

# General Manager's Report

November 16, 2017

Prepared for the Board of Directors  
by Brian Horner

## Introduction

I am pleased to provide the Board of Directors with a brief update on ABCA projects, programs, new partnerships, funding opportunities and activities over the past couple of months. This report also includes information about Conservation Ontario and some of its activities on behalf of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities. If you have any questions please call me. *Note:* This is not an inclusive list – only some highlights.

## Conservation Ontario

Conservation Ontario is the network of 36 Conservation Authorities, local watershed management agencies that deliver services and programs that protect and manage water and other natural resources in partnership with the government, landowners and other organizations. Conservation Authorities promote an integrated watershed approach balancing human, environmental and economic need. Conservation Authorities are organized on a watershed basis.

1. On October 17, 2017 Conservation Ontario made a presentation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy in regards to comments and suggested amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* contained in Schedule 4 of Bill 139. Conservation Ontario supports the leadership demonstrated by the Province in addressing the need to modernize the *Conservation Authorities Act* and encourages the Government to move forward with the passage of this bill. Debate continues and it is expected that 3<sup>rd</sup> reading will happen later this year and the “Bill” will be passed before the end of the year.

## Projects, Programs and Studies

1. Conservation Education staff delivered school programs at Rock Glen CA and Morrison Dam CA on 12 different dates over the past month, as well as providing an environmental leadership workshop on Oct 6 and 16 to gifted students in grades 7-10 from the Avon Maitland District School Board.
2. Mari Veliz helped organize a Lake Huron Summit from October 25 – 26. She highlighted the works being undertaken by community organizations (including ABCA) around the lake and also provided an overview about the importance of ecosystem evaluation.
3. Staff continue to work with the Municipality of Bluewater, Pioneer Park Association and the Huron County Health Unit on water quality for the Main Bayfield Beach.
4. Staff have been contacting GLASI participants in the Gully Creek subwatershed to complete the costs benefit survey as well as the submitting BMP project claims. Both of these submissions need to be finalized by December 15 of this year.
5. Ross Wilson coordinated an event with University of Guelph researchers and Huron County Soil and Crop Improvement farmers on October 18 to demonstrate soil health methods.
6. Staff are still receiving applications for the Huron Clean Water Cover Crop Incentive Program. We have over 2,400 acres registered in the program for this year. Farmers can receive \$10 per acre, to a maximum of \$1,000 per year.
7. Phragmites spraying has been completed for 2017. Tony Drinkwalter and Jeff NanNiekirk sprayed at several private landowner sites as well as roadsides that are owned by the County of Huron.

## **Training and Development**

1. Rachael Scholten attended the final retreat for the Young Conservation Professional Leadership Program from October 18-20<sup>th</sup> in Beaver Valley. Graduation for the program will be held at the Latornell Conservation Symposium on Tuesday, November 21 at the Nottawasaga Inn and Conference Centre in Alliston.
2. Staff participated in a Parkhill Dam gate operation training session on October 6.

## **Meetings and Special Events**

- 1 Tim Cumming met with a consulting firm representative, studying Engagement Best Management Practices by Conservation Authorities. This information will be provided with recommendations to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry as part of the work around the *Conservation Authorities Act* update.
- 2 Friends of the South Huron Trail met at the ABCA Administration Centre on Friday, November 3.
- 3 A Source Protection Committee (SPC) meeting is scheduled to be held, Wednesday November 22, 2017 at the White Carnation Hall in Holmesville.
- 4 Drinking Water Source Protection staff hosted MOECC members from the Source Protection Program Branch on October 24. The information session was Part 1 of a program update for the Branch. The Second Part which focuses on funding will be done at a later date.
- 5 On Saturday, October 28 the Conservation Education staff hosted the annual Owl Prowl. The event was a success as approximately 200 people attended the two sessions to see a presentation with live owls. During the night hike, the Eastern Screech Owls cooperated with their attendance as well.
- 6 Healthy Watersheds staff were invited to attend a Great Lakes Restoration Conference in Buffalo, New York on October 17. The conference was hosted by a coalition of different environmental non-governmental organizations to highlight the work being done to improve the Great Lakes.
- 7 Rachael Scholten attended a workshop presentation at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto on October 26 hosted by Conservation Ontario. The presentation discussed the new Environmental Connections program and possible opportunities for stewardship staff to make use of this online platform to share information, research and projects.
- 8 Davin Heinbuck attended the Land Drainage Engineers' Committee meeting as a Conservation Ontario representative. He also attended the Drainage Engineers' Conference in Guelph in October.