

**Full Authority**  
**21 April 2022**  
**Agenda Item: 13**

**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*

- The 2022 spring freshet peak occurred in early April at 102 cubic metres per second (cm/s).
- The freshet was dominated by snowmelt this year, primarily due to at least an average snowpack and water equivalent. Coupled with this condition was a lack of rainfall early in the spring to contribute to the runoff. Instead, colder conditions and a slow transition to spring has enabled the snowpack to gradually melt over an extended period of time. The runoff has to date, been an orderly release of water into the system.
- The highest average depth recorded in this year's snow survey was 62 cm at the Mephisto survey site with a water equivalent of 139mm. The North River subwatershed and the upper stretches of the Crowe River (Centre Lake to The Gut) on average received the most snow and had the highest water equivalent.
- The runoff could be categorized as a 1:2 or possibly a 1:5 flood event this year.
- Flows at Marmora dam have since receded to approximately 75 cm/s and most lake levels are hovering slightly above and below the summer elevation.

*Anticipated Conditions*

- The next two weeks of April weather conditions should dictate whether a second peak runoff period occurs this year in the Crowe watershed.

- Consecutive days of forecasted rainfall could easily reverse the current receding trend on or shortly after the Easter weekend. This could mean a “double peak” for this spring, which is significantly better than high one time peak that would usually cause flooding concerns.
- However, staff are not anticipating any major problems or flooding issues unless anticipated rainfall exceeds forecasted totals.
- Flooding was observed on the South Road in Wollaston Twp during the week of April 4<sup>th</sup>, likely due to a beaver dam break. A section of the road has been closed to traffic.

#### *Water Erosion Control Infrastructure Status Update*

- No funding announcements have been made for the current WEIC application submitted by the CVCA

#### *Flood Forecasting and Warning System Upgrade*

- Progress has been made with the installation of the new equipment at Belmont and are now able to collect data from the gauge. Staff will be making a presentation at the Board meeting briefly describing the process, equipment and capabilities.

#### *Dam Operations – General*

- Meeting with Littles Welding and Machine Shop staff at the end of April to discuss alterations to overhead gantry system to ensure better functionality for a broader range of staff (to accommodate height and strength considerations). Both gantries at Marmora and Belmont dam should be upgraded.
- As well as the physical considerations, the current units are not properly attached to the gantry, resulting in difficulties removing and replacing the hoists and the chains in the storage container. **Please see attached photos.**
- In addition, the stairs leading down to the Belmont dam are approximately 35 years old and made of wood. They are not designed well, the “treads” are breaking up and who knows what condition the wood is still in at this time. They are literally an accident waiting to happen and CVCA staff are the primary users. However, we also know the public accesses the dam to fish from, therefore we

have liability exposure from that perspective as well. **Please see attached photos.**

- Littles is a reputable company from Campbellford the CVCA has worked with for a number of years on various projects.

***Recommendation:***

***Therefore, to be proactive and avoid accidents for our staff and the public, now is the time to obtain an estimate and move forward to fabricate a set of sturdier and safer steel stairs and;  
Redesign and install an improved storage unit for each hoist at the Marmora and Belmont Dam (four in total).***

***Miscellaneous***

- Ches Semple has been the primary dam operator for the Oak Lake dam for the past 22 years since he lives right at the dam. Ches would record lake levels and file a report to the Authority, make adjustments to the dam as required and generally keep the dam free of material that would block the flow.
- He has decided after 22 years of service, he would be retiring from these volunteer duties at the age of 84.
- Staff will take over the duties that Ches performed on behalf of the Authority.
- A plaque will be given to Ches thanking him for his time, effort and dedication to look after the Oak Lake dam. He will be sorely missed.

**Conservation Areas Update**

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

- Received an update from Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance General Manager the Phase III proposal has been presented to the EOTA Board this spring. Further discussions are anticipated with EOTA regarding the installation of a parking lot for ATV.

- Our Callaghan's volunteer, Marc Forget has placed signs at Callaghan's to inform the public how to proceed with donations to the Crowe Valley Conservation Foundation. The signs are designed to make it easier for the public to donate while visiting Callaghan's using a QR Code.
- Additional anonymous donations (\$550) through the CVCA website have also been received recently.
- Marc Forget through his research of Callaghan's has discovered the original funding for the purchase of the property came from a private donation of \$10,000. He is suggesting the CVCA should recognize this donation by naming a trail after the donor.
- A former CVCA Board member loaned the CVCA a copy of a flora and fauna inventory of Callaghan's completed in 1992. This will provide background information to launch an updated inventory hopefully in 2022 with the assistance of another volunteer and a Professor from the University of Toronto.
- There is continued and growing interest in Callaghan's Rapids CA. Building on this momentum will be key for future projects. Interested local residents have indicated they will be willing to donate additional funding for the installation of a kiosk and/or volunteer their time. With sufficient funding, the CVCA will install a kiosk which is the same as the new kiosk at the McGeachie Conservation Area. This will help to "brand" our conservation areas.

#### *The Gut Conservation Area*

Letters were sent via priority post to the stakeholders requesting a meeting to discuss the road maintenance of the road to The Gut parking lot.

Not all of the identified stakeholders have responded yet, however those who have contacted the CVCA have expressed a positive response and willingness to meet with the CVCA.

If no further responses are forthcoming in the near future, a meeting will be held with those who responded and then a discussion will be had to determine next steps.

## **Administration Update**

### *Short Term Disability (STD) Plan*

The STD plan was amended by the Board at the 24 Feb 2022 meeting with the following motion:

*FA Motion G 28/22*

*Moved by: Jan MacKillican*

*Seconded by: Suzanne Partridge*

*To approve the proposed amendments to the Short-Term Disability policy as presented in accordance with Service Canada requirements. Carried.*

The CVCA has received confirmation from Service Canada stating the Authority “continues to meet all of the requirements for an Employment Insurance Reduction. This decision is based on information recently received regarding your short term disability plan. You are entitled to this reduction in respect of all full-time regular service permanent employees covered by your approved self-insured weekly indemnity plan.”

### *Inventory of Programs and Services*

- Meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April with Faraday Twp to discuss the CVCA Inventory of Programs and Services.
- Provided an overview with the Council, emphasized any MOU agreements will need to be finalized prior to 1 Jan 2024.
- Township focus was to ensure communication key and Council/staff able to request information as required.
- Bancroft media inquired about the success of the meeting and if any other information would be available at this time.

### *Staff Announcement*

- The CVCA is pleased to announce Kelsey Davidson has been hired as the new CVCA Regulations Officer.

- Kelsey comes to the CVCA from a position with Defence Construction Canada where she was employed as an Environmental Services Coordinator.
- Kelsey has been with the Authority since the 21<sup>st</sup> of March and immediately started her training at the office. In addition to this start, Kelsey has been enrolled in the Provincial Offences Officer training, which is a week long course to be held at the end of April. The course is offered by Conservation Ontario and the Ministry of Northern Development Natural Resources and Forestry.
- Kelsey is making very good progress in learning her role and fitting in quite well with the CVCA team.

#### *Conservation Ontario Meeting Update*

- Our Chair, Jan O'Neill and I recently attended the Conservation Ontario AGM.
- A Conservation Ontario presentation was given at the meeting for new members and is provided here for your consideration. It is a good general overview of Conservation Ontario. ([CO presentation](#))
- The agenda focused on a number of information items relating to the changes in the Conservation Authorities Act and the new regulatory requirements.
- For example, there was a report in the agenda regarding the Conservation Ontario Client Service and Streamlining Initiative and the Second Annual Report on Section 28 Permit Timelines
- This is primarily reporting to the Provincial government on turnaround times for regulations permits across the Province. Initially, the largest urban conservation authorities were required in 2020 to indicate their turnaround times for major and minor applications in comparison to the expected Provincial targets. Conservation Ontario has also suggested deadlines for conservation authorities.
- The list of reporting conservation authorities was expanded in 2021, with 14 CAs required to submit their data and 17 CAs volunteered their results.
- Regrettably, due to the 2020 staffing situation and the resulting backlog in 2021, the CVCA did not volunteer to participate. There was also some concern regarding the level of detail required and whether it would be unnecessarily onerous if the current system used by the CVCA is not sophisticated enough.

- However, after consultation with Conservation Ontario early in 2022, it was determined our data collection was more than sufficient (actually exceeding the minimum) and therefore the CVCA will be providing the 2022 permit data as part of the effort by all CAs to participate fully before it becomes a Provincial requirement.
- As well, there were general updates on the Transition Plans and Governance Accountability and Transparency, with Conservation Ontario confirming their support of CAs as we move forward to meet new Provincial guidelines.
- In addition, Conservation Ontario reminded CAs of future initiatives like watershed report cards, CO's action on Indigenous Reconciliation and the Latornell Conservation Symposium. For those of you not familiar with watershed report cards, please follow this link to get a general overview. ([watershed report cards](#))

#### *Land' escapes*

- Recently, staff attended a Limerick Planning Committee meeting to obtain a better understanding of Mr. Ben Samann and his vision of Land' escapes.
- The meeting was informative and also gave a sense of Mr. Samann's intention of how he wanted to proceed vis a vis interaction with planning at the Hastings County level and a possible committee made up of affected municipalities and the CVCA.
- Subsequent to the meeting, Jan McKillican contacted myself regarding the meeting outcome and we both had the same impression of the meeting that he would prefer to continue on the path he is on, but certainly willing to work with the CVCA regarding permit requirements.
- This is significant since the number of acres is so large covering all types of terrain and watercourses, Mr. Samann will be required to submit a number of permits for his development activities.
- Jan M. and I concluded this could place significant pressure on the CVCA's regulation department.

- Within a day of the meeting, Mr. Samann contacted myself to initiate the conversation regarding permitting on his property.
- The subsequent conversation went well with a good exchange of information from both sides and an understanding that both organizations need to work together to reduce workload and assist each other as much as possible.
- Originally, Mr. Samann believed there could be in excess of over 100 permits. This would cause a significant backload of permits causing delays for everyone who has submitted or will be submitting permits this year. To put it into context, one landowner would potentially flood permit applications with approximately 1/3 of the total expected this year.
- As a result, CVCA would be inundated with permits and unable to accommodate this influx effectively.
- The initial conversation focused on this issue and both of us agreed that there is an opportunity to bundle some of the permits. For example, if there are 20 campsites that would require a permit due to their proximity to a wetland or watercourse, the same permit stipulations would apply to all campsites, but it could possibly be issued as one permit.
- Recognized that we are both on same page – to conserve and protect the environment, while Land’ escapes creates a private parkland.
- Mr. Samann is willing to work with CVCA staff and “loan” resources to assist with items such as wetland evaluations.
- Further discussions will be undertaken as the season progresses and as Mr. Samann finalizes his zoning requirements first.

#### *Ministerial Agricultural Appointment*

The CVCA has not received any notification as of yet from the Ministry regarding the possibility of an Agricultural Representative sitting on the CVCA Board.