

Notice of Meeting
Meeting of the Membership #5-2024

Date: May 15, 2024
Time: 8:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Location: Administrative Centre, Wroxeter

A governance review will be held from 7:00pm-8:00pm.

Agenda

1. Welcome by the Chair
2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest
3. Approval of the Minutes: Meeting #4 held on April 17, 2024.
4. Business Out of the Minutes:
 - a) Review of Comments on Large Stock Planting Fees: Report #32-2024
 - b) Information/Education Schedule for 2024: Report #33-2024
5. Business Requiring Decision and or Direction:
 - a) Awarding of Tender for Office Renovations: Report #34-2024
 - b) MVCA's 75th Anniversary in 2026: Report #35-2024
6. Chair and Members Reports
7. Consent Agenda:
 - a) Revenue/Expenditure Report for April 2024: Report #36-2024
 - b) Review of Meeting with Saugeen Ojibway Nation staff: Report #37-2024
 - c) Agreements Signed: Report #38-2024
 - d) Correspondence: Forests Then and Now - Rural Voice
 - e) Correspondence: Conservation Ontario Council Meeting eBulletin – April 2024
8. Adjournment: Next meeting to be held on June 19th at 7:00pm.

Membership Meeting #4-2024 - **DRAFT**

April 17, 2024

Members Present: Alison Lobb, Ed McGugan, Alvin McLellan, Evan Hickey, Sharen Zinn, Megan Gibson, Andrew Fournier, Matt Duncan, Anita Van Hittersum, Ed Podniewicz

Members Absent: Vanessa Kelly

Staff Present: Phil Beard, General Manager-Secretary-Treasurer
Stewart Lockie, Conservation Areas Services Coordinator
Patrick Huber-Kidby, Planning and Regulations Supervisor
Donna Clarkson, Source Water Protection Specialist
Jayne Thompson, Communications, GIS, IT Coordinator
Michelle Quipp, Executive Assistant

Others Present: Cory Bilyea, Reporter, Midwestern News

1. Call to Order

Chair, Ed McGugan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no pecuniary interests at this time.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA) General Membership Meeting #3-2024 held on March 20, 2024.

Motion FA #39-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Megan Gibson

THAT the minutes from the General Membership Meeting #3-2024 held on March 20, 2024, be approved.

(carried)

4. Business Out of the Minutes

- a) Recommendation from Twp. Of Howick re: Proposed Naturalization at the Gorrie Conservation Area: Report #25-2024

Report #25-2024 was presented to the members and the following motion was made:

Motion FA #40-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Alvin McLellan

THAT MVCA start naturalizing and maintaining the south side of the conservation area and enter into agreement with the township of Howick regarding grass cutting on the north side.
(carried)

- b) Transition Requirements Ontario Regulation 41-24: Report #26-2024

Report #26-2024 was presented to the members and the following motions were made:

Motion FA #41-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Matt Duncan

THAT the following staff positions are appointed as officers under Section 30.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act:

General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

Supervisor of Planning & Regulations

Regulations Officer & Environmental Planner/ Regulations Officer

Conservation Areas Coordinator

Falls Reserve CA Superintendent

Falls Reserve CA Assistant Superintendent

Field Services Specialist

Park Patrol Officer

Park Security;

AND THAT the following staff positions are appointed to issue permits under Ontario Regulation 688/21:

All Conservation Area Employees

(carried)

Motion FA #42-24

Moved by: Anita Van Hittersum

Seconded by: Megan Gibson

THAT MVCA staff attend meetings with the building and development departments of our member municipalities and counties to continue communication around these changes;

AND THAT staff continue to monitor and incorporate guidance from Conservation Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry into regulatory working practices as that guidance is developed and issued.
(carried)

5. Business Requiring Decision and or Direction:

- a) Government Relations Strategy for 2024: Report #27-2024

Report #27-2024 was presented to the members and the following motions were made:

Motion FA #43-24

Moved by: Alvin McLellan

Seconded by: Alison Lobb

THAT MVCA chair and vice chairs meet with the two Members of Parliament.

(carried)

Motion FA #44-24

Moved by: Matt Duncan

Seconded by: Sharen Zinn

THAT MVCA chair write to MPP Lisa Thompson regarding the proposed meeting with the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

(carried)

Motion FA #45-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Ed Podniewicz

THAT MVCA prepare a newsletter and make presentations to member municipalities in 2024, as outlined in report #27-2024

(carried)

- b) Information/Education Strategy for 2024: Report #28-2024

Report #28-2024 was presented to the members and the following motion was made:

Motion FA #46-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Ed Podniewicz

THAT members identified Watershed Heath Assessment, Watershed Stewardship and Galbraith Conservation area, as future information and education topics.

(carried)

c) North Perth Flood Plain Mapping Comments: Report #29-2024

Report #29-2024 was presented to the members and the following motions were made:

Motion FA #47-24

Moved by: Alison Lobb

Seconded by: Evan Hickey

THAT the updated North Perth Floodplain Mapping be approved, except for the portion affected by the request for reconsideration, for use in Planning and Regulations and the development of tools to aid the Municipality's emergency services (stage mapping and evacuation mapping);
AND THAT results of the reinvestigated study area specific to 7977 and 8021 Rd 166 be brought back to the Members for approval at a later date.
(carried)

d) MCF Annual Meeting and Funding Confirmation for 2024: Report #30-2024

Report #30-2024 was presented to the members and the following motion was made:

Motion FA #48-24

Moved by: Anita Van Hittersum

Seconded by: Megan Gibson

THAT MVCA send a letter of thanks to the MCF and JHETF Boards in appreciation for their support of MVCA in 2024.
(carried)

6. Chair and Member Reports

Alvin McLellan asked if staff had any information on a clear-cutting violation.

Alison Lobb asked staff about a property located near the Falls Reserve Conservation Area.

Andrew Fournier shared news of the development of community garden projects in Mitchell and Dublin

7. Consent Agenda:

The following items were circulated to the Members for their information:

- a) Revenue-Expenditure Report for March 2024: #31-2024

Motion FA #49-24

Moved by: Matt Duncan

Seconded by: Megan Gibson

THAT Report #31 with the respective motions as outlined in the Consent Agenda be approved.
(carried)

8. Adjournment

Next meeting: May 15, 2024, at 8:00 pm at the Administrative Centre, Wroxeter. A governance review will be held from 7:00pm to 8:00 pm

Motion FA #50-24

Moved by: Megan Gibson

Seconded by: Andrew Fournier

THAT the Members Meeting be adjourned at 8:07 pm.
(carried)

Ed McGugan
Chair

Phil Beard
General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

Members Report #32-2024

To: Members, MVCA
From: Shannon Millar, Restoration Supervisor
Date: May 15th, 2024

Subject: Review of Comments Received on Additional 2024 Stewardship Fees

Purpose:

To provide direction on the proposed additional 2024 stewardship fees.

Background:

On March 20th, 2024, the Members passed the following motion:
“THAT the additional stewardship fees for 2024 be circulated for comment and that any comments received be reviewed at the May 16th, 2024 meeting”

Proposed Fees:

Service	Cost
Hand planting large stock trees and shrubs	\$14/ tree or shrub
Note: There is a minimum hand planting fee of \$1,000 for large stock plantings	

Note these prices are only for projects planted by MVCA. Neighboring Conservation Authority fee schedules will apply if projects are coordinated but not planted by MVCA.

Comments Received:

MVCA has not received any comments since the 30-day review period which ended on, April 19th, 2024.

Recommendation:

THAT the additional 2024 Stewardship Fees be approved.

Members Report #33-2024

To: Members, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
From: Phil Beard, GM-ST
Date: May 3, 2024

Subject: Information/Education Schedule for 2024

Purpose:

To develop a schedule for the Information and Education topics that the Members have identified.

Background:

At the April 17th meeting the following motion was passed:

Motion FA #46-24

“THAT members identified Watershed Health Assessment, Watershed Stewardship and Galbraith Conservation area, as future information, and education topics.”

Proposed Schedule:

1. Watershed Health Assessment:
 - a) Overview of Aquatic Health Assessment: In 2024 staff will be starting their assessment of the health of the rivers and streams across the watersheds that are located within MVCA's area of jurisdiction. A presentation will be made at the September 18th meeting.

2. Watershed Stewardship:
 - a) Jamestown Wetland
This project is a 1.6 acre wetland creation project adjacent to the Little Maitland River in Jamestown (between Wroxeter and Brussels). Buckthorn grinding and light excavation was completed to create habitat and collect more surface water runoff during heavy rain events and spring melts. Additionally, 1 acre will be planted with 550 trees and shrubs in 2024 to buffer the wetland. The overall cost of this project including excavation, spoil placement, and planting was approximately \$49,000. We could visit this project prior to the June 19th Members Meeting.

b) Naftels Creek Dam Removal & Stream Restoration Project:

This project removed a concrete dam along Naftels Creek, a high-quality cold-water stream with Brook Trout about 6km south of Goderich. Removal of this dam has reconnected 4km of upstream habitat which fish and other aquatic animals can now migrate and utilize. Restoration also included converting a 0.3 acre online pond to an offline wetland. The water entering this pond previously became warm and algae filled before re-entering the creek. This restoration will improve water quality and temperature of the cold-water creek by only allowing water to overflow into the wetland during high flow events and allowing it to outflow quickly. The overall cost of this project including engineering, construction, and planting was approximately \$125,000.

Proposed Schedule: We could visit this project on Wednesday, July 17, 2024, at 7:00pm.

3. Conservation Areas: Galbraith Conservation Area: MVCA has leased the Galbraith Conservation Area to the Municipality of North Perth. This conservation area will be providing day use programs for children. North Perth is also working with the At Last Forest School to provide outdoor education programs for children.

Proposed Schedule: The staff from North Perth are available to provide a tour on Wednesday, August 7th at 7:00pm.

Recommendation:

To be developed at the meeting.

Members Report #34-2024

To: Members, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
From: Stewart Lockie, Conservation Areas Coordinator
Date: May 6th, 2024

Subject: Awarding of Contract for Administration Office Accessibility Renovations

Purpose:

To award the contract for accessibility renovations to the MVCA Administration office main entrance and washrooms.

Background:

On March 11th, 2024, MVCA posted a request for proposal (RFP: MC#24-01-CA) for the design and renovations to the front entranceway and main washrooms at the Administration office. The RFP was posted with a tender deadline of April 3rd however the deadline was extended to May 1st after receiving several requests from interested contractors for additional time.

The RFP outlined all aspects of the proposed renovations to provide the following:

- Accessible entranceway and vestibule door systems complete with power door operators.
- One (1) non-gender universal accessible washroom and one (1) non-gender washroom, both complete with all fixtures and equipment.

Tenders where to include all items for a complete project including removal of all old materials, providing electrical servicing, lighting, new flooring, new ceiling tiles in the washrooms, painting, and all requirements to follow accessibility, building codes and regulations.

An optional item was listed in the RFP to provide a “through the wall” drop off box in the vestibule area of the office for after hours delivery of mail. This additional item is recommended to be included in the contract to provide this service.

On May 1st at 2pm, staff had received three tenders for consideration. Staff reviewed all tenders for completeness and determined all tenders met the RFP requirements as specified.

Tender prices are as follows:

Contractor	Tender price	Optional Item Price	TOTAL (plus hst)
Domm Construction	\$117,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$118,000.00
DCH Construction	\$166,449.72	\$1,450.00	\$167,889.72
Direk Construction Inc.	\$168,430.00	\$3,050.00	\$171,480.00

Recommendation:

THAT the Members approve the tender price of \$ 118,000 (plus HST) submitted by DOMM Construction Ltd. for the design and build services for accessibility renovations to existing office entrance and washrooms;
AND THAT an additional \$20,000 be added to the project budget for completion of the accessibility renovation budget to be taken from Working Capital Accumulated Surplus.

Members Report #35-2024

To: Members, Maitland Conservation
From: Phil Beard, General Manager – Secretary Treasurer
Jayne Thompson, Communications and GIS-IT Coordinator
Date: May 7, 2024
Subject: Preliminary Planning for 75th Anniversary

Purpose:

- To obtain direction on the types of anniversary activities Members would like staff to investigate if we decide to mark the milestone.

Background:

In 2020, the Members decided to forgo celebrating MVCA's 70th anniversary in 2021 due to all the health restrictions that were in place at that time. The Members decided that it would be more appropriate to celebrate the 75th anniversary in 2026 instead.

- The upcoming 75th anniversary provides an opportunity to highlight the accomplishments of the organization while spotlighting current and upcoming initiatives.
- Anniversary messaging would give us a chance to highlight the contributions of individuals, municipalities, and community partnerships.
- Marking the anniversary may also provide leverage to complete significant projects such as the picnic shelter at Wawanosh Valley Conservation Area.
- The staff time and associated costs of potential anniversary activities could be significant.

Potential Anniversary Activities

Staff have developed a list of preliminary ideas. Additional ideas or approaches from Members would be appreciated.

1. Potential Large-Scale Projects

- a) Completion of the picnic shelter at Wawanosh Valley Conservation Area: The estimated cost of this project is \$140,000.

Pros: The Maitland Conservation Foundation is currently raising funds for this project. The anniversary may help spur donations. If the project can be completed in time, an official opening could be held in the summer of 2026. The opening would provide an opportunity to recognize donors and celebrate the anniversary. It will create a lasting anniversary legacy.

Cons: Uncertainty on whether sufficient funds will be available and whether or not contractors could have construction finished in time. Significant funds and staff time required for the project.

- b) Development of a pollinator garden at the front of the Administration Centre in Wroxeter

Pros: Will create a strong visual and environmental anniversary legacy.

Cons: Staff time required for project preparation and implementation. Costs associated with design, implementation, and maintenance of the pollinator plot.

2. Tour and BBQ

A tour of Conservation Authority projects followed by a dinner or BBQ has been the traditional approach to marking MVCA anniversaries.

Pros: It provides an opportunity to bring together municipal partners, MPPs, MPs, agency and community partners, and staff. A bus tour provides participants with an opportunity to look at several significant projects over an afternoon.

Cons: This type of event is expensive (venue, meal, buses, support materials etc.) even if we charge a fee. It will also require a significant amount of staff time. There are potential weather and accessibility issues for the tour. No legacy from the event.

3. Potential Year-Long Activities

These activities are low cost but will require staff time for planning, content development and implementation.

- a) Branding - incorporate the 75th theme into the logo to be used from late 2025 to early 2027. Incorporate the image into displays, website, social media, clothing, kiosks and events.

- b) Social Media - develop a series of Throwback Thursday posts highlighting previous successes. Create 75 posts with conservation and stewardship tips.
- c) Tell Success Stories - develop website story maps and info graphics that convey anniversary messages in bite-size slices.
- d) Looking Ahead - use the anniversary as a focal point at MVCA special events and community activities. Invite the public to give us their Maitland/Nine River stories and tell us what conservation changes they'd like to see over the next 75 years.

Direction on the activities that the Members would like staff to investigate further would be appreciated.

Recommendation:

To be developed at the meeting.

Member's Report #36-2024

To: Member's, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
From: Danielle Livingston, Administrative and Financial Services Coordinator
Date: May 8, 2024

Subject Corporate Services - Accounts Paid and Received for: April 2024

Recommendation

That the financial report be accepted as presented for the month of April 2024;
and that accounts outlined in the appendix to this report be approved.

Financial Summary Report Ending	0
Revenue Invoiced	\$228,418.33
Accounts Paid	\$332,330.71

Financial Status at Month Ending	0
Bank Loans Outstanding	\$0.00
Bank Balance at Month End	\$2,091,567.40
Total	\$2,091,567.40

**Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
Accounts Receivable as of April 30, 2024**

Operating Budget Revenue

Corporate

Corporate Services sale office support/rent office equipment	\$	851.15
Drinking Water Source Protection rent/overhead	\$	230.00
bank interest	\$	4,061.70
Huron Clean Water Project administration	\$	<u>475.75</u>
	\$	5,618.60

DWSP Transition Ausable Bayfield Conservation reimbursement	\$	<u>2,794.98</u>
	\$	2,794.98

Communications sales and donations	\$	<u>108.00</u>
	\$	108.00

Total Corporate Services \$ 8,521.58

Flood Safety

Planning/Regulations property advisory fees	\$	270.00
solicitor inquires	\$	760.00
CWMS/watercourse regulations	\$	470.00
regulation applications	\$	<u>4,540.00</u>
	\$	6,040.00

Total Flood Safety Services \$ 6,040.00

Watershed Stewardship

Forestry Provincial funding	\$	400.00
admin fee	\$	300.00
large stock user fees	\$	26,912.25
seedling user fees	\$	<u>15,083.00</u>
	\$	42,695.25

Total Watershed Stewardship Services \$ 42,695.25

Conservation Areas

FRCA camping and park admission	\$	<u>142,887.52</u>
	\$	142,887.52

WPCA camping	\$	<u>9,216.86</u>
	\$	9,216.86

Motor Pool revenue	\$	<u>4,618.04</u>
	\$	4,618.04

Total Conservation Areas Operations \$ 156,722.42

Total Operating Budget Revenue \$ 213,979.25

Projects Budget Revenue

Watershed Stewardship

Huron County Clean Water funding

\$ 14,439.08

\$ 14,439.08

Total Watershed Stewardship Services \$ 14,439.08

Conservation Areas

Total Project Budget Revenue \$ 14,439.08

Total Operating and Project Revenues \$ 228,418.33

**Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
Expense Reports
As of April 30, 2024**

Date	Num	Name	Amount
04-05-2024	24998	E&M Martin	-550.98
04-05-2024	24999	Forest Technology Systems Ltd.	-1,131.70
04-05-2024	25000	Gables Electric	-250.86
04-05-2024	24996	S. D. M. Instructional Services	-1,690.00
04-05-2024	25001	Seebach & Company	-11,074.00
04-05-2024	25002	Bell Mobility Inc. 500181172	-950.03
04-05-2024	25003	CDW Canada Inc.	-422.97
04-05-2024	24997	Cedar Crest Trout Farm LTD.	-3,095.10
04-05-2024	25004	Fishing Friendly	-904.00
04-05-2024	25005	Xerox Canada Ltd.	-76.77
04-05-2024	25006	Bell Canada-properties	-495.88
04-05-2024	25007	GeoProcess Research Associates Inc.	-8,282.90
04-05-2024	25008	Maitland Conservation Foundation	-100.00
04-05-2024	00862	ContinuT Corp.	-2,676.42
04-05-2024	00863	Curt's Coolers Inc	-2,486.00
04-05-2024	00864	Ethan Dykstra	-41.00
04-05-2024	00865	F.S. Partners	-137.83
04-05-2024	00866	Foxton Fuels Limited	-128.09
04-05-2024	00867	Hodgins BC Wingham	-175.02
04-05-2024	00868	Ideal Supply Inc.	-396.62
04-05-2024	00869	Key West Gates Inc.	-3,949.35
04-05-2024	00870	Lei`s Lumber Company Ltd	-314.39
04-05-2024	00871	Mathew Shetler	-81.46
04-05-2024	00872	MicroAge BASICS	-1,814.80
04-05-2024	00873	Mid Western Newspapers	-339.00
04-05-2024	00874	North Huron Publishing Company Inc.	-906.08
04-05-2024	00875	Sparlings Propane-Parkland Corporation	-90.34
04-05-2024	00876	Speare Seeds Limited	-198.15
04-05-2024	00877	Verbinnen's Nursery Ltd.	-1,998.97
04-05-2024	00878	Watson's Home Hardware	-74.53
04-05-2024	00879	Wighty's Repairs Inc.	-1,065.64
04-05-2024	00880	Yellow Pages	-14.80
04-05-2024	25009	D & I Wattam Construction Ltd.	-226.00
04-05-2024	25010	Marsh Canada Limited	-74,331.52
04-08-2024	Apr25EFT	Sun Life Financial	-6,080.32
04-15-2024		Payroll	-49,400.92
04-17-2024	25012	Chris Van Esbroeck	-5,000.00

04-17-2024	25013	Donna Barger	-169.50
04-17-2024	25014	John Barger	-1,000.00
04-17-2024	25015	Wightman Telecom Ltd.	-1,074.73
04-17-2024	25016	Canada Municipal Jobs Inc.	-337.87
04-17-2024	25017	407 ETR	-13.42
04-17-2024	25018	CIBC Visa Centre	-7,158.67
04-17-2024	25019	Merner Contracting Ltd.	-762.87
04-17-2024	00881	AGO Industries Inc.	-749.19
04-17-2024	00882	Borrmann's Garage	-913.76
04-17-2024	00883	Brandt Security	-22.60
04-17-2024	00884	Edward Fuels	-976.49
04-17-2024	00885	Jutzi Water Technologies	-124.30
04-17-2024	00886	MARCC Apparel and Promotions	-569.97
04-17-2024	00887	North Huron Publishing Company Inc.	-456.26
04-17-2024	00888	Patrick Huber-Kidby	-33.89
04-17-2024	00889	Westario Power Inc.	-30.52
04-23-2024	EChqApr24	Clifford Country Store	-100.00
04-30-2024	25020	Wendy Mukerji	-25.00
04-30-2024		Payroll	-50,197.38
04-30-2024	Apr24EFT	Minister of Finance	-3,047.15
04-30-2024	Apr24EFT	OMERS	-26,473.24
04-30-2024	Apr24EFT	Receiver General	-52,062.92
04-30-2024	Apr24EFT	Workplace Safety & Insurance Board	-5,078.54
		Total	-332,330.71

Members Report #37-2024

To: Members, Maitland Conservation
From: Phil Beard, General Manager – Secretary Treasurer
Jayne Thompson, Communications and GIS-IT Coordinator
Date: May 7, 2024
Subject: Summary of Meeting with Saugeen Ojibway Nation Staff

Purpose:

To provide Members with information on an introductory workshop held recently with Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) staff.

Background:

For several months Maitland Conservation staff have been working with Shared Path Consultation Initiative to set up a meeting with SON staff. Maitland Conservation staff are interested in having conversations with SON to determine if there are points of common of interest that we may be able to collaborate on. Engagement with local First Nations communities is often a requirement when seeking permits and approvals for conservation projects. Building a relationship with SON is a first step in meaningful engagement.

Shared Path Consultation Initiative is a charitable organization that is addressing the challenges and opportunities when land use change and Aboriginal Treaty rights intersect. They are working to facilitate Indigenous – non-Indigenous bridge building, particularly relating to land use planning.

Shared Path has received support through Heritage Canada/Patrimoine Canada to develop and deliver a series of these workshops. The Maitland Conservation – SON meeting was held by Zoom on April 12, 2024.

Participants:

From Maitland Conservation, Phil Beard, Shannon Millar, Danielle Livingston, Jeff Winzenried, Patrick Huber-Kidby and Jayne Thompson participated.

From the SON Environment Office participants included:

- Emily Mansur, Acting Manager - Coastal Waters Monitoring Program
- Katrina Keeshig, Lead Technician – Coastal Waters Monitoring Program
- Natalie Kuipers, GIS Coordinator
- Amber Debassige, Resources and Infrastructure

A number of other participants joined the workshop including:

- Summer Valentine, Director of Planning, Building and Economic Development for the Town of Collingwood
- Michael Fox and Heather Swan from Indigenous Engagement facilitated the session.
- Patricia Kambitsch, a visual storyteller, “drew” the discussion. Her images are attached to this report.
- Several staff and board members of Shared Path including Carloyn King, co-founder of Shared Path and the first woman elected as Chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Common Links and Challenges:

The discussion showed that Maitland Conservation and SON share a number of common interests. Both organizations expressed similar connections to the environment including a recognition of the links between land, water and forests.

SON has been doing long-term near shore water quality monitoring and fisheries work and is looking to expand monitoring to in-land streams. The shoreline is a key area of interest for the Environment Office. Their GIS staff are interested in developing mapping products that include data sets, land use planning information, and areas of cultural significance for their traditional territory. They are interested in integrating relevant Maitland Conservation data if possible.

In terms of challenges, the SON team is dealing with a very large geographic area with limited staff and limited capacity to undertake new projects and engage with outside partners. SON deals with over 30 upper and lower tier levels of government. Like Maitland Conservation, managing capacity is an issue for the SON team.

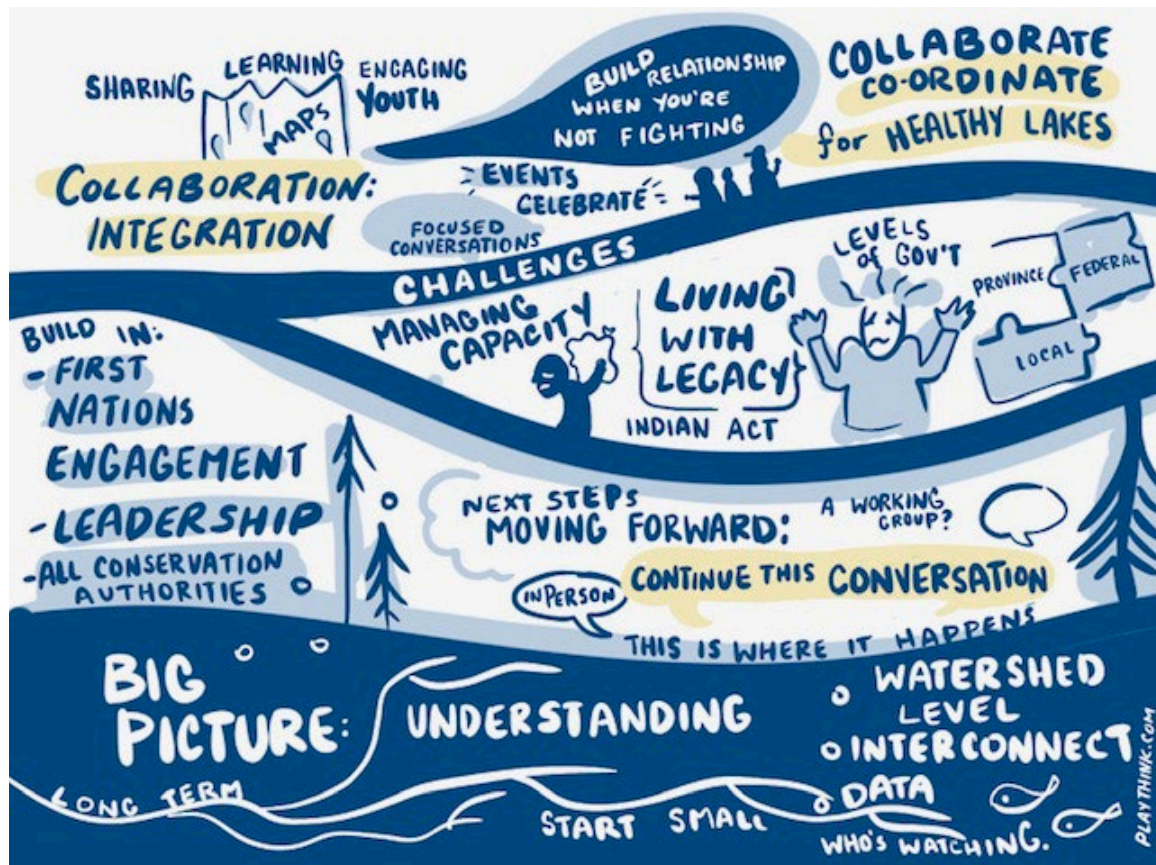
Outcomes:

There was consensus amongst participants that building a collaborative relationship will take time but there was interest in continuing the conversation through in-person discussions. The possibility of a joint working group or round table discussions was raised as was creating opportunities to bring leadership into the conversations.

Following the workshop, Phil Beard provided information to SON on Healthy Lake Huron (HLH) and on the One Health Integrated Approach to healthy communities. Phil encouraged SON to reconnect with the HLH initiative.

Sharing of information on special events and new initiatives was identified as a simple way of staying in touch and that has begun.

Shared Path has indicated that they are available to coordinate the process of planning in-person meet ups so we can continue to connect and identify common goals.



Members Report #38-2024

To: Members, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
From: Stewart Lockie, Conservation Areas Coordinator
Date: May 6th, 2024
Subject: Agreements Signed

Purpose:

To identify agreements that have been signed for compatible uses on CA lands.

1. Gorrie Conservation Area Vegetation Maintenance Agreement.

On April 5th, Maitland Conservation Members approved staff recommendation to enter into a grass maintenance agreement with the Township of Howick to provide grass cutting services on the North side of the river at Gorrie Conservation Area. Maitland Conservation would provide vegetation maintenance on the south side of the river including the reduction of grass cutting in several areas.

On April 25th, 2024, the council of Howick township approved and signed a 1 year vegetation maintenance agreement with Maitland Conservation with the above terms.

Recommendation:

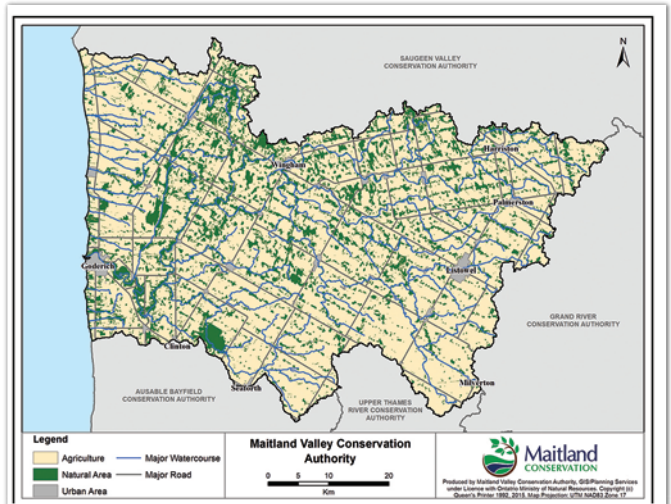
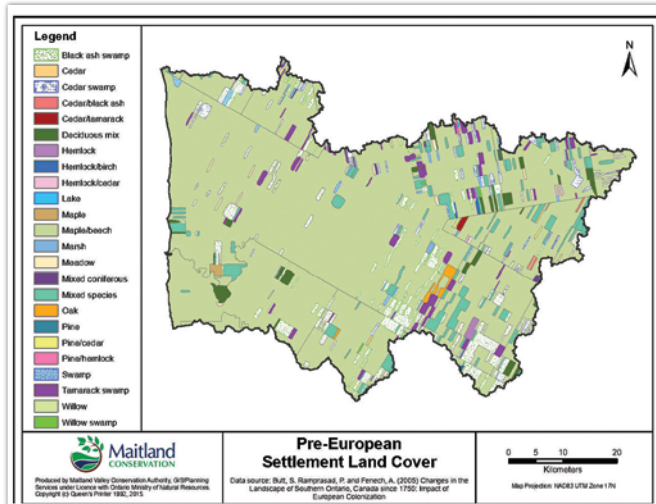
THAT the Members support the signing of the vegetation maintenance agreement with the Township of Howick for 2024.



Forests: then and now

With ash dominating tree regeneration and forest cover declining, results from the Forest Health Project are worrisome

• By Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot •



Before European settlement, Huron County was awash in forest cover (above left) with multitudes of species. Now, forests are fragmented across the county (above, right) with maple being the predominant species reveals results from the Forest Health Project shared by Erin Gouthro, a watershed ecologist, at the April meeting of the Water Protection Steering Committee held in Holmesville. ~Images supplied by Erin Gouthro

The number of tree species in Huron County’s forests is “catastrophically low” reveals a condensed report of the Forest Health Project released April 9.

“Most of our trees are upland and downland Maples,” says Erin Gouthro, who has been working in drainage, wetland, aquatic and terrestrial management as a Watershed Ecologist with the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority since 2013. “Maple trees have always historically been the dominant tree species in this watershed but a significant drop in other species has left Maples as the only prevalent tree species.”

Gouthro is currently leading a watershed-wide health assessment of the MVCA’s aquatic and terrestrial systems. Her findings were, in many ways, terrifying with regard to the future of forests in Huron County. She shared them at the April meeting of Huron County’s Water Protection Steering Committee

Forest cover in Huron County has decreased from 16.5 per cent in 2000 to 16.09 per cent in 2020, which amounts to 57,679 total hectares of forested land. Between 2015 to 2020, 207 hectares of forested land was lost. North Maitland had the most total forest loss. Land conversion to agriculture was the leading contributor of forest loss.

Back when the country was covered with forests, they would have been multi-structural with different levels in the canopy. There would have been a “super canopy” of trees like tall white pines which would have been so wide,

you could not wrap your arms around them. Like a shelving unit in a house, all these canopy levels created complexity in the forest, something today’s forests struggle with. “Our canopies are homogenized. We do not see a four-structure canopy. Ours are two-structured.” Gouthro explained that canopy complexity and lack of it is a “broad signal” of forest health that needs to be documented to be used as a baseline for future monitoring of the county forests.

Good news is that the basal size of trees is slightly increased which refers to the diameter of the tree and their footprint over the landscape. Then this good news was dampened with knowledge that the understory is getting slightly worse. “We aren’t really sure why,” admitted Gouthro.

Regeneration is another concern. To analyze regeneration, forest tree scientists drop a one-metre grid and identify all the tiny trees in the grid to get an idea of the future forest. It was discovered that most of these tiny trees are ash, with very few maple trees in many forests.

“I have been in maple forests with no maple regeneration,” said Gouthro. “Zero is zero. With only ash regenerating, could that mean the end of forests in Huron County?” she asked. The problem with regenerating ash is as soon as they get large enough (10 centimetres), ash borers infest the tree and kill it. Overall, ash trees accounted for 45 per cent of all seedlings counted. Red

maple were five per cent, sugar maple 13 per cent and black cherry four per cent.

Downed woody debris (DWD) is another issue. “It blew out the threshold,” said Gouthro. With all the debris, will forests now emit more carbon than capturing it? This debris also forms mats which is ideal for plants like wild raspberries but they further block the ability of new trees to generate amongst the DWD.

Looking at other forest health signals, Gouthro noted:

- Spring ephemerals: (wildflowers that appear in early spring then disappear such as Trout lily, Oxalis, Hepatics and Bloodroot) are still on the landscape which is a good signal. However, the invasive Garlic mustard which thrives in disturbed areas destroys spring ephemerals

- Pollinators: There are 13 species of wild bumble bees and Gouthro says some of these native bumble bee species are almost extirpated, but added more bee counts and research is being done this year to collect data

Following Gouthro’s talk, the Mayor of Central Huron, Jim Ginn, said in his woodlots, he does see maple, hickory, hackberry and oak regenerating. “To me, woodlots are always changing and a maple stand does not always stay a maple stand.”

Gouthro acknowledged they did see hickory and oak and other trees regenerating but believes there are too few mature stands of these trees to create mass regeneration due to the “cutting pressure” they take. “Most of the woodlots I see just have a flush of ash,” she said.

It’s a signal that really worries her. “How can we get a diversity of regeneration? Can we help it? Do we need to help it? Or is it just part of the cycle?” Gouthro said she sees some forests that are very well-managed where owners replant a variety of species. Her worry is how to educate other landowners so they can be better stewards of their forests because logging the bush and creating an ash thicket to grow is not promising for the future health of forests.

For Gouthro, this was an important point of discussion and generated much discussion as well. Dave Pullen, Huron County’s Forest Conservation Officer, agreed that to add diversity to a forest, there needs to be a good seed source nearby. He has seen forests with large cherry trees create an influx of cherry tree seedlings, for instance.

Pullen said for landowners concerned about the future of forests, the best thing they can do is get “good advice. Don’t sell to the first logger who comes down your laneway.” The problem is that biological problems in forests are combined with a current economic pressure and that is creating a “perfect storm” as landowners log bushes or destroy them to create more farmland.

Gouthro added that having a good database is critical to the future of forests as well. “We need to take stock of where we are to elucidate trends and problems and give that information to landowners,” she said. “Monitoring and assessment also provide a foundation of information that can be used throughout time to evaluate change across various time intervals — important because forests exist at a scale that spans many human lifetimes. Data in turn becomes a kind of living memory to hand on to future



Watershed Ecologist, Erin Gouthro, has been spearheading the Forest Health Project, which is tracking forest health signals. Her report indicates forest health is fair in many areas but well-managed forests do exist.

generations,” states the actual report.

There was a little bit of friendly tension between Pullen and Gouthro as they debated the best approach to forest management with Gouthro finally saying “foresters need to work with ecologists because we see signals in forests that foresters do not recognize because they are not trained to see it. I love foresters and we need to work together from the ground up to work on the whole system.”

For example, new research about spring ephemerals has revealed that these tiny, disappearing flowers take up nitrogen first thing in the spring and as they die down, they release it back into the soil for budding baby trees. “Spring ephemerals are the nursery plants for young trees,” she said.

There is much more information in the actual report which is well worth reading for every landowner. As part of the conclusion of the Forest Health Study report, it was stated:

“If the forests in the Maitland are to have a future, thereby providing their life-giving services to our communities, our perspective must shift. We must stop thinking that whatever influence we have on forests is minor and they’ll simply grow back. The 2021/2022 forest demonstrates the opposite. Under certain disturbance regimes forests don’t grow back, rather, they transform to low-grade invasive plants that halt forest regeneration and destroy habitat for other native forest species.” ♦

Join Our Mailing List



Council eBulletin

Meeting Highlights

This Council eBulletin provides members with a summary of discussions and decisions that took place at the Conservation Ontario Council Meeting on Monday, April 15, 2024. For additional information, please contact the Conservation Ontario staff member listed below.

Conservation Ontario Elects New Board of Directors

Conservation Ontario (CO) is governed by an elected six-member Board of Directors. At the April 15th Annual General Meeting, the following appointments were made to the 2024 CO Board of Directors.

- **Chair, Chris White** (Grand River Conservation Authority)

- **Vice-Chair, Johnathan Scott** (Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority)
- **Vice-Chair, Pat Warren** (Kawartha Conservation)
- **Director, Rob Baldwin** (Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority)
- **Director, Brad McNevin** (Quinte Conservation Authority)
- **Director, Chandra Sharma** (Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority)

Thank you to the 2023 CO Board of Directors for their support, guidance, and leadership.

Staff Contact: [Angela Coleman](#)

2024 Orientation for New Council Members

A presentation is available to familiarize new Conservation Ontario Council Members with Council and Conservation Ontario. Please access the presentation [here](#). If members do not yet have access to the CO Members website, they may register for an account [here](#).

Staff Contact: [Angela Coleman](#)

Conservation Ontario's 2023 Annual Report Released

Highlights from the [2023 Conservation Ontario Annual Report](#) were presented at the CO Annual General Meeting on April 15th. This annual report tells stories of successful collaborations between Conservation Ontario and its partners. These stories remind us that no single entity can tackle conservation challenges alone. Through partnerships, we leverage our collective strengths, share best practices, and amplify our impact.

Thank you for being a part of our stories and supporting Ontario's Conservation Authority network.

Staff Contact: [Nekeisha Mohammed](#)

April 2023 to March 2024 Annual Update on Conservation Ontario Representatives, Committees and Conservation Authority Discussion Groups

Conservation Ontario provides an annual list of CO Representatives and Conservation Authority (CA) Discussion Groups to recognize the significant volunteer contributions provided by CA staff to collective strategic priorities. The [Annual General Meeting Report](#), including appended tables, provides the Committees that were active and the committee members present from April 2023 - March 2024. In addition to those acknowledged in the tables, Conservation Ontario recognizes and appreciates all CA staff contributions to our collective effectiveness including for example, those who review policy proposals and provide comments for development of Conservation Ontario submissions.

CO Staff Contact: [Bonnie Fox](#)

2023 Annual Report on Conservation Authority Section 28 Permit Timelines

Since 2022, all 36 CAs annually track and prepare reporting on review and approval timelines for section 28 permit applications. In 2023, CAs continued to demonstrate a high level of positive client service, issuing over 95% of all permits within provincial timelines. Conservation Ontario will be working with CAs to review and update the annual reporting framework in accordance with new requirements under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. For more information, see the [Council Report](#).

Staff Contact: [Nicholas Fischer](#)

Implementation Support for Conservation Authorities: Ontario Regulation 41/24

On February 1, 2024, the Province released a new Minister's regulation (Ontario Regulation 41/24: *Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*), which took effect on April 1, 2024. To support CAs in the transition to the new legislative and regulatory framework, Conservation Ontario prepared implementation resources, training sessions and held weekly meetings for CAs. Links to these resources are provided in the [Council Report](#). Conservation Ontario staff will continue to collaborate with CA staff to provide resources and training on the new regulation, as required.

Staff Contact: [Bonnie Fox](#)

Flood and Erosion Hazard Mapping Initiatives and Engagement

Conservation Ontario is partnering with Conservation Authorities (CAs), the Provincial and Federal Governments, and other organizations on Flood and Erosion Hazard Mapping projects and initiatives. This includes developing technical descriptions for stages of flood mapping projects and on-line metadata collection application on the current status of floodplain mapping studies commissioned by CAs. Relevant links are provided in the [Council Report](#). Conservation Ontario also collaborated with the Canadian Water Resources Association, CAs, and others to deliver a very successful

Flooding Workshop focused on flood mapping on April 24th and 25, 2024.

Staff Contact: [Jo-Anne Rzdaki](#) and [Rick Wilson](#)

Nature Smart Climate Solutions Program

Three years (2021-2024) of Conservation Ontario's Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund with Environment and Climate Change Canada have been successfully completed. In year 3, Conservation Ontario received two rounds of additional funding from ECCC, bringing the total year 3 funding allocation to \$5 million, and the total funding allocation over three years to \$11 million. Over the full 3 years, from April 2021 to March 2024, 20 CAs completed a total of 83 projects including 11 securement projects, 7 cover cropping projects and 66 wetland, grassland and riparian restoration projects.

Conservation Ontario is continuing to collect a list of standby projects for restoration, land securement and enhanced land management projects occurring between 2024-2030. Projects submitted using the [form](#) will be considered for funding under the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund and other funding opportunities. For more details, see the [Council Report](#).

Staff Contact: [Jenna Salvatore](#)

Tree Canada Partnership with Conservation Ontario

Tree Canada and Conservation Ontario (CO) entered into a "Memorandum of Understanding Relating to Tree Canada's National Greening Program" in November 2023. The goal of the Tree Canada and CO partnership is to enable Conservation Authorities (CAs) to efficiently access funds through the National Greening Program to complete tree planting projects in Ontario. The partnership supports planting up to 600,000 tree seedlings annually during 2024, 2025, and 2026.

On January 25, 2024, CO and Tree Canada hosted a [webinar for CAs](#) to outline the program goals and project eligibility. There were 68 attendees total from 29 CAs.

CAs submitted planting sites to CO in February, and were approved for funding by Tree Canada for the 2024 planting year. As of March 26th, CO will enter into agreements with 10 CAs, for a total of 47 sites, where 104,706 trees and shrubs will be planted.

Staff Contact: [Jo-Anne Rzdaki](#)

2024 Latornell Conservation Symposium - Collaboration: The Future of Conservation is Collaborative

This year's [Latornell Conservation Symposium](#) will be hosted on October 8-9 at the Paramount Eventspace in Woodbridge. This year's theme is Collaboration: The Future of Conservation is Collaborative. Over the course of the two-day event, we will explore and promote partnerships to drive positive change in conservation.

A [Call for Abstracts](#) is currently open, and we are accepting proposals for presentations, panels, workshops field tours and webinars until Friday, May 17th! This year, we are also excited to receive proposals for [PechaKucha](#), a "talk less, show more" presentation.

Registration for the Symposium opens August 12, 2024. Learn more at www.latornell.ca or follow us on X at [@conont](#) for updates.

CO staff contact: [Nekeisha Mohammed](#)

Program Updates

- [Policy and Planning](#) (*Bonnie Fox*)
- [Business Development and Partnerships](#) (*Jo-Anne Rzdaki*)
- [Drinking Water Source Protection](#) (*Leslie Rich*)
- [Marketing and Communications](#) (*Nekeisha Mohammed*)
- [Information Management](#) (*Rick Wilson and Patricia Moleirinho*)

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