

# Board Meeting Highlights

October 28, 2016

## **Announcements:**

### **LSRCA Annual Conservation Awards**

CAO Mike Walters reminded Board members that LSRCA's Annual Conservation Awards ceremony is being held on Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at Madsen's Gardens in Newmarket.

### **Beaver River Wetland Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**

CAO Mike Walters was pleased to advise that the Beaver River Wetland Trail ribbon cutting ceremony took place in Cannington on October 26<sup>th</sup> and marked the completion of the final eight kilometres of trail that now connects the communities of Uxbridge, Blackwater, Sunderland and Cannington. Township of Brock Board member Debbie Bath thanked staff and especially Brian Kemp and his passion for beautifying the Beaver River Wetland Trail.

### **LSRCA Annual Conservation Awards**

CAO Mike Walters was pleased to announce that Influx Magazine recently featured LSRCA's David Lembcke and Bill Thompson in an article regarding salt in urban stormwater run-off. To read this article, please click the following link and proceed to Page 12: [Influx Magazine - Fall 2016](#)

## **Presentations:**

### **LSRCA Landholding Assessment 2016**

General Manager, Conservation Lands, Brian Kemp, provided the Board with a presentation on LSRCA's 2016 Landholding Assessment, noting that the purpose of this assessment is to provide account of all holdings, identify out-of-date records, and inform future land management decisions. He noted that at present, LSRCA owns, manages or holds easement over approximately 2,425 ha (5,992 ac) of conservation lands across the watershed, divided into 35 main conservation landholdings, embodying a range of landscapes, ecosystem types and recreational opportunities.

GM Kemp explained that this landholding assessment assists in moving towards a more sustainable approach to land management and that by identifying information gaps and developing a plan for populating and maintaining a complete and accurate record of all information, LSRCA will be better positioned to shift from a reactive to an active or proactive land management approach.

This presentation and the accompanying Staff Report No. 40-16-BOD contained a number of recommendations, the approval of which were deferred until the next meeting.

### Aquatic Plants in Lake Simcoe

Limnologist, Brian, Ginn, provided the Board with a presentation on aquatic plants, noting that aquatic plants are any plants living above, below or on the water, they are naturally present in healthy lakes, and they are important for fish habitat plant species. Aquatic plants currently found in Lake Simcoe include coontail, Eurasian watermilfoil, and muskgrass and water soldier. LSRCA studies over 200 sites every five years, with recent years seeing the decrease in Eurasian watermilfoil and an increase in muskgrass. Dr. Ginn went on to explain that sunlight, water temperatures, water clarity and competition with other species all play a role in controlling aquatic plants. Invasive mussels contribute to water clarity. Zebra mussels were prominent in Lake Simcoe from 1991–1995 but were then overtaken by quagga mussels in later years. The impact of these changes on the lake was very complex and interconnected. Invasive mussels are filter feeders, so they take phosphorus from the water column and transfer it into the sediment in the near shore lake bottom. By doing so, the mussels are helping the aquatic plants to grow by creating a very fertile lake bottom. The enhanced water clarity also created by the mussels has allowed for great clarity and sunlight penetration, which is also contributing to an overabundance of aquatic plants. The plants die off in the fall and release nutrients when they decompose. During this process, valuable oxygen in the bottom waters is used up, which then impacts on the health of the coldwater fishery.

He explained that in order to manage aquatic plants, the underlying issues must be managed as well. Harvesting or removing plants is restricted by DFO and MNRF as the plants provide habitat for fish. Harvesting aquatic plants usually causes them to spread, and using herbicides to kill the plants can allow other plants such as algae to fill the void. In Ramara, treatment of the Lagoon City canals to kill all the aquatic plants resulted in a massive bloom of Cyanobacteria (blue green algae), which is toxic.

In conclusion, Dr. Ginn noted that ecological improvements are being seen in Lake Simcoe (nutrients, fish), and the best way to control aquatic plants is to limit nutrients to the lake. Regardless, improvements will take time.

### **Correspondence and Staff Reports:**

#### Correspondence

The Board received a copy of a letter from the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change regarding the continuation of funding for the Lake Simcoe/south-Eastern Georgian Bay Clean-up Fund.

#### Budget Status Report

The Board received Staff Report No. 41-16-BOD, prepared by Manager, Finance, Katherine Toffan, which provided the Board with a summary of revenues and expenditures for the period ending September 30, 2016, as they relate to the 2016 budget approved by the Board on April 29, 2016.

### LSRCA Planning and Development Fees

The Board approved Staff Report No. 42-16-BOD prepared by General Manager, Planning & Development, Rob Baldwin, which sought the Board's approval on a new Planning and Development Fees Policy to be effective January 1, 2017. In keeping with LSRCA's Strategic Plan initiative for the Planning and Development program to be at 100% cost recovery on fees by 2019, this staff report recommended changes for a number of the fees.

### Update – Conservation Authorities Act Review

The Board received Staff Report No. 43-16-BOD prepared by Chief Administrative Officer, Michael Walters, which provided an update on the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's review of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

### Durham Regional Forest Standing Timber Sale

The Board approved Staff Report No. 44-16-BOD prepared by Manager, Forestry and Stewardship, Philip Davies, which recommended the tender for Durham Regional Forest standing timber sales be awarded to Gee's Lumber and Logging in St. Williams, Ontario.

### Update - LSRCA Signing Officers

The Board approved Staff Report No. 46-16-BOD prepared by Chief Administrative Officer, Michael Walters, which sought to name Renee Jarrett, General Manager, Communications and Education, as a signing officer for LSRCA's account at the Bank of Nova Scotia. The appointment of the General Manager, Communications and Education as a signing officer replaces the General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services position, which is currently vacant.

For more information or to see the full agenda package and/or the presentations, please click the link below for LSRCA's Board of Directors' webpage: [LSRCA Board Meetings](#)