

April 21, 2011

The Board of Directors Meeting of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was held on the above date, at the Administration Office, in Strathroy, at the hour of 10:00 a.m.

Present: Andy Bruziewicz, Chair; Larry MacKenzie, Vice Chair; Bill Bilton, Terry Burrell, Elizabeth Davis-Dagg, Joe Faas, Norm Giffen, Helen Havlik, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Jon McEachran, Steve Miller, Lonny Napper, Martin Vink, Jeff Wesley

Absent: Steve Arnold, Tony Bruinink, Rod Glen, Dan McMillan, Frank Nemcek

Before the meeting started, directors watched a video of the horse logging at Maples Woodlot and viewed canoe race photos on the new St. Clair Conservation Facebook site.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged Norm Giffen's 10 years and Bill Bilton's 20 years of service to the Foundation and thanked them for their volunteer time. He also advised that Mr. Dallas Cundick had been recently hired to fill the Environmental Planner/Regs. Officer position and that the Species at Risk inserts were distributed in Sarnia, not London. Mr. Bruziewicz then requested that each Director declare a conflict of interest at the appropriate time, on any item within this agenda in that a Director may have pecuniary interest.

**BD-11-034**

**Miller - Bilton**

**"That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held February 17, 2011, be approved as distributed."**

**CARRIED**

The General Manager's Report was presented:

St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation: Annual General Meeting on March 3, 2011.

- celebrating 38 years supporting conservation in the St. Clair Region - Incorporated May 11, 1973
- 2011 Board of Directors: (elected March 3, 2011) Duncan Skinner, President; Lyn Goddard, Vice President; Norm Giffen, Treasurer; Directors: John Simmons, Ken Brooks, William Bilton, Ottavio Colosimo, Rex Crawford, Laura Margetts, Norm Giffen, John Mitchell, Andy Bruziewicz, Cathy Evers.
- 2010 Financial Highlights
  - Foundation Assets: as of December 31, 2010 (in brackets 2009 comparisons)  
Capital Assets - Lands: \$2,592,857.00 (no change)-  
Restricted/Reserve Funds: \$1,135,055 (\$861,869.00).  
General Fund: \$378,004.00 (\$359,559.00)  
Revenue of: \$217,694.00 (\$367,906.00)  
Expenditures/donations of: \$87,033.00 (\$110,194.00)  
Net: \$130,661.00 (\$257,712.00)
  - 2011 Donations/Expenditures  
\$44,596.86 to the Conservation Authority to support, Forestry, Outdoor Education and Conservation Area development, scholarships, general expenditures, transfer to other partners, i.e Dresden Horticultural Society, Enviro-Friends of Coldstream etc.  
\$11,433.00 of Bingo funds spent to support the outdoor education and recreation programs and services of the Authority  
increase in general funds of \$18,285.00

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increase in restricted and reserve funds of \$136,386.00

the Foundation holds 13 properties with a market value at time of donation of \$2,592,857.00.

total assets of the Foundation - \$4,218,292.00

- 2011 Foundation budget was approved including their donation requirements to the Authority based on the Conservation Authority's 2011 budget. Approximately \$108,250.00 to be donated.
- 2 additional land donations under consideration/negotiation
- \$59,660 in corporate donations to the Outdoor Education program
- Memorial forest programs continue with approximately \$16,000.00 in revenue
- \$20,000 - land management (agricultural leases, oil and gas revenue to support the Authority programs)
- \$3000.00 - net income is used to support trail work, forestry, outdoor education etc.
- \$2000 - \$3000 in special events such as the Canoe race
- \$3000 for Scholarship (4)
- many additional individual donations supporting various programs throughout the year.
- Bates Trust (Stewardship) Fund: the fund balance now at \$447,371.00 and the estate has been completed.
- Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Presented April 7, 2011 in London. Congratulations to Bill Bilton, (20 years) and Norm Giffen (10 years) who were recognized for their significant contribution for their volunteer years to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation.
- Conservation Scholarships: Applications and notices are out to all schools for the \$3000.00 in scholarship funds available to students going on to post secondary in a natural resource field. Applications on line and due May 31, 2011. Mary Jo Arnold, Tony Stranak and Archie Campbell Memorial Scholarships
- Biz after Biz: a very successful Biz after Biz was held with the Strathroy and District Chamber of Commerce on February 24, 2011. Over 75 attended the event which profiled the programs and service and excellent networking opportunities with our municipal and private sector partners. Thanks to the members that had an opportunity to attend. St. Clair Conservation received the 2010 Community Involvement winner for the Chamber of Commerce.
- 2011 Provincial Grant: 2011 Business Plan to MNR was submitted in February 2011. We anticipate similar grants as previous years from MNR for water management, operations etc. \$310,000.00. This amount has not changed since 1997. Generally we do not see the transfer payments until late summer.
- Species at Risk Newsletter: the spring edition was funded through the Habitat Stewardship Program. 64,000 copies are distributed throughout the region as newspaper inserts. Laura Margetts (Foundation Board member) is profiled for a project completed on a farm owned by Laura and Kerry Margetts in Brooke Alvinston. In addition we have already received over 75 responses to the riddles competition on the back page of the newsletter and positive comments.
- Conservation Ontario: the Annual General Meeting of Conservation Ontario will be held April 18th in Toronto. Elections will be held for Chair, Vice-Chairs and Board of Directors. Conservation Ontario has been instrumental in negotiating input to Source Protection Planning, requests for funding for infrastructure, partnerships with DFO, MNR

grant funding for critical programs and facilities, new federal and provincial funding opportunities and Section 28 Generic Regulations.

- Staffing:
  - Dallas Cundick, Regulations Officer/Environmental Planner, Dallas has been assisting in the Planning and Regulations Section since April 2010 and has gained excellent experience working under the supervision of the former Environmental Planner/Regulations Officer Jeff Lawrence. Dallas is familiar with the watershed as he grew up on a farm near Watford and has carried out site inspections for 12 months at the SCRCA. Dallas has a, B. SC. (Honours) Biology and in addition is a graduate of the Environmental Management and Assessment program at Niagara College. He has recently completed the Provincial Offences Officer training and other planning/regs training. Dallas is a welcome addition to our team and can be reached at dcundick@scrca.on.ca, Ext 23.
  - Seasonal Program staffing: a partial list of Conservation Areas/McKeough 12-regular seasonal staff (varying terms and hours) (Superintendents, Asst Supts, Security, Gatehouse) plus 25 summer/seasonal.
  - Experience Program (Provincial) 1 -7 weeks - beginning May. Park maintenance, dam inspections and clean up. Funded by MNR grant.
  - Summer Job Service (Lambton College) supported \$2.00 per hour subsidy on 14 positions. (Lifeguards, park maintenance, visitor services, tree planters) \$13,040.00 grant).
  - Tree Planting/Larvicide - 4 seasonal staff for tree planting/larvicide will be hired mid/late April to the end of August.
  - Job Creation Partnership Program awaiting approval for 8 positions for up to 52 weeks beginning in April. (Wage equivalent and support is \$151,000.00 grant.
  - Career Focus: \$29,546.00 in salary funding
    - Biological Technician - 21 weeks -. To begin late April, early May.
    - GIS Technician - 21 weeks -- to begin late April, early May
 Note: These employment programs significantly reduce the cost of operating programs and services of the Authority. A list of all Authority regular, contract and seasonal staff is available
  - Canada Summer Jobs: awaiting approval for one position for 16 weeks. \$7,152.00
- Conservation Ontario Provincial and Local Conservation Areas pass: the wallet sized Conservation Ontario card will permit day use entry to for all Conservation Areas in the province. This will be good until February 28, 2015. In addition, a 2011 windshield pass will be available at the board meeting which provides free day use entry to the Conservation Areas in the St. Clair Region.

**BD-11-035**

**McEachran - Davis-Dagg**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated April 11, 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

Minutes of the March 7, 2011 Conservation Ontario meeting were reviewed.

**BD-11-036****MacKinnon - Marriott**

**“The Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Ontario meeting minutes of March 7, 2011 which includes passing of the 2011 budget.”**

**CARRIED**

A Conservation Area Update was reviewed:

- Background:
  - the Conservation Authority owns 15 conservation areas in the watershed
  - of those 15 conservation areas, 6 are managed by the local municipalities and 9 are operated by the Conservation Authority
  - of these 9, 3 conservation areas are regional campgrounds which attract campers from primarily Southwestern Ontario
  - our three regional campgrounds have over 500 campsites and over 380 seasonal campers
  - our campgrounds are self-sufficient and require no tax dollars to operate
  - profits obtained are used to offset capital improvements within these regional conservation areas
  - opening day for our campgrounds is Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> and they close on Thanksgiving Day
  - the HST (Harmonized Sales Tax) will now be applicable on all conservation area fees
  - staff presently accept camping reservations at the administration office for our 3 regional campgrounds
- Overnight Camper Geographic Trends: (based on 2010 camping permits)
  - A.W. Campbell Conservation Area: Lambton County 31%; Middlesex County 19%; Chatham-Kent 15%; Other Ontario 15%; Essex County 10%; Sarnia 7%; London 2%; Outside Canada 1%
  - L.C. Henderson Conservation Area: Other Ontario 28%; Lambton County 19%; Sarnia 18%; Chatham-Kent 14%; Essex County 11%; Middlesex County 5%; London 4%; Other Canada 1%
  - Warwick Conservation Area: Lambton County 27%; Other Ontario 23%; Sarnia 20%; Middlesex County 14%; London 6%; Chatham-Kent 4%; Essex County 3%; Outside Canada 3%
- L.C. Henderson CA:
  - concrete pool to be renovated with new interior plaster and tile, work to be completed by Hollandia Pools of Lambeth
  - new approach ramps to be constructed to the main entrance of the washroom and education center, this will provide handicap accessibility to the building
  - upon plan approval, a new 32 ft x 40 ft building is to be constructed as a visitor center for campers activities and public rentals for family events & reunions (Foundation Project)
  - due to the Emerald Ash borer a number of trees have been removed
- A.W. Campbell CA:
  - renovations to the main washroom building are complete. These included 2 new shower stalls, new washroom partitions, new sinks and counter top, new roughed in plumbing and fixtures and ceramic tile installed on the floors and walls in the shower areas.
  - 10 existing campsites to be upgraded with new underground hydro.
  - 4 new trail identification signs have been installed.
  - the interior of the gatehouse has been painted.
  - staff assisted with the maple syrup program and festival.

- on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> the conservation area was part of the annual Maple Syrup Festival. An estimated 2,000 people visited the conservation area during the festival.
- Warwick CA:
  - renovations to the woodlot men's washroom are almost completed. These improvements included 2 new shower stalls (1 handicap), new washroom partitions, new sinks and counter top, new roughed in plumbing and fixtures and ceramic tile installed on the floors and walls in the shower areas.
  - renovations are almost completed to the pool washroom and shower areas. These renovations include upgrades to the exterior of the building and 2 shower areas to have new shower stalls and ceramic tile installed on the floor and walls.
  - a number of picnic tables have been repaired in preparation for the upcoming camping season.
  - a new gazebo will be constructed overlooking the lake (camper association project).
  - underground hydro will be upgraded to two campsites in C sections.
    - Highland Glen Conservation Area:
      - the harbor and boat ramp area have been dredged to provide a safe harbor and access to Lake Huron.
      - staff have completed a general spring cleanup of the conservation area.
- Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area:
  - two new conservation area signs have been installed adjacent to highway 402.
  - through municipal drainage improvement works, a new culvert will be installed on the entrance roadway to the conservation area.
  - Duck's Unlimited is proposing extensive improvements to the water control structure in the south pond of the conservation area.
- Strathroy Conservation Area:
  - 5 new water trail access signs have been installed along the route.
  - a number of boardwalks have been repositioned and repaired due to winter and spring flooding.
  - the Reel Paddling Film Festival was held in Strathroy on Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, this was in partnership with Canoe Water Adventuring (local canoe outfitter) and promoted our canoe race, campgrounds, water trail paddle day and Species at Risk.
  - the Water Trail Paddle Day will be held on Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 1 pm at the skate board park access point to the Sydenham River.
- Shetland Conservation Area:
  - the annual Sydenham Canoe Race will take place on Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, the finish line is at the conservation area.
- Marketing in 2011: our conservation areas will be marketed in the following publications or events in 2011:
  - Sarnia Lambton Tourism Guide, Middlesex County Guide and Chatham-Kent Guide
  - camping ads have been placed on MyFm and Strathroy-Middlesex Chamber of Commerce websites
  - we are also investigating web ads on radio stations in the Chatham-Kent and Essex Counties
  - Blue Water Tourism Guide (in partnership with other Conservation Authorities)
  - Middlesex Home & Leisure Show (Strathroy Gemini Complex – April 30<sup>th</sup>)
  - Conservation Ontario Conservation Areas Guide, an updated guide advertising conservation areas in Ontario will be completed by June of this year
  - Grafiks Marketing and Communications will be completing a new conservation area guide for 2011 and 2012

- staff have continued to market and promote our conservation area campgrounds over the winter months. We accept reservations at the administration office during regular office hours. Camping reservation totals to the end of March for the three regional campgrounds amounted to 437 reservations taken and \$ 47,800.00 in revenue (HST adjusted). This can be compared to 345 reservation taken and \$ 42,000.00 in revenue in 2010.

**BD-11-037****McEachran - Napper**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Areas Update, dated April 7, 2011, including capital development, camper geographic trends and marketing initiatives in 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the monthly activity summary from the Watershed Services Department was discussed.

- Drinking Water Source Protection
  - working on data management project to standardize all consultant data for input into central spatial database files
  - assistance with GUDI studies for the Thames, Sydenham & Region
  - assist in preparations for IPZ-3 consultant contracts
  - assemble tables to support policy development for specific threats within vulnerable areas
  - facilitate working group and sub-committee meetings for the development of policy examples
  - update Assessment Report to include IPZ-3 data
  - working on a Source Protection Municipal Planning Advisory Committee to establish common ground for policy development and language for Source Protection Plans
  - collecting existing and potential policies that may be incorporated into Source Protection Plans
  - present septic threats discussion paper to SPC and take the SPC through pilot policy development process through to some draft policies
  - populate provincial policy webforum with Thames-Sydenham preliminary septic policies
  - present Fuels, DNAPL, Agricultural Source Material, and Commercial Fertilizer draft threats discussion papers to the SPC
  - intake Protection Zone -3 work for the St. Clair Region Source Protection Area has started with completion by February 2011
- Flood Forecast & Warning
  - daily and monthly acquisition of hydrologic and climate data
  - continued upgrading of watershed data analysis tools including data storage (BRFU and HEC-DSS) as well as the completion of in-house tools and graphic interface (GDAT v4.0)
  - attend annual PFFWC meeting to review current provincial flood policy development and forecasting procedures and participate in regional (SWOFFA) meetings
  - update GDAT system to include flood prone areas in Strathroy and Petrolia based on slope breakline layers from GIS system
  - participation in the BRFU users group including implementation of new versions on BRFU programming for SW Ontario CA's
  - on going monthly snow and ice thickness surveys
  - monitoring water levels and communicating high water safety/warning bulletins when required

- Low Water Response
  - continued monitoring of watershed conditions to determine current status in relation to MNR reporting standards
- Reforestation/Conservation Services
  - site visits for spring tree planting
  - tree planting plan design, invoicing, landowner packages mail out for the spring
  - built and installed flip down shelving in Cold storage at Clark Wright (TP)
  - installed ventilation and table for benthic sampling in Workshop at Clark Wright
  - gathering tree and shrub quotes for spring large stock approx. 725 plants to order
  - seeding even at Lambton College with 15 students, planting local seed from Red oak, and Shagbark Hickory
- Woodlot Management
  - harvesting operation has been completed at Maples woodlot
  - several enquiries about woodlot management from private landowners
- Lambton County Lands
  - final edits have been sent back to Lambton County for review of their properties
  - met on site at Bowens Creek Property with Ducks Unlimited to assess agriculture field for wetland creation
  - completed brush clearing at the entrance of Marthaville Habitat Management Area
  - inventoried and working on Management Plan for Lambton Meadowview Villa property
  - prepared and sent planting package for 15 acre tree planting at Bowen's Creek Property
- Water & Erosion Control Infrastructure
  - Guthrie Park project administration
  - soils report review and administration for Cathcart Park Shore Protection Rehabilitation Project
  - apply for WECI funding
  - design review for Cathcart Shore Protection Revitalization Project
- McKeough Dam & Upstream Lands
  - McKeough Floodway fall shut down procedures and winterization (SW)
  - controlled Deer Hunt report
- Water Quality - Surface Water
  - conducted a survey of St. Clair River PTTW holders to assess "*added cost to industry BUF*"
  - analyzed available water quality data for St. Clair River to assess "*added cost to agriculture BUF*"
  - submitted first draft "*Review of Status of Beneficial Use Impairment #12: Added Cost to Agriculture and Industry*"
  - submitted "*Review of Status of Beneficial Use Impairment #7: Degradation of Aesthetics*" to Environment Canada for review.
  - received positive feedback on two-year GLSF funding application for a \$61,000 project to survey surface water quality to assess potential impacts of tributary water quality on the St. Clair River in respect to impact on Aesthetic Quality and Fish Habitat, responding to concerns expressed by partners about potential impacts.
- Water Quantity (PGMN)
  - begin 2011 ground water monthly quantity field survey
- Fish Habitat Review
  - completed screening of 11 municipal drain projects including maintenance works and culvert replacements; 14 active project files
  - completed screening of 5 municipal drain projects ; 11 active project files.

- Natural Heritage
  - Lambton Natural Heritage Study –Site selection completed for 2011 season; access requested from 256 landowners; continuing refinement of criteria and integration with County planning
  - reviewed draft report from North-South Environmental on 2010 field season
- Habitat Stewardship Program
  - review of habitat projects proposed for 2010-11
  - application for funding for HSP project for 2011-12
- Health & Safety
  - performed 2 workplace inspections at the Administration Building and at the Conservation Services Workshop at Clark Wright CA
- Funding Applications
  - successful application from TD Friends of the Environment for \$6625.00
  - application to Sobies Community Environmental Fund for \$6,100 seed collection project
  - application to RBC for \$5,000 toward watershed report cards
  - application to FoSCR for \$5,000 for a Bowen’s Creek wetland.
  - Canada Summer Jobs application for \$7,152.

**BD-11-038****Miller - Marriott**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the monthly activity summary dated April 8, 2011, from the Watershed Services Department for February and March 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report on water levels, current and flood conditions was presented.

- Watershed Precipitation
  - precipitation across the watershed in March was significantly higher than regional normal figures. Several storm events with moderate temperatures into March resulted in a mix of snow and rain conditions. With the exception of Sarnia with only slightly above normal by 9%, all other locations received almost 50% more than the average precipitation (combined snowfall and rain). Several significant snowfalls near the first part of the month were recorded as well as smaller events every few days throughout the remainder of March all contributed to a fairly wet spring thaw overall.
  - the regional quarterly averages were 113% of normal for the last three months notably due to additional snowfall in both January and February and the six month average of 99.5% and yearly averages of 102% bring the levels of precipitation back to normal levels following a fairly dry fall and early winter of 2010.
- Streamflows
  - significant flow peaks were experienced near the middle of February when temperatures reached 10 degrees C reducing large amounts of snowpack into the watershed when ice was still present. Ice remained in place well into March when an extended period of breakup began around March 6th and continued for almost 20 days moderated by below freezing conditions at night. Flows were increased during this period with several flow peaks as a result of short periods of warmer temperatures with rain and additional snowfall melting during the daylight periods. Much of the ice was gradually eroded in a consistent thaw process minimizing flood impacts throughout the watershed. In addition, no significant ice jamming was noted likely due to the consistent melting process and the increased flow volumes which flushed out watercourses as the ice deteriorated or, in many cases melted the ice in place on the river.

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- water levels at Wallaceburg over the entire thaw period varied from a pre-event level of 174.8 m (573.5ft) to a high of 175.65m (576.3ft) for a total change of 0.85m (2.8ft).
- Flood Threat
  - flood threat is now significantly reduced as we move into spring. With lower anticipated precipitation through April and into May conditions will continue to improve as watercourses empty from the spring runoff. However, it should be noted soil is saturated and levels remain high. Conditions could change rapidly should there be significant intense rainfall over a short period resulting in localized flood conditions in floodplain areas.
- Flood advisories are an ongoing part of effective communication during high water and flood events. In an effort to align reporting standards between other neighbouring Conservation Authorities and provide consistent messaging to the municipalities, the media and watershed residents; we have revised the communication tools for flood information to the following criteria for publishing notifications:
  - High Water Safety Bulletin - notifies of unsafe river and channel conditions (formerly Flood Safety Bulletin)
  - Flood Advisory - notifies that the potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities
  - Flood Warning notifies that flooding is imminent or occurring within specific watercourses and municipalities
  - Flood communications have been standardized across southwestern Ontario to provide effective communication during high water and flood events. High Water Safety Bulletins, Flood Advisories and Flood Warning have been issued to identify unsafe conditions, potential flooding and imminent flooding. Authorities across the province are investigating the potential to align messaging terminology more closely with current weather forecasting terms. Flood Warnings would remain unchanged. Flood Watches would replace Flood Advisories as notices of potential flooding. Flood or High Water Statements would replace High Water Safety Bulletins as notices of safety concerns and unsafe conditions. A decision on implementation of these new messaging standards is expected later this year.

**BD-11-039****Burrell - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the current watershed conditions and Great Lakes water levels.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure projects was presented.

- 2005 - 2006 WECI Projects
  - Weir #2 (LCH) - Decommissioning / Revitalization Plan - due to the use of the structure as the sole access to leased agricultural lands and as a principle connection to trails used by the public and campers as well as our Conservation Education staff for on-site programs an increased monitoring program will be undertaken to ensure safe operating conditions – decommissioning will be planned upon further degradation
- 2009 - 2010 WECI Projects
  - Centennial Park - Splash Pad Repair and Drainage Improvements - a portion of the work has been completed with remaining works to be completed in the spring and summer of 2011

- 2010 - 2011 WECI Projects -
  - Cathcart Park - Erosion Protection Revitalization Study Phase II - design options have been drafted and are being reviewed by St. Clair Township staff and will be presented to Council as provided or subsequent to revisions, if requested – upon selection of a preferred option, detailed designs and the Class Environmental Assessment documentation will be completed for the acceptance of Council and public consultation
  - Guthrie Park - Shore Protection Revitalization Phase III -
    - despite being funded under WECI funding in design and construction of Phases I & II, this project was left unfunded under this program in 2010
    - with a grants from Community Adjustment Fund of Feddev Ontario, Canada Ontario Agreement funding from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Great Lakes Sustainability Fund from Environment Canada totalling less than 50% of the project cost, St. Clair Township made the decision to proceed with the project
    - in the intervening months, Township officials and Authority staff have confirmed our disappointment with a phased project (requested to be phased by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) being left unfunded in the final stage and maintained communications regarding the status of the project
    - in February, as Authorities were reporting on the status of funded projects, it was determined that \$500,000 in grants would be left unspent at the end of the fiscal year
    - MNR staff contacted the Authority regarding projects that had been left unfunded, specifically enquiring about projects that had proceeded
    - we were able to confirm that the project was 90% complete, and Guthrie Park and several other small projects were sent to the Minister of Natural Resources for funding under the unspent program grants
    - the original request for funding from WECI was \$375,000 and therefore with the project 90% complete, funding was approved for \$337,500 for the final phase of construction
    - as the weather has improved and the construction site is drying up, it is anticipated that Coores Construction will be returning to the site during the week of the 18<sup>th</sup> with approximately 4 weeks of work required to complete the project

Mr. Burrell commented that he would like to see the water treatment plant on the list. It was reported that an agreement with LAWSS is in the works and if approved could start next yet.

**BD-11-040**

**Bilton - Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects across the watershed.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on 2011-12 Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure projects was explained.

- applications for grants have been submitted for funding for in 2011-2012 for the project in the table below
- applications will be reviewed by a committee of provincial and conservation authority staff representatives later this month and will be ranked in comparison to all submitted projects from across the Province
- list of approved projects is anticipated in May or early June

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- Cathcart Park - Cathcart Park Shore Revitalization Project - completion of requirements of the class EA and start with Phase 1 construction - project cost - \$350,000 - requested - \$175,000
- all Authority owned dams - Inspection of Control structures - inspection & report by engineer on all dams reviewing structural integrity and required maintenance - project cost - \$40,000 - requested - \$20,000
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam - McKeough Floodway Functional Review - engineering study and legal review to assess current functional standards, existing easements and recommend potential changes based on 25 years of accumulated data and experience in dealing with extreme events.- project cost - \$75,000 - requested - 37,500
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam - Floodway Slump Erosion Repair - repair to enhance the stability / on-going slumping of the side slopes along the floodway. This is expected to stabilize the channel and prevent any further erosion - project cost - \$60,000 - requested - \$30,000
- Head Street Dam - Spillway Redistribution - redistribution and/or addition of rip rap on spillway surface to reduce erosion and improve flow - project cost - \$16,000 - requested - \$8,000.
- Courtright Waterfront Park - Safety Repairs & Shoreline Improvement - repairs to existing, failing shore protection, removal of a significant amount of rebar and discarded steel, and infilling of voids in adjacent table which are a public safety concern - repairs to existing, failing shore protection, removal of a significant amount of rebar and discarded steel, and infilling of voids in adjacent table which are a public safety concern - project cost - \$50,000 - requested - \$25,000
- Wallaceburg Retaining Wall - Engineering Inspection - a review to determine the stability and structural integrity of the retaining walls in Wallaceburg - project cost - \$25,000 - requested - \$12,500
- Sarnia Erosion Control Project - Shore Protection Repair - reconstructing a reach of shore protection that is failing as armourstone has shifted and created voids that are both a structural and safety concern - project cost - \$90,000 - requested - \$45,000.
- Blue Point Erosion Control - Shore Protection Study - reviewing the Cost Benefit Analysis and the 2011 Lake Huron Shoreline Management Plan and, in conjunction with the Town of Plympton-Wyoming, developing appropriate options for protection of adjacent landowners - project cost - \$50,000 - requested - \$25,000.
- Petrolia Dam - Erosion control - install rip rap toe and slope protection downstream of the control structure - project cost - \$54,000 - requested - \$27,000.
- Running Creek Dykes - Dyke Erosion Control - repair and reconstruct failing section of Dyke including construction of toe protection and re-vegetation of the bank and removal of oversized woody vegetation - project cost - \$15,000 - requested - \$7,500.

**BD-11-041****Davis-Dagg - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects and approves the projects submitted for funding in 2011-2012 and further will assist staff in obtaining matching funds, where required, to support these projects upon confirmation of funding approval.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on an application to the TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation was reviewed.

- \$6,625 to Support Watershed Learning and Species at Risk
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation (FEF) announced that they will contribute \$6,625 to SCRCA. In February, SCRCA made an application for a project valued at over \$16,000 to support watershed learning and species at risk.
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation will fund both outdoor and in-class conservation education programs offered to schools throughout the region. Funding will support nests for endangered snakes and monitoring of threatened turtles, benthic collection supplies, watershed report cards and Species at Risk newsletters will all also be supported in part by the TD FEF.
- The TD Friends of the Environment Foundation is a strong supporter of SCRCA's conservation effort and has contributed funding to our projects for many consecutive years.

**BD-11-042**

**Vink - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on an application to the TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation to support species at risk programs and watershed monitoring.”**

**CARRIED**

A report on an application to RBC Bluewater Fund was discussed.

- \$5,000 Funding Application for Research for Watershed Report Cards
  - in March, SCRCA applied for \$5,000 from the RBC Bluewater Project to cover the cost of research that feeds directly into Watershed Report Cards. The money will help to pay for collection and processing of benthic macro-invertebrate samples. This analysis, in combination with other data such as water chemistry data, are used to assign a letter grade for surface water quality.
  - Watershed report cards are designed to provide basic information on the state of our watersheds, with emphasis on the land and water resources that sustain our communities. They show the results of watershed monitoring data collected over a number of years, indicating the current health of our watershed and helping us to better protect and improve our environment. The next set of watershed report cards are scheduled to be published in January 2013.
  - external funding, such as this RBC support, is crucial to the production and distribution of its Watershed Report Cards. In 2010, RBC contributed also \$5,000 to SCRCA's Species at Risk Education Program. Already in 2011, they have contributed \$5,000 to the Strathroy Water Trail through a partnership with the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc.
  - Ministry of the Environment to Provide Expertise and Temporary Laboratory Space:
    - the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) is assisting St. Clair Conservation with benthic processing and analysis. Over the winter MOE increased its laboratory capacity in order to be able to accommodate SCRCA's Aquatic System Technician. In addition to upgrading microscopes and other equipment, the MOE has offered to provide their identification expertise. This temporary partnership will help ease the transition as SCRCA prepares to set up in-house capacity.

**BD-11-043****Marriott - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on an application to the RBC Bluewater Fund to support watershed report cards plan for finalization in 2012.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on Lambton’s Bowen’s Creek was reviewed.

- A Partnership to Construct Wetlands on Bowens Creek Lands
  - Bowens Creek Lands are a Lambton County treasure. Located on the St. Clair Clay Plains, its wet prairie and mature deciduous forest provide a last refuge for more than 15 locally rare Carolinian flora and fauna. Riddell’s Goldenrod, Shumard Oak, Hooded Warbler and Climbing Prairie Rose, each with distinct habitat requirements, thrive within the property bounds.
  - for this reason, St. Clair Conservation and the County of Lambton are thrilled to seize an opportunity to construct wetlands on the property. Ducks Unlimited and the Friends of St. Clair River each offered to chip in about 25% of the total project costs. SCRCA wrote a funding application for an additional \$5,000. Other organizations are being approached. It seems that 100% of the project will be externally funded.
  - in total, more than 5 hectares of wetland will be created on low lying lands areas that “want to be wet”. Construction of 3 impounded wetlands and approximately 10 shallow sloughs will be a matter of decommissioning existing drainage and some minimal land contouring. The proposal is causing excitement local naturalists and wildlife experts who, recognizing the unique opportunity, envision future wetlands providing waterfowl brood, nesting and staging habitat. Existing forest plants and animals will also benefit from adding an abutting wetland.
  - since 2008, St. Clair Conservation has managed this land on behalf of Lambton County. Constructing these wetlands will make a significant contribution to meeting the management goals of SCRCA’s Bowens Creek Management Plan submitted to the County in April 2011. Additionally, since the property is within the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC), the addition of wetlands will contribute to meeting criteria needed to delist the AOC.

**BD-11-044****Faas - Napper**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the County of Lambton’s Bowen’s Creek Lands and the opportunity to work with several funding partners to undertake the construction of a wetland complex on the site.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the Fish Habitat Review Program was reviewed.

- Background
  - under the 1997 Fish Habitat Management Agreement between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the SCRCA, staff continue to review drain maintenance works and applications under the CA Regulations for potential effects on fish habitat
  - partnership with DFO helps municipalities avoid delays in obtaining advice or Authorization approvals from DFO
  - review helps municipalities avoid damage to fish habitat and potential fines or prosecution under the Fisheries Act

- improved sediment control, erosion control and off-season timing improves the water quality and aquatic habitats in the SCRCA, and keeps the soil on the land
- Changes in processing
  - in February 2011, the SCRCA was assigned to our third Habitat Biologist in six months: Jennifer Wright
  - processing has continued to be slow, partly because this staff member is unfamiliar with our region and our files, and partly because the Species at Risk Biologist for Ontario, Dave Balint, started in that position in February
  - in addition, significant winter snowfall affected municipal maintenance works, and municipalities requested timing extensions for 10 projects to allow in-water works in April or May, when MNR and DFO restrict in-water due to fish spawning in the watercourses
  - after detailed reviews, 5 projects that were incomplete due to winter weather and where the works had already started, received DFO approvals for up to 3 days of in-water work before March 31<sup>st</sup>
- Project summary
  - seventeen fish habitat review projects processed and filed so far this year, resulting in 1 Class Authorization, 3 with no fisheries concerns, 5 DFO timing extensions and 8 Letters of Advice
  - 23 projects are still active and open, requiring information from the proponent or DFO staff

**BD-11-045****Miller - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the Fish Habitat Review Program including the assignment of a new Fisheries Biologist for our watersheds, and multiple requests to work in-water during timing restrictions.”**

**CARRIED**

A report on the Lambton and Sarnia Natural Heritage Study was presented.

- Lambton County, Sarnia, Carolinian Canada Coalition and the SCRCA initiated a Natural Heritage Study for Lambton and Sarnia in 2009
- the goal is to have good baseline data on existing natural areas in Lambton and robust criteria and recommendations for protecting Lambton’s natural heritage system
- this information is to be considered during Official Plan reviews and with respect to municipalities’ and agencies’ policies and actions
- the Technical Advisory Committee includes:
  - Dave Posliff, Peter Corbett and Ezio Nadalin, Planning and Development Services, Lambton
  - Nancy Bourgeois and Jordan Fohkens, Planning and Building Department, Sarnia
  - Nikki May, Sarnia Urban Wildlife Committee and Carolinian Canada Coalition
  - Muriel Andreae, Watershed Services, SCRCA
  - Amanda McCloskey, Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources
- the Steering Committee includes:
  - Steve Arnold, Director, SCRCA
  - Bev McDougall, Councillor, City of Sarnia
  - Sharilyn Johnston, Environmental Officer, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
  - Dave Ferguson, Lambton County Agricultural Advisory Committee
  - Frank Gustin, Lambton County Agricultural Advisory Committee

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- the Steering Committee met last fall, and will meet at least annually to review the status of the project and provide direction and recommendations
- the SCRCA received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for \$75,000 for over three years, 2010 – 2012, to hire a biological consultant to survey thirty woodland patches in Lambton and Sarnia
- in 2010 landowners of 33 woodland patches were asked for access, and owners of nine woodlands generously approved access to their properties for this study
- North-South Environmental Inc. was retained for the 2010 contract
- North-South Environmental surveyed these sites in seven municipalities, providing records for over 350 plants species and 46 species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals
- the consultant noted many healthy woodlands with a rich diversity of native plants and animals, and also observed sites with their diversity negatively affected by drainage ditches, Emerald Ash borer, invasive plant species and/or logging.
- regionally rare birds or plants were noted at every site, even the 7 acre site
- completion of the 2010 contract is pending on final comments from the committee, regarding the 2010 Life Science Inventory Report
- awarding of the 2011 contract is pending on landowners approving access to a sufficient number of sites
- most of the woodland patch mapping in GIS and database development will be completed through in-kind support from Lambton and Sarnia with a volunteer from the Sarnia Urban Wildlife Committee providing administrative assistance
- Advisory Committee is recommending and planning a fall public consultation meeting
- pictures are courtesy of Ronny D’Haene, who also approved access to his 90 acre woodland

The director from Lambton Shores asked for clarification on the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The grant for \$75,000 is for over a 3 year period only. Coalition was defined as “Lambton County” in this case. A report will be available for municipalities.

**BD-11-046**

**Havlik - Marriott**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the Lambton and Sarnia Natural Heritage Study, including formation of a Steering Committee, results from the 2010 field surveys and distribution of access requests for 2011 field surveys.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-11-047**

**Davis-Dagg - Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 19, 2011 on the Lambton and Sarnia Natural Heritage Study – 2011 Contract and approves the Technical Advisory Committee recommendation to award the 2011 contract to North-South Environmental for \$20,710, since their proposal is within budget, is lower than any of the competing proposals received in 2010 for fewer sites, and provides consistency in field expertise between years.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the Sydenham River Action Plan for Aquatic Species at Risk was discussed.

- a National Recovery Strategy for Species at Risk in the Sydenham River was approved in 2003, following four years of development by a recovery team that included SCRCA, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment Canada (EC) and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) staff, University of Guelph faculty and graduate students and six landowners from the watershed
- this Recovery Strategy allowed EC and DFO to approve Habitat Stewardship Program funds for

- the Sydenham River watershed
- since 2000 the SCRCA has received over \$1.1 million in federal dollars for our region from this program, which has supported over \$5 million in landowners' projects and an extensive education and outreach program by the SCRCA
- under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), the federal government must also complete Action Plans and identify critical habitat for species at risk
- the Auditor General has criticized these federal departments for their slowness in completing these tasks, since SARA was approved in 2002
- DFO would like to strengthen the current HSP program and the partnership with the SCRCA by completing an Ecosystem-based Action Plan for the Sydenham
- DFO staff hope to receive support for an Ecosystem-based plan, since it would address many species at once rather than developing species-specific plans
- this Action Plan would be written by DFO with the SCRCA providing information and review, hosting the meetings, and continuing to implement actions on the ground
- an Action Plan would formalize the recovery process under SARA
- should allow more funding and marketing opportunities
- DFO requested SCRCA support in principle

**BD-11-048****Faas - Wesley**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the Sydenham River Action Plan for Aquatic Species at Risk, and supports in principle the development of an Ecosystem-based Action Plan for Sydenham River Aquatic Species at Risk, through cooperation between the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and other members of the Sydenham River Recovery Team.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the final draft of the Lake St. Clair Canadian Work Plan was presented.

- the Lake St. Clair Canadian Work Plan is the third phase in the management and coordination efforts for the Canadian side of Lake St. Clair. In 2005, a review of existing scientific information was completed to provide an assessment of the Lake St. Clair ecosystem and to identify management issues. This work was published as the Lake St. Clair Canadian Watershed Technical Report (2005).
- following this effort, it was evident that the causes of the management issues identified in the Technical Report required management actions at both the Canadian and US watershed levels and there was thus a need for separate Canadian and U.S. watershed Management Plans. The Lake St. Clair Canadian Management Plan (2009) was developed to address the issues identified in the Technical Report including a list of recommendations needed to improve the state of the Lake St. Clair ecosystem.
- under the Lake St. Clair management framework, the Lake St. Clair Canadian Watershed Coordination Council (LSCCWCC) undertakes the coordination of ecosystem management activities within the Canadian portion of the lake and watershed. The Canadian Coordination Council is comprised of representatives from: Environment Canada (EC) (co-chair), Ontario Ministry of Environment (OMOE) (co-chair), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN), St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA), Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA), Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) and the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA).

- Vision
  - the LSCCWCC envisions a healthy Lake St. Clair watershed in which all levels of government, non-government organizations, associations, businesses, academic institutions, landowners and individuals work together to protect, sustain and enhance the natural environment while providing opportunities for people and communities to thrive and prosper.
- Goals
  - integrate Canadian tributary watershed programs and Great Lakes basin-wide initiatives.
  - facilitate cooperation and collaboration towards environmental improvements and provide a forum to address issues and share information specifically in the context of Canadian Lake St. Clair watershed.
  - support existing resource allocations, and encourage the allocation of new resources to address issues on local, national, and international scales.
- Objectives
  - identify management issues and develop recommendations pertinent to the Canadian portion of the watershed.
  - to provide a basis for the development of detailed implementation strategies and action plans.
- About the Work Plan
  - the Work Plan provides a framework for the implementation of actions required for the restoration and protection of the Lake St. Clair watershed and its ecosystem. The Plan is divided into sections where focused and coordinated efforts are most needed. Sections include:
    - Land Use Management (Section 1)
    - Commercial Navigation and Recreational Boating (Section 2)
    - Sources of Pollution (Section 3)
    - Human Health (Section 4)
    - Habitat and Biodiversity (Section 5)
    - Fishing and Hunting (Section 6)
    - Monitoring, Scientific Studies and Data Management (Section 7)
    - Governance (Section 8)
  - the Work Plan includes: the actions, timelines, and the recommended lead agencies responsible for implementing identified actions.
  - a copy of the Work Plan ~25 pages can be forwarded to all who wish an opportunity to review the specifics of the plan

**BD-11-049****Napper - Bilton**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the final draft of the Lake St. Clair Canadian Work Plan and further that the Board of Directors endorses the Plan including the participation of the Authority in implementing the plan.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the Maples Woodlot was reviewed.

- the harvesting operation has been completed at the Maples Woodlot. Several trees have been removed and the harvesting had little impact on the ground and other residual mature trees. A total of 149 trees were cut down and the merchantable logs hauled out and taken to a mill for processing. This totalled 22,125 board feet for a sale of \$3,198.00 plus HST. The tops and parts of the tree that could not be utilized for lumber were left on site. They have been cut and are now

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no more than 6 feet high. The remaining piles of tree tops in the woodlot are and will continue to provide wildlife habitat.

- the media coverage of the Horse logging received good reviews and positive coverage for both the Authority and the logger. The logger has had enquiries from private landowners to harvest their woodlots. From the relationship build by staff and the logger, the logger will contract the Authority to mark and write management prescriptions for any woodlots he intends to harvest within our watershed. Currently that is 3 woodlots totalling approximately 54 acres.
- due to the infestation and current knowledge of Emerald Ash Borer harvesting was prescribed for the Maples woodlot as proactive management. For the most part people were very positive about the operation, however there have been some concerns raised by residents on King Street with regards to the management practices on the property.
- there are 14 trees remaining along the property boundary that the logger could not fell safely with his equipment and the type of tree felling he does. The logger is not contractually obligated to fell trees that he deems unsafe to fell.
- several options were investigated during the operation to remove the 14 trees;
  - two tree service businesses were contacted and provided estimates of \$2,500.00 and \$1,600.00 to climb and top the leaning trees. They would then be cut log length and removed by the logging operation
  - the Lambton College Arborist Program was contacted to remove the tops as training and experience. The person in charge of the climbing visited the woodlot and said the class would not remove them as they are too difficult for their students.
  - costing of proper climbing gear and personal protective equipment to purchase for Authority staff was completed (\$1,000.00). The Conservation Authority does not have staff certified in climbing.
  - both Watershed Services and Conservation Area staff viewed the trees and also declined to remove the trees and or top them.
- the logger identified 4 or 5 trees along the east side of the property prior to the commencement of the operation that may be of concern for felling. It was not until the logger got to each tree to fell, that he identified the lean and concern of several other trees mostly on the west side. Typically the tree marker or logger does not look at every individual tree for felling direction prior to entering a contract.
- these trees are leaning towards residential lots and were identified as trees to be removed. Although these trees may not currently pose a hazard, they may in the not too distant future and should be removed. It will be recommended to the Conservation Foundation to have these trees removed.
- at this point the logger has left the site so the trees will need to be removed in sections to ground level and the wood left on site as part of habitat creation.

A director questioned whether people could walk through the Maples Woodlot and what happens to the remaining trees. People can walk through the woodlot, but trails will not be made. The Authority has received a quote for \$1600.00 to fall the remaining trees adjacent to the surrounding homes.

**BD-11-050**

**MacKenzie - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the management of Maples Woodlot for the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report regarding the Lambton County Woodlands Conservation Bylaw was explained.

- the Authority currently provides a variety of forestry services to the County of Lambton and its respective municipalities
- our forestry programs are diverse and currently geared to be proactive
- tree planting, management of existing wooded areas, financial and technical assistance to landowners to undertake many planting projects, tree seed collection
- there are a number of initiatives coming together that would benefit from an enhanced relationship between the Authority and Lambton County:
  - the desire to improve and strengthen the current Lambton County Woodlands Conservation By-Law;
  - the County is currently working with the SCRCA to develop Management Plans for its own woodlots as an extension of the larger land management agreement in place; and
- the direction of Council to establish a Lambton Tree Legacy based on the concepts and principles of Wellington County's Green Legacy.
- the County has identified that the Authority has the skills required to effectively and efficiently develop and administer a larger, more focussed strategy to see these various programs are supported.
- while the first initiative would benefit from a more active/proactive approach than current applied resources can provide, the latter two initiatives noted above are in their seminal stages and will require additional resources to manage effectively and in keeping with the enhanced profile that County Council and the Public want to see applied
- a dedicated position would need to be created to support these initiatives on a go-forward basis.
- the County is interested in reviewing the potential of the Authority undertaking administration of the Woodlands Conservation Bylaw to utilize the broader services available to a staff person at the Authority
- qualified personnel would be peer reviewing woodlot prescriptions for intent to cut requests, replanting plans and woodlot exemption applications.
- our support in determining new woodland areas will be beneficial for zoning and official plan exercises.
- assistance with assessments on existing treed properties, subsequent removal requests for proposed development (residential, commercial and industrial) and for the resulting tree planting plans within would prove valuable.
- presently the County by-law operates under a complaint-driven process and the Authority could bring a stronger presence throughout the County to monitor for infractions and prevent further tree loss.
- if agreed to in principle, Authority staff will review the requirements of the administration of the Woodlands Conservation Bylaw and will work with County staff to draft an agreement to meet the needs of the County and a proposed budget to undertake the work and will return with a report to the Board for review at the June meeting

A question was asked about whether the County got the results they wanted. Mr. Bilton advised that they did. Mr. Coe advised that other Conservation Authority's have full time foresters doing this work. Timeline goal is June.

**BD-11-051**

**Bilton - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 regarding the Lambton County Woodlands Conservation By-law and further instructs staff to work with the County of Lambton to develop an agreement regarding services to be provided for the administration of the**

**Woodlands Conservation By-law and that a report and agreement be returned to the Board of Directors for review and approval.”**

**CARRIED**

The report on conservation services project was presented.

- **Tree Planting Program**
  - 90 acres of afforestation totaling 70,000 trees is scheduled for this spring
  - 23 individual projects ranging from 300 to 13,000 trees per site
  - approximately 10,000 trees will be planted by a 4 person hand planting crew and the remaining 60,000 are to be planted by a pair of 3 person machine planting crews
  - more than \$93,000 in approved grant for landowners coming from Trees Ontario Foundation, Environment Canada Habitat Stewardship Program, Lambton Stewardship A.O.C. and Chatham-Kent Restoration
  - another 35 landowners have purchased 10,000 trees to plant on their own
  - there are two corporate planting projects taking part in this year’s tree planting program - Enbridge Gas and Lambton County Bowen’s creek property
  - trees are expected to arrive the week of April 20<sup>th</sup> and planting is expected to start soon after arrival depending on weather and site conditions
- **Waste Management – Twin Creeks Landfill - Spring Schedule**
  - screening berm tree planting – \$166,000 in large stock trees are planned for planting along Nauvoo Rd and Zion Line in Warwick Twp
  - completed the last section of the berm along Zion Line last fall. Trees will be planted with large stock trees this spring to match up with previous years planting.
  - replacements of dead trees are also scheduled with the spring plant
  - a recommendation for a temporary irrigation system has been put forward again this year

**BD-11-052**

**MacKinnon - Davis-Dagg**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on Conservation Services projects planned for 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the Larvicide program was discussed.

- Lambton County Community Health Services (LCCHS) has contracted the Authority again this year to continue undertaking the treatment of catch basins with larvicide
- each of the last 2 years, the Authority has applied the pellets (pictured on the right) to each of the catch basins in Lambton County – providing approximately 60 days of protection from mosquito larvae development within the catch basins
- from 2006 to 2008 three treatments were applied to each basin to provide 90 days of protection, however due to budget cuts and expenditure controls the number of treatments was reduced to two
- however, testing undertaken by LCCHS last year noted that although two treatments had been applied to catch basins, by early September, when temperatures can still support the development of mosquitos, there was no residual larvicide remaining in the catch basins to control mosquito maturity
- Authority staff are working with LCCHS staff to review all options that may be able to provide protection throughout the mosquito season while controlling costs
- at minimum, the Authority will apply two treatments to each of the ~15,000 catch basins in Lambton County in July and August of this year at a cost of \$79,640.00

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- if possible, based on funding and available larvicide products, a combination of treatments that will provide protection later into the year will be undertaken – estimated costs for alternatives outlined to date range from \$90,000 - \$100,000
- four post secondary students will be hired to conduct the work after tree planting is completed
- applications for permits for the treatment of catchbasins with the pelletized larvicide “methoprene” and the treatment of open water with Bacillus thuringiensis (Bti) will be forwarded to M.O.E in May.

**BD-11-053****Miller - McEachran**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the application of larvicide to catch basins in Lambton County for the control of West Nile Virus in 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on McKeough Dam and Upstream Lands projects were reviewed.

- inspections of McKeough lands, county properties and foundation properties were conducted – some minor issues encountered – ATV/snowmobilers removed the gate at Baseline Road, and have cut a number of sections of fence to access channel - lock on the gate at Perch Creek, and the chain on the gate at Marthaville were cut off – all required repairs completed
- construction of the washroom in the shop at the McKeough is in the final stage drain and supply lines are installed – wall covering, flooring and ceiling are progressing at an expected pace
- McKeough staff worked with office staff during the flood event to monitor water levels & ice conditions
- McKeough staff responded to three emergency call outs at the McKeough Floodway for power failure, as well as a control wiring issue for the gate controls
- McKeough staff completed repairs and upgrades to the Conservation Services trailer and RTV sprayer
- the First Hussars will be using the McKeough, upstream properties, as well as some foundation properties for military exercises April 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- McKeough staff is currently accepting quotes for repair to the foundation, bathroom, bedroom ceiling, deck, windows and doors to the house at Property 39
- the vacant house at Property 105 has been inspected – due to the nature of the repairs required vacant for over a year and a half, hydro has cut the power supply and the house is deteriorating.
- McKeough staff has started setting up equipment for the spring tree planting season and spring herbicide applications.
- McKeough staff are preparing for the upcoming prescribed burn season, working with the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network on the prairie grass burn at the Sinclair property.

**BD-11-054****Napper - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on McKeough Dam and Upstream Lands projects in February and March.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on an application for grants to Sobey’s Earth Day Canada Community Environmental Fund was presented.

- St. Clair Conservation requested \$4,650 for Sobey’s Earth Day Canada Community Environment Fund to promote and enhance the planting of native trees from local seed. If the application is successful Lambton College, local high schools and elementary schools will receive training on

how to collect, clean and grow native seeds. The benefits of this project are numerous. This project will increase the variety and amount of native stock available to be planted back into the watershed. Increased mast (nut producing) trees will in-turn benefit biodiversity by providing a food source for many different animals. Students will have to opportunity to learn about and care for the local watershed. As seen in the photo below, it is clear students enjoy having this kind of hands-on experience. It is hoped that this project will help grow stewardship among participating students/youths.

**BD-11-055**

**Faas - MacKenzie**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on an application for grants to Sobey’s Earth Day Canada Community Environmental Fund for support for promotion and enhancement of tree planting through local seed collection and seedling growth.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report regarding the potential improvements to Wawanosh Wetlands C.A. were explained.

- Wawanosh Wetlands was purchased in 1982 from the Ministry of Transportation with funding support from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Lambton Wildlife Incorporated (LWI), as the site had wetland vegetation established around the former borrow pits
- in 1986 the SCRCA signed an agreement with Ducks Unlimited whereby DU agreed to construct, operate, manage and maintain water control works to develop waterfowl habitat at Wawanosh
- following site contouring and installation of a pumpworks control structure, vegetation did not re-establish in the exposed mud flats since the water from Wawanosh Drain apparently had high herbicide levels
- the SCRCA filled in the surface connection between the north and south water bodies, so that a north pond would develop and remain isolated from DU’s water level manipulation of the south area
- wave action in the north pond has resulted in some steep eroding shorelines
- DU subsequently stopped pumping drain water into the south area and with natural precipitation and groundwater, vegetation gradually re-established around both the north and south ponds
- since 1986 the south area has experienced high water levels several times, requiring SCRCA staff to re-route the southern interpretive trail farther and farther south
- with new funds from Enbridge, DU is now interested in renovating the 25 year-old control structure and providing donor recognition on interpretive trail signage
- DU has proposed the SCRCA would then be solely responsible for any future maintenance or management costs on the water control structure

A director asked if Wawanosh Wetlands has had fish kills. Mr. Coe reported that they are a natural occurrence.

**BD-11-056**

**Burrell - Davis-Dagg**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 regarding potential improvements to Wawanosh Wetlands C.A. including water control structure renovations and interpretive signage funded by Enbridge through Ducks Unlimited, and authorizes staff to negotiate with Ducks Unlimited to ensure their works enhance the site as a sustainable wetland that has limited to no future maintenance requirements, and that the Chair and General Manager execute the agreement with Ducks Unlimited upon finalization of satisfactory conditions.”**

**CARRIED**

Regulations Summary Reports dated February 28, 2011, March 31, 2011 and April 6, 2011 were reviewed.

**BD-11-057**

**Marriott - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and concurs with the Regulations Summary Reports on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated February 28, 2011, March 31, 2011 and April 6, 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on minor housekeeping amendments was presented.

A director asked that when major changes are proposed, are they presented at public meetings? Overall policy direction is contained in provincial statutes and accompanying guidelines. The Authority/s specific policies pertaining to the implementation of its Regulation, Ontario Regulation 171/06 need to be consistent with provincial direction. There is not a statutory public meeting requirement for the Authority Regulation implementation policies. However, Conservation Authorities should give public notice and undertake consultation prior to board approval. A question was also asked about the interpretation of a moveable house. The Authority does not have a specific policy on moveable houses, but considers the following: simple roof line, one floor, basement openings/windows parallel lines for lifting will be determined by the Board. Not a staff approval in any event. A request regarding Peer Review and was it reasonable. Rarely an issue, however, other Conservation Authority’s have incorporated this policy due to possibility. The St. Clair does not have a in-house permanent engineer and an outside engineering review with proper expertise may be requested in rare instances when Conservation Authorities are challenged with reports that omit critical expertise ie (I) coastal engineering on Lake Huron due to encroachment in flood zones, (ii) geotechnical engineering for slope stability issues.

**BD-11-058**

**Burrell - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the housekeeping amendments to the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s Shoreline Policies as outlined in the report dated April 8, 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

The St. Clair River Area of Concern update was discussed.

- Contaminated Sediment Management Options Project Update:
  - Environ International Corporation is continuing to evaluate options to manage contaminated sediments in the St Clair River Area of Concern under the federally/provincially approved COA (Canada Ontario Agreement) Framework. The following status report is current to April 8, 2011.
  - Canadian Seabed Research (CSR), a firm specializing in bottom and sub-bottom marine surveys, submitted their final draft report in March 2011, on the study conducted in the St. Clair River Areas of Interest (AOI). The AOIs are adjacent to the Suncor and Shell docks and Guthrie Park. This completes the first of three remaining studies of the areas of interest. The survey revealed several large physical items in the vicinity of the docks. The information will be helpful in determining the feasibility of potential sediment remediation actions.
  - the Sediment Technical Committee reviewed the report submitted by CSR and was satisfied that it meets the contract expectations.
  - an application for funding has been submitted to both the federal and provincial governments to support the final two studies of the AOI, a geochemical and geotechnical

characterization of the St. Clair River AOIs. The studies will help to better define the areas that require management and are proposed to be undertaken this coming field season. The Sediment Technical Committee will provide a final recommendation on the selection of the successful contractor. If funds are approved, the Conservation Authority will manage the contract(s). The value of the contract(s) is expected to be about \$300,000, thus approval of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors is required.

- Other AOC related activities
  - the St. Clair River RAP Canadian Implementation Committee (CRIC) and the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) have endorsed the Canadian revised delisting criteria
  - both the CRIC and BPAC also endorsed the report which summarizes the assessment of tainting of Fish and wildlife flavour BUI, which recommended that this BUI should be re-designated from *requires further assessment to not impaired*.
  - the CRIC met in January, at the Walpole Island First Nation Heritage Centre. The committee was updated on a number of initiatives and plans were developed to report on the accomplishments of the 2007-10 AOC work plan.
  - the RAP coordinator and staff from EC will be meeting with the WIFN Heritage Committee to ask the committee's advice about the level of consultation which is expected with the First Nations community on the two government decisions referred to above.
  - the St. Clair River Bi-national Public Advisory Council (BPAC) met April 8, 2011. Domtar paper reported on process and infrastructure changes being made to their facility to address paper fibre and bacteria problems in the river. Fishermen in attendance reported observing improvement to problem over the past months. The company committed to additional improvements. A number of grant request proposals were discussed that will be submitted for Great Lakes Restoration funding.

**BD-11-059**

**McEachran - Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC) update from the Remedial Action Plan Coordinator, dated April 5, 2011 and further that the General Manager or his designate be authorized to sign the contract(s) with the successful proponent(s) for geochemical/geotechnical field work, based on the Sediment Technical Team recommendations and subject to written approval of Environment Canada and Ministry of the Environment funds.”**

**CARRIED**

Planning Activity Summary Report for February and March 2011 was reviewed.

**BD-11-060**

**Burrell - Marriott**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority's monthly Planning Activity Summary Reports for February and March 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

Carlie Burns and Kyle Pratt, staff of the Town of Plympton Wyoming, Nettie McEwen, councillor from the Town of Plympton Wyoming councillor and Will Nywening and Dave Posliff, planning staff from the County of Lambton joined the meeting.

The Authority Board of Directors deliberated at significant length on whether or not to continue with the appeal to the OMB of the Town of Plympton-Wyoming Notice of Refusal to Amend a Zoning Bylaw for

Bluepoint Area (Lots 5-41, Plan 28). The SCRCA staff have recommended the appeal as it was staffs position the zoning was not consistent with provincial policy and was in conflict with the Authority's Regulation policies which do not permit development on vacant lots and limited development on "occupied" lots. This is a long standing issue with the Conservation Authority and development proposals have been heard before the OMB and Mining and Lands Commissioner with decisions in favour of the SCRCA. However, no identification of the high hazard is presented in the Zoning Bylaw.

Lonny Napper (Mayor of P-W and SCRCA Director) gave the municipalities position verbally on why council decided not to amend the zoning bylaw for the area. The zoning by-law amendment was refused on the basis that Town Council does not consider it its obligation to identify the presence or potential presence of shoreline hazards and processes for one particular location beyond what has already been done generically along the shoreline in the Planning documents, does not wish to duplicate existing legislation, and does not consider itself directly obligated to create awareness of restrictions under Provincial legislation" (Quote from Notice of Refusal re: reason for refusal). It is council's concern that site specific zoning will impact property values, and negatively impact present landowners from a financial perspective.

A Staff Report on the appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board was discussed.

- Background: in late 2010, the Town of Plympton-Wyoming presented proposed amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw as part of the required review of these documents. At this time, the Authority provided comments on incorporating hazard information into the planning documents. For several months, Conservation Authority staff had been working with County planning and Township staff to incorporate the natural shoreline hazard information, including the Bluepoint area hazard information, into the Official Plan and Zoning bylaw. Incorporating Bluepoint hazard information would have allowed for greater conformity with the SCRCA Shoreline Planning and Regulation Policies that affected Lots 5-41, Plan 28 in Bluepoint. A relevant excerpt from the 2009 Board approved policies is provided further in this report. However, after significant deliberation and concern from residents expressed during the mandatory public meetings, the accepted changes (P-Wyoming/County planning, P-W council and SCRCA) were repealed. Zoning Bylaw No. 27 of 2011 repealed Bylaw 108 of 2010. Bylaw 108 of 2010 had also adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 27, which also basically became null and void. Both planning documents provided hazard information and issues with development on vacant lots as well as restrictions to existing development in Bluepoint.
- Update: on March 16, 2011, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) received the Town of Plympton-Wyoming's (P-W) "Notice of Refusal to Amend a Zoning Bylaw". See Exhibit "A". This represents the council's repealing the passing of the amending bylaw as noted above. The purpose and effect of the Bylaw amendment would have been to place Plan 28, lakeside Lots 5-41 (known municipally as 4106-4246 Bluepoint Drive – even numbers) in a site specific zone with provisions to draw attention to shoreline erosion, shallow lot depths and restrictions to development. The deadline to appeal this decision was March 30, 2011 and agreement was sought from the SCRCA Chair and Vice Chair to file the appeal contingent on April SCRCA Board decision to proceed or withdraw the appeal. Subject lands: 29 lots with structures and approximately 8 vacant lots = Total 37 (Source: P-W/County)
- Support for appeal:
  - the official plan and zoning by law is not "consistent" with the Provincial Policy Statement(PPS). Planning authorities (lower and upper tier municipalities) must be consistent with the PPS. Official Plan and Zoning is not consistent with Section 3.1.1 (a) of the PPS which states:
  - Development shall generally be directed to areas outside of: a) hazardous lands adjacent

- to the shorelines of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River System and large inland lakes which are impacted by flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards;
- Section 4.5 of the PPS – Implementation and Interpretations also states the following:
    - the official plan is the most important vehicle for implementation of the PPS. Comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning is best achieved through municipal official plans. Municipal official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. Municipal official plans shall provide clear, reasonable and attainable policies to protect provincial interests and direct development to suitable areas.
  - Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13
    - Section 5 - A decision of the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, a minister of the Crown and a ministry, board, commission or agency of the government, including the Municipal Board, in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter,
    - shall be consistent with the policy statements issued under subsection (1) that are in effect on the date of the decision.
    - Section 34. (1) Zoning by-laws may be passed by the councils of local municipalities:
      - or prohibiting the erection of any class or classes of buildings or structures on land that is subject to flooding or on land with steep slopes, or that is rocky, low-lying, marshy, unstable, hazardous, subject to erosion or to natural or artificial perils.
  - Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw for the Bluepoint Area (specifically Lots 5-41) does not meet the intent of the following guidelines and policies:
  - Ministry of Natural Resources Technical Guides which support and implement the PPS Natural Hazard Policies. Appendix A7.2 (Technical guide for Existing development within the Hazardous lands in Great Lakes-St. Lawrence river shorelines) states:
    - For new dwellings on existing vacant lots in infilling situations (more than 50% developed): permitted provided 1) the proponent demonstrates that it meets requirements of “Protection Works Standard” and “Access Standard” to the maximum extent and level possible and that a “best effort” has been made to provide the maximum erosion allowance that is functional and aesthetically tolerable; and 2) it utilizes maximum lot depth and width; and 3) as a minimum, uses the greater of a) an erosion allowance based on a planning horizon of not less than 60 years or b) minimum setback from stable slope allowance of 15 metres; and 4) proper maintenance access is provided to any existing protection works (typically 4-5 m width on lot for heavy construction equipment).
    - For redevelopment (existing structures removed and new structure erected); this is considered “new development”, the aforementioned guideline applies.
  - SCRCA 1996 Shoreline Mgt Plan or 2009 SCRCA Shoreline Policies for Bluepoint
    - SCRCA 1996 Shoreline Mgt Plan “Shoreline Development Guidelines” state in order to construct new dwellings in Shoreline Area 2 (between stable slope and 1:100 year erosion standard) flooding and/or erosion hazards are appropriately addressed. The Benefit/Cost Analysis armour stone protection study carried out by Shoreplan states that basically due to the steep grade, height of bank, nearshore characteristics, and shallow lot depths the cost outweighs the benefit. The analysis was based on MNR Benefit/Cost analysis procedure.
    - SCRCA Shoreline Policy 2.c.(Erosion Hazard).ii. states: Based on Benefit/Cost Analysis that long term erosion protection is not feasible, the following policy

applies for the high erosion area (Lots 5-10, 15-37, 40-41, Plan 28 and Lots 1-18, 27-33, Plan 448), where a suitable building envelope does not exist to meet above policy requirements (general good shoreline mgt objectives and critically outside 60 year erosion hazard), new development may be permitted within the hazard areas along Bluepoint Drive, provided the following additional criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the SCRCA:

- The development maintains a setback equivalent to the stable slope hazard plus 50 year erosion hazard; Note: The reduction of the 60 year erosion hazard setback requirement to a 50 year erosion hazard is deemed as reasonable, as the 50 year erosion hazard has historically been utilized in municipal planning documents. Lots 5-41 do not meet the above noted criteria.
- Summary: existing official plan and zoning bylaw does not reflect the hazard and direct development away from the hazard. It is not transparent for existing and future owners of subject lots in Bluepoint. Through various activities (municipal planning public meetings, public inquiries, shoreline mgt plan update public consultation, CA Regulation applications, etc), it has become increasingly apparent that “buyer beware” is not working. Property transactions have occurred without full knowledge of hazard as applicants were under impression teardowns and building without restrictions can occur. Lawyers are also obtaining title insurance and not acquiring the property inquiry information from CA’s. The SCRCA’s goal is to be upfront and transparent regarding the presence of the hazard and risk to property in a high hazard area. The Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw should clearly set forth the type and extent of permitted land use that is allowed. Development in the form of new dwellings and redevelopment should not be a permitted use for Lots 5-41. The ability to relocate away from the hazard with restrictions (ie moveable dwelling, minimum size, etc) is to be reviewed under the Authority’s application process, namely approval under Ontario Regulation 171/06 “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses”.
- P-W decision to repeal Zoning Bylaw Amendment and Official Plan Amendment: “The zoning by-law amendment was refused on the basis that Town Council does not consider it its obligation to identify the presence or potential presence of shoreline hazards and processes for one particular location beyond what has already been done generically along the shoreline in the Planning documents, does not wish to duplicate existing legislation, and does not consider itself directly obligated to create awareness of restrictions under Provincial legislation” (Quote from Notice of Refusal re: reason for refusal)
- CA right to appeal: the CA has the right to appeal. This is as per the Memorandum of Understanding between Conservation Ontario, MNR and MMAH. Conservation Authorities have been delegated the responsibility to represent the “Provincial Interest” on matters in planning exercise involving natural hazards including floodplain management, hazardous slopes, Great lakes shorelines, unstable soils and erosion which are encompassed by Section 3.1 “Natural Hazards” of the PPS.
- OMB process: as the parties involved to date have been unable to resolve what appropriate information should be included in the planning documents, it is the role of the OMB to review, act as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party and settle disputes.
- the role of the Ontario Municipal Board and appeal process allows for this review and settlement. In a public forum setting, the OMB can assemble the facts and make decisions in light of:
  - environmental, social and economic considerations
  - provincial interests

- rights of the individual citizens
- the best interests of the community as a whole.
- it is important to note that the SCRCA staff have identified to the OMB that this appeal would benefit from mediation a prehearing conference in order to solve and reach a resolution prior to an OMB hearing.
- SCRCA staff recommend the appeal remain filed and proceed in this direction with the intention to continue to seek resolution prior to a OMB hearing (ie. Mediation).

**BD-11-061**

**Burrell - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board and concurs with staff’s recommendation to proceed with the appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board while seeking to resolve through mediation and/or pre-hearing conference if possible.”**

**Recorded vote: 8 for, 7 against CARRIED**

Authorization to appoint Dallas Cundick, Environmental Planner/Regulations Officer as an officer to enforce the Section 28 Regulation under the Conservation Authorities Act was considered.

**BD-11-061**

**Burrell - MacKenzie**

**“That the Board of Directors authorizes and appoints Dallas Cundick, Environmental Planner/Regulations Officer as an officer to enforce the Section 28 Regulation under the Conservation Authorities Act within the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s jurisdiction.”**

**CARRIED**

Authority revenue and expenditures to February 28, 2011, were reviewed.

**BD-11-063**

**MacKinnon - Bilton**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to February 28, 2011, as it relates to the budget.”**

**CARRIED**

January, February and March 2011 disbursements totaling \$1,259,887.85 were considered.

**BD-11-064**

**Faas - Vink**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the January, February and March 2011 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,259,887.85.”**

**CARRIED**

A status report on general levy received to date was discussed. Approximately 45% of the general levy has been paid to date.

**BD-11-065****Bilton - Davis-Dagg****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2011 general levy receipts to date.”****CARRIED**

A Status Report on Honourarium/Per Diem and Travelling Allowances for directors for 2010 was discussed.

**BD-11-066****MacKinnon - Burrell****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Status Summary report, dated April 5, 2011 on directors’ expenses from January 1 to December 31, 2010.”****CARRIED**

A report on provincial Conservation Authority programs and services was explained.

- SCRCA Ranks:
  - Administration
    - 9th in area (4,100 km<sup>2</sup>)
    - 16th in population (159,666)
    - 25th in full time staff compliment (16)
    - 12th in Total Budget (\$6,171,762)
    - 31st in General Levy (\$515,350)
    - 35th in per capita General Levy (\$3.23)
    - 6th in receipt of Section 39 Provincial Grant (this is our only on-going grant toward regular operation and it has not increased since 1996) (\$310,000)
    - 3rd in Federal Grants (\$408,000)
  - Programs and Services
    - 10th in the number of Conservation Areas (15)
    - 5th in the number of campsites (522)
    - 18th in the total length of trails (43 km)
    - 9th in the number of students to education programs (10,604)
    - 23rd in the number of municipal plan input transactions (143)
    - 14th in the number of Section 28 Regulations inquiries (204)
    - 28th in the number of Section 28 Permits issued –this shows the effort of staff to negotiate with landowners to direct development outside natural hazard and natural heritage areas (75)
    - 1st in the number of Level II DFO drain reviews completed (194)
    - 20th in the number of benthic sampling sites (15)
    - 16th in the number of surface water sampling sites (28)
    - 23rd in the number of PGWMN sites (groundwater) (9)

In interpreting the rankings, it is important to note that there is considerable variation in the programs and services provided by Conservation Authorities across the province. This is due in part by size and capability but it also is a reflection of the priorities set out by the board of directors determined by the needs of the local municipalities.

**BD-11-067****Miller - Marriott****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the statistical report on provincial Conservation Authority Programs and Services dated April 8, 2011.”****CARRIED**

A Staff Report on General Levy trends was reviewed.

- this report was prepared to provide some insight into the General Levy paid by our member municipalities to support the work of the Conservation Authority. The SCRCA has a long track record of being a very cost-effective organization. Out of the 36 Conservation Authorities, the SCRCA ranks second lowest in the per-capita General Levy collected from our member municipalities at \$3.23. The average across the province is \$10.93 with a high of \$32.86 and a low of \$2.18 (see report on provincial statistics). For every one dollar of General Levy, the Authority raises \$10. In 1995, General Levy and Provincial Grant made up the largest part of our budget. In 1996, our provincial grant was reduced along with our General Levy. The provincial grant remains at this level in 2011. General Levy remained at the same level for 8 years and has experienced some growth since 2005. In order to remain a relevant organization, the SCRCA continues to seek outside revenues from other government programs, corporate sponsorship, sales of its services, donations from Foundations as well as efficient operation of our revenue generating programs such as campgrounds.

**BD-11-068****McEachran - Burrell****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report on General Levy trends dated April 8, 2011.”****CARRIED**

A summary report on grant applications was reviewed.

- staff actively pursue grants to support the work of the Conservation Authority for projects and programs.
- changes are highlighted below
  - received notice that \$92,500 from Wildlife Habitat Canada was denied, this was the first year applying for this grant, we will apply again in future years
  - applied to RBC Blue Water Project for \$5,000 towards Watershed Report Cards
  - applied to Sobey’s Earth Day Canada Community Environment Fund for \$6,100 forestry seed collection program
  - received \$337,500 from MNR WECEI funds for Guthrie Park Shore Protection Restoration Project Phase II – originally unfunded, Guthrie Park was funded via unspent/returned 2010-2011 funds – funding was restricted to projects that were completed prior to March 31<sup>st</sup> – therefore Guthrie Park was funded at 90% of the original request as the project is 90% complete
  - received acceptance for Career Focus funding of \$29,546 and received 80% of funding up front
  - applied to Provincial Summer Job Service program through Lambton College for \$13,040 which represents a \$2.00/hr subsidy for approximately 6,520 hours of summer students for 14 positions.
  - received \$9,769 from the Special Project Fund from MNR for costs for Girgis appeal to Mining and Lands Commission last fall
  - received \$4,997 to support Low Water Team cost for 2010-2011

**BD-11-069****MacKinnon - Davis-Dagg**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and approve the grant applications summary report dated April 8, 2011 outlining grant applications to date to support the programs and services within our region.”**

**CARRIED**

Plans for this year’s proposed project tour were explained.

- staff is proposing a Conservation Authority Tour on Thursday, June 16, 9:00 – 1:00. The bus will leave and return to the St. Clair Township Office where we will have lunch. The Authority Board meeting will follow at or near 1:30 p.m. in the St. Clair Township Council Chambers
- highlights of tour
  - Cathcart Park - possible shoreline protection project
  - W. Darcy McKeough Floodway - the largest flood diversion project in Ontario
  - Reid Conservation Area - role of the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation
  - Wilkesport Habitat Management Area - Special partners’ award
  - Guthrie Park - official opening of the shoreline protection project
  - lunch – St. Clair Parkway Golf Course
  - other topics
    - St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan
    - the latest on the St. Clair River Contaminated - Sediment Study
    - Bickford Oak Woods
    - Embridge Tree Planting Project
    - new plans for Bowen’s Creek

**BD-11-070****Faas - McEachran**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 7, 2011 on the proposed project tour scheduled for June 16, 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report on Conservation Education was discussed.

- Winter Education Programs
 

• Go with the Flow Program:	662 students
• St. Clair River Bottom Critters	1,972 students
• River Rap Program,	231 students
• Species at Risk Program,	52 students
• Spring Water Awareness:	37 students
• Outdoor (Nature In Winter & Geocaching)	273 students (Highest attendance in 10 years.)
• Total # of students for Jan. /Feb.	3,227 students
- Workshops
  - Rekindle Workshop at ABCA – focus on safety manuals, winter activities, tree activities
  - Carolinian Canada workshop – Species at Risk Presentation Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>, Petrolia
  - Friends of the St. Clair River Meeting – reporting on the River Rap program
- Special Events
  - Heritage Week Display: February 12, An SCRCA display was manned at Petrolia Playhouse which highlighted trails at our local Conservation Areas. About 50 Petrolia residents attended.

- Strathroy Museum Day Camp – March 17 presentation on Spring Water Safety and Conservation of Water to celebrate World Water Day and Earth Hour.
- Maple Syrup Festival 2011: Beautiful weather brought close to 2,000 people to A.W. Campbell Conservation Area over the weekend of March 19 & 20. Visitors were intrigued by the historical perspective of the maple syrup industry as presented by Conservation Education Staff.
- Re-Connect with Nature Seminar - April 5 the Education Technician in partnership with Lambton College Sustainability Program gave a presentation at Lambton Inn on connecting children to nature.
- LCH Marsh Monitoring Workshop - April 9 the Education Technician trained local naturalists to monitor amphibians and birds at the Marshes in our watershed. Workshop sponsored by Bird Studies Canada.
- Up Coming Events
  - Sydenham River Canoe Race: Borrow a canoe, find a partner and mark your calendars for Sunday April 17th. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.
  - Earth Day – April 20th all day presentations at Strathroy High School for Earth Day.
  - Lambton County Trails Committee Luncheon: Staff has been asked to make a Geocaching presentation on May 4 for 80-120 Seniors in Forest at the North Lambton Community Health Department. This partnership will help to promote use of trails in the Forest/North Lambton area. The Community Health Department has 5 GPS units that are available to the public for rental.
  - Lambton County Trails Committee Meeting: On May 5, committee members will participate in a Geocaching Workshop at Henderson Conservation Area. Members will learn about geocaching and will in turn, promote the SCRCA Education programs.
  - Marsh Monitoring at Kettle Point Lands - May (date to be determined) Staff will train local people to monitor amphibians and birds at Kettle Point wetland sites. Data collected will be returned to Bird Studies Canada.
  - International Trails Day - June 4: Staff will be leading activities after the walk at Cathcart Park. Trails Day is sponsored by Community Health Services Department.
  - Other
    - new outdoor Climate Change Program for grades 7/8 will be running this spring.
    - new wetlands game (Home Sweet Home) will be added to the outdoor Water Cycle Program.
    - new Tree Species at Risk game will be used for the Scouts and Guides evening programs.
    - Lambton College Arborist group spent 2 days at LCH cutting out dead ash from the woods where education programs take place. 17 students and 2 teachers focused on trees close to the walkways. Campground staff has been logging out large trees for firewood. Habitat brush piles will be maintained for wildlife.
    - the old Conservation In Crisis program was updated to make use of the Authority's GPS receivers. A "self-guided walk" with question sheets was designed for intermediate grade students.

**BD-11-071**

**Burrell - Bilton**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Education Report, dated April 11, 2011 including the winter education programs, workshops, special events and upcoming events.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the status of employment program applications was presented.

- each year the Conservation Authority seeks grants to hire staff to provide support to a wide variety of programs. In 2010, \$234,700 in direct grants and contribution agreements supported 27 individuals. These individuals gained valuable work experience in a team oriented environment. In addition, many Authority projects and programs throughout our member municipalities benefited from their efforts and talents.
- in 2011, applications have been made to five programs. Approvals have been received for the Career Focus and Summer Experience Programs.
- Career Focus: two post-secondary school graduates will be able to gain valuable work experience through this federal program. The SCRCA received \$29,546 to hire two technical positions for a period of 26 weeks – Approved.
- Summer Experience Program: a summer student will be working out of the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area under the Summer Experience Program assisting with a number of projects including maintenance of the Conservation Authority stream gauge network. The grant of \$2,700 will employ this student for 7 weeks – Approved.
- Summer Job Service: an application has been made for wage subsidies for 14 summer positions including tree planters and campground staff - \$13,040 - Pending.
- Canada Summer Jobs: an application has been made for campground Visitor Services position for 16 weeks - \$7,152 - Pending.
- Job Creation Partnership: an application has been made for a contribution agreement worth \$151,000 with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities under the Job Creation Partnership program to provide employment training for 8 people for 34 to 52 weeks - Pending.

**BD-11-072**

**Miller - Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 1, 2011 on the status of employment program applications for 2011.”**

**CARRIED**

A Staff Report on the application to Union Gas to support the development and delivery of a Spring Water Awareness Program in local schools.

- the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was invited to submit an application for funding to Union Gas in recognition of their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They were looking at options to provide a one-time \$10,000 grant to partner with a community initiative. In the email request Mr. David Stek from Union Gas wrote “one item that sticks with me was when I attended my son’s grade 1 class trip last year to the Conservation Authority in Petrolia and how engaged he was and how professional the class was”.
- the grant was focused on environmental education, conservation and/or research, preferably in partnership with local conservation authorities.
- our proposal was for the development of a Spring Water Awareness Program. This would be an in-school program in which Conservation Education staff will visit schools to teach students about the dangers of being close to water in the spring. Life in the stream/river will also be highlighted, which will be tied into the science curriculum for each grade level. We would incorporate both Spring Water Awareness messages and Environmental Conservation Messages into programs specific to grade levels from Kindergarten to grade 6.
- there were several opportunities for Union Gas to be involved and recognized including a demonstration during our 2011 bus tour.

Jeff Wesley declared a conflict of interest and did not participate in the discussion and did not vote on this motion.

**BD-11-073**

**Faas - Vink**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2011 on the application to Union Gas to support the development and delivery of a Spring Water Awareness Programs in local schools.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-11-074**

**Burrell - Bilton**

**“That the meeting be adjourned.”**



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Andy Bruziewicz  
Chairman

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Ralph Coe  
General Manager