

## **06-25-BOD Agenda**

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Friday, May 23, 2025 at 9:00 AM EDT to Friday, May 23, 2025 at 12:00 PM EDT

### **Agenda**

#### **1. Events**

##### **Tree Planting event in Minesing**

This tree planting event is located along Willow Creek off George Johnson Rd.

**Date:** May 13, 2025 from 9:30am to 3pm.

**Location:** Willow Creek Canoe Corral, Minesing

##### **Spring Paddle in Minesing**

The Friends of Minesing Wetlands will be leading a spring trip into the Minesing Wetlands via canoe or kayak.

**Date:** May 17, 2025 from 8:30am to 2:30pm

**Location:** Willow Creek Canoe Corral, Minesing

##### **Tree Planting event in Mono**

This tree planting event is located along Mono Centre Creek.

**Date:** May 24, 2025

**Location:** 754387 Mono Centre Road Orangeville, ON

#### **2. Call to Order**

#### **3. Land Acknowledgement**

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Board acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional land of the Anishnaabeg people. The Anishnaabeg (*a-nish-i-na-beck*) include the Ojibwe (*o-jib-way*), Odawa (*o-dah-wa*), and Pottawatomi (*pot-a-wa-tom-ee*) 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 #06-25-BOD dated on May 23, 2025 be approved.

#### **6. Chairs Update**

Chair Scott will share his updates.

#### **7. Announcements**

#### **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 05-25-BOD dated on April 25, 2025 be approved.

### 12.2. Staff Reports

#### 12.2.1. Staff Report No. 16-06-25-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist regarding Communications Strategy

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 16-06-25-BOD regarding the 2025 NVCA Communications Strategy.

#### 12.2.2. Staff Report No. 17-06-25-BOD from Chris Parker, Communications Assistant regarding Communications Report

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** Staff Report No. 17-06-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – April 12, 2025 – May 9, 2025, be received.

## 13. In-Camera

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting of the Board of Directors No. 06-25-BOD move into closed session at \_\_\_\_\_ 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:** Director, Corporate Services Sheryl Flannagan; Chief Administrative Officer, Jennifer Vincent and Administrative Assistant, Kerry Jenkins to remain for discussion and recording purposes.

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

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors rise from in-camera at \_\_\_\_\_ and report progress.

#### **15. Other Business**

#### **16. Adjourn**

Recommendation:

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting adjourn at \_\_\_\_\_ to meet again on June 27, 2025 or at the call of the Chair.

**From:** Jonathan Scott

**Re:** Chair's Report – May 2025

**Date:** May 9, 2025

It's been a productive spring for the NVCA. I'm pleased to share a few key updates on our leadership transition, strategic planning and external relations.

### **Welcoming Our New CAO**

We are thrilled to officially welcome Jennifer Vincent as our new CAO. At our onboarding lunch, we discussed our shared commitment to timely, effective planning and permitting, the next five-year strategic plan and early priorities for the 2026 budget. We also "blueskyed" some forward-thinking ideas to enhance our work—from expanding initiatives like maple syrup and branded merchandise sales into something of a social-enterprise model, to exploring AI-assisted customer service, to land acquisition for new conservation areas. We also discussed investing in professional development for both staff and board members to build a culture of continuous improvement.

### **Continued Planning & Permitting Improvements**

Operationally, we continue to deliver results on improving planning and permitting timelines. We've seen early gains from the introduction of triage systems, peer review/fast track system, monthly reporting and stronger customer-service tracking. This remains a priority as we align our internal capacity with increasing external demands. Our commitment remains: to support sustainable growth while protecting natural heritage, with responsiveness and professionalism.

### **Strategic Outreach & Government Relations**

We've begun a new round of outreach to elected officials at both the federal and provincial levels. We've invited local MPPs and MPs to visit one of our conservation areas and meet with staff and leadership. These visits are an opportunity to showcase our work and deepen support for watershed-based conservation. As one example, we met with MPP Paul Vickers, joined by outgoing Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services, Sheryl Flanagan and Conservation Ontario CAO Angela Coleman, in Sheryl's final week—another sign of the strong relationships we're building.

### **Amalgamation Update**

The required threshold of municipal "no" votes has already been surpassed; the current proposal, if put to a vote, would not pass. That said, I continue to believe that it is worth better understanding the practical concerns to be raised by Oro-Medonte so we may address such matters. It is not clear whether they plan to proceed with a meeting on amalgamation (estimated at ~\$25,000 in costs due to advertising requirements), nor when it might be scheduled, if at all. It is my hope that the clear opposition to this proposal by our member municipalities will be sufficient to put this question to bed so we can all refocus on tangible improvements.

**Communications & Media**

I narrated a spring video update highlighting our environmental education, restoration work and permitting reforms. This is part of our broader effort to proactively share our story and connect with the communities we serve, including more effectively on digital media. We also issued a news release touting the results of our 2024 audit, which confirms NVCA's strong financial position and prudent fiscal management. These communications underscore our credibility and operational excellence.

I am proud of the professionalism of our team and the momentum we've built. As always, I welcome your input as we continue advancing our mandate and preparing for the future.

Sincerely,  
Jonathan Scott  
Chair



05-25-BOD (April's Meeting) Minutes **(Draft)**  
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority  
Friday April 25, 2025 9:00 AM EST

**Attendance**

**Present:**

Cllr. Joe Belanger, Wasaga Beach (Town); 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. Richard Schell, Oro-Medonte (Township); Deputy Mayor Paul Van Staveren Clearview (Township); Cllr. Ralph Manktelow, Mono (Town); Cllr. Kyle Fegan, Shelburne (Town); Chair Gail Little, Amaranth (Township); Cllr. Phil Fisher, Springwater (Township); Cllr. Kevin Eisses, Innisfil (Town); Mayor Darren White, Melancthon (Township)

**NVCA Staff:**

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

**Guests:**

Tiffany Cecchetto, CPA, CA, KPMG LLP – *departed at 9:53am*

**Absent:**

Cllr. June Porter, The Blue Mountains (Town); Cllr. Nicole Cox, New Tecumseth (Town); Cllr. Gary Harvey, Barrie (City); Cllr. Patricia Clark, Mulmur (Township);

**1. Events**

**Tree Planting event in the Town of New Tecumseth**

This tree planting event is located along East Beeton Creek in Tottenham

**Date:** April 27, 2025 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

**Location:** Town of New Tecumseth

**Tree Planting event in the Township of Clearview**

Come out to help plant native trees and shrubs in/on Mad River in Clearview Township! Planting trees will help enhance fish and wildlife habitat, shade the stream, reduce erosion, and capture carbon!

**Date:** April 29, 2025 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

**Location:** Carruther Memorial Park, South Avening, ON, on Airport Road (County Road 42)

**Tree Planting event in the Township of Adjala-Tosorontio**

This tree planting event is located along Sheldon Creek in Adjala-Tosorontio

**Date:** May 3, 2025 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

**Location:** Adjala-Tosorontio

**Tree Planting event in Essa**

This tree planting event is located along the Pine River Sheldon Creek in the Township of Essa

**Date:** May 10, 2025 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**Location:** Township of Essa

**Arbour Day**

NVCA will hold its 35th annual Arbor Day Tree Sale. A variety of bareroot tree and shrub seedlings will be for sale. Trees and shrubs are sold in bundles of 10 for \$35 each. Tree availability is first come first serve and cannot be reserved.

**Date:** May 10, 2024

**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 9:03am.

**3. Land Acknowledgement**

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Board acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional land of the Anishnaabeg people. The Anishnaabeg (*a-nish-i-na-beck*) include the Ojibwe (*o-jib-way*), Odawa (*o-dah-wa*), and Pottawatomi (*pot-a-wa-tom-ee*) 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: 35-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

Seconded by: Cllr. Pieter Kiezebrink

**RESOLVED THAT:** the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting #05-25-BOD dated on April 25, 2025 be approved.

**Carried;**

**6. Chairs Update**

Chair Scott shared his updates.

**7. Announcements**

Kyra Howes, Director, Conservation Services to acknowledged that Dufferin Northern Peel Anglers & Hunters donated \$2,000 to support our education curriculum at Mono Amaranth Public School for grades 6, 7 & 8.

**8. Presentations**

**8.1. 2024 Audit from Tiffany Cecchetto, CPA, CA, KPMG LLP**

Tiffany Cecchetto, CPA, CA, KPMG LLP conducted a presentation regarding NVCA's 2024 Audit.

Recommendation:

*RES: 36-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Joe Belanger

Seconded by: Cllr. Kyle Fegan

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board receives the presentation regarding NVCA's 2024 Audit; and

**FURTHER THAT:** the Board approves the 2024 Draft Financial Statements.

**Carried;**

**9. Deputations**

There are no deputations at this time.

**10. Hearings**

There are 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: 37-25*

Moved by: Vice-Chair Gail Little

Seconded by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

**RESOLVED THAT:** agenda item number(s), 13.2.1 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 03-25-BOD dated on March 28, 2025 be approved.

#### **13.2. Staff Reports**

##### **13.2.1. Staff Report No. 12-05-25-BOD from Hendrik Amo, Manager, Information Services & Technology & Dalia Al-Ali, Manager, Engineering Services**

Recommendation:

*RES: 38-25*

Moved by: Cllr. Christopher Baines

Seconded by: Cllr. Rick Schell

**RESOLVED THAT:** NVCA Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 12-05-25-BOD that outlines the rationale to update NVCA's hydrology model; and

**FURTHER THAT:** The Board of Directors approve using reserves to finance the update of the hydrology model to an upper limit of \$60,000 from the operational reserves.

**Carried;**

##### **13.2.2. Staff Report No. 13-05-25-BOD from Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services regarding Employee Handbook & Administrative Bylaws Update**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors approve Staff Report No. 13-05-25-BOD regarding the Employee Handbook & Administrative Bylaws Update.

**13.2.3. Staff Report No. 14-05-25-BOD from Sheryl Flannagan, Interim CAO/Director, Corporate Services regarding 2025 1st Quarter Budget Report**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 14-05-25-BOD regarding the 2025 first quarter financials; and

**FURTHER THAT:** staff continue to monitor budget activities.

**13.2.4. Staff Report No. 15-05-25-BOD from Maria Leung, Senior Communications Specialist regarding Communications Report**

Recommendation:

*Approved by Consent*

**RESOLVED THAT:** Staff Report No. 15-05-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – March 15, 2025 – April 11, 2025, be received.

**14. Other Business**

**15. Adjourn**

Recommendation:

*RES: 39-25*

Moved by: Mayor Scott W. Anderson

Seconded by: Cllr. Phil Fisher

**RESOLVED THAT:** this meeting adjourn at 10:09am to meet again on May 23, 2025 or at the call of the Chair.

**Carried;**



Staff Report: 16-06-25-BOD

Date: 23/05/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Maria Leung,  
Senior Communications Specialist

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**SUBJECT: 2025 NVCA Communications Strategy**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT:** the Board of Directors receive Staff Report No. 16-06-25-BOD regarding the 2025 NVCA Communications Strategy.

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**Purpose of the Staff Report**

The purpose of this staff report is to provide NVCA's Board of Directors the opportunity to review and approve NVCA's 2025 Communications Strategy.

NVCA's work is guided by the 20-year Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP), and the 5-year strategic, business and climate change action plans. These key plans guide program delivery to help NVCA reach its mission and vision. As the 5-year plans are expiring in 2025, NVCA staff developed the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy (WSBRMS) was completed and which will guide the next set of 5-year plans

This Communications Strategy supports NVCA's mission, vision, IWMP and WSBRMS and will be incorporated into the next set of strategic, business and climate change action plans.

### Background

The NVCA collaborates with many partners—including municipalities, funders, landowners, businesses, and dedicated volunteers—to implement programs that enhance and maintain the Nottawasaga Watershed that is resilient to climate and urban growth.

Effective communication, outreach, and engagement empower NVCA's partners to recognize the challenges within the Nottawasaga Watershed and inspire them to collaborate in support of NVCA's mission and vision.

Grounded in four guiding principles, this strategy aims to strengthen engagement with diverse audiences, build awareness of NVCA's programs and services, and promote climate adaptation actions.

It is designed to strengthen NVCA's ability to engage and inform its audiences. Three key desired outcomes include:

- Enhanced understanding of the watershed and climate adaptation,
- Increased awareness of NVCA's programs and services, and
- Increased participation in programs, services, and engagement initiatives.

The strategy also lists action items to be implemented over the next five years. These include crafting organizational and department-specific key messages, developing audience profiles, and establishing baselines and KPIs to assess whether the desired outcomes are met.

### Issues/Analysis

The development strategy was a two-year process. In 2023, NVCA staff established an internal committee to discuss the need and purpose of a communications strategy. In 2024, the Communications team applied to be part of Ontario Resource Centre (ORCCA) for Climate Adaptation's Community Outreach and Engagement Program Application.

The Communications team worked closely with ORCCA staff from March 2024 – December 2024 to establish the project scope, develop guiding principles, audience profiles and finalize the communications strategy.

### Relevance to Authority Policy/Mandate

This 2025 Communications Strategy supports the IWMP and WBRMS.

Impact on Authority Finances

The development of this staff report, as well as the 2025 Communications Strategy will be developed through the approved 2024 & 2025 budgets.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications related to this report.

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

Approved for submission by:  
*Original Signed by*  
Jennifer Vincent  
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: 2025 NVCA Communications Strategy



# Communications Strategy

## 2025



**This strategy was developed through the collaborative efforts of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Ontario Resource Centre for Climate Adaptation.**



# Introduction

Effective communication is essential to advancing the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA)'s mission of fostering a healthy, resilient watershed.

This Communications Strategy provides a framework to guide NVCA's communication and outreach efforts, ensuring that messaging is clear, consistent, and impactful.

**Grounded in four guiding principles, this strategy aims to strengthen engagement with diverse audiences, build awareness of NVCA's programs and services, and promote climate adaptation actions.**

By applying these guiding principles and working to advance and implement the suggested actions, NVCA can effectively increase public understanding of the watershed, inspire greater participation in conservation initiatives, and support communities to adapt to changes in the Nottawasaga Watershed.

# About this Resource

## Purpose

This Communications Strategy is designed to provide a strong foundation for strengthening NVCA's communications across the organization. It describes overarching opportunities for NVCA to enhance the effectiveness of communications and identifies actionable steps to support the integration of the guiding principles into their work. While this strategy identifies key actions that can help bring the guiding principles to life, it is not a practice guide, toolkit, or step-by-step manual for developing specific communications materials or campaigns. Instead, it is intended as a foundational document to establish an overarching lens to guide communications.

## Audience

This Communications Strategy is intended for internal purposes. It was created to support NVCA staff working both within and beyond the Communications Department.

## Objectives

This Communications Strategy is designed to strengthen NVCA's ability to engage and inform its audiences. The overall objective is to increase resiliency to climate change and urban growth across the watershed.

Three key desired outcomes include:

- Enhanced understanding of the watershed and climate adaptation,
- Increased awareness of NVCA's programs and services, and
- Increased participation in programs, services, and engagement initiatives.

**Effective communication is essential to advancing NVCA's vision of a sustainable watershed that is resilient to climate change, urban growth, and other stressors while supporting safe, healthy, and prosperous communities.**

# About this Resource

## How to Use This Strategy

This Communications Strategy is an inspiration document and a guiding lens when developing communications materials and campaigns. It provides key actions to help the Communications Department and other leads enhance tools, resources, and support systems to strengthen NVCA's outreach. By applying these principles, staff can contribute to more effective communication and advance the goal of increasing resilience across the watershed.

### Role of NVCA's Communications Department

NVCA's Communications team is part of the Corporate Services department and provides all departments with writing, graphic design, promotion, social media, and strategic communications support.

The Communications team provides communications support to the organization through:

- Executing and supporting communications deliverables in NVCA's key plans.
- Managing NVCA's brand and reputation.
- Enhancing awareness of watershed issues and NVCA's programs and services.
- Work with other departments to establish new relationships and reinforce existing partnerships.
- Engaging staff and fostering pride in NVCA's work.

### Role of Other Departments at NVCA

All departments at NVCA communicate externally and can help engage more audiences about the issues facing our watershed and the services that NVCA provides to mitigate these issues.

Other departments should follow the guiding principles in this strategy and work with communications staff to maintain consistency in NVCA's voice and messaging when communicating externally.

# Communications

Communications encompass the messages, methods, and tools to share information, engage audiences, and inspire action. At NVCA, communications play a critical role in connecting with communities, partners, and stakeholders to build awareness, foster relationships, and promote conservation efforts.

Effective communication through digital content, public outreach, media relations, or educational programs ensures that key messages are clear, accessible, and aligned with NVCA's mission and goals.

## Communication vs. Outreach vs. Engagement What's the Difference?

### Communication

The transmission of information to inform, educate, or raise awareness. It is often one-way but can invite feedback.

### Outreach

A proactive effort to share information and resources with specific audiences to increase awareness, build relationships, or encourage participation.

Outreach is often two-way, fostering dialogue and responsiveness.

### Engagement

Collaborative process that involves listening, dialogue, and relationship-building to inform decision-making and co-develop solutions. Engagement is interactive and participatory, and often requires ongoing commitment.

Communication is the thread that ties it all together, ensuring outreach and engagement efforts are clear, strategic, and effective.

# Guiding Principles and Implementation Strategies

## Guiding principle 1

**Build public trust and understanding through transparent, consistent, and responsive messaging.**

### Rationale

The public's perception of NVCA is both positive and negative. Programs such as watershed restoration services, education and conservation lands generally benefit from a positive reputation across the watershed. Program areas such as planning and regulation currently suffer from a poor reputation and lack of trust in many places across the watershed, mainly due to their mandated regulatory role. Developers and some property owners perceive NVCA as opposed to their development plans.

Communications from the whole organization should aim to build trust with target audiences so they can more clearly understand NVCA's programs and services, ultimately gaining more support for our efforts to build climate resilience across the watershed.

### Implementation Strategies

1. **Increase transparency:** Share clear information that is easy to understand and accessible to all watershed residents. Provide timely and honest updates about organizational challenges and our efforts to overcome them.
2. **Consistency: Update NVCA brand guide outlining voice, language, spellings, etc.**
3. **Showcase accountability and progress:** Incorporate existing reporting cycles for projects, departments, and/or key plans to ensure regular reporting on goals and milestones, including updates on project timelines, achievements, and measurable impacts. Consistent updates show reliability and demonstrate ongoing commitment.
4. **Prepare for adversity:** Identify programs and areas that are likely to receive public pushback. Create a plan, including audience-specific and scenario-specific draft messages and/or templates, to ensure prompt and consistent response. Provide context and clarify misconceptions.

# Guiding Principles and Implementation Strategies

## Guiding principle 2

### **Align communications with NVCA's mission and vision and Integrated Watershed Management Plan.**

#### **Rationale**

Ensuring consistency across departments and communication channels helps create a cohesive brand identity that is recognizable and trustworthy, ultimately enhancing organizational credibility. When communications align with and reinforce NVCA's core purpose, it becomes easier for the public to see the principles that guide our decisions and actions.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- 1. Develop and distribute core messaging guidelines:** Work with department managers to create a toolkit that includes key messages, value statements, brand voice guidelines, and a summary of the organization's mission and vision.
- 2. Make NVCA's mission and vision visible and actionable:** Seek opportunities to make NVCA's mission and vision statements visible (in physical spaces (e.g., office, conservation areas) and digital spaces (e.g., email signatures, social media templates). Communicate success stories and examples of work that clearly reflect NVCA's mission and vision. Make clear links showing how actions/projects, etc., relate to the mission/vision.
- 3. Implement an evaluation and feedback mechanism:** Conduct periodic reviews of internal and external communication materials from across departments to assess their alignment with the mission and vision. Develop a mechanism to measure and track public awareness of NVCA's core purpose and values.

# Guiding Principles and Implementation Strategies

## Guiding principle 3

**Motivate people and organizations to be active stewards of a healthy watershed.**

### Rationale

Motivating individuals and organizations to be active stewards of a healthy watershed inspires a sense of ownership and responsibility for the environment and protection from natural disasters.

### Implementation Strategies

- 1. Building Strong Partnerships:** Partner with opinion leaders to amplify messages and reach wider audiences. Work with community organizations to co-create and deliver communication campaigns.
- 2. Tell success stories:** Create compelling stories and case studies that highlight the impact of individual and collective actions on watershed health. Stories can be told through different mediums, such as photos, videos, and infographics, to convey messages and evoke emotions.
- 3. Communicate science and opportunities:** Communicate scientific facts about the health of the watershed and restoration priorities, grant opportunities and tangible action items that people and organizations can do to improve the health of the watershed.

# Guiding Principles and Implementation Strategies

## Guiding principle 4

**Integrate principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging into communications.**

### Rationale

All residents of the Nottawasaga watershed have unique, intersectional identities that are integral to the social sustainability of our watershed. Integrating diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging principles into communications strengthens the social resilience of our watershed, enhances audience engagement and accessibility, builds trust, credibility, and community support, and aligns with ethical standards.

### Implementation Strategies

- 1. Create a DEIB-focused style guide:** Include watershed demographics, and language and imagery guidelines. Provide department and/or program-specific language suggestions/examples. Update the guide periodically to reflect current best/promising practices.
- 2. Know your audience and foster a culture of inclusive representation:** Understand resident demographics across the watershed. Use diverse visuals, language, and voices so all audiences feel seen and valued. Consider ages, races, genders, abilities, and backgrounds. Use NVCA's communications channels to highlight cultural events, holidays, observances, resources, and perspectives.
- 3. Embrace storytelling:** Use storytelling to help to amplify underrepresented and diverse voices and to engage watershed residents through relatable narratives, often appealing on an emotional level. Storytelling can help to build cultural awareness and competency, which is integral to building social connectedness (and thus climate resilience) across the watershed. Consider whose voice or experience you are centering (or not centering).
- 4. Build DEIB competency among staff:** Provide ongoing staff training and efforts to embed DEIB into NVCA's organizational culture and deepen staff understanding of the connection between advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging and building social connectedness, a key component of a healthy, climate-resilient watershed.

# Actions

The actions identified below help meet the guiding principles stated above. The priority listing is relative based on how the action will help meet the guiding principles, and the amount of effort needed to achieve them. Completed sections will be completed as new information becomes available.

## Year 1: Year-end 2025-2026

1. Develop a "Communications Toolkit" and training module for NVCA staff to enhance their understanding of best communications practices.

Lead: Communications

2. Develop organizational and department-specific 'key messages' for diverse audiences.

Lead: Communications

Support: Department team leads

3. Develop an 'Adversity Plan' including key messages and response procedures for program areas that receive public pushback.

Lead: Communications

Support: Department team leads

4. Develop and implement a mechanism to measure and track public awareness of NVCA's core purpose and values.

Lead: Communications

## Year 2: 2027

1. Update the "Communications Toolkit" and training module for NVCA staff to enhance their understanding of best communications practices.

Lead: Communications

2. Develop data-driven audience profiles for key audiences. Conduct research (including using existing data) to analyze the demographics, attitudes, and values (including climate perspectives) of diverse resident audiences across the watershed.

Lead: Communications

3. Determine a monitoring and review process for this communications strategy. Possible KPIs are indicated in the next section.

Lead: Communications

Support: Department team leads

4. Update the NVCA 'Brand Guide' to clearly identify guidelines about: tone, voice, spellings/terms, grammar rules, logo usage, colour palette, typography rules, etc.

Lead: Communications

5. Develop a plan to regularly showcase NVCA's success stories.

Lead: Communications

# Actions

## Year 3: 2028

1. Update the "Communications Toolkit" and training module for NVCA staff to enhance their understanding of best communications practices.  
Lead: Communications
2. Encourage staff training opportunities to build DEIB competency and cultural awareness among all NVCA staff.  
Lead: Director of Corporate Services  
Support: Communications
3. Establish and implement a communications 'professional development' plan to enable opportunities for ongoing growth in storytelling, behavioural science, climate communications, and DEIB and decolonizing principles in communications.  
Lead: Communications  
Support: Director of Corporate Services
4. Update key messages and adversity plan to include potential delivery mechanisms and tone that reflect public awareness and audience research.  
Lead: Communications

## Year 4: 2029

1. Update the "Communications Toolkit" and training module for NVCA staff to enhance their understanding of best communications practices.  
Lead: Communications
2. Create a DEIB communications style guide that includes watershed demographics, inclusive language and imagery guidelines, and promising practices.  
Lead: Communications

## Year 5: 2030

1. Update the "Communications Toolkit" and training module for NVCA staff to enhance their understanding of best communications practices.  
Lead: Communications

# Tracking and Measuring Success

## Enhanced understanding of the watershed and climate adaptation

Goal: Establish a baseline and measure improvements in public knowledge about climate change, the watershed, and climate adaptation strategies.

- Knowledge Retention & Awareness: % increase in survey respondents correctly identifying key watershed issues, NVCA's role, and climate adaptation strategies.
- Content Engagement: Number of views, shares, and time spent on educational resources (e.g., reports, infographics, videos).
- Event & Workshop Attendance: Number of participants in NVCA-hosted educational events, webinars, or outreach sessions.
- Media & Public Mentions: Number of articles, blogs, or social media posts referencing NVCA's educational efforts.

## Increased awareness of NVCA's programs and services

Goal: Establish a baseline and measure the reach and recognition of NVCA's work across the watershed.

- Website Traffic & Page Views: % increase in NVCA program and service page visits.
- Social Media Reach & Engagement: Growth in followers, post reach, and engagement rates related to program promotions.
- Newsletter Subscription Growth: % increase in newsletter sign-ups and open rates.
- Direct Public Inquiries: Number of calls, emails, and messages related to NVCA's programs.
- Referral Sources: % of new program participants citing NVCA's outreach materials or partnerships as their source of information.

# Tracking and Measuring Success

## Increased participation in programs, services, and engagement initiatives

Goal: Track involvement in NVCA's programs, services, and initiatives.

- Program Enrollment & Participation: % increase in registrations for NVCA programs, services, and stewardship initiatives.
- Volunteer Engagement: Number of volunteers participating in NVCA-led initiatives.
- Community Event Attendance: % increase in attendees at NVCA-organized events.
- Action Commitment Rate: % of participants who take follow-up actions (e.g., implementing climate adaptation measures, adopting best practices).
- Stakeholder & Partner Collaboration: Number of new partnerships formed to support community engagement efforts.

## Next Steps

The action items in this communications strategy will be incorporated into the next five-year Strategic Plan, Business Plan and Climate Change Action Plan. Communication staff will review the communications strategy when these plans are up for renewal.



**8195 8th Line**  
**Utopia ON L0M 1T0**  
705-424-1479 | [admin@nvca.on.ca](mailto:admin@nvca.on.ca)  
[nvca.on.ca](http://nvca.on.ca)





Staff Report: 17-06-25-BOD

Date: 23/05/2025

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Chris Parker  
Communications Assistant

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**SUBJECT: Communications Report – April 12, 2025 – May 9, 2025**

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**Recommendation**

**RESOLVED THAT: Staff Report No. 17-06-25-BOD regarding NVCA Communications – April 12, 2025 – May 9, 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 April 12, 2025 – May 9, 2025.

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

1. Flood Messages

No flood messages were issued in this reporting period.

2. Media coverage of NVCA news releases

NVCA reports strong financial management and ongoing service improvements, issued on May 1, 2025

| Title                                          | Media Outlet   | Date        | Reference   |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Audit finds 'no concerns' with NVCA's finances | Bradford Today | May 2, 2025 | Chair Scott |
| Audit finds 'no concerns' with NVCA's finances | Innisfil Today | May 2, 2025 | Chair Scott |

Get native plants and shrubs at NVCA's hosts 35th annual Arbour Day Tree Sale, issued on May 1, 2025

| Title                                                   | Media Outlet       | Date        | Reference       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| NVCA holding Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend          | Bradford Today     | May 8, 2025 | Rick Grillmayer |
| NVCA holding Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend          | Barrie Today       | May 8, 2025 | Rick Grillmayer |
| NVCA holding Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend          | Innisfil Today     | May 8, 2025 | Rick Grillmayer |
| Native trees and shrubs available for sale this weekend | South Simcoe Today | May 8, 2025 | Rick Grillmayer |

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

### 3. Other Media Coverage

| Title                                                           | Media Outlet      | Date           | Reference           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Grey Highlands rejects amalgamation of conservation authorities | Collingwood Today | April 16, 2025 | Councillor Lougheed |

| Title                                                             | Media Outlet        | Date           | Reference     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| NVCA closes a section of Bruce Trail due to dangerous conditions  | New Tecumseth Times | April 17, 2025 |               |
| Birch St. \$18.1M affordable housing project gets county approval | Collingwood Today   | April 22, 2025 |               |
| Grey Highlands Council Digest                                     | Penticton Herald    | May 1, 2025    |               |
| NVCA official considers merger with LSRCA 'a closed matter'       | Barrie Today        | May 2, 2025    |               |
| Mad River bank stabilization efforts continue                     | Creemore Echo       | May 9, 2025    | Laura Wensink |

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

- April 22 & 24, 2025 – NVCA display at Honda Earth Month Open House
- May 2, 2025 – NVCA display at New Tecumseth Earth Fest in Alliston
- May 5, 2025 - NVCA Education staff were invited to speak at Forests Canada's Envirothon in Barrie.

## Issues/Analysis

Media coverage in this reporting period focused on Jonathan Scott's comments about the amalgamation between NVCA and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation

Authority, and NVCA's annual Arbour Day tree sale. 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*  
Jennifer Vincent  
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: Media Clippings for the period

## **Grey Highlands rejects amalgamation of conservation authorities**

Grey Highlands supports Collingwood resolution that opposes the concept of an amalgamation of two area conservation authorities

April 16, 2025

Collingwood Today



Grey Highlands council has voted against the possibility of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority amalgamating with the Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority.

At its meeting on April 16, Grey Highlands [joined the growing chorus of area municipalities](#) rejecting the suggestion from Oro-Medonte that the two conservation authorities merge into one entity.

At the meeting, [a resolution from the Town of Collingwood](#) opposing the possible merger appeared on the consent agenda for the meeting. Coun. Joel Loughhead lifted the item from the consent agenda and asked

for council's support for a Grey Highlands resolution opposing the amalgamation.

Loughhead said the amalgamation idea had been discussed extensively at NVCA meetings and had not received any support.

"All of the municipalities either have or will be rejecting the amalgamation," said Loughhead. "It was unequivocal the opposition from the other municipalities."

Rather than formulate a brand new resolution, council chose to use the wording from Collingwood and substituted the Municipality of Grey Highlands for the Town of Collingwood.

The resolution stated:

"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."

Council unanimously supported the resolution.

## **NVCA closes a section of Bruce Trail due to dangerous conditions**

April 17, 2025 by Brian Lockhart

New Tecumseth Times

If you're a hiker, you may want to make sure the trails are open before you head out to some areas of the Bruce Trail.

The recent ice storm brought down branches and trees along sections of the trail making it hazardous for hikers.

In response, to make sure the trails are safe to use, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has closed sections of the trail to the public. This includes the main Bruce Trail and all associated side trails.

Closed sections are between Lavender and Craigleith. This closure is in addition to closures in several from Dufferin Hi-Land and northwards.

Trail maintenance volunteers are working hard to assess the area and clear debris. They are requesting the public to avoid these areas for their own safety.

The closures may last for a few weeks until volunteer crews can attend to all the damage.

As the trail assessment continues, other parts of the Bruce Trail may also be temporarily closed to hikers.

It is important that hikers adhere to trail closures as conditions are creating a serious trip or fall hazard, and anyone injured on the trails may be in serious trouble while waiting for rescue.

A rescue in such areas also creates a hazardous situation for emergency personnel.

## **Birch St. \$18.1M affordable housing project gets county approval**

At County of Simcoe council's meeting on April 22, councillors voted in favour of approving the budget and timeline for the new 30-unit build at 29 and 45 Birch St.

April 22, 2025 by Jessica Owen

Collingwood Today



*Preliminary design drawings of a new 30-unit apartment building planned for 29-45 Birch St. in Collingwood. Images courtesy of the County of Simcoe*

The County of Simcoe is full steam ahead with their Birch St. build in Collingwood.

At their regular meeting on April 22, county councillors voted to formally approve the plans for the Johnson Trust property at 29 and 45 Birch St. in Collingwood, also approving an \$18.1 million budget for the 30-unit affordable housing project.

The timeline, so far, is also still on-track, with the building expected to open for tenancy in the spring of 2026.

Through the report on the matter considered at county's committee of the whole meeting on April 8, county staff shared that the county will apply \$750,000 from the Canada-Ontario Housing Initiative capital funding stream toward the project, and will pursue additional federal and provincial funding opportunities now that the budget has been approved.

"The report was a culmination of a collaborative approach by the county with our municipal staff, to use a very transparent approach in keeping all stakeholders (councils, current tenants, neighbouring property owners, the public and the town's affordable housing task force) informed and engaged as the project progressed," said Collingwood's Deputy Mayor Tim Fryer, who also sits on county council, in an email.

Plans for the modular project include a common room on the main floor, and outdoor patio amenity space, a community program room, indoor bike/scooter storage, community garden boxes, parking for 17 vehicles and an indoor garbage/recycling room. The building will be constructed using energy-efficient technologies.

If all goes according to plan, the county is expecting to start their formal applications to the town, which will include consultation with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and public consultation. Current residents will be moved out in July. In August, the county is hoping to get site preparation underway.

Thirty-six modules will be delivered in October, and construction crews will work to seal the outside of the building before winter hits. Over the next winter, construction crews will finish work on the interior.

The county expects to formally open the building for occupancy in the spring of 2026.

Units will be rented out at 80 per cent of average market rents, which in Collingwood (as defined by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation) translates to \$816 for studio units, \$1,047 for one-bedrooms, \$1,231 for two bedrooms and \$1,357 for a three-bedroom apartment.

The unit breakdown in the building will be 13 studio units, 11 one-bedrooms, three two-bedrooms and three three-bedrooms. Twenty per cent of the units will be fully accessible.

Current tenants of the Johnson Trust apartments will be provided with alternative accommodations in Collingwood throughout the construction, and will be provided with moving costs both when they move out of their current homes, and will be given the right of first refusal to move back into the new apartments once construction is complete.

Now that county council has provided their approval, the Simcoe County Housing Corporation will take over the land and proceed with next steps on the project, which include pursuing planning approvals, design, contract

award, site preparation and construction.

When the project came before Collingwood council [in February](#), residents raised concerns about whether the building would fit into the neighbourhood.

In the staff report approved to county councillors this week, county staff confirmed that concerns regarding the proposed colour scheme, landscaping, parking supply, and setbacks can be addressed through the land-use approvals process.

"Staff have worked so diligently and will continue to ensure the neighbouring property owner's input has been taken into consideration as best possible," said Fryer. "This has helped tremendously in continuing to see such a positive outlook from all of our stakeholders about what we are going to be able to achieve with this project."

## **Grey Highlands Council Digest**

May 1, 2025 by M.T. Fernandes

Penticton Herald

Council awarded tenders, addressed road safety concerns around schools and took a look at ice-storm clean-up at a recent meeting.

### **SCHOOL ZONES**

A School Safety Zone will be put in place on parts of Campbell Street in Flesherton, Devonleigh Gate in Markdale and 3 Line C by the Wilde School, which had come to council to ask for the zone to be created.

An update will be coming to council from the consultant soon. It couldn't be done at the time as the rest of the pedestrian safety study because of the Hwy. 10 construction in Flesherton. That will address the crossing guard and the school zone.

In a related item, the council approved a new policy governing its decisions on community safety zones. Director Chris Cornfield said that too many of the zones could make them less effective.

The guideline can be checked when the public is requesting the community safety zone. There would be a required 66 percent resident support in the area for the Zone before it will go to staff for review.

### **BRIDGE & OTHER TENDERS**

Seeley & Arnill Construction was awarded the tender for the replacement of a bridge on the 10 Concession for \$420,460.31 (excluding HST). Council agreed with the proposal that Grey Highlands support carrying a five percent contingency itself for the project. The bridge came in "way under budget," Coun. Dan Wickens commented, noting they were a local company with a very local pit.

R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited will be providing the contract administration and site inspection services approved for up to \$30,000.

The tender was awarded to Brandt Tractor to supply a new grader, for \$588,250 (excluding HST). An extended five-year powertrain and hydraulics warranty will be added at \$28,150. Grey Highlands will get trade-in value of \$85,000 for the surplus grader, the report said.

A single axle plow truck with a combination dump and spreader body and snow plow harness will be supplied by Lewis Motor Sales Inc. at \$376,284.90, with the extended warranty package for \$15,185.

A new sidewalk tractor with attachments will be supplied by Work Equipment Ltd. for \$186,665.

Grass-cutting from 2025 to 2027 will be done for certain designated properties by S&E Lawncare.

The tender for cemetery services was awarded to Sturrock Construction for the same period.

#### BRUSH PICK-UP

Coun. Nadia Dubyk asked for a report on whether staff, once finished with priority work on municipal areas, could then do pick-up in the most hard-hit built-up rural areas.

In council's discussion on ice storm pick-up, points were made that in Simcoe County waste is handled on a county basis and already include leaf pick-up.

Mayor Paul McQueen said for those with farms, the clean-up could take months and many damaged branches are yet to fall.

Non-agricultural areas have burn permits available, which could help as well.

#### ROCKLYN ARENA SIGN

A staff report will be brought back May 7 on a Friends of the Rocklyn Arena request to acknowledge top sponsors of its Fathers' Day classic car and tractor show with a sign on the outside of the building.

The size requested is four by eight feet and to be created by a sign professional from the group, who would cover the expenses.

The clerk said that there is a billboard bylaw in the municipality, which might

come into play, and said that more research should be done.

Since the event is coming up soon, sponsorship details need to be finalized, Coun. Dubyk said. She asked if the report would come back for the May 7 meeting.

#### SUPPORT ROAD SAFETY

Ron Barnett came to council to seek support again for the fourth year of his Walk Bike Drive Road Safety Campaign.

Council asked staff for a report as to how the requested \$500 would be funded.

Mr. Barnett is partnering with the Hanley Institute in the project.

He is a resident of Grey Highlands, and was inspired to take action after a pedestrian death in Eugenia.

Each year, the campaign's reach has grown, and last year there was more of a marketing effort. He polled the public and found that the majority found the campaign valuable.

This year's campaign will start earlier in June, and will continue until National Road Safety Week in November. The goal is to hand out 5,000 LED armbands and 5,000 rearview mirror/door hanger cards.

#### BUY CANADIAN

Grey Highlands is supporting the request from municipalities to be able

to prioritize buying Canadian, and also to support eliminating inter-provincial trade barriers.

## PLANNING

Zoning changes were approved for Subrisco Investments that will allow repair of one truck trailer at a time on the property on Grey Road 4. This will be an on-farm diversified use.

An application for a zoning change from Ross and Wendy Gowanlock was approved.

This is the final stage in the rehabilitation of the former gravel pit 4 Con. B and changes the zoning back to Agriculture from Extractive Industrial.

The Ministry has accepted the rehabilitation work.

## OPPOSE AMALGAMATION

Grey Highlands passed a motion to oppose the proposed amalgamation of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Lake Simcoe Region CA. The motion said that it has not been demonstrated that such a change would benefit watershed management, municipalities or the public.

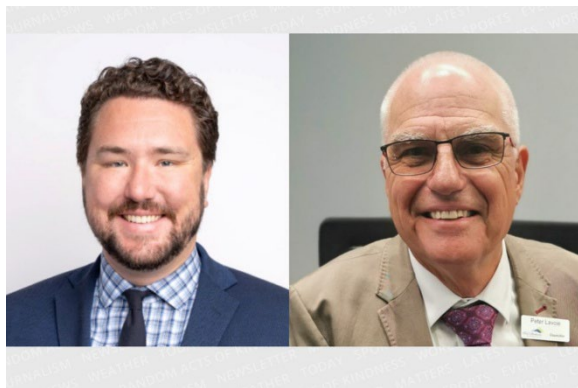
The Canadian Press. All rights reserved.

## **NVCA official considers merger with LSRCA 'a closed matter'**

'It is now a mathematical reality that if an amalgamation meeting were called, the resolution would not pass,' says NVCA chair Jonathan Scott

May 2, 2025 by Wayne Doyle

Barrie Today



*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*

As far as those at the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) are concerned, Oro-Medonte Township's request to amalgamate the NVCA and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) is dead in the water.

In an email to *BarrieToday* on Thursday, NVCA chair Jonathan Scott said every municipality that has considered the amalgamation proposal has passed a resolution to oppose it.

"It is now a mathematical reality that if an amalgamation meeting were called, the resolution would not pass," said Scott, who's also a town councillor in Bradford West Gwillimbury. "We believe the question of an amalgamation of our two authorities is a closed matter given the clear municipal opposition."

According to the Conservation Authorities Act, a two-thirds majority vote in a public meeting is required to pass a resolution to amalgamate two conservation authorities.

According to the NVCA, it has now received confirmation from its member municipalities that if a meeting is called, more than one-third of the votes will not be in favour of the amalgamation and a resolution to amalgamate the two authorities would be defeated.

Those municipalities include the Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Adjala-Tosorontio, Amaranth, The Blue Mountains, Clearview, Collingwood, Melancthon, Mulmur, Mono, Shelburne and Wasaga Beach.

The Town of Georgina in York Region has also passed a resolution requesting that York Region Council, as the member municipality of the LSRCA, also oppose amalgamation.

Based on that, the meeting Oro-Medonte Deputy Mayor Peter Lavoie told township council last week was tentatively scheduled for May 6 might be short, if it's needed at all.

The meeting is a make-good for two previously scheduled meetings that had to be cancelled — one due to conflicts in NVCA's calendar and the other due to the ice storm.

The parties have already met a couple of times since Lavoie introduced his motion at the [township's Jan. 22 council meeting](#).

"Since then, at our request, we met with representatives from Oro-Medonte on two occasions to better understand their concerns and why they believe the amalgamation of two distinct conservation authorities might address what appear to be solvable operational concerns, particularly related to planning and permitting," Scott said.

According to Lavoie, the May 6 meeting will be an opportunity for himself and Coun. David Clark, who seconded the original motion, to discuss steps moving forward.

"The NVCA, in particular, has been quite active in terms of petitioning other municipalities with regards to their opposition of this amalgamation," Lavoie told council at last week's meeting.

Scott said that as fiduciaries of the authority, it was the board's responsibility to take a position on the matter.

"We also were invited to make deputations to several member municipalities about our operational improvements underway," Scott said.

"On some occasions, we also discussed our opposition to the amalgamation proposal."

Lavoie noted that the missed meetings will impact his original schedule of getting this information in front of Simcoe County council in April. He said it may be delayed until later this month, or even June.

"It's important to stress that there is no procedural requirement for this to take place over any particular period of time," Lavoie told council. "So, to that extent, we're not under a statute of limitations or any other obligation for that amalgamation."

Scott confirmed the Act does not prescribe a timeline for holding such a vote, but did say the longer this matter remains unsettled, the more it risks distracting everyone involved. He also noted Oro-Medonte would incur some financial burden because the township would be responsible for the cost of advertising the public meeting in more than 30 municipalities.

Scott said he would have preferred Oro-Medonte put forward an alternate route, one that would have studied the proposal and had a joint committee oversee a feasibility analysis.

"The NVCA was never invited to participate in any feasibility study or data-sharing process," Scott said.

"Rather, our member municipalities were presented with a binary vote of whether to dissolve the two existing conservation authorities and to create

a new one in the same geographic area, or not.

"That question has now been soundly rejected by our member municipalities through council resolutions, which indicate how the municipality would vote at an amalgamation meeting," he added.

## **Audit finds 'no concerns' with NVCA's finances**

'This audit reflects NVCA's commitment to careful financial management and accountability to our member municipalities and residents,' says chair

Bradford Today

May 2, 2025



*The restored bank of the Mad River is shown. Photo supplied by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) continues to be financially stable, according to the 2024 financial audit conducted by KPMG.

The independent audit found no concerns. NVCA maintains a good financial position, with healthy reserves, prudent financial practices

and responsible stewardship of public funds.

"This audit reflects NVCA's commitment to careful financial management and accountability to our member municipalities and residents," said NVCA chair Jonathan Scott. "It provides a solid foundation for our ongoing work to strengthen service delivery and protect the Nottawasaga watershed."

In addition to maintaining a strong financial position, NVCA continues to implement operational improvements. Over the past several months, NVCA has:

- Cut the development planning and permitting backlog of files in half, and aims to eliminate the backlog by July.
- Introduced a risk-based triaging system to fast-track low-risk permits such as pools and septic systems.
- Launched a new e-permitting platform to improve customer experience and internal efficiency.
- Strengthened customer service standards across departments.

"These improvements are helping ensure that NVCA remains a trusted partner in supporting safe, sustainable growth while protecting rivers, wetlands, forests and other natural resources," Scott added.

NVCA's full audit and financial statements are available at [nvca.on.ca](https://nvca.on.ca).

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## NVCA holding Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend

Sale taking place Saturday at Tiffin Centre for Conservation

BradfordToday Staff May 8, 2025 7:00 PM



The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's annual Arbour Day Tree Sale will take place May 10 at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation. Image supplied

### NEWS RELEASE

#### NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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If you are looking to plant native trees and shrubs this spring, come to the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's (NVCA) 35th annual Arbour Day Tree Sale.

It will be held on May 10, 2025 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation.

Trees are sold in bundles of 10 for \$35 per bundle. This year, NVCA is offering white pine, red pine, white spruce, Norway spruce, white cedar, tamarack, European larch, red oak, white birch, silver maple, black walnut, nannyberry and American highbush cranberry. Quantities are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

“The trees sold at our Arbour Day Tree Sale are bare root seedlings,” said Rick Grillmayer, manager of forestry at NVCA. “Although bare root seedlings are younger and smaller than potted trees, they are less expensive and have loose roots that allow them to extend into the soil for moisture and nutrients.”

All proceeds from the event support NVCA’s forestry program. This year, more than 71,000 trees will be planted across the watershed. These future forests will help to moderate the effects of drought and flooding, reduce soil erosion, provide habitat for wildlife, and mitigate climate change. They are also an important economic resource as they can become wood products.

“We typically sell half of our trees in the first hour,” continued Grillmayer. “Come early since there are lineups well before the sale begins.”

The Tiffin Centre for Conservation is located at 8195 8th Line, Utopia, Ont., 10 minutes outside of Barrie, Innisfil and Angus.

For more information on the Arbour Day Tree Sale, visit [nvca.on.ca](http://nvca.on.ca) or call 705-424-1479.

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## NVCA holding Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend

Sale taking place Saturday at Tiffin Centre for Conservation in Utopia

BarrieToday Staff May 8, 2025 6:00 PM



The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's annual Arbour Day Tree Sale will take place May 10 at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation. Image supplied

[Listen to this article](#)

[00:02:09](#)

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InnisfilToday StaffMay 8, 2025 7:00 PM



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For more information on the Arbour Day Tree Sale, visit [nvca.on.ca](http://nvca.on.ca) or call 705-424-1479.

## NVCA official considers merger with LSRCA 'a closed matter'

'It is now a mathematical reality that if an amalgamation meeting were called, the resolution would not pass,' says NVCA chair Jonathan Scott

[Wayne Doyle, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter](#)

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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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As far as those at the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) are concerned, Oro-Medonte Township's request to amalgamate the NVCA and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) is dead in the water.

NVCA chair Jonathan Scott says every municipality that has considered the amalgamation proposal has passed a resolution to oppose it.

“It is now a mathematical reality that if an amalgamation meeting were called, the resolution would not pass,” said Scott, who's also a town councillor in Bradford West Gwillimbury. “We believe the question of an amalgamation of our two authorities is a closed matter given the clear municipal opposition.”

According to the Conservation Authorities Act, a two-thirds majority vote in a public meeting is required to pass a resolution to amalgamate two conservation authorities.

According to the NVCA, it has now received confirmation from its member municipalities that if a meeting is called, more than one-third of the votes will not be in favour of the amalgamation and a resolution to amalgamate the two authorities would be defeated.

Those municipalities include the Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Adjala-Tosorontio, Amaranth, The Blue Mountains, Clearview, Collingwood, Melancthon, Mulmur, Mono, Shelburne and Wasaga Beach.

The Town of Georgina in York Region has also passed a resolution requesting that York Region Council, as the member municipality of the LSRCA, also oppose amalgamation.

Based on that, the meeting Oro-Medonte Deputy Mayor Peter Lavoie told township council last week was tentatively scheduled for May 6 might be short, if it's needed at all.

The meeting is a make-good for two previously scheduled meetings that had to be cancelled — one due to conflicts in NVCA's calendar and the other due to the ice storm.

The parties have already met a couple of times since Lavoie introduced his motion at the [township's Jan. 22 council meeting](#).

“Since then, at our request, we met with representatives from Oro-Medonte on two occasions to better understand their concerns and why they believe the amalgamation of two distinct conservation authorities might address what appear to be solvable operational concerns, particularly related to planning and permitting,” Scott said.

According to Lavoie, the May 6 meeting will be an opportunity for himself and Coun. David Clark, who seconded the original motion, to discuss steps moving forward.

“The NVCA, in particular, has been quite active in terms of petitioning other municipalities with regards to their opposition of this amalgamation,” Lavoie told council at last week's meeting.

Scott said that as fiduciaries of the authority, it was the board's responsibility to take a position on the matter.

“We also were invited to make depositions to several member municipalities about our operational improvements underway,” Scott said. “On some occasions, we also discussed our opposition to the amalgamation proposal.”

Lavoie noted that the missed meetings will impact his original schedule of getting this information in front of Simcoe County council in April. He said it may be delayed until later this month, or even June.

“It's important to stress that there is no procedural requirement for this to take place over any particular period of time,” Lavoie told council. “So, to that extent, we're not under a statute of limitations or any other obligation for that amalgamation.”

Scott confirmed the Act does not prescribe a timeline for holding such a vote, but did say the longer this matter remains unsettled, the more it risks distracting everyone involved. He also noted Oro-Medonte would incur some financial burden because the township would be responsible for the cost of advertising the public meeting in more than 30 municipalities.

Scott said he would have preferred Oro-Medonte put forward an alternate route, one that would have studied the proposal and had a joint committee oversee a feasibility analysis.

“The NVCA was never invited to participate in any feasibility study or data-sharing process,” Scott said. “Rather, our member municipalities were presented with a binary vote of whether to dissolve the two existing conservation authorities and to create a new one in the same geographic area, or not.

“That question has now been soundly rejected by our member municipalities through council resolutions, which indicate how the municipality would vote at an amalgamation meeting,” he added.

## Native trees and shrubs available for sale this weekend

New Tecumseth, ON, Canada / FM92 South Simcoe Today

[Cameron Wilkinson](#)

May 8, 2025 | 8:52 PM



Image provided by Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

If you're looking to plant native trees and shrubs this spring, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) invites you to their 35th annual Arbour Day Tree Sale this weekend!

Trees are sold in bundles of 10 for \$35, with bare root seedlings available in a variety of species, including red oak, white pine, white cedar, nannyberry, and more. Quantities are limited and sold on a first come, first serve basis – many buyers line up early, and half the inventory typically sells within the first hour.

“The trees sold at our Arbour Day Tree Sale are bare root seedlings,” says Rick Grillmayer, Manager of Forestry at NVCA. “Although bare root seedlings are younger and smaller than potted trees, they are less expensive and have loose roots that allow them to extend into the soil for moisture and nutrients.”

Proceeds from the sale support NVCA's forestry program, which will plant over 71,000 trees across the watershed this year to help fight climate change, reduce erosion, and support wildlife.

It's happening on Saturday, May 10th, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation in Utopia, just minutes from Barrie, Innisfil and Angus.

For more information, click [here](#) or call 705-424-1479.

## Mad River bank stabilization efforts continue



By [Trina Berlo](#)

Posted [May 9, 2025](#)

In [Community](#)

Forty volunteers turned out on Tuesday to help plant 200 native trees and shrubs along the Mad River in Carruthers Memorial Park.

According to Laura Wensink of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), the trees and shrubs help in many ways. She said, “the leaves shade the river, the berries and acorns provide food, the branches provide habitat, the trunks sequester carbon and the roots help to stabilize the soil. We planted eight species, including bur oak, nannyberry and white cedar. If you visit Carruthers Memorial Park, you might notice the green tree shelters, which protect the young seedlings from damage by deer and rabbits.”

The tree planting is part of the Mad River Enhancement Program, which has been ongoing for the past three years, in cooperation with Friends of the Mad River (FOMR). Another phase of river restoration is planned for Carruthers Memorial Park this summer.

Wensink says, if anyone missed this volunteer tree plant event, they can still help at tree plants on May 10 and 24 in Wasaga Beach, Angus and Mono Centre. To sign up, visit the NVCA’s volunteer page at [www.nvca.on.ca](http://www.nvca.on.ca).

The event was supported by an EcoAction grant from the Government of Canada and donations from FOMR. To support ecosystem restoration efforts, donate via [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) by selecting “Mad River Enhancement” or any other NVCA programs.