



## NVCA April 2021 Board Meeting Highlights

**Next Meeting: May 28, 2021, held virtually**

*For the full meeting agenda including documents and reports, visit [nvca.on.ca/about/boardofdirectors](http://nvca.on.ca/about/boardofdirectors)*

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### 2020 Financial Statement

NVCA receives clean audit for 2020.

Board members received the 2020 NVCA audited financial statements as presented by KPMG LLP Chartered Accountants. The financial statements is available on [NVCA's website](#).

### Presentation on Forestry

The Manager, Forestry provided an overview of NVCA's Forestry Program.

Every year since 1964, NVCA's Forestry Program has been planting trees. It is the only agency left in the watershed that is providing this service. This program fits into the NVCA mandate in many ways, including reduce flooding, improve water quality.

### History of tree planting in the County of Simcoe

As communities settled in the County of Simcoe between 1831 and 1841, forests were cut down for farming and to create turpentine. The area quickly became a desert, and many farmers abandoned their farms.

In the 1920s, the Province of Ontario tree planting efforts in Southern Ontario, including County of Simcoe. These efforts were transferred to the county in 1988. The province's tree planting program was based on science and very innovative. In the County of Simcoe, there were provincially owned tree nursery in Midhurst, and a tree seed plant in Angus.

### Funding and partnerships

In 2020, \$71,053 of NVCA's levy was used in the Forestry Program. Our partners, including Forests Ontario, Simcoe County, Federal Government, Town of New Tecumseth and landowners contributed \$270,000. Our biggest contributor is Forests Ontario. In the past 5 years, they have contributed \$1 million to NVCA's Forestry Program.

### 2021 Planting Season

This year's planting season will start on April 26, 2021 with 94,000 trees to be planted in 9 municipalities in the Nottawasaga Valley Watershed.

NVCA's comprehensive tree planting program includes tree planting services, and survival surveys in years 1, 2 and 5. After year 7, the trees will most likely be able to survive on their own.

### Arbor Day

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, NVCA hosted a tree sale for property owners who did not need to plant acres of trees. This year's sale is cancelled due to the pandemic.

### Challenges

The trees in our watershed face several challenges including lack of precipitation compared to other geographical areas, deer predation, species selection due to climate change, emerald ash borer, gypsy moths and other invasive species.

Here is some information regarding the control of [emerald ash borer](#) and [gypsy moths](#).

## **Infrastructure Repair for NVCA Tree Cooler**

The NVCA Board of Directors has approved that staff use a maximum of \$5,000 from the NVCA Operational Reserve to secure the services of RCH HVAC & Automation for the supply and installation of a new refrigeration unit be approved as presented.

## **Hazard Tree Removals at New Lowell Conservation Area**

The NVCA Board of Directors has approved the use the New Lowell Conservation Area reserve for hazard tree removals be supported, and further that, Falls Tree Service be contracted for the project at a cost not to exceed \$35,000.

## **Swaley Drain - Springwater Township**

The NVCA Board of Directors approved the use of use no more than \$6,000 from the NVCA Land Management Acquisition reserve to secure the services of Sid Vander Veen from R.J. Burnside & Associates Ltd to identify NVCA's options/obligations as a landowner, including how a decision under the *Conservation Authorities Act* may impact the outcome of the *Drainage Act* review process (for example, allocation of costs).

## **Achieving Net Gains through Ecological Offsetting**

NVCA staff has developed an updated watershed-specific policy and guideline which sets clear direction to when and how offsetting should be implemented.

Population growth and resulting urbanization presents a challenge for the protection and enhancement of wetlands throughout Southern Ontario watersheds. In addressing this challenge, one concept that is gaining momentum is the establishment of policies which outline an approach to 'compensation' or 'offsetting' for the loss of natural assets, which may include wetlands. Like many other Conservation Authorities (CAs), NVCA has historically accepted informal offsetting as a mitigation measure for wetland loss on an ad-hoc basis.

In recent years, other CAs within fast-growing watersheds, such as the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, have standardized this process through instituting formal ecological offsetting policies.

The intention of this guideline is to ensure that, moving forward, natural heritage offsetting is conducted using clear standardized criteria and metrics. This concept assigns a responsibility to compensate, where appropriate, for the value and function of lost natural features, thereby ensuring important functions are maintained and enhanced on the landscape.

This draft document will be circulated to municipalities, stakeholders and board members for comment.

## **Source Protection Committee Chair's Update**

Proposed changes to the Director's Technical Rules have resulted in the Committee starting the process of reviewing policies in the Source Protection Plan which includes addressing dense non-aqueous phase liquids and road salt respectively. Chair Lynn Dollin also outlined the challenges that Risk Management Officials were facing due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Source Protection Region Update**

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) proposed Director Technical Rules to address feedback from Source Protection Committees, Risk Management Officials, and Source Protection Authorities. The changes include proposals include changing circumstances for salt application, salt storage, commercial fertilizer storage, stormwater management.

New or replacement municipal wells and intakes are required to have the source water protection work completed and approved before the MECP issues the drinking water license. Several municipal systems in the NVSPA are presently underway in this process, completed under Section 34 of the Clean Water Act. These municipalities include Stayner, Shelburne, Caledon, and Alliston.

## Appointment of Municipal Member to the Source Protection Committee

Chris Gerrits (Deputy Mayor of Amaranth) was appointed as the municipal representative in the Nottawasaga Valley Source Protection Area to in replacement of Deborah Korolonek, who recently retired from the County of Simcoe.

## Annual Source Water Protection Progress Report to the Ministry

Section 46 of the *Clean Water Act* (Section 46) requires that the lead Source Protection Authority (SPA) report to the Director of Source Protection (MECP) on the implementation of all policies each year.

A primary objective of monitoring and reporting is to assess if threats to municipal drinking water sources are being reduced through the implementation of the Plan's policies. This information will help support any future amendments to the Plan and provide accountability and transparency to stakeholders. The following key findings include:

- All municipalities have submitted their annual reports to Source Protection Authority staff.
- Most policies (98%) that address significant drinking water threats in the Plan have been or are in the process of being implemented in accordance with the timelines set out in the Plan or otherwise amended.
- It is estimated that 89% (3157 of 3514) of existing significant drinking water threats have been mitigated through policy implementation.
- Two hundred and fifty-one (251) RMPs have been established and an estimated 119 RMPs remain to be negotiated across the Source Protection Region. Historic rates of RMP establishment suggest the July 2022 deadline is unlikely to be met. In addition, the rate of RMP negotiation in the remaining 14 months leading up to the deadline has been and will continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Nine hundred and twenty-seven (927) of estimated 2110 round-two on-site sewage (septic) system inspections have been completed with approximately 9 months remaining until the 2022 deadline.

The deadline to complete Risk Management plans was extended to July 2022, however, this represents a significant workload that they may not have the resources to complete. SPA staff will bring progress reports on RMP completion to each future meeting of the SPC and may request a review of the deadline once more to account for the disruption caused by COVID.