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Spring run-off causes flooding in watershed

The Nottawasaga Valley watershed entered spring with between 125 to 240 millimetres (five to 10 inches) of water within the snow pack. This is the amount of water that would be produced if the snow were to melt.

A significant warming trend began on March 30th which prompted the NVCA to issue a Flood Advisory on March 31st. After 15 to 40 millimetres of rain fell during the night of March 31st, the NVCA issued a Flood Warning on April 1st in re-

sponse to the rapid runoff.

A few areas of the watershed experienced serious flooding. The most notable flooding was in Stayner from the Lamont Creek, Wasaga Beach from the Trillium Creek and Angus from the Pine River. Additionally, countless roads were closed from overtopping by the runoff.

The main Nottawasaga River experienced flows that flooded many areas which have been historically prone to flooding. However, no serious damage was reported.

To help prepare our 18 watershed municipalities for such as event, NVCA staff started a new, bi-monthly *Status of the Watershed* report in March.

The report summarizes the snow pack conditions and forecasts temperatures and precipitation for the next two weeks. This report is distributed to our municipalities to warn them of the potential for flooding.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Minesing Wetlands canoe trips
Sat. April 12 & Sat. April 19, 8 a.m. start
Willow Creek Canoe Access
George Johnston Road

Oak Ridges Moraine workshop: How to leave a conservation legacy
Tuesday, April 15, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Caledon East Community Complex

Earth Day Science in your Backyard Conference for Grade 10 science students
Tuesday, April 22
Tiffin Centre

Executive Committee 04/08 meeting
Friday, April 25, 9 a.m. to noon
Tiffin Centre

Board of Directors 05/08 meeting and Advisory committees
Friday, May 9, 9 a.m. to noon
Tiffin Centre

Arbour Day tree sale
Saturday, May 10, 8 a.m. to noon
Tiffin Centre and other select locations

Local health centre helps environment while helping patients

Last Christmas season, the ground may have been covered in snow but the Barrie Chiropractic and Health Services Centre had

green on its mind. Double green actually. The Centre raised \$3,110 for a new NVCA project that will see a waterfowl viewing platform



Staff from Barrie Chiropractic and Health Service Centre present proceeds from one day of services to the NVCA. From left to right: Nancy Wilson, Vivian Greene, Dr. Darryl Bossence, Greg Bray of the NVCA, Kimberly Davies, Jackie Genge and Pam Davis.

built overlooking the Minesing Wetlands. It will feature interpretative signage and a canoe launch, encouraging environmental education and recreation.

Staff at the Centre donated proceeds from one day of patient care to the NVCA.

"At Christmas time, instead of doing a food or toy drive, which are notable causes, we like to do something that supports the planet," says Dr. Darryl Bossence.

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Syrup and sunshine were celebrated at the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival

Thousands of people came out for a tell-tale sign of spring on April 5th and 6th at the Tiffin Centre – maple syrup.

Maple syrup tours featuring traditional and modern methods of production, a full pancake breakfast, horse-drawn wagon rides and bird box building were the weekend's biggest attractions.

The double-digit spring temperatures brought more than 2,500 people to the Tiffin Centre, making it one of the most successful Spring Tonics ever. The festival is hosted by the Rotary Club of Barrie and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

"This is one of our projects that is really focused on family. It's both educational and fun for everyone who attends," says David McCullough, Chair of the Spring Tonic Committee for the Rotary Club of Barrie.

Fifty per cent of the money from ticket sales at Spring Tonic will go to Rotary for various club projects and Rotary will donate the other 50 per cent to the NVCA.



The NVCA plans to use the donation to enhance outdoor recreation at the Tiffin Centre with more interpretative signage and picnic tables, all of which will contribute to next year's Spring Tonic.

Source Water Protection site visits off to a busy start

In January, Source Water Protection staff began contacting approximately 800 landowners in our watershed living or working within 100 metres of a municipal wellhead or 200 metres of a surface water intake, letting them know that their activities could impact and protect the quality of our drinking water.

Through the *Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program*, these landowners are eligible for grants for well and septic upgrades, among other things.

Staff hosted a workshop at the Tiffin Centre for the targeted landowners on Tuesday, February 26th. Since then, staff have completed 120 educational site visits. They have received applications for nine septic system upgrades for private landowners and four pollution prevention reviews for businesses.

In addition to working with individuals and businesses, staff are working with the Township of Springwater to put up *drinking water protection area* signs. The signs will mark the areas through which it takes 10 years for water to travel from the ground surface to the well. These are vulnerable areas that also need protection that can often be forgotten about or misunderstood by the public.

For more information on this program, please contact Shannon Stephens, Healthy Water Program Coordinator, at 424-1479, ext. 239 or sstephens@nvca.on.ca.

Local Health Centre

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"It's not something everybody thinks of."

This is the second time the Centre has held this fundraiser for the NVCA and the most money it has ever raised. Greg Bray, Land & Operations Supervisor, was at the Centre the day of to answer questions from patients regarding the work the NVCA does.

"The educational aspect is more powerful than the cheque. Seeing posters and hearing speakers sparks an interest where there may not have been one," says Dr. Bossence, who enjoys canoeing in the wetlands.

In addition to donations from the staff, Life 100.3 FM donated \$500 to the project. The NVCA extends its sincerest gratitude to everyone involved.

Construction of the waterfowl viewing platform will begin early this summer. It will be located off of Concession 2 in Clearview Twp. between McKinnon and Kearnan roads.

Huronia Lookout

The Huronia Lookout, once completed, will be an elevated, viewing platform located on George Johnston Road, adjacent to Historic Fort Willow. The view will stretch 40 km and overlook the Minesing Wetlands, Nottawasaga River, Niagara Escarpment and Georgian Bay.

The Huronia Lookout Committee is holding a design competition to find an icon that creatively represents the history, importance and beauty of the Lookout.

The contest is open to residents of Simcoe County and Georgina Island. The deadline is April 30, 2008. For more details, please visit www.discover.simcoe.ca/attractions/natural.

ENGINEERING & TECHNICAL SERVICES

Spring run-off, continued from page 1

Conservation Authorities play a significant role in the protection of life and property from natural hazards such as flooding. They are responsible for predicting flows and water levels within their watersheds, operat-

ing flood control structures such as dams and disseminating flood warnings to local municipalities and agencies. They also work with municipalities in preparing flood contingency plans and during the emergency response process.



April 1st in Stayner. Lamont Creek at Brock Street, looking southeast.



Same house in Stayner on April 2nd.

New project to take inventory of dams throughout watershed

The NVCA is developing an inventory of dams within our jurisdiction, both publicly and privately owned, as part of a province-wide project with Conservation Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

We are collecting basic information on dam structures, including physical characteristics, dam type, purpose and use of the dam. For the purposes of this inventory, a dam is defined as a man-made structure that holds back water in a river, lake, pond, or stream to raise the water level, creating a reservoir.

The data collected will be used to create a comprehensive database of public and privately owned dams across Ontario.

It is estimated that we have 871 dams within our watershed. An Engineering Technician has been hired on contract to contact landowners and conduct site visits. The site visits began the week of April 7th.

In addition to collecting data on the site visit, NVCA staff will offer a free consultation about best management practices for ponds and/or streams for protecting and maintaining water quality, enhancing fish habitats and maintaining a safe dam structure.

For more information on the dam inventory, please contact Monica Essig, Engineering Technician, at 424-1479, ext. 246, or messig@nvca.on.ca

PLANNING

Enhanced tools to help with the permit process

With the construction season gearing up, the NVCA would like to remind anyone wishing to alter their property that they may be regulated under *Ontario Regulation 172/06 Development Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses*.

Staff have revised the *Frequently Asked Questions* brochure and made it available on our web site. Watershed maps are also featured more prominently on the web site. If you would like to find out if your property is regulated, please go to www.nvca.on.ca and click on the "planning, permits and maps" link on the right-hand side of the page. If you don't have internet access, please call the NVCA at 424-1479.

19th annual Arbour Day Tree Sale

A variety of trees and shrubs will be on sale on Saturday, May 10th at the Tiffin Centre and 3 other locations throughout the watershed. For details, go to www.nvca.on.ca or call 424-1479, ext. 9. All proceeds go to watershed restoration and reforestation.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Chair and Executive re-elected to Board

At the NVCA's Annual General Meeting on January 11th, Town of Mono representative Fred Nix was re-elected as Chair of the Board of Director by acclamation. This is his third consecutive term as Chair and his 16th year with the NVCA.

The members of the 2007 Executive Committee were also re-elected by acclamation. In addition to Nix, the committee is made up of Vice-Chair Walter Benotto, Councillor for the

Town of Shelburne; Coun. Barry Ward, City of Barrie; Mayor Gord Montgomery, Township of Mulmur; Joan Sutherland, Town of New Tecumseth; Mayor Brian Mullin, Municipality of Grey Highlands; and Tom Elliott, Township of Springwater.

Chris Carrier, Mayor of Collingwood, is the Board's only new member this year. Carrier is the former Chair of the NVCA and replaces Dave Labelle.



2008 NVCA Board of Directors

Local students to celebrate Earth Day with the NVCA at Tiffin Centre

On April 22nd, 100 local high-school students will come to the Tiffin Centre for a full-day conference called *Science in your Backyard*.

NVCA staff designed the conference to link our daily environmental work to the Grade 10 science curriculum. The students will be able to apply what they learn in the classroom to local environmental features they can find right in their own "backyard."

Students will be attending from Orillia District Collegiate & Vocational

Institute, Centre Dufferin District High School in Shelburne and Jean Vanier Catholic High School in Collingwood.

Our staff, and outdoor education contractor, will run sessions and share their expertise on issues such as invasive species, pond management and fish habitat, species at risk and ecosystem management.

In addition to the session topics, we will introduce students to the variety of career options in environmental sciences.

Board member from New Tecumseth resigns

Dennis Egan, Councillor from the Town of New Tecumseth, resigned from the NVCA Board of Directors on March 19th.

New Tecumseth continues to be represented on the Board by Joan Sutherland. A replacement for Dennis Egan will be announced at a later date.

2008 budget approved

A 4.5 per cent levy increase over 2007 was approved at the February 8th Board of Directors meeting.

Of the 22 board members present, 20 voted in favour of the proposed budget, while two objected at the direction of their municipal councils.

The 2008 budget includes two new initiatives. The first is a \$489,000 grant program to protect local wells from contamination. The second is an additional NVCA staff member to help with Conservation Lands management.

2008 Corporate Communications Strategy approved

The Executive Committee approved the 2008 Corporate Communications Strategy at its meeting on March 28th.

The Strategy lists seven objectives for NVCA communications throughout the year, including greater outreach to the general public to learn about and benefit from NVCA services.

A copy of the Strategy can be found in the Business Plan.

www.nvca.on.ca

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