

**Full Authority**  
**16 November 2023**  
**Agenda Item: 11**

**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*

- Water levels and flows have remained steady throughout the watershed, albeit at slightly lower levels due to an extended dry period since late August.
- Fall drawdown has proceeded as per the usual timeline, starting at Paudash Lake with a targeted winter level by the end of September to comply with Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) guidelines for the trout spawning requirements. Due to lower water levels, the start of the drawdown for the remainder of the watershed has only recently begun in earnest during the first week in November. Similar to last year, staff have considered the drawdown as "quiet" with minimal stop log adjustments to date.
- The Steenburg Lake Community Association has reached out to the CVCA requesting a newsletter article to provide a brief explanation of water management concerns due to beaver activity and the debate regarding high and low water.

*Anticipated Conditions*

- Staff anticipate a gradual drawdown of water levels and flows heading into the winter season.
- Deviation from the current status should only occur with an extended period of rainfall or severe storm event which would result in a heavy accumulation of water entering into the watershed system. This would delay the drawdown period and potentially compromise the flood storage capacity of the watershed.

### *Water Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) Status*

- Progress has been slow with the installation of the walkway/stairs at Belmont Dam and the new storage boxes for the mobile overhead gantry systems at Belmont and Marmora dams due to restrictions faced by the contractor.
- However, recent communication with the contractor has confirmed the work will proceed shortly with the fabrication and installation of the stairs. In addition, the storage boxes will be built inside at their location during the winter months. This work will be completed within the MNRF's fiscal period which is at the end of March 2024.

### *Dam Operations – General*

- Staff have completed the fabrication of stop logs for the Belmont and Marmora dams this fall and have ordered additional stop logs for Marmora dam which should be arriving before year end.

### **Conservation Areas Update**

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

- A year end report is to be available for the January 2024 meeting.
- A Maintenance Report is included in the agenda package regarding a complaint received this fall.

#### *McGeachie Conservation Area*

- CVCA staff have continued to cleanup the McGeachie trail network with the assistance of a volunteer. All trails have now been cleared and are available for use. Signage will be placed indicating trails are open and be advised not to use them in windy conditions.
- In addition, the purchase of a new Gator was made possible with funding through our insurance and the CVCA covering our deductible. The CVCA received approximately 67% coverage from the insurance company. The new Gator was acquired the last of week of September and has been an instrumental piece of equipment to finish the work at McGeachie.
- CVCA staff have noted there has been a high interest from the public in the trail clearing progress and have received a number of emails and phone calls supporting the work. Many have noted how pleased they are to hear the trails will be reopened and how valuable the trails are for the local residents for their recreational opportunities, physical and mental health.

- In the past few years, the McGeachie trail network has received additional assistance from a number of sources, including Limerick Twp, Hastings County and the Hastings Development Trails Incorporation. These agencies and organizations have been instrumental for the development of the trails and their ongoing support indicates the level of interest for a recreational asset in the CVCA watershed.
- In addition to the above noted support, the CVCA has recently been contacted by an individual contracted by the Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nation. This First Nation community is within the North Hastings area and there is a partnership opportunity with them to maintain and further develop the trail and facilities at MCA through the Wàwàtesì Algonquin Cultural Discovery Project
- *“Wàwàtesì means firefly in the Algonquin language. Fireflies symbolize the lighting of the trail & signify the passage of time, renewal, healing and the cycle of life.*
- *The Wàwàtesì Algonquin Cultural Discovery Project will develop real world & virtual experiences introducing Algonquin art, culture, language & heritage to those who live & work in traditional Algonquin lands, as well as those who visit for business & leisure.*
- *Significant funding has been obtained for the creation & renewal of local infrastructure & natural outdoor spaces as well as the curation of experiential, mobile web content — all shining a light on the rich legacy of the Algonquin People”.<sup>1</sup>*
- Plans are to meet with Robert Hunter, Algonquin Negotiation Representative of the Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nation and begin fostering a long term relationship.

#### *Crowe Bridge Conservation Area*

- Work on installing an Axiom Telemetry Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network station is progressing well and should be completed by the end of November. The CVCA has been doing groundwater monitoring at this site for a number of years. This equipment will enable us to send the information we collect to the Province remotely without having to attend the site.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.kijichomanito.com/projects/wawatesi/](http://www.kijichomanito.com/projects/wawatesi/)

### *The Gut Conservation Area*

- Staff have recently conducted an inspection of the portion of the road where improvements were made last year. This section remains in excellent condition.
- Staff have also received information there are two sections of the railing down by the gorge have been damaged. Staff will make repairs as soon as possible.

### **Administration**

#### *Personnel Policy Update*

- Staff continue to make progress on the Personnel Policy, however, it is not completed and will not be available for the Board's review at the November meeting.

#### *Regulation 686/21*

- In addition to comments submitted to the Board at the September meeting, staff will provide a brief update during budget deliberations since there is a connection to the Draft 2024 Budget.

#### *General*

- The CVCA's server has recently been damaged beyond repair presumably during an unscheduled power outage. Although the server was surge protected, the age of the server may have come into play since it is almost 12 years old.
- The server will be replaced as soon as possible. In the meantime, all steps have been taken to temporarily bridge the day to day operations of the CVCA's programs and services.
- Funding to pay for the new server has been built into the CVCA's yearly allocation for asset replacement.

#### ***Staff Recommendation***

***That the CVCA Board release the funds from the General Reserve to pay for the new server.***

### **Board Discussion**

**TP**