

Full Authority
18 May 2023
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

- Water levels and flows have receded slower than normal from the peak of the spring freshet due to weather conditions and the slow melting of the snowpack.
- Levels and flows have reversed the downward trend due to steady consistent rainfall experienced in the watershed during the period from the 28th of April to the 7th of May.

Anticipated Conditions

- Depending on predicted precipitation, staff are anticipating the normal fluctuations experienced after the spring freshet. Typically, the time period from the peak of the freshet until the end of June will result in water levels and flows increasing and then subsiding until the weather patterns become more stable and predictable with longer periods of consistent weather. During this period, the CVCA watershed is considered "full" ready for the summer heat, periods of little rain and possible drought conditions.
- In anticipation of this normality, staff will usually keep lakes slightly above the summer targeted elevation to retain water to assist with the inevitable strain on the watershed system. This will help to keep water levels and flows at summer elevations for the recreational activities and enjoyment of the watershed residents and visitors alike.
- In order for this to occur, there will be a significant number of stop log adjustments between now and the summer recreational season.

- No flooding is anticipated in the watershed in the foreseeable future.
- Staff will continue to monitor weather conditions, lake levels and flows as part of the normal daily flood forecast and warning cycle.

Water Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) Status

- CVCA is hopeful to receive notice of WECI project approvals by the end of May or mid-June.

Dam Operations – General

- Staff will be manufacturing stop logs as soon as dam operation activity subsides.
- Belmont and Marmora dams are targeted for new stop logs.

Conservation Areas Update

Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area

- See Callaghan's Report

Crowe Bridge Conservation Area

- The Municipality of Trent Hills have reviewed the CVCA/Trent Hills Crowe Bridge Conservation Area Lease Agreement. Council considered a 5 year term agreement be entered into with the CVCA. Notification of the results of this discussion are pending and will be available for the June meeting.

The Gut Conservation Area

- A request for the installation of a wind phone has been recently received. Staff are currently investigating the possibility with the individual who submitted the request.

- Phase One of the Gut Road improvements were completed last year, which included regrading of the road for proper drainage, adding appropriate resurfacing material, filling in deep ruts, ditching and an expansion of the parking lot.
- The next phase will include culvert replacements, additional material, grading and possibly the installation of a gate. Similar to last year staff will be hosting a meeting inviting property owners and municipal staff for discussion on next steps.

McGeachie Conservation Area

- Cleanup efforts are ongoing. CVCA was approached by a Sir Fleming College forestry student requesting a placement at the Authority for a period of two weeks. The student has been assisting staff with the cleanup and good progress has been made. Two of the trails have been cleared and should be opened to the public by mid-May. The remainder will be opened as staff time and additional resources allow.
- Possible financial assistance from Hastings County may allow hiring a logger if matching dollars become available to the CVCA to clear the remainder of the trails or possibly other options which would include volunteers.
- A successful tree planting day was completed at the McGeachie Conservation area. It was spearheaded by our Faraday Board Member John O'Donnell. John had assistance from Fred Werner, Ian Hendry and Steve Wilkins. The local Scout troop and members of the Community Integration rounded out the volunteers for the event. Altogether, there were approximately 20 Beavers, Cubs and Scouts with leaders and parents along with 7 or 8 from Community Integration. Fred Werner (Bancroft Area Stewardship Council Forester) provided information and instruction on tree planting, while John and Ian assisted with distributing trees to be planted (with the necessary tools of course).
- In approximately one hour, the tree planting "crew" had planted 250 trees.
- The scouts requested this become an annual event and all of the partners agreed this cooperative effort would be well worth the time and effort to reforest the areas damaged by the derecho from last year. It was a great fun community project that everyone can be proud of year this year and hopefully into the future.

- Contributions came from the Rally of the Tall Pines to assist with the cost of the seedlings, the volunteer planters, BASC and the organizers. As John said, “All of us giving a little to help the big picture is heartwarming and an example of communities working together to make the best of a bad situation.”

Regulations and Planning Program and Services

- Staff are pleased to inform the Board all of the items brought forward to the Board at the February meeting have been implemented.
- Meetings with North Kawartha and Havelock-Belmont-Methuen staff (building inspectors, planning staff) have been undertaken with staff from all organizations extremely pleased with the positive results. For example, lines of communication have been opened up with a much better understanding of what is required from each other and why. Pre-consultation has been addressed with planning, which makes it better for the applicants, staff at the municipalities and the CVCA. As well, it assists with the understanding of the CVCA’s regulations up front in the planning stage.
- In addition to the foregoing, CVCA staff have launched another service for the public to engage with staff. The public has always been able to email, phone, drop off files or submit applications electronically. Not only is the office open for “drop-ins”, the CVCA has now expanded its service and have set aside two days for appointments (Monday and Thursday). CVCA staff believe this service will be especially beneficial for everyone whether they need to discuss a complex application or just need guidance due to unfamiliarity with either the regulations or planning process.
- In summary, with the changes made by the CVCA and the possible slowdown of the economy due to higher interest rates, staff are certainly anticipating a reduced processing time for CVCA permit applications in comparison to the prior few years.

Administration Update

Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP)

- Update to be provided at the June meeting.

Communications

- The 2023 CVCA Watershed Report Card was launched on the 22nd of March 2023. The Report Card provides a grade on the conditions in the CVCA watershed. It can be found on the CVCA website under Watershed Management/Monitoring Programs/Watershed Report Card.
- As with previous report cards, all aspects of the CVCA watershed were graded “A”.

Audit – 2022 Financial Statement

- The audit has yet to be completed, but will be ready for the Board’s review at the regularly scheduled June meeting.

Conservation Ontario/CVCA Staff Meeting

- Conservation Ontario General Manager Angela Coleman, Policy and Planning Director Bonnie Fox and Policy and Planning Specialist Leslie Rich requested a meeting with CVCA staff. The intent of the meeting was to discuss regulation issues brought to Conservation Ontario’s attention both locally and provincially and stress the importance of potential changes to the new regulation to be applied across the Province. As well, by extension, there was discussion regarding the hearing process.
- The meeting was an excellent opportunity to discuss the CVCA Regulation and Planning program with the Conservation Ontario staff and confirm the CVCA has followed a process similar to other conservation authorities throughout the Province.

Special Projects

- The CVCA has been awarded funding for one summer student position from Canada Jobs Service. This position is for the benthic monitoring program.
- A second summer student position, which was funded by the CVCA is necessary as the program requires two students to collect, analyze and log the benthic invertebrates.

Board Discussion

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