

**Full Authority**  
**20 January 2022**  
**Agenda Item: 15**

**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*

- Lake levels have been successfully drawn down to winter targets. Flows do remain higher than normal for this time of year, although they are receding consistently toward a seasonal norm.
- Stop log adjustments have been ongoing as flows decrease throughout the watershed affecting lake levels.

*Anticipated Conditions*

- CVCA staff are anticipating a reasonably quick return to average flows for the January and February winter months. This should only be interrupted if an extended thaw with rainfall is associated with it. At this time, weather patterns suggest the extreme temperature swings may not abate.

*Water Erosion Control Infrastructure Status Update*

- No further updates to report regarding the Crowe Bridge Weir Assessment at this time, however the report is still anticipated to be completed by the end of March, 2022.

### *Flood Forecasting and Warning System Upgrade*

- Staff have recently received all of the monitoring equipment for four gauges to begin the process of converting current equipment. With the equipment here, staff can now turn their attention to the actual installation, which will also require some alteration to accommodate the new equipment and how it records levels.
- There are three primary components to the upgrade including, 1) radar to record the level, 2) equipment to collect it and send it via satellite and 3) new software to record and analyze the data.
- To power the system, staff will be installing solar panels with batteries as a backup. Staff are anticipating the delivery of the solar panels within the next 30 days.
- A report will be provided to the Board at the April meeting.

### **Conservation Areas Update**

#### *McGeachie Conservation Area*

- Further to the information provided to the Board at the November 2021 meeting, recent communication with the volunteer who groomed the MCA trails for cross country skiing has resulted in confirmation that he is still willing to assist with the trail work providing he has additional volunteers to help with the workload. His intention is to train individuals who live closer to MCA to complete the work.
- However, the insurance remains to be a stumbling block and the volunteers have been advised not to conduct any activity until the insurance issue is resolved.
- After contacting Marsh Insurance (the insurance company not only for the CVCA, but all authorities across the Province) and speaking with Glenn Sheppard, he has strongly advised the volunteers have the appropriate insurance. Essentially, the primary issue is the volunteers are considered workers, but do not have WSIB coverage. Without the correct insurance, in the event of an injury, the CVCA could be held liable. Of course, this risk escalates with the use of equipment, especially anything that is motorized.
- Last year, when the Hastings Destination Trail Inc. (HDTI) paid for the insurance, it was not an issue, especially since HDTI is an incorporated body.
- Glenn Sheppard has advised the volunteers do not necessarily need to become incorporated to obtain the insurance coverage required for the volunteer activities at MCA. He has stated a volunteer insurance “package” could be obtained from

Marsh, although Marsh typically only deals with larger organizations or groups like the 36 conservation authorities represent.

- The volunteer has been informed of the discussion with Marsh and the insurance requirements. As expected, the volunteer perceived the news as “now having to pay to volunteer”.
- As a solution, to retain the volunteer expertise, meet the goals for the trails and virtually eliminate CVCA staff time (primarily for tree removal) the following options are proposed for discussion.
  - i. Request the volunteer(s) pay for the insurance up front and as donations are received for the cross country trails, the money be used to reimburse the volunteers. If there are not sufficient funds, then the balance be supported with the issuance of a tax receipt from the CVCA.
  - ii. There may be some limited funding from HDTI to assist with the insurance expense.
  - iii. HDTI, (perhaps in conjunction with CVCA) request additional funding from Hastings County.

#### *Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area*

- Preparation continues to proceed with the next phase of development at Callaghan's Rapids C.A. for 2022. Marc Forget has initiated contact with the Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance to work collaboratively to secure access from the trail leading to a parking area for ATV's. Marc will be requesting funding from EOTA and will keep the Authority apprised of progress. Target date to commence the next phase will hopefully be after the spring freshet and completed before the long weekend in May.