



Meeting Date: October 27, 2021

Submitted by: M. Di Lullo, CAO

Report No: CAO-28-2021

Subject: Regulatory Proposals under the Conservation Authorities Act

Recommendation:

THAT Report CAO-28-2021, re: Regulatory Proposals under the Conservation Authorities Act be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council in regards to Regulations that are now in effect for conservation authorities. New Regulations have been finalized to focus conservation authorities on their core mandate by prescribing mandatory programs and services they must provide, which affords municipalities greater control over what conservation authority (CA) programs and services they will fund, and consolidating “Conservation Areas” regulations.

Background:

Report CAO-10-2021 was provided to Council back in June of this year that outlined the proposed Regulations in accordance with Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from *COVID-19 Act* (Budget Measures), 2020, which made changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the *Planning Act*.

Analysis:

On December 8, 2020, Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020, which made changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and the Planning Act, received Royal Assent. To implement these changes, three new Regulations have been filed under the Conservation Authorities Act as part of the first phase regulations:

- Ontario Regulation 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services. This Regulation prescribes the mandatory programs and services CAs would be required to provide, including core watershed-based resource management strategies.

This Regulation will come into effect on January 1, 2022.

- Ontario Regulation 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services Under Section 21.1.2 of the Act. This Regulation requires each CA to have a 'transition plan' that would outline the steps to be taken to develop an inventory of programs and services and to enter into agreements with participating municipalities to fund non-mandatory programs and services through a municipal levy. It also establishes the transition period to enter into those agreements.

This Regulation came into effect on October 1, 2021.

- Ontario Regulation 688/21: Rules of Conduct in Conservation Areas. This regulation consolidates the current individual CA 'Conservation Area' regulations made under Section 29 of the Conservation Authorities Act into one Minister's regulation that regulates the public use of CA owned land. This regulation will come into effect when the unproclaimed provisions of Part VI and VII of the Conservation Authorities Act that deal with development permissions come into effect.

The new Regulations will help to improve the governance, oversight and accountability of CAs, while respecting taxpayer dollars by giving municipalities more say over the CA programs and services they pay for.

Middlesex Centre has been in dialogue with some of the conservation authorities within our boundary area to discuss transition plans as some of these Regulations take effect at the beginning of the New Year. There will be cooperation and input in the development of the 'transition plans' to ensure that service is maintained for programs and services offered by our conservation authorities to residents of Middlesex Centre.

To learn more about these changes, information is posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario website at: <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2986>

Financial Implications:

N/A

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Middlesex Centre has five different Conservation Authorities within the geographic boundary, it is important to work with our community partners as indicated in Objective 5.4 of our Strategic Plan and provide input and assistance where possible.

Attachments:

N/A