



St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Meeting Highlights – September 19, 2024

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.

Conservation Authority Act Updates and Revisions: On April 1, 2024, changes to the legislative and regulatory framework under the Conservation Authorities Act came into effect. The primary changes include revisions to the requirements of the Mandatory Programs and Services Regulation (O.Reg. 686/21), new proclaimed sections in the Conservation Authorities Act (Part VI and VII), the new Section 28 Regulation (O.Reg. 41/24) and the new Section 29 Regulation (O.Reg. 688/21 – Rules and Conduct in Conservation Areas). Staff have identified required actions for the SCRCA and have attended sessions provided by Conservation Ontario to ensure the organization is compliant with the revisions to the CA Act. For more details on the changes and updates to the Act, see Item 7.2 – Update on Revisions to Conservation Authorities Act in the September 19, 2024 [SCRCA Board of Directors meeting package](#).

Watershed Conditions: The current flood threat in the St. Clair Region is low, however, the watershed did experience two significant precipitation events in July which saw between 60 and 180 mm of rain fall throughout the region. Stream flows and levels are seasonal for this time of the year but there is a risk that levels can quickly increase with the onset of high intensity precipitation events. Water levels in Lake Huron, and St. Clair remain high due to wet conditions experienced in late spring and early summer

Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) – 2024-2026: The SCRCA submitted 9 projects for consideration to the 2024-2026 WECI project intake. Five projects were successful in receiving funds totalling \$378,964. Successful projects include:

- Sarnia Shoreline Protection Project (Kenwick St. To Penhuron Ave)
- Ferry Dock Hill Shoreline Project
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam Instrumentation Project
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam Gatehouse and Roof Repair Project
- Coldstream Dam Repair Projects

Conservation Area Upgrades: Through several grant and funding opportunities, upgrades have been completed or are scheduled to be completed at local Conservation Areas. Projects include:

- New trail loop and natural playground at Warwick Conservation Area, and upgraded trail loop to stone dust at Wawanosh Conservation Area (funded by the Judith and Norman Alix Foundation - \$172,500)
- Control of Phragmites at Wawanosh Wetland Conservation Area and Marthaville Habitat Management Area (funded by the Wetlands Conservation Partnership Program - \$85,250)

- Parking lot upgrades at Coldstream Conservation Area (grading, gravel and re-configuration of parking spots)
- New dock at Warwick Conservation Area (funded by the Ron and Mina Rollason Foundation)

Planning and Regulations Activity: Between June 1st and July 31st, 2024, staff issued 43 permits and responded to 108 inquiries under O. Reg 171/06 – Development, Interference of Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses under O. Reg 97/04. Additionally, 6 permits were issued during the same timeframe under the *Drainage Act* and Section 28 Regulations Team (DART) protocol. Planning activity between June 1st and July 31st, 2024, included the review and comment on 66 municipal plan input and review files, 3 environmental assessments, and 10 legal inquiries.

2024 Fall Fairs: In an effort to increase engagement and interaction with our watershed communities, the SCRCA will be securing outdoor booths at several fall fairs throughout the month of September. The booths will feature interactive displays and information on the Authority's services and programs including tree planting, stewardship, Species at Risk, and flood forecasting and monitoring, among others.

- Plympton Wyoming Fall Fair, September 13-15
- Forest Fall Fair, September 20-22
- Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Fall Fair, September 27-29

St. Clair River Area of Concern: Work continues to restore the St. Clair River and engage local communities on the efforts to “delist” the river from the list of Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Recent activities and achievements include:

- **Re-designation of BUI #9 – Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste and Odour Problems** – Staff received confirmation from Environment and Climate Change Canada in June, that this BUI has been officially redesignated to not impaired as per the recommendation of the status assessment report prepared by the Canadian Remedial Action Plan Implementation Committee (CRIC).
- **2nd Annual Honouring the St. Clair River Event** – On September 26, 2024, the CRIC will be holding the 2nd Annual Honouring the St. Clair River Event at the Four Points by Sheraton Point Edward. Participants will hear updates from the RAP Coordinator and local community groups about the ongoing efforts to restore the aquatic health of the St. Clair River. In addition, a guest speaker from the University of Toronto will present information on microplastics in the Great Lakes.

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