



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: April 20, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.

SCRCA Administration Office/Remote via Zoom

Directors Present: John Brennan, Pat Brown, Sue Cates, Greg Grimes, Frank Kennes, Anne Marie Gillis, Don McCabe, Don McCallum; Mary Lynne McCallum, Ross O'Hara, Kristen Rodrigues, Jerry Westgate

Remote: Al Broad, Terry Burrell, Aaron Hall, Rhonda Jubenville, Adam Kilner, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Steve Miller, Lorie Scott

Regrets: Emery Huszka

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Regulations; Chris Durand, Manager of IT/GIS; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Chunning Li, Director of Corporate Services; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Ken Phillips, General Manager; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Lands

Guests Present: Brenda Barton, Joe Bourgeois, Jeanne Chalmers, Pete Fisher, Dan Nesbitt, Rob Newport, Larena Parkhouse, Jim Perry, Yvonne Perry, Larry Roberts, Lisa Roberts

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and 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.

Larry Gordon of Point Edward passed away on March 17, 2023. Larry served on our Board of Directors, representing the Village of Point Edward for 7 years, three of which he served as Vice-Chair. Larry was a strong supporter of SCRCA, who always provided thoughtful points and discussion in his signature broadcaster's voice. He will be greatly missed. On behalf of St. Clair Conservation, flowers were sent to Larry's family and a memorial tree will be planted in his memory. For those who would like to attend, a Celebration of Life will be held on June 1, 2023 at the Seaway Kiwanis pavilion in Canatara Park from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Petrolia Mayor Brad Loosley is taking a temporary leave of absence from council to focus on a medical issue, Petrolia Councillor Ross O'Hara has been appointed as an interim Director on the Authority board. We wish Mayor Loosley good health and hope he is able to return to council soon. We welcome Ross O'Hara to the Board of Directors.

All guests of the meeting were welcomed and the Chair acknowledged the request for a delegation relating to the rules and regulations for seasonal campsite structures. A majority vote from the board allowed Mr. Pete Fisher the opportunity to address the Board.

Mr. Pete Fisher read aloud his concerns, as per the correspondence sent to all Directors via e-mail on April 14, 2023.

Directors Comments:

A question and answer period with Manager of Conservation Lands, Greg Wilcox confirmed the following points:

- Accessibility was not a factor in the initial inspection of campsite structures, however if deemed necessary, grandfathering may be considered with adjustments made to railings and railing height on a case-by-case basis.
- Lambton County has indicated they would issue after the fact permits, once building code is satisfied. The building department representing Southwest Middlesex has indicated that they would not issue after the fact permits.
- One on one meetings with affected seasonal campers will be held in May to assess specific situations
- Some affected sites may be addressed with little to moderate effort such as grading or lowering.
- Roofs will not be permitted
- Waiver presented to seasonal campers must be signed to be provided a 3-year grace period. Waivers must be signed before a 2024 seasonal site deposits will be accepted in September/October of 2023.

Directors will be provided with a report in June, following the one on one meetings with seasonal campers and will provide better clarity on next steps.

Vice Chair Lorie Scott thanked Manager of Conservation Lands, Greg Wilcox for taking the time to investigate issues on an individual basis and expressed appreciation to the seasonal campers in attendance, and those who have written in, for their insight. It was noted that as an Authority, Staff and Board have a responsibility to follow and conform to safety regulations.

BD-23-32

Brennan – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors receive a delegation from Mr. Pete Fisher on behalf of seasonal campers regarding the rules and regulations for seasonal campsite structures, and that he be heard for a maximum of 10 minutes and further, that delegation(s) on this topic will not be heard at the June 22, 2023 Board of Directors meeting.”

CARRIED

BD-23-33

Gillis – Kennes

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

CARRIED

The minutes of the Board of Directors Annual General Meeting, held March 10, 2023 were reviewed.

BD-23-34

Scott – MacKinnon

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held March 10, 2023, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

Director of Water Resources, Girish Sankar provided a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the water resources department, including flood forecasting and the operation of the McKeough Dam, where specific criteria is met.

BD-23-35

Grimes – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the presentation from Girish Sankar on the Water Resources department.”

CARRIED

Operations

- The General Manager attended via Zoom a General Managers/CAO meeting with Conservation Ontario to discuss forthcoming changes to regulations and policies concerning services offered by conservation authorities and apportionment strategies on February 23.
- The General Manager Attended a Conservation Ontario General Managers/CAO meeting to discuss changes to the Provincial Policy Statement and anticipated changes to Section 28 (Permits and Regulations) of the Conservation Authorities Act on March 20.
- The General Manager attended a Source Water Protection meeting on March 24 hosted at Upper Thames Conservation Authority. It was the first in-person meeting since 2020.
- The General Manager attended Zoom meeting with Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas and Plympton-Wyoming staff on March 22 to discuss the disposition of the Highland Glen and McEwen properties to the municipality.
- The General Manger attended a Management Committee meeting of the Source Water Protection group to discuss information packages to all municipalities and vacancies with staff (Risk Management Official) and on the SWP Board and to devise a strategy to fill these vacancies.

Community/Partnership Outreach

- The General Manager attended a March 1 information breakfast hosted by the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce Green Committee. SCRCA staff member Craig Paterson did a well received presentation on the organization's turtle recovery program.
- The SCRCA will be partnering with the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce on April 22 for an Earth Day event at Wawanosh Wetland Conservation Area. Imperial Oil will be donating trees for a giveaway to the public and SCRCA staff will provide advice on how to plant trees.
- The General Manager attended several meetings of the BASES Emergency Preparedness Committee and will be attending this year's shelter in place exercise hosted by St. Clair Township.
- The General Manager has organized a community outreach event for Petrolia for May 10 to provide information to the public on ways to storm proof private properties.

Federal/Provincial/Municipal Meetings

- The General Manager did overview presentations and answered questions from council members for the Chatham-Kent (February 6), Brooke-Alvinston (February 9), Petrolia (February 13), St. Clair Township (February 21) and Plympton-Wyoming (February 22). He answered general questions from members of council about SCRCA programs and activities.
- The General Manager attended a Zoom meeting February 26 regarding Middlesex Centre's Transportation Master Plan. SCRCA has a property in Centre Middlesex (Coldstream Conservation Area) that borders main roadways.
- The General Manager held a Zoom meeting for new members of the Board of Directors to answer any questions they may have stemming from their orientation. Any new members that could not attend are invited to contact the General Manager to arrange an opportunity to meet.

BD-23-36

McCallum, Don – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated April 11, 2023.”

CARRIED

Conservation Ontario (CO) held its AGM on April 3 in Richmond Hill. It was the first in-person meeting of Council since March of 2020.

Chris White from Grand River was acclaimed as the Chair for 2023 (his first term) and Pierre Leroux from South Nation and Robert Rock from Kawartha were acclaimed as Vice

Chair (their first terms). Linda Laliberte, CAO of Ganaraska, Rob Baldwin, CAO of Lake Simcoe and Chandra Sharma, CAO of Niagara, were appointed as Directors at Large.

Three SCRCA staff were appointed to CO committees:

Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources was appointed to the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECl) Committee

Nicole Drumm, Special Projects Technician and Ken Phillips, General Manager, were appointed to the Lake Erie Action Plan Implementation Team.

Several other SCRCA staff currently serve on working groups and committees for CO:

Melissa Levi (Environmental Education) is the current Co-Chair of the Outdoor Education Annual Conference Steering Committee

Chris Durand (Manager, IT and GIS) is the Chair of the Conservation Authority Regional IM/GIS Working Group: Western Ontario

Emily De Cloet (Water Resource Specialist) is a member of the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Communications Working Group, the Ontario Hydrometric Program Coordinating Committee (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Water Survey Canada) and the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning Committee (PFFWC) (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry)

CO's financial statements were presented and approved by Council. CO posted a surplus of \$85,963 for 2022 with \$830,876 in deferred revenue for 2023 out of a total budget of \$8,010,301 (combined special projects and operations).

CO Council approved the Special Operation Budget of \$8,921,270 with the bulk of the funding coming from Federal and Provincial ministries and grants.

CO staff provided a report on Board of Directors by-law revisions that are required to meet changes to the Conservation Authorities Act. SCRCA staff will be making the necessary changes to ensure that the organization is compliant with the Act.

Director Comments:

Director Greg Grimes wished to highlight the fact that SCRCA staff are active at the provincial level, participating on various committees.

BD-23-37

Miller – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors receive for information the report dated April 11, 2023 concerning the April 3, 2023 Conservation Ontario Annual General Meeting.”

CARRIED

Recently, the SCRCA has undertaken a review of their fleet and associated maintenance requirements. The SCRCA has not purchased a new vehicle since 2019. The majority of the current fleet was purchased between 2011 and 2015 with the oldest truck in the fleet being a 2006 model year.

Management has explored the option of using a fleet service company to meet current and future vehicle needs. However, due to a lack of new vehicles available in the marketplace, there are no fleet service companies that can meet the requirements of the SCRCA. In speaking with other conservation authorities currently utilizing fleet services, the shortage of work vehicles across all sectors has led to fleet companies issuing used vehicles of questionable quality and durability.

Two vehicles in the SCRCA fleet have reached the end of their service life and repair costs to keep them road worthy far exceed their value. Prior to the Pandemic of 2020, the SCRCA was beginning the process of replacing vehicles on a regular basis (every three to four years) to maximize trade in value. Going forward, the organization will once again undertake this practice.

Due to a shortage of standard work trucks globally, staff are recommending that two vehicles with light duty capacity be purchased.

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 1.3 Asset Management

Financial Impact:

Funds removed from Equipment Reserve will be recovered through internal chargebacks to SCRCA departments.

BD-23-38

Burrell – Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the report dated April 12, 2023 on the SCRCA vehicle replacements and approve the transfer of up to a maximum of \$100,000 from the Equipment Reserve to purchase two new vehicles for the SCRCA fleet; And further, that the Board of Directors approves the disposal of the 2013 Chevrolet Sierra (Fleet Vehicle #10) and 2012 GMC Orlando (Fleet Vehicle #11) from the SCRCA fleet inventory.”

CARRIED

In April of 2022, SCRCA implemented a Risk Management and Land Classification Guideline. As part of the Risk Management Program, a committee meets at least once annually to review the program. On February 13, 2023, the Risk Management Committee met to review the program for 2022.

New in 2022:

- Facility rental agreement and waiver developed for rental of the Coldstream soccer field and all pavilions
- Increased use of social media and media releases to communicate service interruptions at SCRCA owned and managed properties (trail improvements, parking lot upgrades, bridge replacement, etc.)
- Service interruption page created on SCRCA website to further improve communications
- Citywide Maintenance Manager software and mobile app used to schedule and track conservation area property inspections and work orders
- Mergin Maps mobile app used to identify, and track hazard tree removals
- All seasonal campers required to show proof of liability insurance
- 3rd party security hired to patrol campgrounds on busy nights to enforce rules

Risk Assessments:

In 2022, risk assessments were completed for nine Conservation Areas and Lambton County properties. Assessments were conducted at the following properties:

- Clark Wright CA
- Coldstream CA
- Peers Wetland CA
- Strathroy CA
- Strathroy Marsh Walk
- Wawanosh Wetlands CA
- Lambton County Heritage Forest
- Marthaville Habitat Management Area
- Perch Creek Habitat Management Area

Common hazards identified included:

- Insufficient railings on bridges
- Poison ivy along trail edges
- Need for additional signage
- Drowning risk (deep water, skating, high flows during flooding, etc.)
- Dog bite risk
- Poor lighting in parking lots
- Parking lots with minimal or no snow removal

No hazards deemed “high risk” were identified.

Staff are investigating potential mitigation measures and implementing as budgets permit. Priority is given to higher risk mitigations.

In 2023 additional risk assessments will be completed at SCRCA managed campgrounds and other Authority properties.

2022 Property Inspections:

Through the use of the Citywide Maintenance Manager program, staff completed 84 property inspections. Sixty-nine work orders were created that were the direct result of an inspection. At end of year, 58 of these work orders had been completed. An additional 46 work orders not connected to inspections were completed at SCRCA conservation areas and managed lands. Common work orders were bridge repair, boardwalk repair, tree removal, pothole repair, trail widening, and signage replacement.

3rd Party Playground Inspections:

In late summer, playground inspections were completed by Playchek Services Inc. at Coldstream CA, A.W. Campbell CA, L.C. Henderson CA, and Warwick CA. Deficiencies were identified at all sites. In 2023, three swing sets will be replaced, one teeter-totter will be removed, and many playground equipment hazards will be repaired/replaced. New playground wood chip surfacing will be installed at 1 playground and 2 swing set areas. Most other playground areas will have the protective surfacing topped up to improve its cushioning properties.

Policy Recommendations:

Inspection frequencies for each category of property are identified in the SCRCA Risk Management and Land Classification Guideline. Higher Liability properties (includes the 3 campgrounds) are currently inspected bi-weekly (alternating weeks) during the active camping season. Two additional inspections are completed from November through April.

This practice was implemented in 2022, however, bi-weekly inspections were not achieved. Campground inspections are very thorough and take staff a day or longer to complete. Staff need time to complete the necessary repairs/upgrades identified during inspections and prioritized repairs over additional inspections.

It is recommended that Higher Liability Property inspections (campgrounds) are completed monthly from May through October with two additional inspections between November and April. This will provide a better balance of staff resources between inspection and repair/upgrades.

Current guidelines are shown in the table below.

SCRCA Risk Management and Land Classification Guideline	
Property Category	Current Inspection Frequency
Higher Liability	Inspected bi-weekly (alternating weeks) during the active camping season. Two additional inspections completed from November through April. Seasonal camping area patrolled bi-weekly during the off-season to monitor for security concerns or other obvious issues and report observed concerns to the owner of the trailer.
Moderate Liability	Inspected monthly from May through October. Two additional inspections November to April (reasonably spaced out).
Minimal Liability	Inspected every other year, prior to an upcoming forestry harvest, or when staff receive a complaint/concern they deem warrants inspection.
Leased Properties	Inspected once annually, during the snow free season.
Playgrounds	Inspected monthly from May through October.

BD-23-39

Kennes – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated March 29, 2023, and approve the recommendation to change the frequency of higher liability property inspections as outlined in this report.”

CARRIED

On April 7, 2020 the Township of Dawn-Euphemia sent correspondence to the Authority to determine if there was interest in transferring ownership of Shetland CA to the municipality. At the September 17, 2020 board of Director’s meeting, the Directors voted 14-6 in favour of the Authority maintaining ownership and entering into a lease agreement with the municipality.

On January 1, 2022 the Township of Dawn-Euphemia and the SCRCA entered into a lease agreement for the municipality to manage and maintain the Shetland CA.

Conservation Authority Flood Plain Acquisitions:

Conservation Authorities including SCRCA have acquired floodplain lands and flood vulnerable structures to minimize flood impacts. Many of the lands owned by the Authority were flood plain acquisitions. Although Shetland CA was acquired by donation, the property is almost entirely mapped as flood plain and aligns with this program.

Conservation lands (including flood plain acquisitions) are developed to allow for compatible recreation that benefit watershed residents.

Conservation Authorities are the second biggest landowner in Ontario, behind the Province. Approximately a third of these lands are designated as natural hazard lands and help to prevent and control flooding and erosion.

Purchase Agreement with the Shetland Picnic Corporation:

In the purchase agreement the condition set by the Shetland Picnic Corporation is that the Authority hold the land for their sole and only use forever. It is important for the Authority to follow the wishes of land donors.

The original request from the Township of Dawn-Euphemia as well as excerpts of the the purchase agreement with condition set by the Shetland Picnic Corporation and minutes of the September 17 meeting were reviewed.

Directors Comments:

Director Alan Broad requested that the report dated March 24, 2023 on the Board decision to maintain ownership of the Shetland Conservation Area be forwarded to the Township of Dawn-Euphemia for information.

BD-23-40

Scott – Gillis

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and receives for information the report dated March 24, 2023 on the Board decision to maintain ownership of the Shetland Conservation Area.”

CARRIED

In Feb. 9, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting, Committee members requested that a report be brought forth to the April Board of Directors meeting to confirm whether the Municipal Act, under which the Authority’s Investment Policy adheres, restricts any particular types of investments.

Staff researched eligible investments in Municipal Act, 2001 Ontario Regulation 438/97, and reached out to Scotia investment advisor. The investments in the current portfolio are made up of mostly Canadian as well as global bonds, and about 53% of the portfolio sits outside the Act. The advisor indicated it was his first time to see this requirement for the Authority, and given that interest rates are expected to drop by the end of this year, he suggests a gradual transition out of the current portfolio and into the revised portfolio that fits within the Act. He indicated that the portfolio has had excellent conservative growth until the past 18 months. When the interest rates drop back down, the appreciation in bonds will inject growth into the portfolio, so he recommends to move 25% of the portfolio each quarter if the Board wants to be more strictly onside with the Act.

BD-23-41**Burrell – Kennes**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the report dated March 31, 2023 regarding the Scotia investment types, and further direct to move 25% of the portfolio each quarter to bring Scotia investment to be more strictly in line with eligible investments in Municipal Act.”

CARRIED

- 4 Projects were initially submitted to the WECI program 2023-2024
- The WECI Program was under subscribed and a second call for projects was announced and SCRCA has submitted 3 additional projects to the WECI program
- A list of 7 WECI projects submitted for 2023-2024 is outlined in the table below
- All applications will be reviewed by a committee, made up of Provincial and Conservation Authority staff representatives, in late March or early April, and will be ranked in comparison to all submitted projects from across the Province
- If funding is confirmed for this program, a list of approved projects may be available in May 2023

Structure	Project Name	Description of Work	Total Project Cost (\$)	Grant Requested (\$)
Sarnia Shoreline Protection	Shoreline Repair (Penhuron to Kenwick Street)	Carry out construction of shoreline protection as per the design	\$800,000	\$400,000
Seagar Park	Seagar Park Shoreline Restoration	Design and Construction of Shoreline restoration at Seagar park	\$500,000	\$250,000
W. Darcy McKeough Floodway	Floodway Access lane Repairs	Repair floodway access lanes	\$60,000	\$30,000
W. Darcy McKeough Floodway	Drainage improvement and fence repairs	Repair ruts, potholes and improve drainage at the top of the berm	\$50,000	\$25,000
Lambton Area Water Supply System	LAWSS Shoreline Repair	Carry out construction of shoreline protection as per the design (ongoing)	\$400,000	\$200,000
A.W. Campbell Walkway	Walkway Decommissioning	Decommission the walkway to the drop tube structure. Walkway is deteriorated and is in poor condition	\$20,000	\$10,000
L.C.Henderson Weir	LCH Weir Repair Project	Repairs to asphalt weir crossing. The top of the weir has asphalt surfacing that is experiencing erosion and is failing.	\$40,000	\$30,000

BD-23-42

McCallum, Mary Lynne – Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated March 30, 2023 on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects and approves the projects submitted for funding in 2023-2024, and further will assist staff in obtaining matching funds, where required, to support these projects upon confirmation of funding approval.”

CARRIED

7.1 (a) Business Arising

The report on business arising was reviewed.

7.1 (b) Current Watershed Conditions

Report Highlights

- Water levels on the surrounding Great Lakes are projected to remain above average over the next six months
- The current flood threat is low to moderate owing to lower waters but higher reactivity from saturated soils
- Precipitation trends err on the side of below normal, interspersed with above-normal events

Precipitation

- In general, Sarnia and Strathroy both saw bouts of below-average precipitation over the past year, with much of the winter seeing below 80% of normal values, with the exception of Strathroy in January and Sarnia in February.
- All Great Lakes saw above average precipitation in February, with the Lake Superior basin receiving 138% of its long term average, and 142% in the Lake Michigan-Huron basin

Lake Levels

- In February, Lakes Huron and Erie both fell compared to their mean water level for the previous year, 13 cm and 6 cm respectively; Lake St. Clair saw a rise in its mean water level by 11 cm.
- All lakes remained above their long-term average, however Lakes Huron and Erie were both down from their 2020 record highs; 84 cm and 54 cm respectively; Lake St. Clair was 63 cm below its 1986 record.
- Six month projections indicate that water levels on the surrounding Great Lakes will likely be similar to 2022, and could see either a rise or fall in levels depending on the precipitation inputs and net basin amounts

Flood Threat

- The flood threat is currently low to moderate
- Lower water levels on the Great Lakes (compared to previous years) have enabled a greater storage capacity upstream in Wallaceburg.
- Recent Spring rains have reduced the storage capacity in the soil, resulting in water levels reacting more quickly to new precipitation inputs
- Further Spring rain events have the potential to cause minor, nuisance flooding into natural floodplain areas; conditions for major flooding do not exist at the time of this report

7.1 (c) Regulations Activity Report

The regulations activity report covering the period of Feb 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023 was reviewed.

7.1 (d) Planning Activity Report

The planning activity report covering the period of Feb 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023 was reviewed.

7.1 (e) Revenue and Expenditures

The statement of revenue and expenditures as at February 28, 2023 were reviewed.

7.1 (f) Disbursements

The list disbursements issued January to February, 2023 were reviewed.

7.1 (g) General Levy Update

The 2023 general levy summary was reviewed.

7.1 (h) Investment Statements

The investment statements to February 28, 2023 were reviewed.

7.1 (i) St. Clair River AOC Update

Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption – BUI #1

Using the 172 completed submissions from the on-line angler survey that was launched in Spring 2021 and closed at the end of December 2022, a detailed analysis of the survey information submitted was undertaken. The analysis included statistics on the most commonly consumed fish, meal size, meal frequency, preferred fishing locations, and key concerns about the consumption of fish from the St. Clair River. The summary report and

PowerPoint presentation were submitted to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) on March 28, 2023, as per deliverables under the contract agreement. The summary information is subject to revisions based on input from ECCC, the public, and Indigenous communities.

Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste and Odour Problems – BUI #9

Engagement efforts remain underway to communicate the findings of the draft assessment report that was completed in January 2022 on the restrictions on drinking water consumption or taste and odour problems. The report recommended that this BUI be redesignated to no longer being impaired. A presentation to Walpole Island First Nation Chief and Council, tentatively scheduled for March 21, 2023, had to be rescheduled to a date to be confirmed. A presentation to the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) will follow. Questions and comments raised during the engagement sessions are being documented and responses are provided and tracked for reporting purposes.

Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat – BUI #14

In accordance with a deliverable in the contract agreement with ECCC, all technical information/data from the habitat working group partners was compiled, organized, and assessed against each of the seven-specific habitat restoration targets to evaluate if each target had been met, and provided evidence to support it. The information was presented in a draft status assessment report completed in January 2023. The report includes maps, tables and figures to support the nature of the assessment work conducted and the outcome of the restoration projects and includes a recommendation that this BUI be redesignated to Not Impaired. The report is under review by the Canadian RAP Implementation Habitat Subcommittee.

A PowerPoint presentation and fact sheet were prepared based on the findings of the draft status assessment report, and submitted to ECCC on March 29, 2023, as per deliverables under the contract agreement.

Once comments provided by the Habitat Subcommittee on the draft report have been addressed, presentation material will be finalized and stakeholders, Indigenous communities, and the public will be engaged on the report findings.

Recent and Scheduled Meetings

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC)

- November 8, 2022
- Next meeting to be scheduled

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR)

- December 5, 2022

- February 2, 2023
- April 11, 2023

Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

- November 1, 2022
- February 16, 2023
- April 19, 2023

Outreach and Engagement

Newsletter

Friends of the St. Clair River and the RAP Office continue to partner on the production of St. Clair River News, a free monthly e-newsletter. The goal of this newsletter is to increase awareness and engagement in the Area of Concern and highlight environmental initiatives happening in the region. A number of new subscribers to the newsletter are in the process of being added based on feedback from the fish consumption survey.

Canadian RAP Implementation Outreach Subcommittee

As follow-up to a meeting held on February 23, 2023, education staff from the SCRCA are reaching out to Aamjiwnaang First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation to discuss opportunities to schedule an education program with elementary school students in April 2023.

Walpole Island First Nation Heritage Centre Open House

During the Open House event on March 23, 2023, a virtual presentation was made on the accomplishments over the previous 5 years and planned activities over the next five years (2022-2027) to address the remaining five Beneficial Use Impairments.

Annual Report

A report summarizing public and Indigenous engagement conducted between April 2022 and March 2023 was prepared and submitted to ECCC on March 29, 2023, as per a deliverable under the contract agreement.

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 3 – Protect, manage, and restore our natural systems including woodlands, wetlands, waterways, and lakes.

Financial Impact:

Funding for the RAP Coordinator position is provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) and ECCC. The current agreement with MECP is in place until February 28, 2024. The funding agreement with ECCC has two funding periods. The first funding period ended on March 31, 2023, and the option to extend it for the second period until March 31, 2024, was implemented. The SCRCA is

providing monthly updates to MECP and ECCC on the status of the project work. An invoice was submitted on March 30, 2023, to ECCC in the amount of \$40,402.47 (includes HST) for the completion of the BUI #14 draft fact sheet and presentation, the fish consumption survey and summary report, and the annual summary report on outreach with the public and Indigenous communities.

7.1 (j) Communications Update

Sydenham River Canoe and Kayak Race:

After the successful return of the Sydenham River Canoe and Kayak Race in 2022, staff are looking forward to welcoming paddlers from all over the province to the 2023 edition of the event. Co-sponsored by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation and Authority, the race serves as a fundraiser for the SCRCA's Conservation Education program.

The race features 11 different race classes and three different race lengths. In 2022, over 70 paddlers participated in the event that raised over \$5,000.

The 2023 event is scheduled for Sunday, April 30, 2023. The race begins on Mosside Road, just west of County Road 79, north of Cairo and ends at the Shetland Conservation Area. For more information visit <https://www.scrca.on.ca/events/sydenham-river-canoe-and-kayak-race-2/>.

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 statistics cover the timeframe from January 1, 2023, to March 31, 2023:

Media Relations

Activity	2023 (January – March)	2022 (January – March)
Media Releases	3	6
News Article Mentions	140	461

Social Media

Facebook

Activity	Total	2023 (January – March)	2022 (January – March)
Post Reach*	--	28,229	28,918
Page Visits	--	1,214	1,292
New Likes/Followers	2,413	48	44
Posts	--	48	53

***Post Reach** – The number of people who saw any content from your Page or about your Page, including posts, stories, ads, social information from people who interact with your Page, etc.

Twitter

Activity	Total	2023 (January – March)	2022 (January – March)
Tweets	--	57	59
Retweets	--	78	57
New Followers	909	19	24
Engagements*	--	726	892

* **Engagements** = clicks, retweets, replies, follows, and likes

SCRCA Website

Activity	2023 (January – March)	2022 (January – March)
Website Views	34,565	38,572
Website Visitors	11,351	12,159

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 4 – Provide recreation and education opportunities for the public to enjoy and learn from our Natural Environment.

7.1 (k) Education Update

Winter Education Program Summary:

In-Class Sponsored Programs: SCRCA staff are nearing completion of in-class sponsored programs for Winter 2023. All programs were fully booked, and interest exceeded capacity and funding.

Aquatic Species at Risk: Funded by the Canada Nature Fund, this program has engaged over 3,600 students this year; either as an in-class program or connecting virtually to the Aquatic Species at Risk webinar. Webinar recordings have been accessed over 100 times, representing between 100-2,500 student viewings.

Phosphorus 101: Sponsored by Friends of the St. Clair River, this program introduces students from Grades 8-12 to the issue of phosphorus loading into our watershed and Lake Erie. Over 400 students participated between January and April 2023.

River Rap: This Friends of the St. Clair River sponsored program was a great success. Almost 500 students participated between January and March 2023, learning about the St. Clair River.

Spring Water Awareness Schoolyard Program: Plains Midstream Canada continues to sponsor this important program that will teach 1,100 students on how to stay safe this April. Of interest to note, St. Philippe School in Grande Pointe will be a first-time client, since the program is now offered in French.

Bluewater Association for Safety, Environment and Sustainability (BASES – formerly SLEA) Programming: Negotiations continue with BASES to secure funding for this popular program. In the meantime, the “My Environment” program is being booked as a paid program, with upcoming programs at the Aamjiwnaang Kinooomaage Gamig, the Brigden Library, and the Petrolia Library.

Maple Syrup Festival and School Program Summary:

SCRCA Education Staff were delighted to be able to share the history of maple syrup at our demonstration sugar bush at A.W. Campbell Conservation Area with the return of the Maple Syrup Festival. Despite the cold weather, the Education Team was busy running nonstop tours from 10 am – 3 pm both Saturday and Sunday for approximately 500 visitors. Education Staff also hosted the Sweet Maple Syrup Program for almost 200 students the week following the festival.

Outdoor Spring Education Programming:

Springtime field trips are booking up quickly. There are only a few openings left in May and June.

Nature in your Neighbourhood Schoolyard Programs:

Schoolyard programs will continue to be offered to schools that are unable to secure bussing.

Webinar Programs – Spring 2023:

St. Clair Education continues to offer fee-based webinars to our local school boards. Lambton Kent District School Board and St. Clair Catholic District Schoolboard have partnered to book 15 webinars for the winter/spring 2023 season.

February's webinars, focusing on 'Winter in the Conservation Area', attracted 2,275 viewers, and March's topic of 'Flooding' brought in about 1,250 viewers. The topic for the April webinar will be 'Our Relationship with Trees' and the May webinar will be broadcast live from the Keith McLean Conservation Lands. A Farm Tour webinar by one of the SCRCA's Champion Watershed Farmers will occur in June.

Kettle and Stony Point First Nation – Canadian Nature Fund, Year 4:

St Clair Education continue to assist with development and delivery of the Land-Based Ed initiative this school year (Sept. 2022 - June 2023). Staff continue to visit the school weekly to provide Outdoor Education in the form of 'bushwalks'.

Committee Involvement: SCRCA Education Staff continue to represent SCRCA on a number of committees in the watershed.

Lambton Trails Committee: One update of interest, Lambton County Trails Committee is working on updating Lambton Trails Map, in an attempt to encourage and facilitate public use of trails in Lambton County.

Arbour Week Committee: This program continues to strive toward planting more trees in our watershed. The St Clair Education team will partner with School Board representatives to run a School Arbour Week Contest and award Sugar Maple seedlings to 3 winning classrooms in our watershed.

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 4 – Provide recreation and education opportunities for the public to enjoy and learn from our Natural Environment.

7.1 (I) Equipment Disposals

Background:

The following surplus equipment has no value, and will be disposed/recycled:

Microsoft Surface Book – SB1703 (2017)
Microsoft Surface Book – SB0016 (2016)
HP Laptop 6730b – DEVPC (2015)
Lenovo T60, L3-BT588 – ROVER (2015)
Lenovo L512, LR-BFWLA – C0093 (2015)
Lenovo - C0102L (2011)
CAT cell phones (11)
Samsung Razor cell phones (3)
Blackberry Curve cell phones (3)
Blackberry Z30 cell phones (3)
iPhone 5S cell phones (3)

BD-23-43

Grimes – Brennan

“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and receives the accompanying items 7.1 (a) through 7.1 (I) as information.”

CARRIED

Correspondence dated April 5, 2023 from Chad Anderson regarding agricultural land stewardship and best farming practices was reviewed.

Additional Comments:

It was noted that the SCRCA has assembled a committee to review the agricultural lease agreements ahead of the next contract period and that the committee will aim to ensure considerations are made in regards to best farming practices and soil health.

BD-23-44

McCabe – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge and receive for information the correspondence dated April 5, 2023 from Chad Anderson regarding agricultural land stewardship and best farming practices.”

CARRIED

Correspondence dated March 27, 2023 from Gordon McAuslan regarding the seasonal campground rules and regulations pertaining to decks and other permanent structures was reviewed.

BD-23-45

Scott – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge and receive for information the correspondence dated March 27, 2023 from Gordon McAuslan regarding the seasonal campground rules and regulations pertaining to decks and other permanent structures.”

CARRIED

Correspondence dated March 31, 2023 from Alan and Margaret Lester regarding the seasonal campground rules and regulations pertaining to decks and other permanent structures was reviewed.

BD-23-46

O’Hara – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge and receive for information the correspondence dated March 31, 2023 from Alan and Margaret Lester regarding the seasonal campground rules and regulations pertaining to decks and other permanent structures.”

CARRIED

Under New Business

Vice Chair, Lorie Scott wished to thank General Manager, Ken Phillips for the orientation provided to new directors and positions of office. Administrative Assistant and Board Coordinator, Ashley Fletcher was also thanked for her assistance.

Chair, Pat Brown encouraged all directors to consider attending or participating in the upcoming Sydenham River Canoe and Kayak Race on Sunday, April 30th and thanked those who have sponsored him and fellow director Emery Huszka in the race.

Pat – Sydenham River Canoe & Kayak Race – Encouraged to participate. Thank you for sponsors.

BD-23-47

Gillis – Kilner

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED



Pat Brown
Chair



Ken Phillips
General Manager