



## St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Meeting Highlights – September 14, 2023

Below is a list of highlights from the SCRCA board meeting held in September. For details, please refer to the entire meeting package which can be found at [www.scrca.on.ca/about-us/board-meeting-packages](http://www.scrca.on.ca/about-us/board-meeting-packages).

**Memorandum of Understandings for Category 2 and 3 Programs:** SCRCA General Manager, Ken Phillips has been engaging with staff and councils of member municipalities to begin the process of preparing MOUs and funding agreements for Category 2 and Category 3 programs and services as prescribed under O. Reg. 687/21 – Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services under Section 21.1.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Two agreements have been completed and were approved at the September Board meeting. Pre-consultation continues with municipal staff at the Authority's remaining member municipalities.

**Disposition of Highland Glen and C.J. McEwen Conservation Areas:** As per the requirements under Section 21(2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, a 45-day public consultation period was initiated on July 12<sup>th</sup> for the disposition of the Highland Glen and C.J. McEwen Conservation Areas to the Town of Plympton-Wyoming. In total, three comments were received concerning the C.J. McEwen Conservation Area and four comments were received concerning the Highland Glen Conservation Area. Comments and questions raised have been addressed in the conservation easements imposed for both properties. Staff will now provide notice of the dispositions to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry with a closing date of December 20, 2023.

**Seasonal Camping Fee Schedule:** The Authority owns and operates three regional campgrounds that offer both seasonal and transient camping opportunities. For many years, seasonal camping at the SCRCA has been operated under market rate, and due to increasing operating costs and the need to maintain reserves, the Board of Directors approved a three-year price increase strategy that will see fees increase by 7% in 2024, 10% in 2025, and 10% in 2026.

**Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF):** The Government of Canada has opened the third intake for the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF), a national merit-based program that will invest \$1.375 billion to support wildfire mitigation activities, rehabilitation of storm water systems, and restoration of wetlands and shorelines. The SCRCA has submitted seven projects for consideration. All located along the Lake Huron and St. Clair River shorelines, the project locations were chosen based on the need to protect public and private infrastructure along with improving safety for public use.

**Flood Threat:** High intensity rain events have led to localized flooding throughout the watershed. The month of July experienced five intense rainstorms that saw 145 mm of rain, which is more than double the average rain for this month. Staff will continue to monitor weather forecasts and precipitation amounts to see if the trend of frequent intense precipitation events continue in future years.

**Planning and Regulations Activity:** Between June 1 and July 31, 2023, staff issued 47 permits and responded to 122 inquiries under O. Reg 171/06 – Development, Interference of Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses. Additionally, 16 permits were issued during the same timeframe under the *Drainage Act* and Section 28 Regulations Team (DART) protocol. Planning activity between June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup> included the review and comment on 72 municipal plan input and review files, 4 environmental assessments, and 10 legal inquiries.

**2023 Conservation Scholarships:** On July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, the recipients of the 2023 Conservation Scholarships were presented with their awards by SCRCA Chair, Pat Brown. The conservation scholarship program rewards graduating high school students who are pursuing post-secondary studies in a conservation-related field and who have demonstrated high academic standing and involvement in environmental initiatives.

A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarships (\$1,000)

- Annabelle Rayson, St. Patrick's Catholic Secondary School, Sarnia
- Olivia Grubb, Lambton-Kent Composite School, Dresden

Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

- Brynn Dugdale, Strathroy District Collegiate Institute, Strathroy

Mary Jo Arnold Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

- Rebecca Adema, Strathroy District Collegiate Institute, Strathroy

For more information, contact:  
Ken Phillips, General Manager  
519-245-3710 ext. 236  
kphillips@scrca.on.ca