

Full Authority
18 November 2021
Agenda Item: 12

General Manager's Report

Background

The General Manager's report provides a brief update for the Board Members prior to the Board meeting bringing forward additional information and/or progress on initiatives or current issues for the Board members consideration.

Watershed Management

Current Watershed Conditions

- Water levels and flows have gradually been receding toward the winter draw down, especially in the past two weeks. This fits into the traditional window when the CVCA aims to have all lakes at winter levels in preparation for the spring runoff.
- While this is the aim of CVCA water management staff, the above average precipitation levels in the fall have also extended the summer recreational levels. This has been a boon for cottage owners, especially with above average fall temperatures. The combination has resulted in more recreational opportunities on their lakes later into the season.
- Although CVCA staff have taken this situation into consideration, the Authority must follow normal water management practices and continue to draw down lake levels to create flood storage capacity.
- Stop log adjustments will be ongoing and should be near completion by the end of November or beginning of December depending on weather conditions.

Anticipated Conditions

- Based on current weather patterns and predictions for the winter, CVCA staff are anticipating higher than average flows for at least the remainder of the fall and possibly at the beginning of the winter season.

Water Erosion Control Infrastructure Status Update

- The Crowe Bridge weir inspection had crawled to a standstill due to above average precipitation amounts that started in the summer and spilled over into the fall. For example, the two day low pressure system that brought approximately 160mm of rain to the watershed in early September pushed flows at the Marmora dam to spring freshet levels.
- Flows have continued to remain high, resulting in additional stop log adjustments throughout the watershed and with these conditions, the work at the Crowe Bridge weir was not possible to proceed since the engineer required a profile of the weir to be surveyed.
- Fortunately, a small window was available to manage the flows in the lower portion of the watershed to allow the work to proceed on the 10th of November. If this opportunity was missed, the survey work may not have been completed and the assessment of the weir may have been jeopardized.
- CVCA staff also had to assist with the work due to safety concerns expressed by the surveyors.
- Since there was a significant delay in collecting data, the report will not be ready until late March of 2022.

Conservation Areas Update

McGeachie Conservation Area

- Cross country skiing with groomed trails was offered for the first time last year at the McGeachie Conservation Area with great success. The CVCA received positive feedback from users and along with donations for trail maintenance and upkeep during the winter season.
- Recently, the groomer for last year informed the CVCA that due to the distance he had to travel, he decided to withdraw his services. However, he has volunteered to train local volunteers to do the grooming and will be assisting with building the sled for grooming. He is hopeful the CVCA will allow it to be stored on site to help reduce the effort to complete the work.

- Should the donations remain at the same level as last year, there should not be any additional funding required to pay for the work. In fact, as the activity grows in popularity, CVCA staff are hopeful the donations will correspondingly increase.
- If the donations decrease, CVCA will take the expenses for the trail maintenance from the lands budget.
- In preparation for the winter season, volunteers from the Hastings Destination Trail Inc. (HDTI) will be clearing the trail of any deadfall and/or brushing that is required. These volunteers are covered through HDTI insurance.
- The CVCA is also anticipating an increase in usage of the trail by individuals who have used the Nellie Lunn trails should the sale of that area proceed.

Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area

- As part of the three phase plan to secure access to Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area (CRCA), the main parking lot improvements were completed in late October.
- A special thank you must be extended to Marc Forget for all of the time, effort, financial contributions and work he has committed to the Callaghan's project. His personal energy, professionalism and devotion to CRCA is exemplary. These volunteer efforts are commendable and are a true example for others. The approach he has used is certainly a model that could be replicated and/or expanded for the CVCA watershed. It has been and will continue to be a pleasure to work with Marc to build on the successes of 2021.
- The project to "reclaim" Callaghan's is going to take a team of volunteers that are community based and focused on realistic goals and objectives. Not only has Marc led the way by example, but he has helped to initiate a network of dedicated volunteers and raised awareness in the community. Ongoing efforts will be required to fuel the momentum and the Board's support has been greatly appreciated to ensure long term success.

- Participants in this network include various agencies and individuals whom are many even at this juncture. The list includes, the “original” group of Callaghan’s supporters who brought their concerns and issues forward to the CVCA, EOTA, the Municipality of Marmora and Lake staff, volunteers who assisted with the trail reclamation project and removal of cattail mats on various properties on Crowe Lake, Marmora and Lake Councillor Bernie Donaldson, a private donor (which paid for the parking lot restoration) and the CVCA Board. Thank you to one and all for this team effort. It truly is a community based initiative.
- The network of volunteers, agencies and stakeholders continues to expand and undoubtedly will become a strong fabric to meet any future challenges. This will ensure Callaghan’s will be protected and enjoyed by future generations.
- Please find attached to the agenda package a letter from Marc Forget and a copy of the parking lot plans. In addition, there are photos of the completed work with additional suggestions/plans to continue to improve the parking lot and provide a better experience for visitors to the area. Marc has also provided a final report of the project to myself with next steps and possible expenses for next year (pending funding).