



# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: November 12, 2020      Time: 10:00 am  
Remote via Zoom

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**Present:** Alan Broad, John Brennan, Pat Brown, Terry Burrell, Joe Faas, Chair; Larry Gordon, Vice Chair; Aaron Hall, Frank Kennes, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Mark McGill, Netty McEwen, Dan McMillan, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Lorie Scott, Mike Stark

**Regrets:** Andy Bruziewicz, Jerry Westgate

**Staff Present:** Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Erin Carroll, Director of Biology; Chris Durand, Manager of GIS and IT; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Sarah Hodgkiss, Planning Ecologist; Brian McDougall, General Manager; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Tracy Prince, Director of Finance; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Steve Shaw, Manager of Conservation Services; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Lands

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was 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-20-91**

**Scott – Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors accepts the agenda for the meeting as presented.”**

**CARRIED**

Minutes of the September 17, 2020 Board of Directors meeting were reviewed.

**BD-20-92**

**Miller – MacKinnon**

**“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held September 17, 2020, be approved as distributed.”**

**CARRIED**

Minutes of the October 22, 2020 Board of Directors special meeting were reviewed.

**BD-20-93**

**Scott – Burrell**

**“That the minutes of the Board of Directors special meeting, held October 22 2020, be approved as distributed.”**

**CARRIED**

### **Province of Ontario 2020 Budget**

- On Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, the Ontario government will release its 2020 Budget
- The province has stated that it will focus on protecting the health and safety of the people during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing much-needed supports to families, workers, and employers, and laying the foundation for future growth, renewal and economic recovery
- Based on the above information it does not appear that legislative or regulatory changes which may affect Conservation Authorities will be included, however it remains possible and we will be prepared to discuss any relevant changes included in the 2020 Budget at the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **COVID-19**

- Authority staff continue to work under the Return to Work Plan
- No positive reports of COVID-19, several test have been completed, most of which have related to childcare requirements
- Staff levels exceed 40% at the office each day with remaining staff working from home
- Increase numbers of cases in the Province are a significant concern, however with the greatest number of these cases being reported in Toronto and area as well as Ottawa, no changes to the current staffing plan are proposed
- The Management Team has reviewed our preparedness to respond to direction from the Province or from Regional Health Units to respond to any changes in the situation and we are ready to respond as required

A verbal report of the following updates was provided by General Manager, Brian McDougall

### **Province of Ontario 2020 Budget**

- On Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, the Ontario government will release its 2020 Budget through Bill 229
- Bill 229 is an omnibus Bill that also includes changes to over 40 Acts including the Conservation Authorities Act and the Planning Act
- On November 9<sup>th</sup>, staff from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks hosted a webinar for Conservation Authority CAOs and GMs
- A short presentation outlining the changes affecting Conservation Authorities was provided
- This was followed by a lengthy questions and answer period; many questions with few answers
- Many of the questions or comments brought forward are to be “taken back” and responses are to be provided by the Ministry in the near future

- Other questions were confirmed to be covered under regulations that are forthcoming
- There are significant concerns that the details of the changes may be a low priority in the need to pass the budget

## **Major Concerns Related to Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020**

- 1. Consequential amendments to the *Planning Act* to remove CAs as public bodies.** Unclear how CAs will be circulated applications under the *Planning Act* if there are no requirements for municipalities to do so. If CAs are only participating through the Provincial One Window then they will only be reviewing Official Plans and OPAs where the municipality hasn't been delegated decision-making approval on their official plans (very few). CAs would be involved in *Planning Act* applications in unorganized townships where planning boards do not exist. MMAH is the only ministry that could appeal to the LPAT. Many municipal OPs are out of date and do not contain relevant hazard information. This "consequential" amendment would allow these municipalities to approve *Planning Act* applications with no oversight as it relates to natural hazards. This is an extremely dangerous scenario as it relates to public safety.
- 2. Proposed amendments to the Section 28 Regulation:** There are major amendments proposed to the composition of the Section 28 Regulation. The majority of these amendments promote the Minister inserting themselves into the Section 28 regulatory process – the limitations associated with these activities are to be enacted through future Ministerial and LGIC regulations. These include:
  - a. Appeals of Section 28 Hearing Board Decisions to the Minister and/or to the LPAT.** The Minister is not required to hold a hearing prior to making a decision and with no ability for the CA to appeal– therefore the process lacks transparency. These new appeal processes will add an inordinate amount of time to the permitting process. Note that it also includes the ability to appeal non-decisions within 120 days of submission.
  - b. Minister's Orders/ Minister's Powers-** which would allow the Minister to prohibit CA(s) from issuing a permit to a person and enable the Minister to issue their own permit instead. The subsequent legislation creates an expectation that the CA would monitor implementation of the Minister's Permit despite having no ability to provide input into the permitting process. It is unclear what parameters the Minister would use to decide

whether or not to issue a permit and/or whether or not they have access to appropriate technical staff to make a decision.

- c. Enforcement Clauses-** some fettering of access to property has taken place as well as the removal of the ability of a CA to issue a stop order. There is no timeline associated with the enactment of the new enforcement clauses. Note that Conservation Ontario Council recently provided a letter to Minister Yakabuski and Minister Yurek indicating their support for the enactment of the new enforcement clauses found within the CA Act (2019).
- 3. Scoping of Non-Mandatory Programs** – clauses enable the Minister to make regulations that would prescribe standards and requirements for Municipal Programs and Services (i.e. service agreement between Municipality and CA) and Other Programs and Services (i.e. those determined by the Board and which if use municipal levy would require all municipalities' agreement). AMO has released this morning (Nov 6), CO's understanding from the Minister's Office "that the local service agreement MOU's between Conservation Authorities and Municipal Governments are a local matter and the province is not intending to reduce this local control of MOUs through future regulation." CO is pursuing opportunities to have these amendments revoked through the Standing committee clause by clause process so that they do not remain in the legislation for use by a future Minister or Government.
- 4. Governance** – a number of amendments have been made regarding CA Board appointments. Of concern are new clauses that require municipalities to only appoint municipal councilors and that the Chair/Vice Chair rotate every two years between different municipalities. Conservation Ontario's positioning has been that Board appointments should remain the decision of the municipality but there will be practical limitations for these new requirements to be met. Additionally, changes to the 'Duty of Members' from furthering the objects of the authority to representing the interest of their municipality undermines the importance of the CA Board Members' need to represent broader watershed interests further to the purpose of the Act.

A summary of the proposed amendments to the Conservation Authorities & Planning Acts through Bill 229 were reviewed, including concerns and implications of such changes.

**Director's Comments:**

Directors discussed the proposed legislative and regulatory changes to the

Conservation Authorities and Planning Acts under Bill 229. Directors offered differing perspectives toward the proposed changes. It was requested that Conservation Authority staff draft correspondence to the Minister outlining the implications of the proposed changes from the perspective of the Conservation Authority and forward to member Municipalities for additional comments. Feedback is to be reviewed at the December 10, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.

**BD-20-94**

**McMillan – McEwan**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated November 4, 2020 as well as the verbal update on the Province of Ontario Budget and major concerns related to Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-20-95**

**Burrell – Stark**

**“That the Board of Directors request staff to prepare a response to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, to be sent to member Municipalities for input and to be reviewed at the December, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.”**

**CARRIED**

A verbal report on the available reserves to fund the Service Delivery Review Consultation, as quoted by Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd, was provided by General Manager, Brian McDougall. It was noted that while reserves are not intended as operating funds, the Administration Centre and Vehicles and Equipment reserves are best able to bear the brunt of this cost.

**Director’s Comments:**

Directors request that funds to support the Service Delivery Review Consultation be split evenly from the administration centre reserve and vehicle and equipment reserve.

**BD-20-96**

**Brown – Kennes**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated November 4, 2020 regarding the available reserves to fund the proposed Service Delivery Review Consultation as quoted by Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd and further that the Administration Centre and Vehicle and Equipment reserves be utilized to each cover 50% of the costs.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-20-97**

**McMillan – Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and endorses the recommendations accompanying Items 6.1 a - 6.1 m.”**

**CARRIED**

The report on business arising from the September 17, 2020 Board of Directors meeting was reviewed.

**6.1 (a) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the updates on business arising from the September 17, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.**

**Highlights:**

- Flood threat is low due to a drop in water levels on the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair and in Wallaceburg
- Water level forecasts for Lake Huron and Lake St. Clair show levels may exceed record-highs in January through March
- Regional precipitation amounts are near or above normal averages

**Flood Threat**

The current flood threat is low owing to a drop in water levels in Wallaceburg and on the Great Lakes, resulting in a 25 cm freeboard capacity in downtown Wallaceburg (as of this report).

- Water levels on Lakes Huron and St. Clair were higher in September 2020 compared to 2019; Lake Erie was lower by 4cm
- Lake St. Clair exceeded it's maximum montly mean record set in 2019 by 2cm; Lakes Huron and Erie were below their records by 4cm each
- Upper range predicted mean water levels on Lakes Huron and St. Clair are forecasted to be below record levels in November and December
- Water levels are forecasted to have the potential to be near or exceed record-highs in January through March

**Precipitation Conditions**

- High amounts of rainfall in August brought totals for the last quarter above monthly normal amounts for the region
- Rainfall averages for six and twelve month periods for all regions are near or above normal amounts

**6.1 (b) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated October 27, 2020 on the current watershed conditions and Great Lakes water levels.**

Healthy Lake Huron (HLH) is a campaign working towards maintaining and improving water quality of the Lake by taking local action from Sarnia to Tobermory. Technical team members include staff from SCRCA as well as Ausable Bayfield, Saugeen, and Maitland Valley Conservation Authorities, provincial ministries (OMAFRA, MECP), and community groups. HLH provides outreach and educational opportunities for coastal communities, rural centres, and agriculture. Team members work with farmers to implement BMPs that will build their soil health and keep nutrients on the land; with coastal communities to improve dune habitat and invasive species removal and with rural centres to promote rain gardens, trash clean ups, and naturalization projects.

The Healthy Watershed Program have restored or enhanced over 1,000 ha of land, and over 2.3 million trees planted throughout the region. These projects, along with our outreach and education events aim to minimize non-point source sedimentation, nutrient loading, and thermal changes of water bodies within our watershed.

### **Update:**

Although COVID-19 shuttered many opportunities for coordinating outreach activities, SCRCA staff were able to safely host an annual Shoreline Cleanup event at Ipperwash Beach in Lambton Shores. We're not exactly sure why this year's event had the greatest turnout yet, but it may have been the beautiful September Saturday weather or the ice cream that brought out 35 people! This year, we had the most children participate and many of the volunteers were attending for their first time. For the past few years, the Ipperwash Beach Club offers free ice cream to those who participate in the event. The manager of the IBC is part of the SCRCA Lambton Shores Steering Committee and is a shoreline resident very keen on keeping Ipperwash Beach beautiful and natural.

Outreach funding from MECP COA for Healthy Lake Huron provides us this opportunity to connect to local landowners and families living in Lambton Shores. Thanks to Lambton Shores for transporting the garbage away for us. Ipperwash Beach benefits from such a great community of volunteers that almost daily collect garbage to keep it a pristine environment.

### **Grant update:**

- EcoAction Canada, 2020-2022: recently awarded \$99,000 over two years for staff salary, outreach, and stewardship projects throughout the SCRCA watershed
- Wildlife Habitat Canada, 2021-2023: applied for \$50,000 for each of 2 years for staff salary, outreach, and wetland/wildlife habitat stewardship projects throughout the SCRCA watershed

## **Upcoming Outreach:**

As we continue to be limited in our in-person workshop opportunities, keep an eye out for agriculture outreach videos and social media posts. Currently, SCRCA staff are interviewing local farmers and experts about how to incorporate bio strips into their farming practices. Bio strips are rows of vegetation planted in a crop field between the crop planting rows. The goal of biostrips is to cover most of the field in the non-growing season to reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss as well as boost foraging opportunities for the soil microbiome. Biostrips are essentially cover crops but the difference is cover crops cover an entire field while bio strips leave the soil in the narrow planting rows exposed to sunlight, allowing the soil to heat up in the spring and be ready for planting sooner.

## **Strategic Objectives(s):**

The Healthy Watershed Program fulfills Goals 2 and 3 of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority strategic objectives.

## **Financial Impact:**

The Healthy Watershed Program is funded by grants, landowner contribution and corporate donations. Since its beginning, the program has distributed more than \$1.9 million in grants to landowners, which has resulted in over 550 projects (total project cost nearly \$5.75 million).

**6.1 (c) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated October 29, 2020, regarding the Healthy Watershed Program, including the outreach and education events held throughout the watershed and online.**

The Regulations Activity Report on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated October 29, 2020 was reviewed.

**6.1 (d) That the Board of Directors accepts the Regulations Activity Reports on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated October 29, 2020 and includes the period September 1 to 30, 2020 as presented.**

The Planning Activity Summary Report dated October 29, 2020, for the period of September 1 to 30, 2020

**6.1 (e) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s monthly Planning Activity Summary Reports dated October 29, 2020, for the period of September 1 to 30, 2020.**



The revenue and expenditure report to September 30, 2020 was reviewed.

**6.1 (f) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to September 30, 2020, as it relates to the budget.**

The September to October 31, 2020 disbursements were reviewed.

**6.1 (g) That the Board of Directors approves the September to October 31, 2020 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,257,249.38**

The status report on the 2020 general levy receipts to October 31, 2020 were reviewed.

**6.1 (h) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2020 general levy receipts to October 31, 2020.**

The investment reports for the period ending September 30, 2020 were reviewed.

**6.1 (i) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Investment Reports, for the period ending September 30, 2020.**

The minutes of the August 4, 2020 Joint Health & Safety Committee meeting were reviewed.

**6.1 (j) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the August 4, 2020 meeting minutes of Joint Health and Safety Committee**

### **Strategic Objectives(s):**

Goal 3 – Provide recreation and education opportunities for the public to enjoy and learn from our natural environment.

### **Memorial Forest Dedications:**

#### **Denning's Memorial Forest Program – 2020**

The Denning's Memorial Forest Program was established by the Foundation in partnership with Denning's Bros Funeral Homes in 1997. Through this program, Denning's makes donations on behalf of families they serve, which are used to support conservation education and tree planting efforts throughout the region. In 2017, Denning's Funeral Home expanded into Lambton and Chatham-Kent. The Memorial Forest Program expanded to include seven funeral homes. Memorial forest dedications were held at Victoria Park in Strathroy (May) and at the Keith McLean Conservation Lands in Morpeth (September) to celebrate the memory of those lost. The services typically attracted between 70-100 people, each.

In late 2019 and early 2020, Denning's Bros Funeral Homes sold some of their Chatham-Kent establishments and decided to discontinue the dedication service held at the Keith McLean Conservation Lands. Instead, they planned to hold one large event in Strathroy this past June. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the event was cancelled.

In 2019, \$18,000 was donated to the Foundation. The 2020 donation will be made available in early 2021.

### **Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication - 2020**

Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and Foundation made the difficult decision to cancel the in-person Foundation Memorial Forest dedication service scheduled to take place on September 27, 2020 at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area.

In the coming months, a recorded service will be released and made available to all the families who made donations this past year. In addition, 2020 families will be invited to the 2021 dedication next September.

From September 2019 to August 2020, 79 trees were dedicated through individual donations to the program. To date, a total of 2,221 trees have been dedicated through the Foundation's Memorial Forest Program.

### **Conservation Awards:**

A list of possible conservation award recipients will be brought forward at our Board meeting in December. Board members wishing to nominate any individual or organization should contact Brian McDougall or Donna Blue at the SCRCA Administration Office.

### **St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation:**

The St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation raises funds to support the work of the Conservation Authority. At the October 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Foundation approved support for the following projects and programs:

- \$60,000 to support Conservation Education
- \$2,000 to support the printing and distribution of the Species at Risk (SAR) Newsletter that will be distributed to over 60,000 households in the St. Clair watershed.
- \$10,000 to support the development and publishing of Watershed Report Cards that analyzes water quality data for the period of 2016-2020.
- \$6,420 to support playground updates and the installation of speed bumps at the SCRCA's three regional campgrounds.

### **Conservation Education Fundraising:**

One of the main Authority programs supported by the Foundation is Conservation Education. Efforts are made to secure funds from corporate sponsors, special events and the BINGO program. Additionally, the Conservation Authority applies for government grants to support the education program. Current efforts include:

#### **Sarnia-Lambton Environmental Association (SLEA)**

For over 20 years, the Sarnia-Lambton Environmental Association (SLEA) has provided \$30,000 in funding to sponsor the “River Bottom Critters” (JK - Grade 12) and “Go With the Flow” (JK – Grade 8) in-class conservation education programs, allowing the SCRCA to offer these programs free-of-charge. With current visitor restrictions imposed at local schools, a request will be submitted to SLEA to support these and new programming options developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Communication with SLEA has commenced.

#### **Plains Midstream Canada**

The SCRCA will again be receiving \$5,000 in funding from Plains Midstream Canada to support the “Spring Water Awareness” program delivered to elementary students (JK - Grade 6) in 2021. This program is offered in March every year and teaches children about the hazards and dangers associated with spring snow and ice melt along streams and rivers. Plains Midstream Canada has committed to supporting this program until 2022.

#### **Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR)**

The Friends of the St. Clair River community group have once again committed \$2,500 towards delivering the “River RAP” and new “Phosphorus 101” education programs to both elementary and secondary school students throughout the 2020-2021 school year, understanding that alterations will be made to its delivery.

#### **Canoe Race Donations (even without a Canoe Race)**

Despite the cancellation of the 2020 Sydenham River Canoe and Kayak Race that raises funds to support conservation education programs, a generous member of the community donated \$1,000 towards the SCRCA conservation education program. Discussions surrounding the 2021 Canoe Race have commenced.

### **Other Funding:**

#### **1. Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) – Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk**

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Canadian Nature Fund is providing \$8,000 towards the on-going partnership between the SCRCA and Kettle and Stony Point First Nation in developing Species at Risk education programs that pairs western science with Indigenous-based knowledge to students at Hillside Elementary school.

## **2. Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Great Lakes Virtual Field Trips**

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, SCRCA education staff created “virtual field trips” to support teachers in delivering important science-based concepts to their students during school-closures. The success of the “virtual field trips” exceeded all expectations and led to MECP contacting the SCRCA to discuss creating a regional Great Lakes field trip to support their Great Lakes literacy program. The Ministry’s proposal will provide \$15,000 in funding to create a Lake Huron/St. Clair River “virtual field trip” and materials (e.g., draft script) that can be used by other Conservation Authorities and non-profit organizations to develop “virtual field trips” for the other Great Lake regions. Confirmation of this funding is expected in November.

## **3. Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund**

In cooperation with the SCRCA Biology Department, an application has been submitted to the Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund. This fund has been developed to help support non-profit organizations recover and rebuild from the impacts emerging from COVID-19. Over \$13,000 has been requested to support conservation education salaries and equipment upgrades.

### **Media and Social Media Analytics:**

In order to continually improve upon our activities related to local media outlets and social media, communications staff will be reviewing analytics to help assess our communications efforts.

The following are statistics covering the timeframe from September 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020:

#### **Media Relations**

- 0 media releases
  - 2020 Total = 22 media releases
- 62 news article mentions
  - 2020 Total = 523 news article mentions

#### **Social Media**

- Facebook
  - New Likes = 20 (Total = 1,683)
  - New Followers = 194 (Total = 1,918)
  - Posts = 29 (2020 Total = 232)
- Twitter
  - Tweets = 45 (2020 Total = 239)
  - Retweets = 24 (2020 Total = 194)
  - New Followers = 19 (Total = 677)

- Engagements (clicks, retweets, replies, follows, and likes) = 1,051 (2020 Total = 4,604)

**6.1 (k) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Communications Report dated October 31, 2020 including memorial forests, conservation awards, Conservation Foundation update and conservation education fundraising.**

**Strategic Objectives(s):**

Goal 3 – Provide recreation and education opportunities for the public to enjoy and learn from our natural environment.

**Fall Education Programs**

Despite restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the SCRCA education team has eagerly adapted to these challenges with innovative, creative and exciting new programming opportunities! We are thrilled to be able to offer the following options to our teachers and students! Fees were approved by the Board of Directors on September 17, 2020.

**1. Family Field Trips**

Family field trips are being offered at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area (LCH) for groups of individuals who share a common “social bubble”. Specialized programs are available for groups up to 10 individuals. Participants will explore the Conservation Area under the direction of an experienced Conservation educator. The programs are designed to enable real-life, hands-on, experiential, curriculum connected nature learning while maintaining the safety of pre-existing social bubbles.

Two home-school programs took place at LCH this fall!

**2. Live-Stream with a Naturalist**

SCRCA staff will offer a new “Live-Stream with a Naturalist” program where teachers and students can connect with our conservation educators ‘live’ from a Conservation Area. This program will allow students the chance to deepen their understanding of the natural world while experiencing a “field trip” second hand. During the live-stream, students can ask questions, explore the natural world, and experience curriculum connections in real-time.

Staff are currently waiting on the delivery of a SIM card that will improve internet service at the conservation area. Three pilot classes are scheduled for November in addition to one paid presentation for 39 students. This program will be further promoted as a winter option for teachers.

### 3. Virtual Field Trips

The SCRCA continues to offer their virtual field trip catalogue and create additional resources that will provide teachers in various grades with more options to meet science-based curriculum requirements.

Schools are now charged a fee to access the virtual field trips. One full suite has been purchased for \$250.00, which allows the school to access the presentations for six months. The virtual field trips continue to receive very positive feedback. One teacher will be using it as a main component of the entire unit!

### 4. Nature In Your Neighbourhood

With current protocols restricting visitors from entering schools, SCRCA staff are offering “Nature in Your Neighbourhood” programs where SCRCA educators will visit local school yards and school neighbourhoods to deliver curriculum connected, experiential outdoor education, while maintaining the safety of pre-existing cohorts. A number of program options are available including games, scientific exploration and neighbourhood nature hikes.

The “Nature in Your Neighbourhood” program has become a popular option for schools throughout the watershed. To date, 79 classes have either participated or registered for this program (Table 1).

**Table 1:** “Nature in Your Neighbourhood” program options and number of classes that have participated or registered for programming.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Registered Classes</b>
The Lorax	9
Fabulous Fall	26
Plant-astic	4
Owl Prowl	9
Circle of Life	1
Geocaching	12
A Bugs World	13
Healing Hike	4
Rocks and Minerals	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>79</b>

All program information can be found on the SCRCA 2020 Fall Strategy landing page at [www.scrca.on.ca/govirtual](http://www.scrca.on.ca/govirtual).

### Elementary and Secondary Program Flyers

Elementary and Secondary Program Flyers for teachers have been approved by the Lambton-Kent District School Board. Once field trips are allowed to resume, staff will be able to quickly shift to normal program offerings.

## **Geocaching Event – Sunday, September 20, 2020**

Twenty-three individuals participated in the 2020 CITO (Cache In, Trash Out) Geocaching Event held at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area on September 20, 2020. Pandemic restrictions altered the event slightly, allowing groups to socially and physically distance following Provincial guidelines. We hope to return to the traditional Geocaching Event in 2021!

## **Kettle and Stony Point First Nation (Canadian Nature Fund, Year 2)**

On October 28th and 29<sup>th</sup>, SCRCA Education staff will visit Hillside School at Kettle and Stony Point First Nation for the first programming dates of the 2020-2021 school year. Staff will be working with two classes in partnership with the Ojibwe program and the Principal/Education Director to add a western science lens to the school's Land Based Education curriculum. This partnership continues to grow and has expanded to include school administration. With this comes the opportunity for SCRCA Education staff to grow professionally and learn more about indigenous realities, rights and responsibilities, while providing a respectful, trusted scientific voice to Hillside's Ojibwe language and cultural teachings. SCRCA staff continue to meet the main deliverable for the project which is to create a reciprocal learning relationship where SCRCA exchanges knowledge with the staff, students and community at KSPFN.

## **6.1 (I) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Education Report, dated October 28, 2020 including fall education programs and events.**

### **Strategic Objective(s):**

Goal 2 – Protect, manage, and restore our natural systems including woodlands, wetlands, waterways, and lakes.

### **Remedial Action Plan Coordinator:**

On September 8, 2020, Natasha Pozega started her position as the St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan Coordinator.

### **Friends of the St. Clair River Photo Contest:**

The Friends of St. Clair River held their third amateur photo contest to raise public awareness and appreciation for the beauty and majesty of the St. Clair River amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Entries were submitted to three categories: Wonderful Waterways, Digital Perspectives, and Floating Away. In total, 187 contest entries were received. A \$500 prize will be awarded to the best youth and best adult entry for each category on October 29<sup>th</sup>. Winners will be announced on [www.friendsofstclair.ca](http://www.friendsofstclair.ca), local media and in the fall E-newsletter.

## **Area of Concern Video**

Earlier this year, CraneFly Productions was hired to produce a short video to inform the general public of the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and the past anthropogenic sources that contributed to the degradation of the St. Clair River. The video is in the final stages of production and is anticipated to be completed in the late fall. Once completed, the video will be available to the public through social media and will be used to engage the public on the St. Clair River RAP at future events.

## **Funding**

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks has committed to funding RAP coordination until March 31, 2022. This is exceptional news given delays over the past few years.

## **Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC)**

On October 27<sup>th</sup>, the CRIC had their first meeting in 2020. The following updates were provided to the group by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority:

- Current status of the St. Clair River RAP by Natasha Pozega
- Sediment Management Project Update by Mike Moroney
- Update on the Sydenham River Phosphorus Management Plan by Nicole Drumm

## **Past and Upcoming Meetings:**

Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

- September 24, 2020 – Zoom Conferencing Platform (Virtual Meeting)
- Next meeting expected to be held in January 2021

Canadian Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Implementation Committee (CRIC)

- October 27, 2020 – Zoom Conferencing Platform (Virtual Meeting)

**6.1 (m) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated October 20, 2020 on the St. Clair River Area of Concern.**

## **Conservation Area Fee Increases**

Fee increases are a result of increasing staffing costs, maintenance, park upgrades, and general cost increases. Fee increases are also required to ensure financial reserves are maintained at levels sufficient to undertake large capitals expenditures (septic system updates, road improvements, etc.) when required. With the proposed increases our rates remain at or below most local private and regional Conservation Authority campgrounds.



## **Fee Comparison:**

A table comparing seasonal and transient camping fees of other Conservation Authorities, the Provincial Parks, and other local private campgrounds was reviewed. A comparison of 2020 and proposed 2021 Conservation Area fees was also reviewed.

### **BD-20-98**

**Miller – Nemcek**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated October 27, 2020 regarding the 2021 Conservation Area Proposed Fees and further approves the fee schedule as presented.”**

**CARRIED**

### **BD-20-99**

**Miller – Nemcek**

**“That the Board of Directors directs staff to remove the Highland Glen daily and seasonal boat launch fees from the 2021 schedule of fees and further that the fee amount be re-evaluated upon the eventual re-opening of the boat launch.”**

**CARRIED**

## **Bright's Grove, Kenwick Street to Helen Avenue – Phase 2**

- Cope Construction commenced shoreline work in December 2019
- Toe stones were inspected using a professional diver in May 2020
- Deficiencies were identified at the toe of shoreline protection
- 17 locations have been identified along this section
- Contractor attempted to fix deficiencies from a barge on October 9 2020
- Deficiencies still remain
- Contractor exploring alternative methods to complete repairs

## **Bright's Grove, Kenwick Street to Helen Avenue – Phase 3**

- Consulting Engineer has developed a Request for Pre Qualification (RFPQ).
- SCRCA and City of Sarnia has provided comments
- RFPQ process will be completed in November
- Tender submission will follow this process
- Shoreline work in this section is expected to start mid December 2020.

## **Bright's Grove, Old Lakeshore Road East**

- Facca Incorporated Inc. started shoreline work on February 10, 2020.
- Construction work resumed second week of August.
- All in-water work has been completed.
- Shoreline work progressing well

- Contractor to focus on placing revetment stones
- All shoreline work is expected to be completed by mid December 2020.

### **2021 Shoreline Projects:**

SCRCA is working with City of Sarnia and St. Clair Township to prioritize projects for 2021. The following are the recommended projects for 2021.

#### **City of Sarnia Projects**

- Design and construction of shoreline for Pine avenue to Penhuron Drive, Brights Grove, ON.
- A groyne only project to:
  - Prioritize location of groynes
  - Installation of 2 – 3 groynes

#### **St. Clair Township Projects:**

- Design of Shoreline protection for the following Parks:
  - 1) Reagan Park
  - 2) Port Lambton Park
  - 3) Seager Park.

A verbal update on the City of Sarnia Kenwick to Helena project was provided by Director of Water Resources, Girish Sankar. Toe issues have been identified in 17 areas. Contractors are trying to repair through the use of barge.

#### **BD-20-100**

##### **Marriott – Stark**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated October 29, 2019 on the ongoing Shoreline Projects across the watershed and further that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chair and General Manager to sign contract documents if the preferred tender falls within budget.”**

**CARRIED**

#### **BD-20-101**

##### **Gordon – Brown**

**“That the 2021 Nominating Committee consisting of the following four directors representing the four districts of the Authority being Sarnia, Lambton, Chatham-Kent, and Middlesex be: Terry Burrell, Lorie Scott, Aaron Hall, and Betty Ann MacKinnon and further that the Nominating Committee’s recommendation for the 2021 committee membership be presented at the Annual General Meeting.”**

**CARRIED**

The 2021 tentative schedule of meetings was reviewed. General Manager, Brian McDougall gave a verbal update on the upcoming Annual General Meeting on February 25, 2021 which is scheduled to take place in Point Edward and held on a larger scale to

celebrate SCRCA's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Due to COVID-19, it is not likely that we will be able to host an event of this size, or face to face. Staff will continue to monitor the Provincial guidelines.

**BD-20-102**

**McGill – MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the 2021 tentative schedule of meetings for the Board of Directors and Committees, dated September 21, 2020.”**

**CARRIED**

**Under New Business**

Director Mike Stark discussed the current state at Cow Creek, Brights Grove and enquired whether SCRCA staff can assist with obtaining support and funding to dredge the creek. Director Terry Burrell echoed these concerns and requested a highlight the safety aspect of the loss of a Safe Harbour as well as the closure of Highland Glen. General Manager, Brian McDougall stated that SCRCA will lend its expertise and comments for use in approaching various provincial and federal agencies for approval and financial assistance. SCRCA staff are asked to investigate potential funding sources and report to the Board of Directors at the December, 2020 meeting.

Director Aaron Hall enquired regarding the recent burning of the building erected by the Wallaceburg Sportsmens Club, which was located at the Peers Wetland Conservation Area and whether there were any environmental concerns as a result. Manager of Lands, Greg Wilcox informed the Board of Directors that SCRCA did not renew the rental agreement with the club and they were in the process removing the building and its contents when the fire occurred. The building was completely unsalvageable and debris was removed by a contractor due to the risk to public safety. A copy of the invoice will be sent to the Wallaceburg Sportsmens Club for their contribution to the cost of the clean-up.

**Loosley – McMillan**

**BD-20-1-2**

**“That the meeting be adjourned.”**

**CARRIED**



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**Joe Faas**  
**Chair**



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**Brian McDougall**  
**General Manager**