

April 18, 2013

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: Steve Arnold, Chair; Terry Burrell, Vice Chair; Bill Bilton, David Boushy, Tony Bruinink, Elizabeth Davis-Dagg, Joe Faas, Anne Marie Gillis, Rod Glen, Helen Havlik, Don McCallum, Netty McEwen, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Ben Phay

Absent: Norm Giffen, Larry MacKenzie, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Tom McGregor

Also Present for all or part of Meeting: Brian McDougall, General Manager; Rick Battson, Director of Communication; Patty Hayman, Director of Planning; Dallas Cundick, Environment Planner/Regs Officer; Muriel Andreae; Senior Biologist; Brendan Martin, Student Volunteer, Girish Sankar, Water Resources Engineer; Kevan Baker, Director of Conservation Areas; Tracy Prince, Director of Financial Services; Marlene Dorrestyn, Administrative Assistant

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their vote of confidence as Chair and Vice Chair. He 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-13-032

Bruinink - Miller

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held February 21, 2013, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

BD-13-033

Glen - Davis-Dagg

“That the Woodland Conservation for Chatham-Kent Committee be allowed to make a presentation.”

CARRIED

Steve Myslik, Tom Chatterton and Sheldon Parsons made a presentation from the Woodland Conservation for Chatham-Kent Committee regarding the need to protect tree cover in Chatham-Kent. They are seeking support to encourage Chatham-Kent to protect and enhance woodland conservation. The Committee is looking for advice and support.

Directors' Comments:

- a significant percentage of woodlots will disappear this year.
- sandy and lighter soils are prone to wind erosion
- what is the response from Chatham-Kent council - council is meeting with groups to get a consensus of what is going on. A report is expected in August.
- asked how do you save a woodlot?

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BD-13-034

Burrell - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the presentation regarding woodland conservation in Chatham-Kent and will further review with staff prior to providing a response.”

CARRIED

The General Manager’s Report was presented:

- staff hosted 8 Board members at the orientation for new members on March 26th
 - all four of our newly appoint members attended
 - a presentation regarding the Authority’s projects and program, as well as some diverse questions and enlightening discussion provided a well-rounded introduction to the Authority
- a report was presented to the February 7th Executive Committee meeting regarding administration of the permit to hunt program on the McKeough Lands
 - staff have been reviewing the options for the continuation of the program, including the potential of the Authority resuming the administration of the permitting program
 - staff will present a report to the Board in June including, a proposal for the future of the program
- an issue has developed regarding the proposed date for the Authority’s Annual Project Tour and June Board meeting, scheduled for June 20th
 - the Annual Conference of the Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is being held in Marquette, MI June 19th – 21st
 - there is the potential for this to impact the availability of Board members and staff for our Tour and meeting
 - Thursday, June 27th is provided as an alternative date for the Tour and meeting, if required

BD-13-035

Miller - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated April 8,2013.”

CARRIED

BD-13-036

Bruinink - Glen

“That the Project Tour and Board of Directors Meeting be held on June 27th, 2013.”

CARRIED

A report regarding Conservation Ontario’s Green Economy Roadmap was reviewed.

- the Green Economy Roadmap has been an initiative of Conservation Ontario since 2011. The project reached a milestone with the endorsement of the Green Economy Roadmap and Assessment Guide by Conservation Ontario Council this week. The *Green Economy Roadmap for Conservation Authorities in Ontario* describes the focus areas, assets, actions and partnerships that will (in accordance with the CO 2011-15 Strategic Plan Vision) help establish Conservation Authorities in Ontario as “Partners of Choice for Managing and Adapting to Climate Change and Growing the Green Economy”. The *Green Economy Assessment Guide for Conservation Authorities in Ontario*

provides direction on how to identify and prioritize green economy initiatives and tools and the steps involved to implement the initiatives.

- Roadmap Highlights:
 - strong links already exist between Conservation Authorities and the green economy, given their mandate of promoting conservation in Ontario. In fact, in a survey of CAs completed in the fall of 2012, 100% of survey respondents stated that their CA is *already* advancing and promoting green economy initiatives. This Green Economy Roadmap describes a number of specific green economy projects that Conservation Authorities in Ontario currently have underway. These address a range of issues including for example, climate change, Great lakes and integrated watershed management. However, as the provincial economy in Ontario continues to evolve, new thinking, reframing and articulation of the work of Conservation Authorities is required within the context of a green economy. This includes the identification of new and emerging opportunities required for CAs to remain leaders in this area. All CAs who responded to the survey indicated that there are greater opportunities for them to advance and promote green economy initiatives. Within the green economy environmental, social and economic outcomes are compatible, complementary and mutually reinforcing.
- Environmental Outcomes Economic Outcomes Social Outcomes
 - conserves land
 - reduces emissions
 - increases awareness
 - reduces water or other resource consumption
 - improves water quality
 - reduces waste generation
 - increases resiliency to climate change
 - internalizes (operationalizes) environmental costs
 - raises revenue
 - reduces costs
 - climate change adaptation
 - sends a price signal
 - creates jobs
 - improves social cohesion
 - improves life satisfaction
 - improves health

A complete document is available if interested.

BD-13-037

Nemcek - McCallum

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 9, 2013 regarding Conservation Ontario’s Green Economy Roadmap and further requests that a staff committee provide a report later this year outlining the status of current initiatives and potentially proposing additional initiatives.”

CARRIED

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A staff report on the permit to hunt program on McKeough properties was considered.

- a McKeough Deer Hunting Report was provided to the Executive Committee on February 7th, 2013, which outlined issues and concerns regarding the administration of the permit to hunt program. Staff have considered additional issues raised by neighbors and hunters in the community, as well as enforcement officials. The Board of Director's support making these lands available for public hunting and provide the following recommendation:
- SCRCA shall terminate the agreement with the Lambton County Farmers and Friends Conservation Club as of June 30th, 2013, as outlined in the document and will implement administration of the permit to hunt program internally as of July 1, 2013.
- further, in order to better administer the hunting program, SCRCA staff will be implementing some improvements and are exploring some additional options:
 - upgrade the maps supplied to hunters with permission to hunt the McKeough Upstream Lands, as well as looking at making the maps available on the SCRCA website.
 - co-ordinate ongoing communications with MNR Conservation Officers, as well as OPP Officers, to assist with enforcement of the McKeough Upstream Lands hunting program.
 - make the hunting package available on our website
 - mail a complete and accurate hunting list, that will be forwarded to Enforcement Officials before Sept 1st.
 - have membership to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) as a prerequisite to obtain permission to hunt the Upstream McKeough Lands, as OFAH carries \$3 million liability insurance on its members.
 - SCRCA staff have reviewed and revised the hunter permission agreement with input from MNR Conservation Officers.
 - SCRCA staff has also reviewed the fees to hunt the upstream lands and suggest increasing the fee from \$50.00 per hunting year (Aug 1st to May 31st) to \$70.00 per hunting year to cover administration costs, and enforcement cost associated with the hunting program.
 - \$10.00 per property trapping fee remain unchanged

BD-13-038

Faas - Glen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 17, 2013 regarding the permit to hunt program on McKeough properties and further that Authority shall terminate the agreement with the Lambton County Farmers and Friends Conservation Club as of June 30th, 2013 as outlined in the document and will implement administration of the permit to hunt program internally as of July 1, 2013.”

CARRIED

A report regarding Conservation Ontario meeting including Conservation Ontario's Project Tracking spreadsheet was discussed.

- attended the Conservation Ontario meeting on April 8th at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto
- Dick Hibma (Grey Sauble CA) was acclaimed as Chair of Conservation Ontario
- Lin Gibson (Nickel District CA) and Mark Burnham (Mississippi Valley CA) were elected as Vice Chairs
- Wayne Wilson (Nottawasaga Valley CA), Cliff Evanitski (Long Point Region CA) and Sally Martyn (Kettle Creek CA) were also elected to the Executive Committee

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- presentations regarding the Green Economy Roadmap and the Special Projects Budget were provided and approved
- also included in the Board package is the overall project tracking table that is presented at each Conservation Ontario meeting

BD-13-039**Burrell - Bruinink**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report regarding the Conservation Ontario meeting of April 8, 2013 including Conservation Ontario’s Project Tracking spreadsheet for April 2013.”

CARRIED

A report on the business arising from the last meeting was discussed.

- staff continue to update the Finance and Administration Manual (Policies, Procedures and Regulations) – this update is required to meet current legislation, incorporate Board approved items, correct errors and update policies – the intention is to present a draft of the updated manual to the Board in April with the final version being reviewed in June
 - *both the time required to complete the review and the opportunity to prioritize the review may have been underestimated as we now anticipate that the update will not be completed until fall*
 - *staff have been reviewing current policies and procedures, adding adopted and undocumented procedures, reviewing legislation to ensure compliance and undertaking reviews of comparable document reviews in development of the proposed 2013 update*
 - *a draft table of contents is undergoing final review and an update will be provided at the June Board meeting*
- a staff report regarding the draft agreement with Middlesex Stewardship Council was discussed. The lawyer comments have not been received to date.
 - *see 6.(ii) Middlesex Stewardship Council – revised agreement, correspondence from solicitor and insurance coverage.*
- Eastern Power’s development proposal review under Application # 10715.

BD-13-040**Havlik - Bilton**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the updates on business arising from the February 21, 2013 Board of Director’s meeting.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the proposed operation agreement with Middlesex Stewardship Council was considered.

- in addressing the Board’s concerns regarding the proposed agreement with Middlesex Stewardship Council (MSC), staff have had the proposed agreement and the general situation reviewed by a solicitor as well as our insurance broker and provide the following for the Board’s review
- our insurers have provided us with two recommendations for protecting the Authorities (5 Conservation Authority watersheds drain Middlesex County) and MSC
- all authorities should add MSC to their Property and Liability insurance.

- the resulting cost to each Authority (estimated to be between \$400.00 and \$600.00 total) is to be assumed by MSC
- director's insurance for MSC is a different issue
- the coverage would be contingent upon
 - a Board resolution from each Authority stating that "MSC is supported as a committee of the Authority Board"
 - a requirement that MSC provide action reports to each Authority Board on a quarterly basis
 - a Board resolution from SCRCA that the Board officially sanctions and duly constitutes the Middlesex Stewardship Council as a volunteer Committee of the SCRCA

Directors Comments:

- if MSC is a committee of the Authority, should we not appoint the members
- after checking with the Insurance Company, it is better if MSC works as a volunteer Committee. There are 4 other Conservation Authorities working with MSC, all working in the same manner in their area of jurisdiction.
- include MSC representatives in our nominating report

BD-13-041

Miller - McEwen

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2013 regarding the proposed operation agreement with Middlesex Stewardship Council as well as the correspondence and revised agreement from our solicitor and further approves the revised operating agreement between the organizations, officially sanctions and duly constitutes the Middlesex Stewardship Council as a volunteer Committee of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, subject to obtaining the required property and liability insurance riders and Committee support from each of the 5 Conservation Authorities in Middlesex County and subject to the quarterly reporting requirements."

CARRIED

A Conservation Lands Update was reviewed:

- Conservation Areas:
 - background:
 - the camping season in 2013 runs from Friday, April 26th to Thanksgiving Day
 - over the winter months we have accepted campsite reservations at the administration office for our 3 regional campgrounds
 - Warwick Conservation Area (Warwick Township):
 - new ceramic tiles have been installed in the women's main washroom shower areas
 - new water conservation toilets to be installed in the main campground washrooms
 - approach ramps to be installed on the main trail bridge
 - roads to be resurfaced with gravel
 - pool ladders and railing anchors to be replaced
 - vacant campsites are being prepared for the upcoming camping season
 - 20 large stock trees to be planted
 - a number of dead and dying trees have been removed
 - L.C. Henderson Conservation Area (Enniskillen Township):
 - a tree contractor has trimmed and removed trees along the hydro right of way

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- entering the conservation area
- slide hoods have been installed on the playground equipment
- new ceramic tile have been installed on the main campground washroom floors
- 2 canoes have been purchased for public use & rental (Foundation Bingo)
- BKL Engineering (Sarnia) is completing design and cost estimates to install a new trailer dump station
- barn board siding to be replaced on the campground end of the main building
- 20 large stock trees to be planted
- roads to be resurfaced with gravel
- A.W. Campbell Conservation Area (Brooke/Alvinston & S.W. Middlesex Townships):
 - 9 new windows have been installed in the visitor center
 - staff prepared the grounds and buildings for the annual syrup festival, approximately 1000 people attended
 - new steel doors to be installed on the pool washroom building
 - staff continue to remove dead and dying ash trees (wood is processed as firewood and sold within the conservation area)
 - 20 large stock trees to be planted
 - roadways to be resurfaced with gravel
- Strathroy Conservation and March Walk:
 - two bridges to be replaced on the main trail system (Foundation Project)
 - Strathroy Water Trail paddle day to be held on Saturday, May 25th
- Clark Wright Conservation Area:
 - trail improvements include the installation of a 36 ft railed bridge and 16 board walk sections (Foundation Project)
- Peers Wetland Conservation Area:
 - wetland improvement works have been initiated and will include berm reconstruction, pump and pumping chamber installation, and hydro connection
 - other improvements to include 5 acres of trees to be planted, 1.2 acres of tall grass prairie, property and donor signs installed and parking lot constructed
 - a draft master plan has been completed
- Highland Glen Conservation Areas (Plympton/Wyoming):
 - the boat ramp and harbor area will be dredge to allow better access for boaters to Lake Huron (tentative date set is week of April 15 to 19th)
- marketing in 2013:
 - our conservation areas will be marketed in the following publications or events in 2013:
 - Sarnia Lambton Tourism Guide, Middlesex County Guide and Chatham-Kent Guide
 - camping ads have been placed on MyFm, CKXS FM Wallaceburg, Strathroy-Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, Sarnia Chamber of Commerce and Victoria Playhouse websites
 - Blue Water Tourism Guide (in partnership with other Conservation Authorities)
 - Ron Clark RV Show, Pt. Edward Arena, April 12th to 14th
 - Middlesex Home & Leisure Show (Strathroy Gemini Complex – April 27th)
 - Grafiks Marketing & Communications is preparing a new visitors guide for our conservation areas for 2013 and 2014.

- we have been accepting reservations at the administration office since January 2nd. Camping reservation totals to the end of March for the three regional campgrounds amounted to 511 reservations taken and \$ 71,000.00 in revenue (HST adjusted). This can be compared to 394 reservation taken and \$ 55,700.00 in revenue in 2012.
- Lambton County Lands:
 - the Conservation Authority manages 7 properties and over 1,400 acres for the County of Lambton
 - at the Lambton County Heritage Forest, staff have performed trail inspections and have removed a number of trees which have fallen on the trails; Forestry staff are performing a forest inventory of the property to determine standing timber values
 - at Marthaville Habitat Area, 200 feet of fence to be replaced along the north boundary
 - at Perch Creek Habitat Area, improvements will be made to the parking area and along the trail system; Forestry department will be developing a Ash tree plantation replacement plan
 - at Bowens Creek, the Forestry department will be planting 14,000 trees and will be continuing their herbicide management program on existing plantation
 - at Meadow View, Forestry staff will be planting 600 seedlings
- McKeough Lands:
 - erosion improvement works have been completed on Property 95 & 97
 - funding has been secured to prepare environmental farm plans and property management plans for the upstream agricultural properties
 - funding assistance has been secured to complete soil erosion improvement projects on Properties 82, 83 and 103

BD-13-042**Nemcek - McCallum**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Lands Update dated April 4, 2013, outlining development and management activities on Conservation Areas, McKeough Upstream Lands and Lambton County properties.”

CARRIED

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

- watershed precipitation
 - precipitation numbers improved into January 2013 with most stations reporting 50% more precipitation in the form of both rain and snow than the average with Sarnia receiving three times the expected amount of snow and rain combination. Much of this increase was attributed to two major events during the month January and again into February. However, in the month of March there was significantly lower than average rainfall with most stations recording less than 50% of the normal and Sarnia receiving only 17% of normal. Sarnia numbers were however offset by a very wet January resulting in precipitation 40% above normal for the first three months of the year while all other stations reported near normal volumes over the same period. Regional averages for the six and 12 month periods remain again below average with 82.2% and 86.1% respectively. Should this precipitation trend continue into the spring, the anticipated recharge will likely be less than anticipated potentially impacting on water levels into the summer months again for 2013.

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- streamflows
 - while streamflows 2012 remained consistent with lower than normal flow patterns resulting from reduced precipitation amounts throughout 2012; conditions improved slightly into January and early February. Accumulated snowpack conditions across the watershed were totally depleted in mid-January by a significant thaw resulting in a flood event. A second event occurred at the end of January creating even higher flow conditions and again reducing snowpack significantly. Several smaller events were reported into March but only had marginal impacts on rural floodplain areas. Flows have since reverted to pre-event levels into February and with moderate temperatures, reduced snow cover and no significant storm events the spring thaw period for 2013 remained somewhat uneventful. Lack of significant rainfall in March allowed conditions to moderate back to flows that are consistently lower than would be normally expected for the same period in other years.
- flood threat
 - during the two flood events in January, overbank conditions were experienced in several flood prone areas of the watershed with high water levels into floodplain regions as well as the closing several rural roads such as Pretty, Fairweather and Waterworks Roads. Much of the accumulated ice was moved out of the rivers and no significant ice jams were created allowing the watershed to drain over several days during the last week of January. While several smaller events were experienced into February and March there were no significant flood impacts into the spring, making for a somewhat uneventful spring thaw for 2013.
 - as always, high water conditions together with any sudden fluctuations in temperature or extreme storm systems may produce large amounts of precipitation over a short period of time. While conditions have stabilized since the January events, continued care should be taken during such weather events where local conditions may change without warning (i.e. low lying areas and adjacent roadways or underpasses, drainage ditches and culverts). Ice and snow conditions are no longer an issue throughout the watershed. These conditions will be monitored to assess potential flood situations as we move into spring. Advisories will continue to be provided as watershed conditions dictate.
- Weather Forecast As reported by Weather network, Environment Canada
 - April/May - sunny periods but overall cooler with extended periods of rain or possibility of overnight snow for remainder of April and possibly even May
 - Spring/Summer - Summer will be cooler and rainier than normal, with the hottest temperatures in early to mid-July and mid-August
 - Great Lakes Water Levels – Long Term View
 - the Great Lakes, their connecting waterways, and their watersheds, comprise the largest surface freshwater system on the planet. The monthly, seasonal, and annual surface water elevations of the lakes fluctuate in response to a variety of factors.
 - specifically, in December 2012 and January 2013, the monthly average water level on Lake Michigan-Huron dropped below the previously recorded (1964) low for the period of record beginning in 1860. Seasonal outlooks indicate that water levels may continue to set new record lows. There remains some snowpack to the north of Lake Superior which may moderate the impact slightly but only in the short term. The current record-setting low water levels on Lake Michigan and Huron are a result of many factors,

including the large decrease in water levels that took place on the upper lakes in the late 1990's, as well as recent increases in over-lake evaporation and reduced precipitation levels experienced throughout 2012.

- How are water levels predicted?
 - forecasts of Great Lakes water levels are typically based on computer simulation models. One example is the Great Lakes Advanced Hydrologic Prediction System (AHPS), run by NOAA-GLERL, which combines historical meteorological data with a series of mathematical models and climate forecasts from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center to simulate multiple variables. Similar analysis is conducted by the Canadian Hydrographic division of Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The most important variables are over-lake precipitation, over-lake evaporation, and rainfall-induced runoff. The sum of these variables (also referred to as the "net" supply of water to the basin) is routed through the lakes and their interconnecting channels using models that reflect flow patterns in those channels and the regulation rules that guide operation of water level control infrastructure (notably Sault Ste. Marie flood control structure between Lake Superior and Lake Huron/Lake Michigan).
- Great Lakes Current Levels (March 2013)
 - the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports latest forecasts indicate a strong likelihood for continued low levels on Lake Michigan-Huron over the next several months. The current monthly mean for March of 175.61 is only slightly above the all-time low mean value of 175.59 recorded in 1964. Water levels on the remaining Great Lakes are expected to remain below their respective long-term average water levels, but above record lows.

BD-13-043

Faas - Davis-Dagg

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2013 on the current watershed conditions and Great Lakes water levels."

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Cathcart Park Shore Protection Revitalization Project was reviewed.

- Township and Authority staff met on site with the design engineer, site supervisor and representatives of the contractor (Ontario Construction) – First week of February, 2013
- we reviewed the site and the contractor has fenced the construction site. The gravel parking lot in the park is being used as a staging area for the project.
- 3 new culverts were installed and access was provided to the Island by a temporary gravel roadway
- 20 working days have been provided for completion of the project under the contract (a working day is any day during which the conditions permit the contractor to be able to undertake work to greater than 60 percent of capacity).
- Shoreplan Engineering provided supervision for the project and site meetings were held weekly.
- approximately 70 m of shoreline work completed in Phase II.
- construction of Phase II work was completed March 18, 2013.
- restoration work will be completed in April 2013.

BD-13-044

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 5, 2013 on the Cathcart Park Shore Protection Revitalization Project.”

CARRIED

A staff report on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects submitted for funding in 2012-2013.

- applications for grants have been submitted for funding for in 2013-2014 for the project
- 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
 - Cathcart Park - Cathcart Park Shoreline Protection - Phase 3 - design, tender and rehabilitate about 250 m of shoreline at Cathcart Park (Phase 3 construction).
 - total project cost \$600,000 - grant requested - \$300,000
 - Lambton area water supply system - Shoreline Repair - rehabilitate about 280 m of shoreline at the mouth of St. Clair River using armourstone and riprap.
 - total project cost \$600,000 - grant requested - \$300,000
 - Sarnia Shoreline Protection - Shoreline Repair (Helen and Kenwick st) Phase 1 - carry out construction of Phase 1 from the recommendation of Engineering study.
 - total project cost \$500,000 - grant requested - \$250,000
 - McKeough Floodway - McKeough Floodway Berm Repair - perform repair work along the floodway
 - total project cost \$80,000 - grant requested - \$40,000
 - McKeough Floodway - McKeough Dam Drop structure/ Gate house concrete repair - repair several cracks in concrete slabs and barrier walls
 - total project cost \$60,000 - grant requested - \$30,000
 - McKeough Floodway - remove trees, shrubs and debris that have the potential to cause slope stability issues
 - total project cost \$8,000 - grant requested - \$4,000
 - Coldstream Dam - Coldstream repair project - rip rap redistribution, removal of trees, shrubs and debris
 - total project cost \$20,000 - grant requested - \$10,000
 - Petrolia Dam - Petrolia Dam Repair Project - crack repair and signage
 - total project cost \$4,000 - grant requested - \$2,000
 - Esli Dodge - Esli Dodge Repair Project - repair of Concrete cable/ retaining wall
 - total project cost \$10,000 - grant requested - \$5,000

Director's Comments

- perhaps it is time to send a letter to the Minister requesting more funding for projects.

BD-13-045

Davis-Dagg - Havlik

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 5, 2013 on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects and approves the projects submitted for funding in 2013-2014 and further will assist staff in obtaining matching funds, where required, to support these projects upon confirmation of funding approval.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation Species at Risk project was discussed.

- the SCRCA is one of eight partners working with KSPFN to provide monitoring, habitat enhancement, stewardship and outreach with respect to SAR on KSP lands
- in the fall our Outdoor Ed and Bio Staff completed several programs at Hillside P.S. with Grade 3, 4, 5, students including an in-class component, a hike through the woodland beside the Band Office and having students help with sampling fish and invertebrates in Shashawandah Creek
- this is the second year where our staff have attended KSP March Open Houses and staffed a display on stewardship and SAR monitoring activities
- this Year March 26, 6-9pm we took the newly-prepared Eastern Fox Snake which had been collected as a road kill on Holt Line, near McKeough CA.
- residents were very knowledgeable about which Species At Risk are found at KSP
- 2 Environmental Tech Trainees and 2 Envrtal students are hired for the year and are very enthusiastic
- many KSP residents have volunteered with the project as evidenced by the newsletter
- people of all ages were very interested in the fox snake and indicated they had observed Milk Snakes (species of Special Concern) and even one Blue Racer (Endangered species), but had never seen fox snakes at KSP

Director’s Comments:

- Directors commented that it is a great program
- importance of education and our youth

BD-13-046

Glen - Davis-Dagg

That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 11, 2013 on the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation Species At Risk project and approves the staff involvement in the outreach and education component.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Talfourd Creeka nd Aamjiwnaang First Nation project was considered.

- the Aamjiwnaang Environment Department is working to restore a short stretch of Talfourd Creek adjacent to the Community Centre in Bear Park. The objective is to beautify the creek, educate the community on watershed management, restore a healthy ecosystem, re-establish the traditional connection to the creek, and reduce erosion to the St. Clair River Area of Concern.

- St. Clair Conservation was awarded funds, through the Great Lakes Guardian Fund, to assist with educational and monitoring components of the Talfourd Creek project. The specific objectives of the project are to:
 - monitor benthic macro-invertebrates at two to three stations
 - design and implement a benthic education program to be taught at 4 community events
 - organize a Talfourd Creek Awareness day
 - plant a mixture of native large stock and seedling trees, including staking trees and maintenance
 - develop interpretive signage for the site in collaboration with Friends of the St. Clair River and the Aamjiwnaang Environment Department
 - some of these activities have already begun.
- Pre-restoration Benthic Macroinvertebrates Monitoring
 - Benthic Macroinvertebrates are organisms that live in and or on the substrate of water bodies and are key indicators in determining the quality of the water in a watercourse. Since some organisms are more tolerant to pollution than others, determining the diversity within Talfourd Creek, pre and post restoration, will show the benefits of this project in regards to improving the creek from its current state.
 - a sample was collected in fall of 2012 to show the pre restoration community of benthos, another sample will be taken in spring of 2013 after the construction has been completed.
 - this project is an opportunity for St. Clair Conservation to partner on an excellent project coordinated by the Aamjiwnaang Environment Department. We are looking forward to collaborating on this project.
- Earth Day Celebration – April 20
 - the Authority will help host a Earth Day celebration at Aamjiwnaang. At the event, participants will learn first-hand about stream health. Using dip nets to sample stream critters and tally sheets for analysis, youths will have a chance to learn a little about the science relating to surface water quality. We'll also plant large stock trees and play games that teach about food webs. Other planned activities include a stream clean-up and a dedication ceremony with song and drum.

Director's Comments:

- another great project

BD-13-047

Gillis - Bruinink

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on the Talfourd Creek and Aamjiwnaang First Nation project and approves the staff involvement in the outreach and stewardship component.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Peers Conservation Area was presented.

- Peers Property – Funding, Restoration and Enhancement Update
 - the Peers property, locally known as Chicken Island, is bounded by Otter Creek to the west which outlets into the North Sydenham River at Wallaceburg. The size, 33 acres, in the context of the Chatham/Kent landscape of 5% natural cover remaining, is very

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- significant.
- in October 2012, the property was purchased with the help of more than 15 partner organizations and many local individuals.
- the objective of the restoration phase of the project is to conserve/restore 12.9 hectares (31.8 acres) of wildlife habitat, including 7.7 hectares (18.9 acres) of wetland and 5.2 hectares (12.9 acres) of upland habitat. The project will also involve upgrades to the dyke, water control structure and installation of a pump to ensure that the wetland doesn't dry in the summer.
- funding updates
 - additional funding for phase two from the Chatham-Kent Community Partnership Fund has been confirmed at \$10,000.
 - funding in the form of \$10,000 has been approved by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent
 - an application for \$45,000 in funding has been submitted to the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund to support phase two.
- restoration and enhancement Updates
 - the reconstruction of the berm has been completed
 - tall grass prairie, shrub, and tree planting is planned for April 2013
 - pump is to be installed in 2013
- other projects
 - work on a master plan for the Peers Wetland has started.

Director's Comments:

- worthwhile project for the area
- enhances wetlands - very positive
- municipality supported financially
- should try and obtain property adjacent to Peers

BD-13-048

Faas - Bilton

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on the Peers Conservation Area and acknowledges the significant support received from partner organizations and individuals."

CARRIED

A staff report on Bowens Wetlands was presented.

- since 2008, St. Clair Conservation has managed this land on behalf of Lambton County.
- Bowens Creek Lands are a Lambton County treasure. The land which is owned by the County of Lambton is part of the area formerly known as the "1800 block" which includes the Bickford Oak Woods Conservation Reserve and the Ducks Unlimited Canada project on Terra Nitrogen owned lands.
- the wet prairie and mature deciduous forest at Bowen's Creek provide a 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

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bounds. The property is located within the St Clair River Area of Concern, so habitat restoration on this land will help achieve the Remedial Action Plan goals.

- 2011 Improvements - more than 5 hectares of wetland were created on low lying lands areas of the southern portion of the property in areas that “wanted to be wet”. Construction of 3 impounded wetlands and approximately 10 shallow sloughs were created by decommissioning existing drainage and some minimal land contouring.

BD-13-049

Burrell - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on Bowens Wetland, including continuing restoration of wetlands and woodlands on site during 2012 and extensive tree planting plans for 2013 and acknowledges that this habitat restoration work on Lambton County lands is only possible with significant support from many partners.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Species at Risk reptiles and turtles was explained.

- 2013 is off to a great start for Reptiles at Risk in the St. Clair Region Watershed. At the beginning of the year, SCRCA was awarded additional funds of \$2,235, from the Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund, for the specific deliverables that we achieved above and beyond those outlined in our original application/contribution agreement, a maximum total of \$21,484 for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. With the newly allocated funds we hosted an Eastern Foxsnake nesting box workshop in Wallaceburg on the 9th of February 2013.
- the nesting box workshop was a great success. Overall there were 12 participants and 2 guest speakers.
- the workshop was designed to educate local landowners on the importance of snakes on their properties particularly the Eastern Foxsnake which is common in that area and to enhance the habitat for these creatures by implementing artificial nesting boxes. The boxes are created from corn crib wire fencing and t-bar posts and are filled with straw, mulch and compost material to allow snakes to dig into the material to lay their eggs. Megan Lawrence, volunteer coordinator from Salthaven was present to discuss the physiography of snakes and even had brought along an Eastern Milksnake for reference, as the Eastern Milksnake is often mistaken for a foxsnake. Brett Groves, Species at Risk Biologist from MNR, was also in attendance to discuss the successes of artificial nesting boxes in Essex County.
- all of our participants were very interested and eager to enhance the habitat on their properties, 6 of our 11 artificial nesting boxes went out to good homes.
- the highlight of the day was when one of our volunteers, who was terrified of snakes, finally found the courage to approach the Milksnake and even hold it for a little while!
- monitoring for snakes will continue for the 2013 field season and many more projects for both snakes and turtles are planned for this fiscal year.

BD-13-050

Bruinink - Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on Species At Risk reptiles and turtles, including the recent snake nesting box workshop and plans for 2013 snake monitoring.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the new Healthy Sydenham Headwaters Initiative between the Authority and Middlesex Stewardship Council was discussed.

- background:
 - the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and Middlesex Stewardship Council are partnering on the Healthy Sydenham Headwaters (HSH) Initiative to guide conservation and restoration efforts in these important headwaters areas.
 - land selected for the HSH Initiative occurs in the south-west corner of Middlesex. The Sydenham River headwaters and the Strathroy-Caradoc Sand Plain are located within this boundary. Actions in headwater rehabilitation will have the greatest impact on the entire watershed.
 - landowners interested in stewardship projects are encouraged to speak with SCRCA staff and Middlesex Stewardship members about project design and potential grants.
 - landowners will be able to share ideas with neighbours and other watershed residents. The Initiative will ensure that landowners are fully resourced with science and information to meet the long-term goals for the area
 - funding will available for projects including: riparian buffers, tree planting, wetland and woodlot restoration and strengthening wildlife movement corridors.
- other activities:
- staff attended the Middlesex Cattlemen's Association AGM, Middlesex Soil and Crop Improvement Association AGM, Lambton County Woodlot Owner's Association meeting, Middlesex County Woodlot Owner's Association meeting, to introduce the Initiative and encourage landowners to take advantage of the granting opportunities available.
 - staff also attended Middlesex Stewardship Council meetings.
 - staff worked with a local champion to host and introduce the Healthy Sydenham Headwaters Initiative to neighbours in the Strathroy area.
 - 10 families attended and were interested in learning more about implementing stewardship projects on their property.
 - Soil testing kits were available and six landowners took them home to have their soil tested.
 - staff applied for the RBC Community Grant (approved: \$5,000), RBC Leadership Grant (declined), Wildlife Habitat Canada Grant (approved: \$28,000), and Habitat Stewardship Program (pending: \$600,000 over three years).
 - staff attended the OSCIA Soil testing workshop.
 - staff is currently working alongside MSC to develop a landowner introduction letter to be mailed out to all landowners in the initiative area with properties greater than 5 acres
 - a soil testing pamphlet encouraging growers to test their soils for nutrients is currently being developed.

BD-13-051**Nemcek - McCallum**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated April 4, 2013, regarding the new Healthy Sydenham Headwaters Initiative between the SCRCA and Middlesex Stewardship Council and the associated activities including grant writing, attending relevant agriculture meetings, and an upcoming mail out.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the past Lambton Shores Healthy Watersheds project activities was reviewed.

- background:
 - Lambton Shores Tributaries (LST) Watershed received funding from Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Environment Canada in 2011 as part of the Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Water, Clean Beaches campaign, which identified 5 priority sub-watersheds along Lake Huron Shoreline that require immediate action to improve beach and inland surface water quality
- updates:
 - Cover Crop Workshop (March 28)
 - this public event targeted local cash crop farmers in Lambton Shores as well as the St. Clair Region Watershed.
 - Anne Verhallen and Christine Brown, Soil Management Specialists with OMAFRA discussed managing cover crops, fitting them into a field crop rotation, on-going demo and research trials, impacts on the bottom line, and soil health impacts of cover crops.
 - local Mapleseed and Pickseed dealers were present to offer information about the cover crop types they have available and answer questions.
 - 25 participants came and interested individuals were given soil tests
 - participants were quite interested in the topic and asked many questions
- Other activities:
 - together with Communities in Bloom – Lambton Shores, SCRCA was awarded a \$3,375 grant from TD Friends of the Environment for community planting days at the retired Forest Sewage Lagoon.
 - developing community restoration plans for the retired Forest Sewage Lagoons is ongoing and involves many partners (Municipality of Lambton Shores, Communities in Bloom, CH2M Hill, Lambton Shores Trail Committee, and SCRCA).
 - presentation at the SCRCA AGM introducing the Healthy Lake Huron – Lambton Shores project
 - water quality sampling across the watershed has resumed for 2013
 - spot sampling for water quality took place in March to coincide with the Walk the Watershed program of last summer.
 - the Rural Stormwater Management Model permanent flow station installed on Shashawandah Creek has collected water samples for four storm/melt events in December through March.
 - staff attended the Southwest Agricultural Conference, Lambton Soil and Crop Improvement Association AGM
 - 3 Tree planting projects and 1 windbreak project were confirmed and will be planted spring 2013.

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- 1 Clean Water Diversion project was confirmed and will be implemented spring 2013. Materials are purchased for eaves troughs on a barn on the property of landowner who attended our November 8 cover crop workshop
- 1 Riparian Buffer and Erosion Control project on Duffus Creek that is currently undergoing the Municipal Drainage Act process. This reach of Duffus Creek experiences significant erosion and water velocity needs to be reduced through erosion control measures. We are working with the Lambton Shores Drainage Superintendent and the investment company that owns the abutting property.
- 2 site visits resulted from our Walk the Watershed program and are Erosion Control projects within the Duffus watershed. We are currently following up with these two landowners
- Upcoming Events:
 - *April 21, 2013*
 - SCRCA will be participating in the Communities in Bloom Ipperwash Beach Trash Bash to promote clean and safe shorelines as well as the importance of good water quality.
 - *April 27, 2013*
 - SCRCA will be participating in the annual Forest Home and Garden Show to promote available grants, offer information about water quality and community involvement.

BD-13-052**Davis-Dagg - Havlik**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013, regarding the past Lambton Shores Healthy Watersheds Project activities including the Cover Crop workshop and water sample collection, as well as upcoming community engagement events.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the phosphorus reduction program was explained.

- due to conditions of the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality (COA), the provincial ministries MOE and OMAF received significant funding in 2012-13
- in 2011, the dissolved phosphorus in Lake Erie had caused a blue-green algae bloom over 1/6 of the lake basin, fouling the beaches and impeding fishing and boating since the thick mat extended approximately 20km from shore
- dissolved phosphorus can come from municipal and private sewage systems and from farming practices
- presumably due to this algal fouling, OMAF started working with the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) and ABCA to address the high levels of dissolved phosphorus in ERCA and ABCA watercourses
- they have since approached the SCRCA, LTVCA and KCCA
- the governments have defined the Lake Erie watershed to start at Sarnia, so within the SCRCA all lands that drain directly into the St. Clair River, the Sydenham River and Lake St. Clair (85% of the SCRCA) are considered to be within the Lake Erie Basin
- the other 15% of the SCRCA drains directly to Lake Huron where the Healthy Lake Huron program has been focused

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BD-13-053**Phay - Nemcek**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 11, 2013 on the phosphorus reduction program and approves staff involvement in providing landowners with information on soil erosion control and nutrient best management practices on agricultural lands and in implementing these practices on Authority lands.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Groundwater Monitoring program was reviewed.

- Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Program (PGMN)
 - since its inception in year 2000, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation Ontario, the Conservation Authorities and the participating Municipalities have, together, built and operated the PGMN; which now consists of over 470 monitoring wells around the province. St Clair Conservation monitors eight wells for the PGMN which have been sampled for eight consecutive years.
 - St Clair Conservation recently renewed the Program Partnership Agreement with the Ministry of Environment’s Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network. The new agreement goes to March 31, 2016
 - under this new agreement, there a few changes:
 - St. Clair Conservation now manages data correction for water quantity data.
 - water quantity sampling is conducted half as often
 - the next PGMN partner meeting is planned for May 2013.
- Groundwater Quality Data
 - the PGMN monitoring wells provide annual groundwater quality data to support the above activities and to support local Heath Units and Conservation Authorities.
 - two parameters that exceeded PGMN guidelines this year are fluoride and sodium. According to the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards the acceptable concentration for fluoride is any value below 1.5 mg/L. Figure 1 below shows the average fluoride concentrations in wells across Ontario. Please note that the wells we monitor are no longer used as a source of drinking water.
 - the wells with fluoride exceedances:
 - W0000-459-1 Kerwood, Adelaide-Metcalf - May 2006 (2 mg/L), November 2006 (2.3 mg/L), March 2007 (1.9 mg/L), September 2008 (2.24 mg/L), October 2009 (2.42 mg/L), Oct. 2010 (2.38mg/L), Nov. 2011 (2.42 mg/L), and Oct. 2012 (2.42mg/L).
 - W0000-109-2 Tienray, Dawn-Euphemia – May. 2002 (1.69 mg/L), Oct. 2005 (1.5 mg/L), Nov. 2006 (1.5mg/L), Sep. 2008 (1.72 mg/L), Oct. 2009 (1.58 mg/L), Oct. 2010 (1.71 mg/L), Nov. 2011 (1.65 mg/L), and Oct. 2012 (1.56 mg/L).
 - W0000-461-1 Bothwell, Dawn-Euphemia - Oct. 2009 (1.65 mg/L), Oct. 2010 (1.72 mg/L), Oct. 2011 (1.75 mg/L), and Oct 2012 (1.71 mg/L).
 - the wells with sodium exceedances:
 - Guthrie W0000-106-2 Guthrie, St. Clair – Oct. 2002 (266 mg/L), Nov. 2006 (430 mg/L), Mar. 2007 (420 mg/L), Sept. 2008 (402 mg/L), Oct. 2009 (412 mg/L), Oct. 2010 (396 mg/L), Oct. 2011 (401 mg/L), and Oct. 2012 (390 mg/L).
 - W0000-109-2 Tienray, Dawn-Euphemia – May 2002 (298 mg/L), Nov. 2006

- (300 mg/L), Mar. 2007 (360 mg/L), Sept. 2008 (278 mg/L), Oct. 2009 (307 mg/L), Oct. 2010 (296 mg/L), Nov. 2011 (300 mg/L), and Oct. 2012 (290 mg/L).
- in addition to the previously mentioned exceedances, chloride, dissolved solids, hardness, iron, and manganese levels exceeded the Ontario Drinking Water Standards in certain wells. This is probably caused by local geology and would be a possible topic for future research. Selenium, boron, pH, organic carbon, and alkalinity values were within the acceptable limits for all wells.
 - the water chemistry results help the province monitor the ambient groundwater quality of the SCRCA watershed. The data also contributes to our own knowledge of the state of the region's aquifers and allows us to report it to the public through the Watershed Report Card. We also collect water level data at each of these wells that can provide an early warning for changes in water levels caused by climate conditions or human activities such as water takings.

BD-13-054**Glen - Burrell**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on Groundwater Monitoring program and acknowledges the value of continuing to support monitoring and reporting on the quality of the groundwater in the St. Clair Region.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding water quality and benthic monitoring was discussed.

- 2012 Surface Water Monitoring Program: the SCRCA, through the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and Canada-Ontario Agreement water monitoring program, monitors the health and surface water quality of 12 watercourses within the watershed with 19 sampling stations. Samples were taken from April to November 2012 but the SCRCA has only received and analyzed data from samples taken between April and October 2012. The results of the monitoring program are used to assess the overall health of the sub-watersheds as well as providing the basis on which the conservation authority can make recommendations.
- Benthic Macro-invertebrate Sampling: benthic macro-invertebrates are small organisms, mainly insects and crustaceans, that live within watercourses. The SCRCA collects a sample in the spring and counts which and how many of each species are captured. The counted species are then compared to the species which have historically inhabited similar watercourses in the SCRCA. Watercourses that closely resemble the historical normal are given a higher grade than those that have either a different composition or have species that indicate a degraded water quality
- a Benthic Macroinvertebrate Field Study reporting the data collected from 2006-2010 has been completed and filed with SCRCA. A similar report, The Quality of Water and Habitat in the St. Clair River AOC, reporting on the benthic data and fish species and habitat data has also been completed and filed with SCRCA for the Friends of the St. Clair River.
- Stream Water Quality: the SCRCA uses both the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) and the Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) water monitoring programs. The Middlesex-London Health Unit also provides the SCRCA with *E. coli* monitoring data for some of the sites that fall within their jurisdiction.
- COA: the SCRCA receives data from 11 COA sites within the watershed. The SCRCA has the data for each of these stations from June to September, 2012.

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- PWQMN: this program has run since 1964 in our region and provides a good indication of the watershed health of long-term. Eight key indicator parameters are used to analyze the data, including suspended solids (measured as particulate residue), chloride, total phosphorus, nitrate, copper, lead, zinc and *E. coli*.
- results
 - Phosphorous: is a key nutrient for plant and algae growth and is naturally produced via a wide range of processes. Human-influenced sources, however, contribute to a large portion of phosphorous levels in aquatic systems. Such sources include nutrient application and subsequent runoff from agricultural sites, application and subsequent runoff of lawn fertilizers, and partially treated and/or untreated sewage overflows. The interim Provincial Water Quality Objective (PWQO) for total phosphorous within rivers and streams is set at 0.03 milligrams per litre. Levels above this may result in excessive growth of algae. Total phosphorous levels were either above or significantly above the PWQO at all sites within the Sydenham River Subwatershed (Figure 1). While three sites (Hickory, Bear Bickford, and Black Marthaville) saw a small decrease or stabilization in phosphorous levels the vast majority of sites had significant increases. Two of the sites that saw decreases (Bear Bickford and Black Marthaville) still have some of the highest phosphorous levels in the subwatershed. Overall the levels of total phosphorous within the subwatershed are increasing.
 - Nitrates: are compounds whose main component is nitrogen. While some nitrates are inert and have very little use by either plants or animals the majority are very important to plant growth. The main source of nitrates within the Sydenham River Subwatershed is runoff from agricultural and landscaped areas (Figure 3). The PWQO is set at 2.93 milligrams of nitrates per litre, Nitrate levels within the subwatershed vary but overall levels are trending down. Of the twelve stations, four remain above the PWQO while historically eight stations measured above the recommended levels.
 - Benthic Macro-Invertebrates: the SCRCA uses the Family Biotic Index (FBI) to determine the quality of watercourses whenever benthic macro-invertebrates are sampled. The index distributes a rating to each species of invertebrate on a scale of 0 to 10. An average of all the scores is tallied to produce the overall score for each station. The SCRCA has interpreted the rating scale into categories ranging from Excellent to Very Poor. The overall trend within the watershed is a decrease in FBI scores which correlates to an increase in water quality (Figure 4). The one very notable exception to this trend is the Lake St. Clair Tributaries which fell from the Fairly Poor to Very Poor category. A similar situation is occurring at the Lower North Sydenham sampling site.
- Recommendations: overall the condition of surface water within the watershed is relatively stable or increasing very slightly. Nitrate levels are decreasing and benthic studies are showing that there is improvement from an ecosystem standpoint. However phosphorous levels are rising throughout the watershed when compared to earlier records. If phosphorus levels remain high within the watershed algae blooms may become more prevalent causing both economic and ecological harm specifically to the Lake Huron and Lake St. Clair shorelines. One of the best solutions to prevent further increases in phosphorus is to decrease the amount of surface run off from agricultural sites and landscaped sites, as well as reducing the amount of wastewater that is released untreated into watercourses. This can be done by ensuring tile drains are, when possible, installed and maintained properly. Wastewater releases can be minimized by ensuring that faulty septic systems are repaired as well as by maintaining effective septic systems. Maintaining or

planting adequate well-vegetated buffer strips along the sides of streams, rivers, and drains would also improve the overall water quality within the watershed. The buffer strips would allow some of the phosphorous and nitrogen, where it exists, to be incorporated in the plant life growing within the buffer and therefore removed from the water column itself.

BD-13-055

Miller - Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 4, 2013 on the Water Quality and Benthic Monitoring, including recognition of the associated recommendations regarding soil erosion control, nutrient management and the value of vegetated buffer strips.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Biology Department funding was presented.

- 2013 is shaping up to be a very busy year for the Biology Unit. As we work to pull together final reports for a number of successful projects, we prepare to move forward with new grants and new challenges. We continue to push into new areas expanding our understanding and expertise in areas such as rural stormwater management, environmental monitoring, and Species at Risk stewardship.
- the Biology Unit was successful in bringing several new grants since the last funding report in November 2012:
 - \$10,500 was awarded for a property management plan and Species at Risk Inventory at Reid Conservation Area.
 - \$5,755 was awarded for costs relating to the acquisition of Peers.
 - \$10,000 was awarded for the restoration of Peers Wetland.
 - \$2,202 from TD FEF for Benthic Education to take place at four education days at Talfourd Creek with Aamjiwnaang First Nations
 - \$10,000 for equipment for the benthic laboratory from St. Clair Conservation Foundation
 - \$5,000 for Improving Riparian Habitat in the Upper Sydenham River Watershed
 - \$2,235 top-up funding for the Reptile at Risk Program toward a Foxsnake Workshop
 - \$3,750 for the Naturalization and Habitat Improvement of the Forest Sewage Lagoons
 - \$2,914 top-up for the wetland restoration at Peers Wetland.
 - \$28,000 for the Coordination of Wetland Restoration Projects and Mapping in Upper Sydenham Watershed, one year starting in 2013
 - \$57,800 for implementing environmental activities that reduce P to streams and rivers feeding into Lake St. Clair and the Great Lakes watershed by drafting soil and erosion nutrient management programs for 500 acres of SCRCA-owned cropland, design and implementation of erosion berms on the McKeough Properties 82, 83, 95 and 97, collection of water quality and soil samples.
 - \$3,500 towards a Property Management for the McKeough Properties Cartier and King.
- as well, a number of new applications were made:
 - \$40,228 for Foxsnake monitoring and research, a collaboration with Queens
 - \$22,181 for St. Clair River AOC Research and Monitoring 2013/14
 - \$45,479 for Peers Wetland Restoration Project Phase II St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC) 2013-2014

- \$ 124, 000 Sediment and Erosion Mitigation And Fish Habitat Enhancement of Agricultural Watercourses of the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC)
- \$600,000 for the Sydenham River Habitat Stewardship Program
- the Biology Unit has had good success in securing grants in the current economic climate, with more than \$672,860 in funding secured for a number of programs, despite large cut-backs Federally and Provincially.
- if all our applications are funded we could receive an additional \$866,888. This funding that spans over multiple years helps support a number of new and exciting initiatives that focus on stewardship, environmental monitoring and building partnerships

BD-13-056**Bruinink - Nemcek**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated March 26, 2013 on the Biology Department Funding Update, including the significant value of the program funding that has been received for the St. Clair Region, including water quality monitoring and reporting, habitat enhancement and grants for BMP’s on private and public lands, land management plans, natural heritage planning, education and outreach and enhanced biodiversity monitoring.”

CARRIED

A staff report on Conservation Services projects and programs were presented.

- Tree Planting Program
 - the spring tree planting program is running on normal schedule this year. Tree nurseries have reported normal thaw conditions and expect to start lifting trees around April 15th and commence with shipping the following week depending on weather conditions.
 - most of our trees are expected to be in by April 25th from the three individual private nurseries.
 - this year we have 77,000 trees ordered; up several thousand from last year
 - SCRCA crews will be planting 66,000 trees with 2 machine planting crews and one small hand planting crew. Approximately 40 landowners will be planting 11,000 trees on their own
 - tree planting will take place once again this year at the Enbridge and Lambton County properties in St. Clair Township as part of a multi-year reforestation commitment from both organizations. Approximately \$60,000 in provincial grant will be used to partially fund these two projects
 - \$160,000 has been secured through 9 separate funding sources this year to offset planting costs for most landowners taking part in the program.
- Vegetation Control Program
 - similar to the planting program, weather and site conditions have an impact on the timing of vegetation management operations
 - approximately 150,000 trees require spraying maintenance this spring (under the 3 year vegetation control program) plus the 66,000 newly planted trees scheduled this year. Two machine sprayers will start herbicide applications in early April and continued for approximately 6 weeks.
 - most of the 3 year tending work is paid in advance and carried forward each year to cover the cost of the labour and material.

- Large Stock Trees
 - there are 900 large stock trees ordered this spring for approximately 13 landowners and 2 municipalities (Brooke-Alvinston and Strathroy-Caradoc)
 - Brooke-Alvinston is providing a subsidized rate for landowners wanting to plant trees on their property.
 - trees range in size from 1 metre for the evergreen trees to 1.8 metres for the hardwood trees. Most of the trees ordered for this spring are either potted or balled and burlap stock.
 - we expect trees to be in sometime around the week of April 22nd
- Stewardship projects
 - there are 20 stewardship projects that are being funded through the species at risk stewardship fund (2012-2013 funding year) in the amount of \$60,000
 - several erosion control and wetland creation projects are on being funded on the SCRCA McKeough upstream properties.
 - work on the first project on property 97 on McCallum Line started on April 4th and was complete on April 8th with several more erosion projects scheduled when conditions are a little drier in May.

BD-13-057

Boushy - Faas

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 5, 2013 regarding Conservation Services projects and programs.”

CARRIED

A Staff Report on the Larvicide program was discussed.

- in 2006 the Conservation Authority took on the task of treating catch basins in Sarnia and Lambton County for the Lambton County Community Health Services Department (CHSD). Prior to that the St. Clair Parkway Commission was contracted to do the work.
- in 2008 CHSD contracted the Authority under a 3 year contract.
- approximately 15,000 catch basins are treated with 3 separate applications of larvicide throughout the summer to aid in the control of mosquito populations and help protect Sarnia-Lambton residents from West Nile Virus carrying mosquito species.
- in 2010 and 2011 the contract was extended each year.
- 2012 was the last year that a contract extension could be implemented and currently we do not have a contract in place for 2013
- discussions between Conservation Authority and CHSD staff have recently taken place with interest from both sides to continue with this partnership in the future.
- we are currently waiting to hear from the County of Lambton regarding the necessary steps to take in order to proceed with larvicide treatment services for 2013.

BD-13-058

Havlik - McCallum

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 5, 2013 on the application of larvicide to catch basins in Lambton County for the control of West Nile Virus in 2013."

CARRIED

A staff report on the Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Act Protocol was explained.

- purpose: to inform the Board of Directors of a process and an accompanying protocol related to Municipal Drainage Act works and approval processes under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act.
- report summary
 - the Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authorities, Ontario Drainage Superintendents of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food have been working together to streamline approval processes for municipal drainage works within regulated areas under the Conservation Authorities Act.
 - the protocol has been posted on the EBR Registry and has been endorsed by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Drainage Superintendents of Ontario.
- background
 - under the Drainage Act, municipalities are legislated to maintain and repair drains and to respond to petitions for new drainage systems. At the same time, under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act, Conservation Authorities (CAs) regulate development in or adjacent to watercourses, wetlands, the shoreline of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System or inland lakes, river or stream valleys, hazardous lands and other areas where, in the opinion of the Minister, development should be prohibited or regulated or should require the permission of the authority. A conservation authority may grant permission for development if, in the opinion of the Authority, the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, pollution or the conservation of land is not affected. Definitions and corresponding Regulations staff comments as it relates to drain repair/maintenance are provided at the end of this memorandum. CAs also regulate activities that change, divert, or interfere in any way with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse, or that change or interfere in any way with a wetland. Municipal drains are generally watercourses as defined under the CA Act and are therefore regulated by Cas.
 - because of incongruent provisions between the two provincial Acts, there is potential for legal liability issues with regard to maintenance and repair of existing drains. If a municipality is unable to proceed with required drain maintenance or repair because of requirements for a CA Act S. 28 permit, the municipality could be held liable for any consequences. If drain repair and maintenance activities are carried out (with or without a CA Act S. 28 permit) and impact regulated areas with respect to the CA's regulatory responsibilities under the CA Act, the CA could be held liable for not undertaking or enforcing its regulatory responsibilities.
 - in response Conservation Ontario, Drainage Superintendents, and staff from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Natural Resources have collaborated on a Provincial Drainage Act and Regulation Team (DART) to streamline approvals processes that are required for municipal works, completed under the Drainage Act, within areas regulated under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act. The Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Protocol (attached) was developed to provide provincially-approved guidance to conservation authority staff and municipal representatives (e.g. drainage superintendents) regarding the most appropriate practices and permit requirements for municipal drain maintenance and repair activities.

- the protocol includes a set of Standard Compliance Requirements for regular repair and maintenance activities that, if followed, would serve as the written permission to proceed with work under the CA Act.
- the protocol only addresses the maintenance and repair of drains as required by the Drainage Act and does not address issues around new drains and improvements to existing drains. It also does not apply to permissions under the federal Fisheries Act or the Ontario Endangered Species Act in any other respects. Other items, such as new construction will be the subject of a further protocol to be developed by the DART Committee.
- the protocol has been reviewed and commented on by all affected parties (drainage superintendents, drainage engineers, Conservation Authority staff, MNR and OMAF) and had been posted and reviewed on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry (EBR). In a Southwest Conservation Authority Planning and Regulations meeting held at UTRCA April 4, the following CA drain maintenance/repair protocol Board adoption status is provided:

ERCA	approved
UTRCA	pending (late Spring 2013)
LTVCA	approved
CCCA	pending (Spring 2013)
ABCA	pending
KCCA	absent

BD-13-059

Burrell - Miller

"That the SCRCA approves the use of the DART Protocol as distributed by MNR, OMAF and Conservation Ontario on January 14, 2013 for Municipal Drain maintenance projects submitted after May 31, 2013 within watercourses regulated by the SCRCA under C.A. Act Regulation 171/06, and further requests that staff prepare recommendations by September 2013 to address staff needs and cost recovery for same."

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Drainage Act and new Engineers reports was explained.

- as noted in the previous memorandum the DART protocol only addresses the maintenance and repair of drains and does not address issues around new drains and improvements to existing drains which require engineering.
- background
 - Conservation Authority Act Regulations - individual CA Regulations contain the following sections dealing with watercourses.
 - "Alterations prohibited
 - 5. Subject to Section 6, no person shall straighten, change, divert or interfere in any way with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse or change or interfere in any way with a wetland".
 - "Permission to alter
 - 6.(1) The Authority may grant a person permission to straighten, change, divert or interfere with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or

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watercourse or to change or interfere with a wetland.

6.(2) The permission of the Authority shall be given in writing, with or without conditions.

Under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act, a conservation authority may grant permission for development if, in the opinion of the authority, the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, pollution or the conservation of land is not affected.

- Drainage Act
 - the Drainage Act provides a procedure whereby municipalities may, with a valid petition of landowners in the “area requiring drainage” for agricultural practices, provide a legal outlet for surface and subsurface waters not attainable under common law. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is responsible for the Drainage Act with implementation activities occurring at the municipal level. The SCRCA is provided the opportunity to comment, in the opinion of the authority, the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, pollution or the conservation of land is affected.
 - historically, SCRCA has provided minimal comment to municipalities, in respect to new drains and drain improvements requiring engineering.
 - St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) remains primarily involved with drainage matters under a Level 2 DFO Partnership Agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). Through the recent changes to all Authority’s Regulations (2006), and clarification provided through the DART committee meetings, municipal drains meet the definition of a ‘watercourse’ under Section 28 of the CA Act. The DART committee’s next task is to establish a protocol for “new” drainage activity. As this is a significant task, SCRCA recommends an interim approach for reviewing drains under Section 28.
- for discussion purposes
 - proposed SCRCA Policies to guide Regulations input on new drainage proposals and improvements.
 - the draft “Guidelines to support CA Administration of the “Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation”, April 2008, prepared by MNR/Conservation Ontario Section 28 Peer Review Implementation Committee suggests the following when considering new drainage proposals:
- Interference with a Watercourse
 - in general, interference with a watercourse shall not be permitted;
 - notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, public infrastructure (e.g roads, sewers, flood and erosion control works) and various utilities (e.g. pipelines) may be permitted within a watercourse subject to the activity being approved through a satisfactory Environmental Assessment process or through other studies deemed necessary by the Conservation Authority and/or if the interference on the natural features and hydrologic and ecological functions of the watercourse has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority.
 - notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, stream, bank, and channel stabilization to protect existing development or conservation or restoration projects may be permitted within a watercourse if the interference on the natural features and hydrologic and ecological functions of the watercourse has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority;

- notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, any works that are to be located below the bed of the river within a watercourse shall be located below the long term scour depth to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority;
- notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, minor interference and/or alteration may be permitted within a watercourse if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the interference is acceptable on the natural features and hydrologic and ecologic functions of the watercourse;
- notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, major interference (e. realignment, dam, enclosure, pond) within a watercourse may be permitted where supported by the recommendations of a sub-watershed study, Environmental Assessment and/or if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the interference is acceptable for the natural features and hydrologic, ecologic functions of the watercourse;
- notwithstanding Section 1.1.1, watercourse crossings may be permitted if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the interference on the natural features and hydrologic and ecological functions of the watercourse has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority. At a minimum, the submitted plans should demonstrate the following based on morphological characteristics of the watercourse system;
 - culverts have an open bottom where it is feasible, or where it is not feasible, the culverts should be appropriately embedded into the watercourse;
 - crossing location, width, and alignment should be compatible with stream morphology, which typically requires location of the crossing on a straight and shallow/riffle reach of the watercourse with the crossing situated at right angles to the watercourse;
 - the crossing is sized and located such that there is no increase in upstream or downstream erosion or flooding;
 - the design should consider fish and wildlife passage
 - have regard for upstream and downstream effects when installing/replacing a culvert/bridge.
- Development and Interference within Wetlands
 - in general, development and interference shall not be permitted within wetlands;
 - in general, ponds and drains shall not be permitted within wetlands;
 - in general, stormwater management facilities shall not be permitted within wetlands;
 - notwithstanding Section 2.1, public infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewers, flood and erosion control works) and various utilities (e.g. pipelines) may be permitted within a wetland subject to the activity being approved through a satisfactory Environmental Assessment process and/or if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the control of flooding, erosion, pollution or the conservation of land will not be affected and the interference on the natural features and hydrologic and ecological functions of the wetland has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority;
 - notwithstanding Section 2.1, conservation or restoration projects may be permitted within a wetland if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the control of flooding, erosion, pollution or the conservation of land will not be affected and the functions of the wetland has been deemed to be acceptable by the

- Conservation Authority;
- notwithstanding Section 2.1, development associated with public parks (e.g. passive or low intensity outdoor recreation and education, trail system) may be permitted within a wetland if it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority that the control of flooding, erosion, pollution or the conservation of land will not be affected and the interference on the natural features and hydrologic and ecological functions of the wetland has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority.
- area between the adjacent lands of the wetland
 - in general, development shall not be permitted within 30 metres of the boundary of a wetland;
 - notwithstanding Section 3.1, the same activities mentioned above in 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 may be permitted within 30 metres of a wetland if the interference on the hydrologic functions of the wetland has been deemed to be acceptable by the Conservation Authority;
 - in general, development may be permitted in the area between 30 to 120 metres of a wetland if the interference on the hydrologic functions of the wetland has been deemed to be acceptable to the Conservation Authority.

BD-13-060

Glen - Bilton

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 3, 2013 on the Drainage Act and new Engineers reports under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and supports the formation of guidelines to review new drainage works under Section 28."

CARRIED

Regulations Summary Reports dated March 31, 2013 was reviewed.

BD-13-061

Faas - Phay

"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 March 31, 2013."

CARRIED

Planning Activity Summary Report for February and March 2013 was reviewed.

BD-13-062

Miller - Bruinink

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority's monthly Planning Activity Summary Reports for February and March 2013."

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the high level of activity in planning and regulations was explained.

- the planning and regulations department has been noting an increase in workload over time. This could be due to both an increase in development activity and an increased awareness at the

municipal level of the role of the Conservation Authority in plan review commenting and permitting requirements within the SCRCA regulated area.

- a breakdown has been provided below demonstrating the increase in activity during January-March 2013 when compared to the same time period in 2012.
- in addition to the summary of the files tracked in our database Planning and Regulations staff have also had the following items on their workload that are not typically tracked:
 - 7 Environmental Impact Statement/Development Assessment Report reviews (typically require several days each). Reviewing environmental reports for natural heritage compliance under the Provincial Policy Statement is a planning service the SCRCA provides to its municipalities;
 - 1 Ontario Municipal Board case to prepare for in January (on the date of the hearing it was deferred due to inclement weather);
 - screening of 58 planning file notices circulated to the SCRCA s that did not result in planning letters (18 not within the SCRCA watershed);

BD-13-063

Burrell - Bilton

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated March 31, 2013 on the high level of activity in Planning and Regulations."

CARRIED

Authority revenue and expenditures to February 28, 2013, were reviewed.

BD-13-064

Nemcek - Faas

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to March 31, 2013, as it relates to the budget."

CARRIED

January, February and March 2013 disbursements totaling \$1,555,814.36 were considered.

BD-13-065

Bilton - Burrell

"That the Board of Directors approves the January, February and March 2013 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,555,814.36."

CARRIED

A status report on general levy received to date was discussed. Approximately 48% of the general levy has been paid to date.

BD-13-066

Davis-Dagg - Gillis

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2013 general levy receipts to date."

CARRIED

Board of Directors Meeting, April 18, 2013

A Status Report on Honourarium/Per Diem and Travelling Allowances for directors for 2012 was discussed.

BD-13-067

Miller - Bilton

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Status Summary report, dated April 9, 2013 on directors' expenses from January 1 to December 31, 2012."

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. 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 2013, three applications have been made and approval has been received for the Career Focus and Summer Experience Programs.
- Summer Experience Program: two summer students 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 \$5,400 will employ these students for 7 weeks – Approved.
- Summer Job Service: an application was made for a \$2.00 per hour wage subsidy for 13 summer positions including tree planters and campground staff - \$13,040. We received \$6,500 for 6 summer positions.
- Job Creation Partnership: The Authority has received approval for a program to employ 7 people ranging from 26 weeks to 35 weeks. The positions include: Planning Technical Writer/Research Assistant, Water Quality Technician, Conservation Services Technician and four Resources Technicians. Total program grant \$113,092

BD-13-068

Davis-Dagg - McEwen

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2013 on the status of employment program applications for 2013."

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Community Clean Up Event was reviewed.

- this year, approximately 200 students from 4 schools will be participating in our 17th Annual Environmental Cleanup day. Students will be picking up garbage and planting trees in Strathroy. Each class has their own designated area to clean and plant trees. As each school arrives, a volunteer meets the bus and welcomes the student, then talks about the importance of keeping our park systems garbage free. Classes are then given garbage and recycle bags and head out to clean up their area. Everyone meets at the pavilion at Alexandra Park where all the morning's work is displayed to show just how much garbage/recycleables are littered throughout the parks system.
- we are planting approximately 200 trees donated to the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc by John Stuart and John Trott.

- an important part of the day is to have a student from each school talk briefly about what they did and learned that morning.
- lunch is served, then the students return to their schools.
- several businesses have again agreed to assist. Langs Bus Lines has donated buses to help transport students, the Strathroy Lions Club will provide lunch (hot dogs and pop), Entegrus, Fanshawe College, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc will provide organization and equipment.
- this year's event was cancelled due to wet weather conditions.

BD-13-069**Nemcek - Glen**

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 8, 2013 on the Community Clean Up Event planned for April 17th."

CARRIED

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

- staff is proposing a Conservation Authority Tour on Thursday, June 20, 9:00 – 1:00. The bus will leave and return to the Dresden (place to be determined). We will have lunch followed by the Board meeting. This year our tour will include a visit to the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority and their staff will provide an overview of issues along the tour route.
- highlights of tour
 - Dresden Floodplain
 - Peers Wetland
 - Wallaceburg Floodplain
 - Erie Beach Shoreline Issues
 - Keith McLean Property

BD-13-070**Davis-Dagg - Faas**

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 9, 2013 on the proposed project tour scheduled for June 27, 2013."

CARRIED

A staff report on Conservation Education was discussed.

- Winter Programing
 - indoor programs were very timely this winter, considering the local teacher contract issues. Although teachers were unable to participate in out of school field trips, our curriculum related in-school programs were welcomed by teachers in the watershed.
 - a list of our in school sponsored programs follows:
 - St. Clair River Bottom Critters: Grades k-9
 - Go With The Flow (groundwater) Grades 4-10 - Updated program to include a Gr. 7 specific curriculum. Also modified Gr 4, 6 and 8 programs to better connect to students and required curriculum.
 - River Rap: Grades 4-10
 - Aquatic Species At Risk: Grades 4-10

- Spring Water Awareness Program: Grades K-6
- Maple Syrup Festival
 - under cooler skies than usual this time last year, 1,000 people were welcomed to the Sugar Bush at A.W. Campbell Conservation Area on March 16th and 17th. Visitors viewed historical demonstrations of First Nations, Pioneer and Modern methods of collecting sap and turning it into liquid gold. Lambton Wildlife's Junior Conservationists assisted with sugar bush set up.
- Sydenham River Canoe Race
 - mark your calendars for this year's Canoe Race: Sunday April 21st, 2013. We look forward to another great turn out for this Conservation Education Fund Raiser!
- New Alternative Energy Program
 - thanks to a donation from Enbridge, development of a new alternative energy program is in progress to be ready for spring bookings. Program will include a power point presentation curriculum specific activities & games for Grades 4-12.
- Community Partnerships
 - several special interest groups have booked a variety of presentations this spring, including Scouting and Guiding units.
 - through a Great Lakes Guardian Grant, staff will be participating in 4 community education days as part of the Aamjiwnanng Talfourd Creek restoration project.
 - the SCRCA continues to be a sponsor of Lambton Wildlife's two Youth Groups. Young Naturalists is for children aged 6-11 years old and Junior Conservationists is for those aged 12 and up. Recent meetings included:
 - Birds, Birdwatching & the Great Backyard Bird Count
 - Wood Duck Box Maintenance at Bickford Oak Woods
 - Native Seed Planting with Return-the-Landscape', 'Nocturnal Creatures of Canatara Park
 - return the Landscape is an organization that is dedicated to rescuing and replanting species native to Sarnia-Lambton. Interesting group of people on committee including municipal & county employees, representatives of Lambton College & UWO Research Centre
 - the Lambton County Trails Committee continues to promote walking and biking trails to encourage residents to use the great wealth of local trails.

BD-13-071**McCallum - Faas**

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Education Report, dated April 5, 2013 including the winter education programs, Maple Syrup Festival, Sydenham River Canoe Race, Alternative Energy Program and Community Partnerships."

CARRIED

A staff report on the Healthy Hikes Initiative was presented.

- Conservation Ontario, in cooperation with its member Conservation Authorities, is launching a new initiative called Healthy Hikes.
- Healthy Hikes is an Ontario wide campaign that will encourage Ontarians to visit Conservation Areas to boost their physical and mental health, while at the same time learning about connections

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between healthy people and healthy ecosystems. The campaign will utilize a challenge to encourage Ontarians to visit Conservation Areas. Participants will log their time spent hiking or walking in a Conservation Area online for a chance to win great prizes. As part of the campaign, Conservation Authorities (along with local partners) will have the opportunity to host special events/guided hikes that promote connections between health and the environment. Participants who attend a Healthy Hikes event will receive extra points towards their goal. Healthy Hikes will begin in May 2013 and end in October 2013.

- the Authority have two events planned that will be part of Healthy Hikes: Strathroy Paddle Day, May 25 and the Geocaching Adventure September 22 at the L.C. Henderson Conservation Area. We will be promoting the program by having a link on our website.

BD-13-072

Miller - Glen

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 9, 2013 on the Healthy Hikes Initiative."

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Middlesex on the Move was reviewed.

- the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was a partner in a project, lead by Middlesex Tourism, to produce a guide book of trails in Middlesex County. In addition to the guide, the project included several events, a healthy living component and a website. Our trails at the A.W. Campbell, Coldstream, Clark Wright and Strathroy Conservation Areas were included. The guide book has proved very popular at our front desk.

BD-13-073

Davis-Dagg - Phay

"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated April 9, 2013 on the Middlesex on the Move."

CARRIED

Plans for the future of Rural Lambton Stewardship Network were discussed. RLSN is in the process of incorporating and moving away from the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Authority looked after their finances since their establishment in the 1990's. RLSN sought quotes from the Authority and others for financial services and a private bookkeeping firm provided the best proposal. As of May 1st, they will be working on their own. The Authority will no longer be handling their finances.

BD-13-074

Davis-Dagg - Bruinink

"That the Board of Directors authorize funds to be returned to Rural Lambton Stewardship Network as they incorporate their business."

CARRIED

The meeting went In camera to discuss property issues.

BD-13-075

McCallum - Bilton

"That the Board of Directors go in camera at 11:42 a.m. to discuss property issues, with all staff remaining."

CARRIED

BD-13-076

Faas - Glen

"That the Board of Directors rise and report at 12:05 p.m."

CARRIED

BD-13-077

Faas - McEwen

"That the Board of Directors endorses the agreement between the Authority and the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation regarding the management of the Keith McLean Conservation Lands previously approved by the Foundation."

CARRIED

BD-13-078

Faas - Miller

"That the Board of Directors approves in principle and endorses the Chair to enter into an agreement with the trustees of the Estate of Keith McLean to manage the Keith McLean Conservation Lands for the Estate until the ownership of the lands are officially transferred to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation."

CARRIED


BD-13-079

Bruinink - Faas

"That the meeting be adjourned."

Brendan Martin made a presentation regarding snakes in our watershed and Chris Kirk explained the process of taxidermying the Eastern Fox Snake.

Steve Arnold
Chairman



Brian McDougall
General Manager