



# Customer Satisfaction Report

## Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, 2018

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### Commitment to Excellence in Customer Service

In September 2013, NVCA adopted a Customer Service Charter that sets out our commitment to providing excellent customer service. As part of this commitment, NVCA provides an annual summary of customer feedback.

#### **NVCA Customer Service Mission Statement**

We aim to provide a high standard of effective and efficient service to all our customers. We achieve excellence in customer service by being:

- Accountable
- Personable
- Accessible
- Efficient
- Knowledgeable
- Trustworthy
- Convenient

The following highlights the feedback received for programs offered by NVCA in 2018.

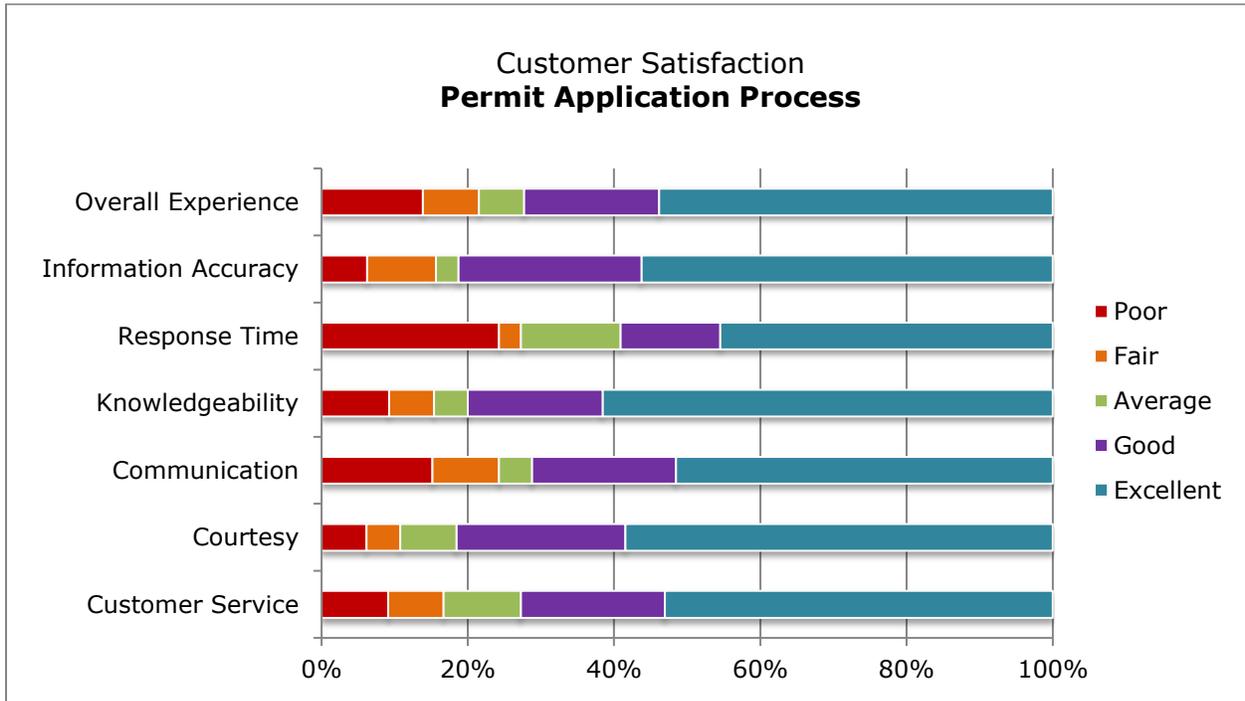
### Client Feedback— Watershed Management Services, Permit Process

Sixty-six (66) individuals and organizations completed a client survey on the NVCA permit application process. The survey is sent to all those receiving NVCA permits.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of those completing the client survey rated their overall experience with NVCA's permit application process as good or excellent. Staff knowledge, courtesy, information accuracy, communication, and customer service received similar feedback, with between 70% and 80% of survey respondents rating them as good or excellent. Response time received a lower rating, with 59% of survey respondents rating it as good or excellent.

These ratings are lower than in past years, where NVCA staff typically received overall ratings of good or excellent from 90% of responding clients. Several clients commented

on what they believed to be lengthy time lines for permits to be issued. Staff turnover late in 2017 lead to some delays, as did a significant increase in the number of permit applications. (NVCA has seen a 74% in permit applications over the past 5 years.) As new staff was brought up-to-speed, and new in-house processes continued to improve both efficiency and customer service, responses from clients improved throughout the year.



Among the written comments:

- ✔ "It would appear that the work-load for the NVCA's technical staff is currently very heavy - perhaps a seasonal aberration - resulting in in a longer response time on their part than one might hope for. However the staff with whom I have dealt with have been most accommodating."
- ✔ "We had a wonderful experience from initial contact to receiving our permit. Every staff we spoke to was helpful and able to answer our questions. Communication was prompt and clear and made the process less daunting. We are truly appreciative of the staff we had interactions with."
- ✔ "The process was very straight forward and the staff provided the information required to submit my application."
- ✔ "Keep up the great work. We all know that Conservation Authorities are crucial & paramount to the protection of the whole environment! We expect it takes time for final decisions. I am very very happy with NVCA!!!"
- ✔ "I am thrilled that your application process is all submitted digitally now!"

Suggestions for improvement from clients included recommendations to better communicate what to expect throughout the permitting process, to better respond to status update inquires, and to provide a more precise timeline for permit issuance.

## **Client Feedback— Lands, Education and Stewardship Services**

NVCA's lands, education and stewardship services include a wide variety of service areas. Highlights of the feedback received from clients via email, letters and surveys, follows.

### **Stewardship Program**

NVCA's stewardship services include tree planting/forestry, the Healthy Waters grant program, and other projects to protect and enhance our watershed.

Three (3) stewardship client surveys were received in 2018. Of these surveys, 100% of respondents gave a good or excellent rating to their overall experience with NVCA staff.

### **Conservation Lands Program**

NVCA's conservation lands program maintains the conservation areas and other properties owned and managed by the authority.

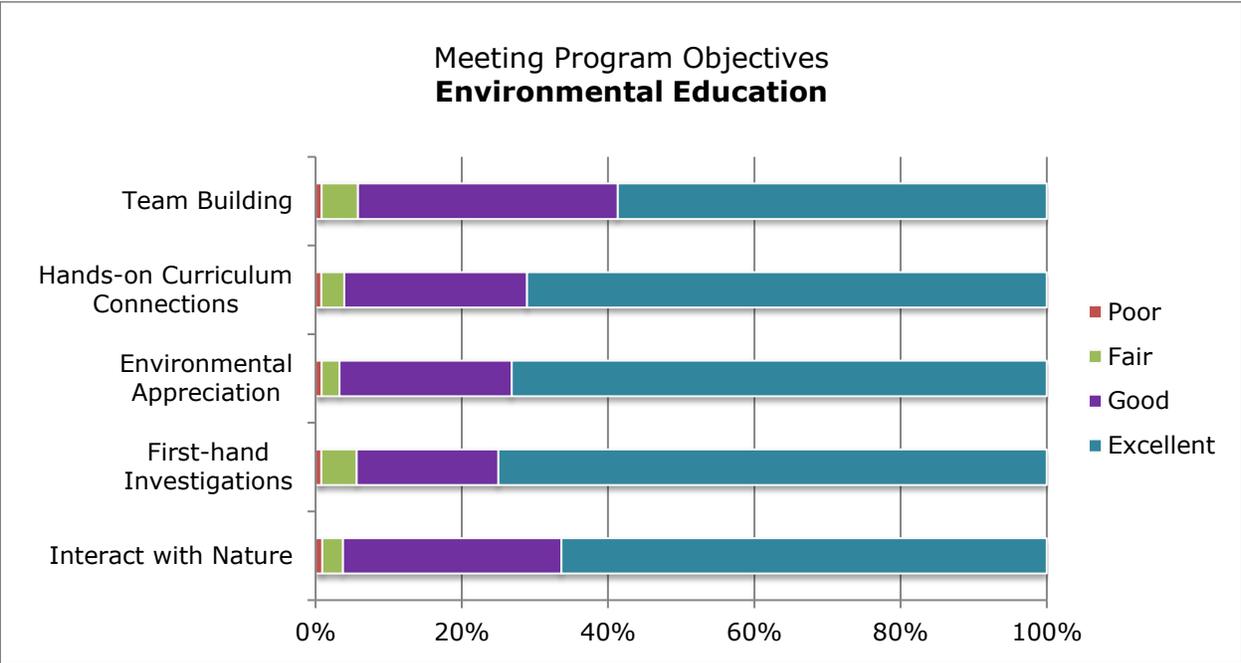
Three (3) client surveys were received in 2018. Of these surveys, 100% of respondents gave a good or excellent rating to their overall experience.

Clients raised a few concerns in their comments: 1) the need for wayfinding along the trails; 2) desire to have more detailed hiking routes and information on-line and 3) questioning why payment is required for parking. Staff continue to improve trail signage and web content. Unfortunately current funding does not cover the cost of operating and maintaining the conservation areas; a nominal parking fee (\$6.50 per vehicle) is charged to offset these costs.

### **Environmental Education**

NVCA's environmental education program provides hands-on, curriculum-aligned programs for students from JK to grade 12. Thousands of students take part in these programs each year.

In 2018, 75 teachers submitted feedback surveys on NVCA's environmental education programs. Of those responding, 96% rated the programs as having good or excellent connections to the provincial curriculum. Ninety-seven percent (97%) ranked their students' environment appreciation as result of the program as good or excellent.



Among the written comments:

- ✔ "Was an excellent opportunity for our students to explore and learn outdoors. Your staff is wonderful, their enthusiasm and patience keep everyone involved and learning."
- ✔ "The students had the opportunity to explore nature, which many of them had never experienced before."
- ✔ "This program accommodated all children. We were thrilled that our children with special needs were so engaged. We liked the space and variety to build with the free moving forest...this is a great addition to Tiffin centre. The price is always reasonable and fair compared to other places."
- ✔ "We really enjoyed our day. The goals were met. The staff was very efficient, organized, understanding of child development and very accommodating to our group."
- ✔ "Wonderful experience, and I would highly recommend this program to other teachers. We look forward to coming back to Tiffin for another visit!"

**Events/Public Programming**

NVCA’s lands department hosted several public events in 2018, including the Festival at Fort Willow and the annual Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival. Of the 53 visitors completing a special event feedback survey, 100% rated their overall experience as very good or excellent.

For NVCA’s signature event, Spring Tonic, 45% of respondents were returning guests, and 94% indicated they would or would consider attending the event in future years.

For the Festival at Fort willow, 24% of respondents were returning guests, and 100% of respondents indicated they would or would consider attending the event in future years.

Some of the comments received included:

- ✔ "Very well organized. We especially enjoyed the demonstrations of the various methods of making maple syrup and the pancake feast." *Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival*
- ✔ "This was such a great event. Interactive, fun, interesting, educational, friendly! We look forward to coming back next year." *Festival at Fort Willow*

## Weddings Celebrations

In 2018, the Tiffin Centre for Conservation was host to 19 wedding celebrations. Eleven (11) of these couples responded to a wedding feedback survey. Of those responding, 100% rated NVCA's customer service as excellent, and 100% said they would recommend Tiffin Centre as a wedding venue to others.

Some of the comments received included:

- ✔ "The Tiffin Centre facility and staff was excellent. We are so happy with how our whole wedding day went. We strongly recommend for any special event!"
- ✔ "We would just like to thank everyone at Tiffin for helping us create a magical day! This venue felt like the perfect place for us as a couple and we had so many guests comment on how beautiful it was. We appreciated all the hard work that you put into preparing for our day and the freedom you gave us to really make it our own."

## Additional Feedback

Throughout the year, NVCA received feedback from clients related to various staff through emails, surveys and personal correspondence.

Among the comments received this year:

- ✔ "Shannon is fantastic! So knowledgeable and a great support. She is a great ambassador for your organization." *Landowner speaking about working with Shannon Stephens, Healthy Waters Program coordinator.*
- ✔ "Daniel was a pleasure to deal with and I would commend him on how he handled our file." *Landowner requiring a permit from NVCA, commenting on customer service received from Daniel Dyce, regulations technician.*
- ✔ "Andrew Fera was very accommodating, courteous, professional and attentive in resolving our file and assisting us in obtaining the necessary permit in order to build our family's dream home." *Landowner requiring a permit from NVCA, commenting on customer service received from Andrew Fera, regulations technician.*
- ✔ "We were most pleased with the staff. Kyra and Heather were incredibly helpful whenever we needed any questions answered or advice for planning the day.

They answered any questions big or small very clearly and were extremely flexible with requests. Mike and Spencer were outstanding with their support with setup/tear down. They were extremely efficient and listened to all of our requests. From our first visit, Mike answered many questions and reviewed several options for setup, and it was such a pleasure to work with him." *Bride and groom from a wedding held at Tiffin speaking about the wedding team of Kyra Howes, manager of lands; Heather Kepran, communications coordinator; and Mike Bacon and Spencer Macdonald, lands and operations technicians.*

- ✔ "I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to both you and Grant for handling this incident [a student injury while visiting the Tiffin Centre]. Your professionalism and dedication were noted not only our staff, but by parents" *Principal from a local school commenting on NVCA's education staff members Naomi Saunders and Grant Wilson.*

## **Committed to Customer Service**

NVCA remains committed to providing excellence in customer service. We will continue to encourage customer feedback in 2018 through the use of formal online surveys and event evaluations.

For more information about NVCA's Customer Service Charter or this report, contact NVCA's director of corporate services at 705-424-1479 or [admin@nvca.on.ca](mailto:admin@nvca.on.ca).

## **Alternative Formats**

If you require this document in a different format please contact NVCA at 705-424-1479 or [admin@nvca.on.ca](mailto:admin@nvca.on.ca).