

Full Authority
19 June 2025
Agenda Item: 11

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

- Precipitation levels have been higher than normal since the spring freshet subsided earlier this spring.
- This set of watershed conditions has both negative and positive effects throughout the watershed.
 - For example, the higher flows have resulted in additional power generation at the Orillia Power Generation Plant situated at the Marmora Dam. Should normal water flows prevail for the remainder of the year, the revenue from the profit sharing agreement will likely be higher than average.
 - On the downside, higher water levels and flows requires additional operational work for CVCA staff, especially when additional rain requires stop logs to be pulled and then replaced usually within a fairly short turn around time.
 - Additionally, at the Crowe Bridge Conservation Area, higher flows make it too dangerous to open the area to the public
- However, current water levels and flows have recently “normalized” in the watershed with Cordova Lake water levels being one of the last to fall into line.
- As a reminder, once stop logs are placed into the dams to maintain summer recreational levels, the stop logs are also “jacked” (compressed together) to reduce the gaps in between the stop logs to help eliminate leakage in the bays. This is a time consuming operational procedure required to be completed at most if not all bays located in the dams. If additional precipitation becomes excessive after this procedure and stop logs must be removed, then after the lake level returns to the summer recreational range, the stop logs are replaced and jacking is repeated.
- If the CVCA does not manage the dams in this manner, then there is risk if the summer trends to hot and dry, lake levels will drop to far below the summer

- recreational levels. This in turn creates other problems and issues for cottagers and residents alike as docks are not positioned for those conditions, boats bottom out on rocks or motors are damaged and water lines are at risk.
- To help augment concerns and be proactive, the CVCA water management staff usually keep the lake levels slightly higher (3-4”) for a buffer heading into the summer season.

Anticipated Conditions

- Weather forecasts for June are predicting higher than normal temperatures to start the summer, but will also be accompanied by above normal precipitation, which will likely result in more than usual stop log adjustments and jacking operations.
- There is also the possibility for an increase in storm events (due to more energy in the atmosphere – hot and humid conditions) which could result in significant amounts of rainfall in a short period of time, causing localized short term water level and flow fluctuations.

Dam Operations – General

- Staff will be monitoring lake levels closely to ensure stoplogs adjustments are completed in dams to capture enough water to begin the summer recreational season.
- Due to the ice storm earlier this spring, considerable debris from downed trees have become entangled in the booms at the Marmora Dam. The Belmont Dam boom is not affected since it is detached in the winter and is replaced when levels and flows are considered safe for staff to reattach it across the Crowe River.
- There has been some evidence presented to the CVCA the Oak Lake Dam has been tampered with recently. Staff will be investigating and taking the necessary steps to ensure Oak Lake will be at the summer recreational level as soon as possible.

Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI)

- The Marmora Dam Fencing Project (R.25.031) was submitted to the WECI Committee in 2024 and received approval. As a result, it was included in the 2025 CVCA Budget.
- This project, located in Marmora will be to install fencing at both access points (with one vehicle gate and one door entrance at the east end) of the Marmora Dam. This is critical for public safety and limit CVCA liability.
- Amanda and I have recently met with the contractor and the fencing should be installed by the end of the summer. CVCA staff will reach out to Marmora and Lake Township staff to issue a joint press release and discuss any other communication to the public prior to the installation.

- Although the public has had access to the dam, the risk of injury for the public has increased and interactions with staff during dam operations needs to cease to prevent accidents.

Conservation Areas Update

Crowe Bridge Conservation Area

- Flows have returned to normal for this time of year, which allows for the opening of Crowe Bridge and enables swimming by the weir.

McGeachie Conservation Area

- Staff have been working to prepare for the upcoming rental season for the cottage.
- A local individual in the Coe Hill area has been selected to clean the cottage to replace the cleaner from last year.
- Trails are open to the public, although additional work still needs to be completed, such as trees and branches that have been hung up along the trails.

The Gut Conservation Area

- Beth and I met with Danielle Percy, the Program Coordinator from the Nature Conservancy of Canada as a follow up to the initial discussion regarding a potential road maintenance agreement between the two organizations.
- The NCC is planning on allowing public access to their property south of The Gut. However, this access would be over the right-of-way to The Gut parking lot. As a result, the NCC would like to contribute to an ongoing road maintenance plan in conjunction with the CVCA and any other partners we would be able to pull into the arrangement.
- Further discussions will be required and an MOU will need to be agreed upon prior to next year's project. The project should include the replacement of one failed culvert, additional material placed on the road and potentially any brushing along the right-of-way.
- Danielle informed staff a site plan for their road repairs on the NCC property will be submitted to the CVCA to determine if there is a need for a permit. CVCA staff will advise accordingly once the plan is reviewed.

Callaghan's Conservation Area

- A local volunteer has taken up the slack at Callaghan's to reposition some additional rock to provide further barriers where the barriers had been breached or none existed.
- The CVCA had received a donation late last year which will be more than enough to cover any expenses from the work incurred at Callaghan's.
- Hopefully, there will be an opportunity to build on the success of Callaghan's to ensure it continues to trend toward enticing families and individuals that respect the area.

Regulations and Planning

No further updates

Administration

General

- Kate Martin, our new Water Resource and Regulations Technician has joined the CVCA team. Kate's first day was the 9th of June and is now residing in Marmora.
- Liam Bailey-McDade is currently enrolled in the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System course. The week long course begins on the 16th of June. Once completed, this will round out Liam's training for this year for his role as a CVCA Regulations Officer.
- Kelsey Davidson has recently completed a two day Soil and Erosion course held at the Toronto Region Conservation Authority.
- Jordan XXXXXX, CVCA Benthic Monitoring student has volunteered to implement a project to track the extent of zebra mussels in the CVCA watershed. Jordan will be reaching out to residents on select lakes in the watershed using them as a template to determine if there is enough interest to expand the initiative in future years. The project will be driven by volunteer recruits. Jordan has given freely of her time to develop the project and committed to working as a lead volunteer for the upcoming season and into next year.

Staff Recommendation

That the CVCA Board receive the General Manager's report as presented.

Board Discussion

TP