council unanimously passed a resolution opposing the possibility of a merger between the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

As part of its correspondence for the meeting, [council received a letter from NVCA Chair Johnathan Scott](#) explaining that NVCA had

recently passed a resolution opposing any amalgamation.

The [possible merger of the two conservation authorities arose in February](#) when Oro-Medonte Mayor Randy Greenlaw circulated a letter advising that his municipality was interested in seeing the two authorities merge into one entity.

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority includes the cities of Barrie, Kawartha Lakes and Orillia, the County of Simcoe, the regional municipalities of Durham and York, the towns of Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Innisfil, Newmarket, New Tecumseth, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the townships of Brock, King, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Scugog and Uxbridge.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority includes the City of Barrie, the Municipality of Grey Highlands, the towns of The Blue Mountains, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Collingwood, Innisfil, Mono, Shelburne and Wasaga Beach and the townships of Adjala-Tosorontio, Amaranth, Cleaview, Essa, Melancthon, Mulmer, New Tecumseth, Oro-Medonte and Springwater.

The amalgamation suggestion didn't gain much traction.

"It wasn't supported for a number of reasons," said Coun. June Porter, who represents The Blue Mountains on the NVCA board of directors.

Porter said an amalgamation was seen as an “unnecessary distraction”, lacked a business plan and would represent a burden on the participating municipal members. She said if an amalgamation happened, the end result would be unwieldy.

“The conservation authority would be huge. The Town of The Blue Mountains has nothing in common with Kawartha Lakes,” she said.

Coun. Gail Ardiel fully agreed with council’s direction on the matter.

“(Amalgamation) is not a good move. It would be too large of an area,” Ardiel said, suggesting that instead of a costly and disruptive amalgamation process, that steps be taken to address any concerns Oro-Medonte has about NVCA operations. “They could do that and leave the rest of Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority the way it is.”

Porter said NVCA’s acting CAO would be reaching out to Oro-Medonte to try and work out the issues.

In an email to CollingwoodToday, new NVCA chair Jonathan Scott (a councillor with the town of Bradford West Gwillimbury) said the authority is in the process of implementing a plan to improve its services.

“NVCA is working on an action plan to improve our planning and permitting processes to better serve our customers, faster. We’re grateful our municipal partners are recognizing this progress and agree that an

amalgamation with another authority is unneeded, certainly when no business plan exists,” said Scott “We are committed to ensuring excellence in all we do and will continue to improve to better serve the public and our municipal partners.”

## **Barrie police urge drivers to be wary of hydroplaning amid warm weather**

With heavy rain in the forecast, police say this could create pooling of water on local streets and highways

March 12, 2025

Barrie Today



Stock image. Photo by Vlad Chețan via Pexels

With warmer weather on the way and still a lot of snow hanging around, Barrie police are asking drivers to be cautious on the roads.

Temperatures are expected to be around 6 Celsius on Thursday before jumping to 12 C on Friday, followed by highs of 13 C and 9 C on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

"With the increase in temperature, much of the snow that fell in January and February will continue to melt, which may cause some ponding and pooling of water on our streets," city police stated in a news release. "And with rain in the forecast for both days this weekend, this will only add to enhance the melting process."

Police are asking motorists to use this period of milder weather to top up washer-fluid levels, check for tears in the rubber of your wiper blades and replace them if necessary, and check the air pressure in your tires and adjust as required.s

"It is also a good time to ensure that any loose objects, such as mud flaps or plasticized underside engine panels of low-riding cars, are secure as snowbanks at the end of driveways may have damaged the fasteners that hold them in place," police say.

In the event that the heavy rain in the forecast on Sunday creates ponding and pooling on local streets or highways, police ask drivers to reduce your speed accordingly.

"This will help to reduce the risk of hydroplaning and always drive according to the conditions you are experiencing," police say.

Residents are also being to asked to keep young children and pets away from ditches, watercourses and all bodies of water as any existing ice or drainage areas into these areas will become compromised and unsafe due to the flow of meltwater and accumulating rain.

On Wednesday, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority both had their flood status listed as 'normal.'

## **Ever seen a yellow-bellied sapsucker? March break could be your chance**

Springwater Provincial Park a great option for local birdwatching; all you need is pair of binoculars, field guide or app, and some patience

March 12, 2025

Bradford Today



A teen keeps an eye on the sky with his binoculars. Lera Mk photo via Pexels

There are lots of simple ways for families to get outside and get some animal-friendly fresh air this March break.

For those who like to keep an eye on the sky, both Springwater Provincial Park in Midhurst and Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area in the Angus area offer great spots to view a wide variety of bird species.

With more than 5,000 hectares to explore, the [Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority](#) (NVCA), which

is responsible for the Minesing Wetlands, offers visitors the opportunity to see more than 300 species of birds that have been identified within the NVCA's watershed.

[Springwater Provincial Park](#) also serves as a great location to view a variety of bird species, such as the cedar waxwing, pileated woodpecker, white- and red-breasted nuthatch, yellow-bellied sapsucker and several waterfowl species that include wood ducks, mallards and black ducks.

This simple and accessible activity merely requires a pair of binoculars, a field guide or app and a bit of patience.

Visitors are also welcome to come hiking, play disc golf, do some geocaching, snowshoeing, or canoeing at one of the NVCA's conservation areas. However, people are always advised to check online as some locations are closed seasonally.

Springwater Provincial Park also includes 10 kilometres of multi-use trails for Nordic skiing or snowshoeing in the winter, or hiking in the summer.

For those looking to take a short road trip north, they can consider making a reservation for a guided tour at [Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary](#) in Rosseau.

Visitors are provided the unique opportunity to see the sanctuary's permanent residents — including moose, coyotes, bears and wolf packs — hear their stories, and learn how to



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Midland Today

March 12, 2025



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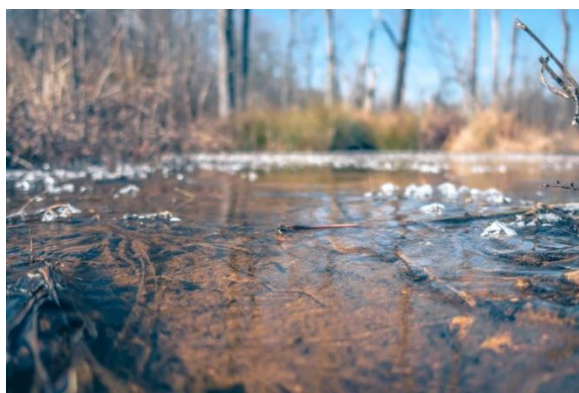
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## **Early spring-like temps mean unsafe conditions near waterways: NVCA**

Conservation authority says dangerous ice and slippery banks already exist, with more rain and melting snow to come

March 13, 2025

Barrie Today



*Stock image*

NEWS RELEASE  
NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
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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 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. 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.

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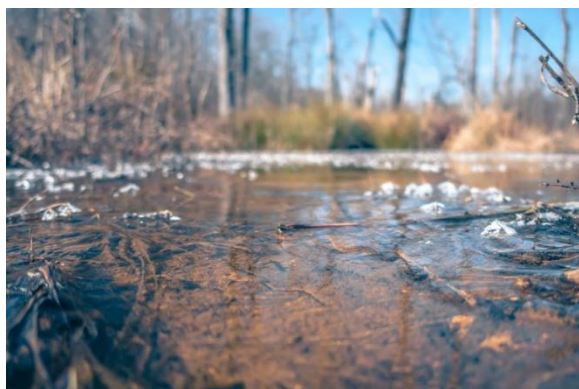


**Early spring-like temperatures mean unsafe ice and slippery banks already exist throughout the watershed, conservation authority says**

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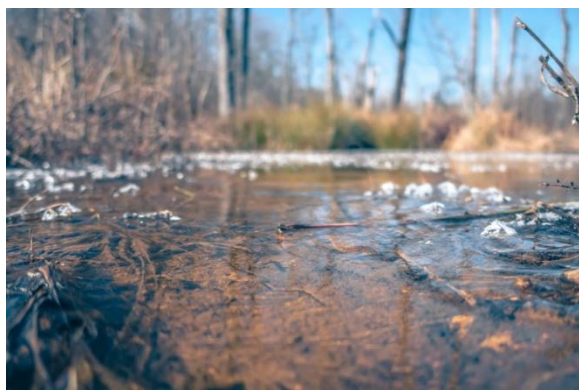
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March 13, 2025

Innisfil Today



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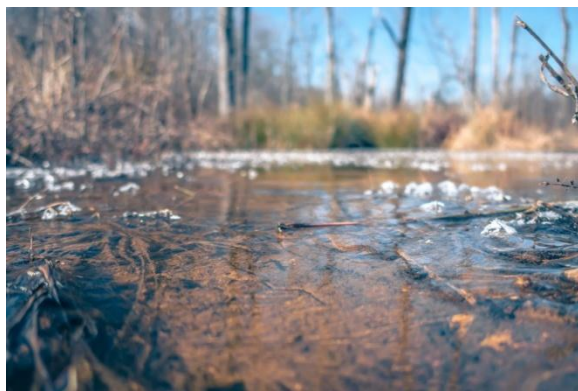
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## **Be wary around local lakes, streams, warns conservation authority**

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March 13, 2025

Orillia Matters



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## **Talk of merging conservation authorities called 'unnecessary distraction'**

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March 14, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Hamilton Spectator

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While the majority of municipalities that would be affected by the motion haven't taken a position publicly, two have and neither of them are in favour of the idea.

The Town of Wasaga Beach and the Town of the Blue Mountains have given the proposal the thumbs down, as has the NVCA's board of directors.

At its council meeting this past Monday, the Town of the Blue Mountains unanimously passed a resolution opposing the possibility of a merger.

"It wasn't supported for a number of reasons," Coun. June Porter, who represents The Blue Mountains on the NVCA board of directors, told BarrieToday's sister publication CollingwoodToday earlier this week.

Porter said an amalgamation was seen as an "unnecessary distraction," lacked a business plan and would represent a burden on the participating municipal members.

Blue Mountains Coun. Gail Ardiel agreed.

"(Amalgamation) is not a good move. It would be too large of an area," said Ardiel, suggesting that instead of a costly and disruptive amalgamation process, that steps be taken to address any concerns Oro-Medonte has about NVCA operations.

"They could do that and leave the rest of Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority the way it is," Ardiel said.

Last week, the Town of Wasaga Beach said no to amalgamation and urged other municipalities to exercise patience as the NVCA appears to be making headway with some of the challenges it's faced in the past.

Wasaga Beach Mayor Brian Smith said the recent improvements the NVCA has made are enough to convince him to say no to amalgamation at this point.

"If you talked to me a year ago, I'd say, 'let's do this amalgamation thing,' we've got to find a solution to the

problems,” Smith said during the town’s March 6 council meeting. “Today, I’m of a very different opinion.”

Smith said he’s seen, and heard, numerous improvements in the NVCA’s service delivery since the late December appointment of the conservation authority’s interim chief administrative officer, Sheryl Flannagan.

When Lavoie made his motion, he said Oro-Medonte believed there would be advantages of “economics, consistency, timeliness and governance” to merge the entities.

In an email to BarrieToday on Friday morning, Lavoie said he hopes to be able to “more precisely frame the reasons supporting amalgamation which are not at all those currently set out in the press” in the near future.

He expects that the township will bring the motion to Simcoe County council for discussion in April.

“While there is a process set out in the provincial legislation, it is not very prescriptive, nor does it have required timelines,” he said.

Jonathan Scott, chair of the NVCA and a councillor in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, reiterated the conservation authority’s assertion that a merger is [neither necessary nor advisable](#).

“Such a process would be disruptive, could lead to a loss of local control

and would create a bigger bureaucracy spanning a very large geographic area,” Scott said in an email to BarrieToday on Thursday afternoon. “Because there is no analysis, any claim of cost savings is speculative; the opposite could equally be true.”

Scott said he doesn’t know when the amalgamation motion will be discussed by all of the municipalities involved.

“Oro-Medonte put forward a motion to trigger the amalgamation process, and so it is up to Oro-Medonte to call that public meeting to discuss amalgamation, if they so choose,” he said.

“The NVCA board has unanimously opposed the amalgamation, and a growing number of member municipalities have also unanimously voted to indicate they would be in opposition to an amalgamation if Oro-Medonte proceeds with a public meeting on the matter at this time,” Scott added.

— With files from LJI reporter Chris Fell

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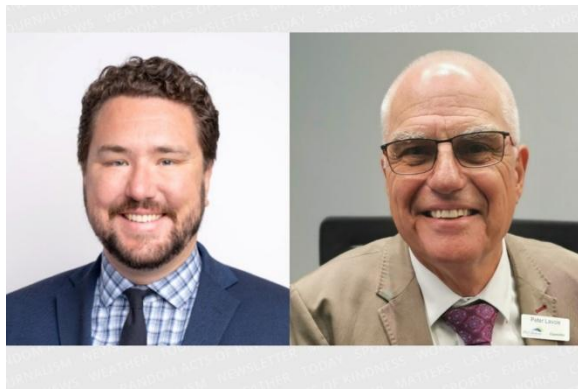
— With files from LJI reporter Chris Fell

## Talk of merging conservation authorities an 'unnecessary distraction'

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March 14, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Orillia Matters



Jonathan Scott, left, is chair of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's board of directors and town councillor in Bradford West Gwillimbury. Peter Lavoie, right, is Oro-Medonte Township's deputy mayor. BarrieToday files

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— *With files from LJI reporter Chris Fell*

## **Local Municipalities Oppose Conservation Authority Amalgamation**

March 15, 2025 by Evrim Agaci

Pinnacle Gazette

### **Two towns firmly reject Oro-Medonte's merger proposal as local control concerns rise.**

It's been nearly two months since Oro-Medonte Township Deputy Mayor Peter Lavoie introduced a controversial motion to merge the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). Despite the proposal aiming for potential benefits, it faces significant backlash from local municipalities, with both the Town of Wasaga Beach and the Town of the Blue Mountains publicly opposing the idea.

At their recent council meeting, the Town of the Blue Mountains unanimously passed a resolution opposing the merger. "It wasn't supported for a number of reasons," stated Coun. June Porter, who serves on the NVCA board. She described the proposed amalgamation as "an unnecessary distraction," noting it lacks both a comprehensive business plan and could impose additional burdens on participating municipalities.

Another council member, Gail Ardiel, expressed discontent with the broad scope of such a merger.

"(Amalgamation) is not a good move. It would be too large of an area," Ardiel said, advocating instead for targeted measures to resolve Oro-Medonte's concerns about the NVCA's operations without instigating extensive changes.

Just days earlier, on March 8, 2025, Mayor Brian Smith of Wasaga Beach announced their rejection of the amalgamation. His stance has shifted dramatically since this time last year when he was open to considering the merger. "If you talked to me a year ago, I'd say, 'let's do this amalgamation thing,' we've got to find a solution to the problems," Smith reflected during the March 6 council meeting. "Today, I'm of a very different opinion." He underscored the improvements the NVCA has made under the interim leadership of Sheryl Flannagan, appointed late last year.

Lavoie presented the motion believing it would offer economic advantages, increase consistency, improve timeliness, and streamline governance. He stated he plans to clarify these reasons more precisely and hopes to present the motion to Simcoe County council for discussion by April 2025.

Jonathan Scott, chair of the NVCA, shared similar sentiments, deeming the merger unnecessary. He cautioned the potential consequences by stating, "Such a process would be disruptive, could lead to a loss of local control and would create a bigger bureaucracy spanning a very large geographic area." Scott emphasized

the speculative nature of any potential cost savings attributed to the merger, pointing out the NVCA board's unanimous opposition and growing dissent among member municipalities.

Scott mentioned, "Oro-Medonte put forward a motion to trigger the amalgamation process...it is up to them to call the public meeting to discuss amalgamation, if they so choose." This indicates the urgency and importance of public engagement as discussions around the proposal continue to evolve.

Despite the ambitious intentions behind Lavoie's motion, it is met with increasing skepticism from the affected municipalities. With the NVCA board openly opposing the merger and local councils moving to state their positions against it, the future of the proposed amalgamation appears uncertain. Observers will be watching closely as Oro-Medonte aims to navigate these turbulent waters and possibly reshape the governance structure of conservation entities within its jurisdiction.