



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Administration Centre  
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

10:30 a.m.

### AGENDA

1. Chair's Welcome and Call to Order
2. Land Acknowledgement Statement
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
5. Disclosure of intention to record this meeting by video and/or audio device
6. Approval of Minutes from July 17, 2025
7. **Business Out of the Minutes**
  - Draft ABCA Administration Regulations By-Laws – Davin Heinbuck
8. **Program Reports**
  - Report 1: (a) Development Review (O Reg 41/24) – Andrew Bicknell
  - (b) Violations/Appeals Update – Andrew Bicknell
  - Report 2: Mileage Rate Policy – Nathan Schoelier
  - Report 3: Draft Rock Glen Conservation Area Master Plan – Nathan Schoelier
9. **General Manager's Report** – Davin Heinbuck
10. Committee Reports
11. **Correspondence**
12. New Business
13. **Committee of the Whole** – *property matter*
14. Adjournment

### Upcoming Meetings and Events

October 9, 2025	Budget Committee Meeting – 9:30 a.m.
October 23, 2025	Board of Directors Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, July 17, 2025

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom  
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

### DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Joey Groot, Dave Jewitt, David Marsh, Wayne Shipley

### DIRECTORS ABSENT

Steve Herold, Jaden Hodgins, Marissa Vaughan

### STAFF PRESENT

Tina Crown, Millie Ghorbankhani, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Mari Veliz, Ellen Westelaken.

### OTHERS PRESENT

Rick Sickinger, County of Huron

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

#### **MOTION #BD 49/25**

**Moved Dave Jewitt**

**Seconded by Joey Groot**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the July 17, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting be approved.”**

**Carried.**

### DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting or from the previous meeting.

### DISCLOSURE OF INTENTION TO RECORD

None.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES**MOTION #BD 50/25**

**Moved by Wayne Shipley  
Seconded by David Marsh**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on June 19, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”**

**Carried.**

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

PRESENTATION – SOUTH HURON TRAILS 2025 PROPULSO DATA

Rick Sickinger, Economic Development Officer for the County of Huron, presented to the Board about the use of data from Propulso, which tracks pings from cell phones. The County is using this data to help determine where people are spending their time, which will be helpful to the tourism industry. The info collected is just surface geolocation information and doesn't collect personal information. One of the places where data was tracked in 2024 was the South Huron Trail. Last year, over 91,000 “pings” were detected from cell phones on the trail. Over 20,000 were unique visitors, and this data does not account for children or users who are not carrying cell phones. These numbers are comparable to the G2G trail, as well as the Bayfield River Valley Trails. This data can also track where the visitors have come from to walk on the trail. This information is helpful to the ABCA, as it can help us determine our busiest times on the trail and can perhaps inform where new entrances could be located to aid in trail use. It may also help staff determine where they should be advertising to attract new visitors.

PROGRAM REPORTS**1. (a) Development Review**

Ellen Westelaken, Water & Planning Technician, presented the Development Review report pursuant to Ontario Regulation 41/24 *Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*. Through the application process, proposed developments within regulated areas are protected from flooding and erosion hazards. Staff granted permission for 6 *Applications for Permission* and 6 *Minor Works Applications*.

**(b) Violation/Appeals Update**

Ellen noted that there were no violation updates at this time.

**MOTION #BD 51/25**

**Moved by Dave Jewitt**

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**Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors affirm the approval of applications as presented in Program Report # 1 – a) Development Review and receive the verbal Violations and Appeals update as presented.”**

**Carried.**

**2. Draft ABCA Administration Regulation By-Laws**

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, reported that staff updated the ABCA Administrative By-Law for a number of changes. The Administrative By-law is passed under the Conservation Authorities Act and covers general governance, meeting procedures, Code of Conduct and procedures for elections. Through the changes to the Conservation Authorities Act over the past several years, there were some updates needed for ABCA’s Administrative By-law to ensure consistency. Some of the key changes include consistency with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporation Act, Minister appointments for Agricultural Representatives, Bill 23, Ontario Regulations 400/22 and 402/22, and updates for ABCA’s 2020 amendment to allow electronic meetings during a declared state of emergency. Staff provided Directors with a copy of the proposed updates, and recommended that they be approved and posted on the ABCA website.

Directors were all in favour of the updates, but suggested that an update be made to the Administrative By-law under the electronic meetings, that there be a declaration of who else may be in the room for those joining the meeting from other locations, especially during Committee of the Whole. Directors asked staff to make that change, and then bring the Administrative By-law back to an upcoming meeting for approval.

**MOTION #BD 52/25**

**Moved by Joey Groot**

**Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors accept the report *Draft ABCA Administration Regulation By-Laws* as presented, and direct staff to make appropriate updates and bring it back to a subsequent Board of Directors meeting for approval.**

**Carried.**

**3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Profit and Loss Statement**

Tina Crown, Financial Services Coordinator, provided the profit and loss statement to June 30, 2025, including a projection for the remaining six months of the year.

**MOTION #BD 53/25**

**Moved by David Marsh**

**Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Profit and Loss Statement for information as presented.”**

**Carried.**

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Reference: Order in Council 862/2025 and 863/2025  
File: A.12  
Brief: Two orders in council from the Province of Ontario. 862/2025 appoints Hassaan Basit as Deputy Minister and Chief Conservation Executive, Cabinet Office for up to three years. The second Order in Council 863/2025, appoints the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks as the reporting Ministry for conservation authorities.
- b) Reference: Grain Farmers of Ontario Letter of Support  
File: W.11.16  
Brief: A letter addressed to Mari Veliz, supporting the work at the Huronview Demonstration site, and commending the leadership of the Huron County Soil and Crop Improvement Association and the ABCA in advancing the work at this site.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. Chair Chartrand informed Directors of a CTV news clip he had recently seen regarding the *Southern Lake Huron Coastal Adaptation Strategy* lead by the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority. He noticed that ABCA was not at the meeting and wondered if there would be a role for the ABCA. Staff noted that they have been invited to participate where relevant in future meetings.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

##### **MOTION #BD 54/25**

**Moved by Dave Jewitt  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors go into Committee of the Whole at 11:24 a.m. to discuss a property matter, with Nathan Schoelier, Davin Heinbuck and Abbie Gutteridge remaining in attendance.”**

**Carried.**

**MOTION #BD 55/25**

**Moved by David Marsh  
Seconded by Joey Groot**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors  
rise and report at 11:49 a.m.”**

**Carried.**

**MOTION #BD 56/25**

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen  
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors  
approve staff to proceed as directed regarding the property matter.”**

**Carried.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Wayne Shipley at 11:50 a.m.

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Ray Chartrand  
Chair

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Abigail Gutteridge  
Secretary

*Copies of program reports are available upon request.  
Contact Abigail Gutteridge, Corporate Services Coordinator*

## ***ABCA Program Report***

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** September 18, 2025  
**From:** Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary Treasurer  
**Subject:** Draft ABCA Administration Regulations By-Laws  
**Report Type:** ACTION REQUIRED

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### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Board of Directors approves the updated and amended ABCA Administration Regulations By-Laws as presented; and,

THAT, the amended Administration Regulation By-Law be posted on the ABCA website.

### **Background**

The draft Administrative By-Law was brought to the Board of Directors on July 17, 2025. Direction was to amend the draft document with a few minor changes and the inclusion of guidance around the procedures for conducting closed sessions (Committee of the Whole) during electronic meetings.

Previous updates were outlined in the minutes and the report from the July 17, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

# **Ausable Bayfield**

## **Conservation Authority**

### **Administration Regulations**

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Ray Chartrand, Chair

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary  
Treasurer

September 18, 2025

#BD \_\_/25

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Effective Date

Resolution

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## ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS

as set by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors

Effective September 18, 2025

## Administrative By-Laws

### Introduction

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority is a non-share corporation, established under Section 3 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, with the objects to provide, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, programs and services designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources other than gas, coal and minerals.

Under the Act, municipalities within a common watershed are enabled to petition the province to establish a conservation authority. The purpose of the Act is to provide for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario. The Authority is comprised of its Members, appointed as representatives by the Participating Municipalities:

***Mission – Protect, improve, conserve, and restore the watershed in partnership with the community.***

***Vision – Healthy watersheds where our needs and the needs of the natural environment are in balance.***

The Members of the Conservation Authority form the General Membership of the Conservation Authority. The Members are bound by the Act and other applicable legislation. The Authority must always act within the scope of its powers. As a non-share corporation, the Authority has the capacity and, subject to the Act and other applicable legislation, the rights, powers and privileges of a natural person. The powers of a conservation authority to accomplish its objects are set out in the Act, including those identified under subsection 21(1).

### **Powers of authorities**

21 (1) For the purposes of accomplishing its objects, an authority has power,

(a) to research, study and investigate the watershed and to support the development and implementation of programs and services intended to further the purposes of this Act;

(b) for any purpose necessary to any project under consideration or undertaken by the authority, to enter into and upon any land, with the consent of the occupant or owner, and

survey and take levels of it and make such borings or sink such trial pits as the authority considers necessary;

(c) to acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise any land that it may require, and, subject to subsections (2) and (4), to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land so acquired;

(d) despite subsection (2), to lease for a term of five years or less land acquired by the authority;

(e) to purchase or acquire any personal property that it may require and sell or otherwise deal therewith;

(f) to enter into agreements for the purchase of materials, employment of labour and other purposes as may be necessary for the due carrying out of any project or to further the authority's objects;

(g) to enter into agreements with owners of private lands to facilitate the due carrying out of any project;

(h) to determine the proportion of the total benefit afforded to all the participating municipalities that is afforded to each of them;

(i) to erect works and structures and create reservoirs by the construction of dams or otherwise;

(j) to control the flow of surface waters in order to prevent floods or pollution or to reduce the adverse effects thereof;

(k) to alter the course of any river, canal, brook, stream or watercourse, and divert or alter, as well temporarily as permanently, the course of any river, stream, road, street or way, or raise or sink its level in order to carry it over or under, on the level of or by the side of any work built or to be built by the authority, and to divert or alter the position of any water-pipe, gas-pipe, sewer, drain or any telegraph, telephone or electric wire or pole;

(l) to use lands that are owned or controlled by the authority for purposes, not inconsistent with its objects, as it considers proper;

(m) to use lands owned or controlled by the authority for park or other recreational purposes, and to erect, or permit to be erected, buildings, booths and facilities for such purposes and to make charges for admission thereto and the use thereof;

(n) to collaborate and enter into agreements with ministries and agencies of government, municipal councils and local boards and other organizations and individuals;

(o) to plant and produce trees on Crown lands with the consent of the Minister, and on other lands with the consent of the owner, for any purpose;

(p) REPEALED

(q) generally to do all such acts as are necessary for the due carrying out of any project or as may be desirable to further the objects of the authority.

## A. Definitions

**“Apportionment”** means the amount of net costs apportioned to participating municipalities in accordance with the Act and Regulations under the Act.

**“Authority”** means the Auable Bayfield Conservation Authority

**“Act”** means the *Conservation Authorities Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter C.27

**“Chair”** means the Chairperson as referenced in the Act as elected by the Members of the Authority.

**“Chief Administrative Officer”** means the General Manager or Chief Administrative Officer of the Authority, and which may, by resolution of the Authority, include the responsibilities of the Secretary-Treasurer if so designated by resolution of the Authority.

**“Declared Emergency”** is any emergency declared pursuant to the Emergency Management Civil Protection Act that has been declared to exist, in all or part of an area over which the Authority has jurisdiction, under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. (From April 2020 ABCA By-Law Amendment)

**“Electronic Meeting”** means a meeting called and held in full or in part via electronic means (including, but not limited to, video conference, audio conference, teleconference or other appropriate electronic means), and with or without in-person attendance. (From April 2020 ABCA By-Law Amendment)

**“Fiscal Year”** means the period from January 1 through December 31.

**“General Membership”** means all of the Members, collectively.

**“Majority”** means half of the votes plus one.

**“Members”** shall mean the members or directors appointed to the Authority by the participating municipalities in the Authority’s area of jurisdiction and a member appointed to the Authority by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector (as

applicable) and effectively act as directors as specified in the *Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act* (ONCA).

**“Officer”** means an officer of the Authority empowered to sign contracts, agreements and other documents on behalf of the Authority in accordance with section 19.1 of the Act, which shall include the Chair, Vice-Chair(s) the Chief Administrative Officer and the Secretary-Treasurer (or the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, if applicable).

**“Participating Municipality”** means a municipality that is designated by or under the Act as a participating municipality in a conservation authority.

**“Pecuniary Interest”** includes the financial or material interests of a Member and the financial or material interests of a member of the Member’s immediate family.

**“Secretary-Treasurer”** means Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority with the roles specified in the Act.

**“Staff”** means employees of the Authority as provided for under Section 18(1) of the Act.

**“Vice-Chair”** means the Vice-Chairperson as elected by the Members of the Authority. If a first and second Vice-Chair are elected, they shall be called First Vice-Chair and Second Vice-Chair.

**“Weighted Majority Vote”** means the votes of 51 per cent of those represented after the votes are weighted by the percentage that applies under Ontario Regulation 402/22: Budget and Apportionment.

## B. Governance

### 1. Members

#### a) Appointments

Participating Municipalities within the jurisdiction of the Authority may appoint Members in accordance with Section 14 of the Act. An additional agricultural sector representative may be appointed to the Authority by the Minister.

Members must reside in a Participating Municipality within the Authority’s area of jurisdiction and may include citizens as well as elected members of municipal councils.

Collectively, the appointed Members comprise the Authority, and for the purposes of this by-law are also referred to as the General Membership.

In this document and on a day-to-day basis members will be referred to as Directors. The term “Director” is equivalent to the term “Member” under the *Act*.

Appointment of Directors will be made as follows:

Municipality	Number of Directors
Central Huron ( <i>Clinton, Goderich Twp., Hullett</i> )	1
Huron East ( <i>Seaforth, McKillop, Tuckersmith</i> )	1
Bluewater ( <i>Bayfield, Stanley, Hay, Zurich, Hensall</i> )	1
West Perth ( <i>Hibbert</i> )	1
Lambton Shores, Warwick ( <i>Grand Bend, Bosanquest, Thedford, Arkona</i> )	1
South Huron, Perth South ( <i>Exeter, Usborne, Stephen</i> )	1
Lucan Biddulph	1
Middlesex Centre, Adelaide Metcalfe	1
North Middlesex ( <i>East Williams, West Williams, Parkhill, Ailsa Craig, McGillivray</i> )	1
Total	9

#### **b) Term of Member Appointments**

In accordance with Section 14 of the Act, a Member shall be appointed for a term of up to four years at the discretion of the appointing municipal council; such term beginning at the first meeting of the Authority following his or her appointment and ending immediately before the first meeting of the Authority following the appointment of his or her replacement. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the appropriate municipality in advance of the expiration date of any Member's term, unless notified by the municipality of the Member's reappointment or the appointment of his or her replacement. A Member is eligible for reappointment. A Member can be replaced by a Participating Municipality at the municipality's discretion prior to the end of their term. The Minister will define the term for the Member they appoint as a representative of the agricultural sector and they may be replaced at the Minister's discretion.

#### **c) Powers of the General Membership**

Subject to the Act and other applicable legislation, the General Membership is empowered without restriction to exercise all of the powers prescribed to the Authority under the Act. In addition to the powers of an authority under s.21 of the Act for the purposes of accomplishing its objects, as referenced in the introduction of this By-law model, the powers of the General Membership include but are not limited to:

- i. Approving by resolution, the creation of Committees and/or Advisory Boards, the members thereof and the terms of reference for these Committees and/or Advisory Boards;
- ii. Appointing a General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer;

- iii. Terminating the services of the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer.
- iv. Approving establishing and implementing regulations, policies and programs;
- v. Awarding contracts or agreements where the approval of the Authority is required under the Authority's purchasing policy.
- vi. Appointing an Executive Committee and delegate to the Committee any of its powers except:
  - i. The termination of the services of the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer,
  - ii. The power to raise money, and
  - iii. The power to enter into contracts or agreements other than those contracts or agreements as are necessarily incidental to the works approved by the Authority.
- vii. Approving by resolution, any new capital project of the Authority;
- viii. Approving by resolution, the method of financing any new capital projects;
- ix. Approving details on budget allocations on any new or existing capital projects;
- x. Approving the total budget for the ensuing year, and approving the apportionment to be paid by the Participating Municipalities;
- xi. Receiving and approving the Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor for the preceding year;
- xii. Authorizing the borrowing of funds on the promissory note of the Authority in accordance with subsection 3(5) of the Act;
- xiii. Approving by resolution, any proposed expropriation of land or disposition of land, subject to the requirements under the Act;
- xiv. Approving permits or refusing permission as may be required under any regulations made under Section 28 of the Act;
- xv. Holding hearings required for the purpose of reviewing permit applications, and advising every applicant of their right to appeal the decision to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry through the Mining and Lands Tribunal.

If a Member has been appointed representing the agricultural sector, they do not have a vote on items ix, x, and xi as per s.14 of the Act and s.2 of Ontario Regulation 402/22 Budget and Apportionment.

#### **d) Member Accountability**

Participating Municipalities appoint Members to the Authority as their representatives. Members have the responsibilities of Directors of the corporation that is the Authority.

While the administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations, the General Membership is responsible for matters of governance, ensuring compliance with applicable legislation, and ensuring appropriate policies are in place and for financial soundness of the Authority.

All Members have the responsibility to be guided by and adhere to the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and Conflict of Interest Policy (Appendix 2), as adopted by the Authority.

As a duly appointed Director of the participating municipalities, it is your responsibility to:



- i. Attend all meetings of the Authority;
- ii. Understand the purpose, function and responsibilities of the Authority;
- iii. Become aware and knowledgeable of programs, projects, and activities of the of the Authority;
- iv. Be familiar with the Authority's statutory and other legal obligations;
- v. Set strategic direction for the Authority along with the administration;
- vi. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and Committees to which you have been appointed;
- vii. Keep the councils whom you represent informed of Authority programs, projects and activities;
- viii. Be prepared to discuss issues at all Authority meetings.

#### ***e) Applicable Legislation***

In addition to the Act, the Members are subject to other legislation including, but not limited to:

- *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

If any part of the by-law conflicts with any provision of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act or the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or a provision of a regulation made under one of those Acts, the provision of that Act or regulation prevails.

#### ***f) Relationship Between Members and Staff***

The General Membership relies on the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer to manage the operations of the organization, including all employees of the Authority. The General Manager/Secretary Treasurer is accountable to the Authority, working cooperatively to achieve the goals established by the Authority.

The General Membership will ensure that a process exists for regular performance evaluations of the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

## **2. Officers**

The Officers of the Authority, and their respective responsibilities, shall be:

### **Chair**

- Be a Member of the Authority;
- Preside over the Annual and all Board of Director meetings;
- Represent the Authority at such functions as warrant the interest of the Authority, except where the responsibility is specifically assigned to some other person;
- Serve as signing officer of the Authority;
- Ensure relevant information and policies are brought to the Authority's attention;
- Keep the General Membership apprised of significant issues in a timely fashion;
- Be "ex-officio", a member of all committees, sub-committees and ad hoc committees appointed from time to time by the Board of Directors;
- Perform other duties when directed to do so by resolution of the Authority.

## **Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair of the Authority shall assist the Chair in all ways possible and in particular shall:

- Be a Member of the Authority;
- Act as Chair immediately upon the death, incapacity to act, absence, or resignation of the Chair until such time as a new Chair is appointed or until the Chair resumes his/her duties;
- Act on behalf of the Chair at any function upon the request of the Chair;
- Be “ex-officio”, a member of all committees, sub-committees and ad hoc committees appointed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

## **General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer**

The General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Authority and to so represent the Authority in such capacity as and when required, subject always to the immediate direction of the Board of the Authority. The responsibilities of the General Manager as assigned by the Authority include, but are not limited to the following:

- Being an employee of the Authority;
- Giving or causing to be given all notices required by this regulation;
- Keeping or causing to be kept accurate records of meetings and accounts of the Authority and shall be custodian of the corporate seal;
- Carrying out or causing to be carried out required financial transactions on behalf of the Authority;
- Having the power to call meetings and conduct business in the absence of a functioning Board of Directors (*revised #BD22/11*)
- Administering and coordinating the total program of the Authority in accordance with the approved budget, policies and strategic directions;
- Providing direction and instructions for the consultants, contractors and other professional firms and individuals engaged from time to time by the Authority;
- Directing the preparation of material or projects to be undertaken by the Authority and to provide such reports as might be from time to time requested by the Authority;
- Coordinating, supervising and directing all projects of land acquisitions and to retain such appraisers, surveyors and legal assistants that may be required;
- Being aware of and responsible for the disposition of any land acquired by the Authority and the leasing or other use of lands so acquired including liaison of the said land and the municipal legislation applicable thereto;
- Being responsible for all documentary requirements necessary to obtain approval under the *Conservation Authorities Act*;
- Directing the preparation of all budget estimates for approval in accordance with the requirements of the Authority and the directions therein from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry;

- Communicating all instructions from the Authority and its various committees to the administration of the Authority and to supervise the carrying out of all such communications;
- Being responsible for the preparation of reports and correspondence to other agencies, governments and individuals dealing with the policy of the Authority on particular items;
- Reviewing with the Authority, or any Committee appointed by the Authority, management methods, regulations, appointments to the administration, promotions and compensation for the employees as are requested from time to time;
- In general acting as the Human Resources Officer of the Authority.

### **3. Absence of Chair and Vice-Chair**

In the event of the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair from any meeting, the Directors present shall appoint an acting Chair who, for the purposes of that meeting has all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chair.

### **4. Maximum Term for Chair and Vice-Chair**

Both the Chair and Vice-Chair shall hold office for a term of one year, and shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms. Notwithstanding these terms, the Minister may grant permission (upon application by an Authority or a participating municipality) for a Chair or Vice-Chair to serve for a term of more than one year or to hold office for more than two consecutive terms.

### **5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs**

The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be held in accordance with the Authority's procedures for election of officers (see Appendix 3).

### **6. Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council**

The Authority may appoint up to three Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council ("Council") in accordance with the Conservation Ontario By-law, designated as Voting Delegate and Alternate(s). Council will consist of the Voting Delegates appointed by each Member Conservation Authority. The Voting Delegate and Alternates shall be registered with Conservation Ontario annually. Chair – Voting, Vice Chair – 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate, General Manager/Secretary Treasurer – 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate.

### **7. Appointment of Auditor**

The General Membership shall appoint an auditor for the coming year at the Annual Meeting in accordance with Section 38 of the Act.

### **8. Appointment of Financial Institution**

The General Membership shall appoint a financial institution to act as the Authority's banker by Resolution for a term as specified in such resolution.

## **9. Appointment of Solicitor**

The General Membership shall appoint a solicitor(s) to act as the Authority's legal counsel by Resolution for a term as specified in such resolution.

## **10. Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor**

The General Membership shall receive and approve the Audited Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor annually for the previous year. This is done at the earliest convenience for the Auditor, normally first Board meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

The Authority shall forward copies of the Audited Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor to Participating Municipalities and the Minister of Natural Resources OR the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, in accordance with Section 38 of the Act and will make the Audited Financial Statements available to the public. The appropriate minister above will be dependent on the current governing Ministry over the Conservation Authorities Act.

## **11. Borrowing Resolution**

If required, the Authority shall establish a borrowing resolution by March 31 of each year and such resolution shall be in force until it is superseded by another borrowing resolution.

## **12. Apportionment Notice**

The municipal apportionment due to the Authority from participating municipalities shall be communicated to those municipalities in accordance with the Act and any applicable Regulations.

## **13. Signing Officers**

The signing officers of the Authority shall be the Chair, the Vice-Chair, General Manager and designate whose signatures shall be required as laid down in the following paragraphs.

Any two of these signing officers are empowered to sign such documents as are necessary for works approved by the Authority and authorized by the Board of Directors; save and except individual accounts payable in excess of \$30,000 whereby the Chair or Vice-Chair and the General Manager or designate will sign.

For the above purposes, the signing officers are empowered to arrange for the borrowing by way of promissory notes of the funds necessary for the approved projects and programs of the Authority, at such rate of interest as the Minister approves.

The General Manager and designate are authorized to sign cheques up to a maximum of \$30,000 per cheque.

## **14. Executive Committee**

The Authority may appoint an executive committee at the first meeting of the General Membership each year in accordance with the Section 19 of the Act and Section 1(c)(vi) of this by-law.

## 15. Advisory Boards and Other Committees

In accordance with Section 18(2) of the Act, the Authority shall establish such advisory boards as required by regulation and may establish such other advisory boards or committees as it considers appropriate to study and report on specific matters.

The General Membership shall approve the terms of reference for all such advisory boards and committees, which shall include the role, the frequency of meetings and the number of members required.

Resolutions and policies governing the operation of the Authority shall be observed in all advisory board and committee meetings.

Each advisory board or committee shall report to the General Membership, presenting any recommendations made by the advisory board or committee.

The dates of all advisory board and committee meetings shall be made available to all Members of the Authority.

## 16. Hearings

Hearings under the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulations or any other regulations of the Authority shall be carried out separate from any regular meeting and will not form part of a regular meeting. Minutes and/or reports from a Hearing may, however, be presented at a regular meeting for information purposes. The Authority will not impose a fee on the applicant for conducting a Hearing under the **Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits** unless the Hearing is on-site and /or a special meeting of the Board of Directors.

In the event of an emergency has been declared in all or part of an area over which the Authority has jurisdiction that may prevent members of the authority from meeting in person for a Hearing please refer to procedures under Section C Meetings Procedures #9 Electronic Meetings Protocols.

## 17. Remuneration of Members

Authority Directors shall receive a per diem allowance for attending Board meetings and Committee meetings, and any other such meeting to which they are appointed;

If no quorum is present, the per diem rate shall be paid to those in attendance;

Authority Directors will be paid for expenses incurred on authorized Authority business;

Authority Directors will receive a per diem for all official meetings regardless of the venue (eg. web meeting, conference call, etc.).

## 18. Records Retention

The Authority shall keep full and accurate records including, but not limited to:

- i. Minutes of all meetings of the Authority, including registries of statements of interests in accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*;
- ii. Assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements of the Authority and Financial Statements and Reports of the Auditors;

- iii. Human Resources Files for all employees and Members as applicable;
- iv. Workplace Health and Safety documents including workplace inspections, workplace accidents, investigations, etc.;
- v. Electronic Communications including emails
- vi. Contracts and Agreements entered into by the Authority;
- vii. Strategic Plans and other documents providing organizational direction
- viii. Projects of the Authority;
- ix. Technical Studies and data gathered in support of Programs of the Authority;
- x. Legal Proceedings involving the Authority;
- xi. Incidents of personal injury or property damage involving the Authority and members of the public.

Such records shall be retained and protected in accordance with all applicable laws and the Records Retention Policy of the Authority as approved by the General Membership from time-to-time.

#### **19. Records Available to Public**

Records of the Authority shall be made available to the public, subject to requirements of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and further to O.Regulation 400/22.

The Authority shall designate a Member or a committee of Members to act as head of the Authority for the purposes of MFIPPA.

#### **20. By-law Review**

In accordance with the Act, these by-laws shall be reviewed by the Authority, every five years, to ensure the by-laws are in compliance with the Act and any other relevant law. The General Membership shall review the by-laws on a regular basis to ensure best management practices in governance are being followed.

#### **21. By-law Available to Public**

In accordance with the Act, the Authority shall make its by-laws available to the public on the Authority's website. By-laws shall also be available for review by any member of the public at the Authority's administration centre or provided in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

#### **22. Enforcement of By-laws and Policies**

The Members shall respect and adhere to all applicable by-laws and policies (for example, the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest). The Authority may take reasonable measures to enforce its by-laws and policies, including the enforcement mechanisms under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. Measures taken will include but will not limited to the following:

- an investigation will be conducted regarding the alleged breach;

- an opportunity will be provided to the affected member to respond to the allegation;
- the findings of the investigation and the affected member's response will be communicated to the General Membership in a closed meeting;
- the appointing municipality shall be notified of the outcome of the investigation

### **23. Indemnification of Members, Officers and Employees**

The Authority undertakes and agrees to indemnify and save harmless its Members, Officers and Employees and their heirs and legal representatives, respectively, from and against all costs, charges and expenses, including all amounts paid to settle an action or satisfy any judgement, reasonably incurred by any such Member, Officer or Employee in respect of any civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding to which any such Member, Officer or Employee is made a party by reason of being a Member, Officer or Employee of the Authority (except in respect of an action by or on behalf of the Authority to procure a judgment in its favour) if;

- such Member, Officer or Employee acted honestly, in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Authority and within the scope of such Member's, Officer's or Employee's duties and responsibilities, and,
- in the case of a criminal or administrative action or proceeding that is enforced by a monetary penalty that such Member, Officer or Employee had reasonable grounds for believing that the conduct was lawful.

## **C. Meeting Procedures**

The Meeting Procedures below governing the procedure of the Authority shall be observed in Executive Committee and Advisory Board meetings, as far as they are applicable, and the words Executive Committee or Advisory Board may be substituted for the word Authority as applicable.

### **1. Rules of Procedure**

In all matters of procedure not specifically dealt with under the Act and this By-law, the current edition of Bourinot's Rules of Order shall be binding.

The Authority may choose to conduct its business as a committee of the whole.

### **2. Notice of Meeting**

At least two meetings of the Authority shall be held each year at such time and place as the Authority shall decide, including one meeting prior to March 1<sup>st</sup> and one meeting after July 1<sup>st</sup>, the annual meeting being the first meeting of the year and such meeting will be held prior to March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Notice of all Authority Board of Directors meetings shall be conveyed to members, municipalities, **presiding Ministry** (Ministry of Natural Resources OR the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks), and to local media at least five calendar days prior

to the date of the meetings. The notice shall include the time and place of the meeting and all items to be discussed at the meeting. The appropriate Ministry above will be dependent on the current governing Ministry over the Conservation Authorities Act.

Anyone wishing notice of other meetings shall leave their name and address with the General Manager. The General Manager or his or her designate shall inform that person, in writing or by telephone, in advance of other meetings.

When any matter pertaining to an application for an Authority permit (eg. Ontario Regulation 41/24) is to be discussed at a meeting of an Authority, the applicant shall be notified 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting and invited to attend.

The Authority shall meet at such time and place as the Chair shall decide or at the written request of one-third of the Directors. A special meeting of the Board of Directors can be called on three working days written notice. The notice shall state the business of the meeting.

Each Standing or Ad Hoc Committee shall meet at such time and place as the respective Chair shall decide under the general direction of the Authority.

Notice of Standing and Ad Hoc Committee meetings shall be conveyed to all members at least 5 days prior to the date of the meeting.

The Chair or the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer may, if it appears that a storm or like occurrence will prevent the members from attending a meeting, postpone that meeting by advising as many members as can be reached. Postponement shall not be for any longer than the next regularly scheduled meeting date.

### **3. Meetings Open to Public**

All meetings of the General Membership and Executive Committee, if applicable, shall be open to the public. In the event that circumstances require this meeting to be held electronically, where possible, the Authority will provide for alternative means for the public to participate in meetings electronically.

A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is identified in the closed meeting section of the Agenda and the subject matter meets the criteria for a closed meeting as defined in this by-law. (Section 11)

### **4. Agenda for Meetings**

Authority staff, under the supervision of the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, shall prepare an agenda for all regular meetings of the Authority that shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following headings:

- a) Chair's Welcome
- b) Adoption of Agenda
- c) Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
- d) Disclosure of intention to record this meeting by video and/or audio device



- e) Adoption of Minutes from previous meeting
- f) Business out of the minutes
- g) Program Reports
- h) Correspondence
- i) New Business
- j) Committee of the Whole
- k) Adjournment

The agenda for special meetings of the Authority shall be prepared as directed by the Chair.

Agendas for meetings shall be forwarded to all Members at least five calendar days in advance of the meeting. Such agendas shall be made available to the public on the Authority's website at the same time, unless the meeting is closed to the public in accordance with this by-law. Such agendas shall also be available in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

## 5. Quorum

At any meeting of the General Membership, a quorum consists of one-half of the Members appointed by the participating Municipalities. As there are currently nine members, five are required for quorum. NOTE: Any future Member appointed by the Minister to represent agricultural interests is not part of quorum.

If there is no quorum present, one-half hour after the time appointed for a meeting of the Authority, the General Manager records the names of those present and the meeting shall stand adjourned until the next meeting.

If during an Authority or Advisory Board or Committee meeting a quorum is lost, then the Chair shall declare that the meeting shall stand recessed or adjourned, until the date of the next regular meeting or other meeting called in accordance with the provisions of this by-law. Agenda items including delegations present may be covered and presented and issues discussed, but no formal decisions may be taken by the remaining Members which do not constitute a quorum.

Where the number of Members who are disabled from participating in a meeting due to the declaration of a conflict of interest is such that at that meeting the remaining Members are not of sufficient number to constitute a quorum, the remaining number of Members shall be deemed to constitute a quorum, provided such number is not less than two.

## 6. Order of Business

The business of the Authority shall be taken up in the order in which it stands on the agenda unless otherwise decided by a majority of those Members present.

No Member shall present any matter to the Authority for its consideration unless the matter appears on the agenda for the meeting of the Authority or leave is granted to present the matter by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Members present.

## **7. Debate**

The Authority shall observe the following procedures for discussion/debate on any matter coming before it:

- a) A Member shall be recognized by the Chair prior to speaking;
- b) Where two or more Members rise to speak, the Chair shall designate the Member who has the floor, who shall be the Member who in the opinion of the Chair was first recognized;
- c) All questions and points of discussion shall be directed through the Chair;
- d) Where a motion is presented, it shall be moved and seconded before debate;
- e) No Member shall speak more than once to the same question without leave from the Chair, except in explanation of a material part of the speech;
- f) Any Member may ask a question of the previous speaker through the Chair;
- g) The Member who has presented a motion, other than a motion to amend or dispose of a motion, may speak again to the motion immediately before the Chair puts the motion to a vote;
- h) When a motion is under debate, no motion shall be received other than a motion to amend, to defer action, to refer the question, to take a vote, to adjourn, or to extend the hour of closings the proceedings;
- i) When a motion is under consideration, only one amendment is permitted.

## **8. Members' Attendance**

On an annual basis the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer shall provide a listing of Members attendance at scheduled meetings of the Authority to the participating Municipalities. The report will contain the Director's name, number of meetings invited to and the number of meetings attended.

Upon a Members' vacancy due to death, incapacity or resignation occurring in any office of the Authority, the Authority shall request the municipality that was represented by the Member appoint a Member replacement.

If a Member is unable to attend any meeting and wishes to bring any additional information or opinion pertaining to an agenda item to the General Membership, the Member shall address in writing or email to the Chair or General Manager/Secretary Treasurer such correspondence prior to the start of the meeting. The correspondence shall be read aloud by the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer without comment or explanations.

## **9. Electronic Meetings Protocol**

With the Consent of the Board of Directors, meetings and/or procedures may take place by way of an Electronic Meeting and Amendments to this Electronic Meeting During a

Declared Emergency Protocol (hereinafter, “Protocol”) may be permitted to be made by simple majority vote of members to accommodate an effective and efficient meeting, so long as any such amendments are not contrary to prevailing Provincial legislation, order or direction.

During any Electronic Meeting called by the Board of Directors or during any period where an emergency has been declared to exist, in all or part of an area over which the Authority has jurisdiction, under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, that may prevent the General Membership from meeting in person, a regular or special meeting or Executive Committee meeting may be conducted by an Electronic Meeting in accordance with this section.

During any period where an emergency has been declared to exist, in all or part of an area over which the Authority has jurisdiction, under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, that may prevent the General Membership from meeting in person, any date or timeline requirement established under any Section in this By-law shall be postponed until such time as the General Membership can reasonably address the issue either by meeting in person or meeting electronically.

During any period where an emergency has been declared to exist, in all or part of an area over which the Authority has jurisdiction, under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, that may prevent the General Membership from meeting in person, any delegation, hearing or appeal dealt with in this By-law may be conducted electronically with provisions for applicants and their agents to participate if the Authority decides to hear any delegation or hold any such hearing or appeal.

In the event that an Electronic Meeting has been called by the Board of Directors or an emergency has been declared by the Province of Ontario or by a Municipality within the jurisdiction of the Authority, that may prevent members of the Authority from meeting in person, the following would apply:

- a) That members of the Authority would be permitted to participate in an Electronic Meeting and to register votes when participating electronically. All votes shall be recorded votes.
- b) That any member of the Authority who is participating in an Electronic Meeting may be counted in determining whether a quorum of members is present at any point in time during the meeting, including both open and closed sessions;
- c) That any member of the Authority can participate in any Electronic Meeting that is open or closed to the public;
- d) For closed sessions, any member of the Authority participating in an Electronic Meeting shall declare at the start of the closed session that they are in their own privacy and that discussions can not be overheard.
- e) The regular order of the agenda for the meeting may be suspended in order to allow an Electronic Meeting to be held during such emergency and that such Electronic Meeting may proceed without delegations.

- f) During the Electronic Meeting or the declared emergency, the Authority will continue to implement best practices to make Board meetings open to the public. Where possible, the Authority will provide alternative means to allow the public to participate in an Electronic Meeting in any non-closed meetings.
- g) A Board member may participate in a meeting via Electronic Meeting on a system that can be muted to block background noise, subject to:
  - i. The member is unable to travel to the meeting; or
  - ii. The member's health;
  - iii. The Chair may direct that the electronic connection be terminated if the member cannot be clearly understood or if a poor connection or background noise is deemed to be disruptive to the meeting;
  - iv. If a technical problem prevents or interrupts a member's electronic participation in a meeting, the minutes of such meeting shall reflect the time at which the member ceased to participate in the meeting by reason of a technical problem. If such technical problem is later resolved and the member rejoins the meeting by electronic means without a vote on a motion having taken place during the interruption in the member's participation, the minutes of the meeting shall reflect the time at which the member rejoined the meeting.
  - v. If any electronic communication is interrupted during a meeting and remains interrupted while a vote on the motion is taken, the member effected is deemed to have left the meeting prior to the vote and shall not be permitted to rejoin the meeting either electronically or in person.

## 10. Delegations

Any person or organization who wishes to address the Board of Directors, Standing or Ad Hoc Committee Meeting must give 2 weeks notice of their interest in making a presentation. Except by leave of the Chair or appeal by leave of the meeting, delegations are limited to 15 minutes plus discussion time. Delegations with written information for consideration of the Authority Board or Committee will provide same 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

## 11. Meetings with Closed "Committee of the Whole" Sessions

Every meeting of the General Membership, Executive Committee and Advisory Boards, if applicable, shall be open to the public as per Section 15(3) of the Act, except where there is a resolution to go to Committee of the Whole, subject to the exceptions set out below. Meetings may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to:

- a) The security of the property of the Authority;
- b) Personal or confidential matter about an identifiable individual, including Directors or employees of the Authority. A memorandum of the meeting in the Committee of the Whole will be certified by the Recording Secretary and the Chair and kept in the appropriate personal and/or confidential file and not form part of the minutes;

- c) A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of real property for Authority purposes;
- d) Labour relations or employee negotiations;
- e) Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals (e.g. Ontario Land Tribunal), affecting the Authority;
- f) The receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- g) A matter in respect of which the General Membership, Executive Committee, Advisory Board or committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another act;

The Authority shall close a meeting if the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under MFIPPA, and the Authority is the head of an institution for the purposes of MFIPPA.

Educational or Training Sessions: A meeting may be closed to the public if the following conditions are both satisfied:

- i) A meeting is held for the purpose of training the members; Labour relations or employee negotiations;
- ii) At the meeting, no member discusses or otherwise deals with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of directors.

Before all or part of a meeting is closed to the public, the Board or Committee shall state by resolution;

- i) The fact of holding of the closed meeting;
- ii) The general nature of the matter considered at the closed meeting.

The General Membership shall not vote during a meeting that is closed to the public, unless:

- i) The meeting meets the criteria outlined in this by-law to be closed to the public; and
- ii) The vote is for a procedural matter or for giving direction or instruction to Officers, employees or agents of Authority.

Any materials presented to the General Membership during a closed meeting shall be returned to the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer prior to departing from the meeting and shall be treated in accordance with the Authority's procedures for handling confidential material.

Meetings or sessions which are closed to the public may be referred to as "In Camera" meetings or sessions, or "Committee of the Whole".

## 12. Voting

In accordance with Section 16 of the Act:

- a) each Member, including the Chair, is entitled to one vote, and
- b) a majority vote of the Members present at any meeting is required upon all matters coming before the meeting.

Where a member has been appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector, the member shall not vote on: a resolution to enlarge an authority's area of jurisdiction; a resolution to amalgamate the Authority with another conservation authority; a resolution to dissolve the Authority; or, a resolution related to any budgetary matter.

If any Member who is qualified to vote abstains from voting, they shall be deemed to have voted neither in favour nor opposed to the question, which will not alter the number of votes required for a majority.

On a tie vote, the motion is lost.

Unless a Member requests a recorded vote, a vote shall be by a show of hands or such other means as the Chair may call. No question shall be voted upon more than once at any meeting, unless a recorded vote is requested.

At the meeting of the Authority at which the Non-Matching Levy is to be approved, the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct the vote to approve of Non-Matching Levy by a Weighted Majority of the Members present and eligible to vote, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 402/22 Budget and Apportionment.

## 13. Notice of Motion

Written notice of motion may be given by any Director of the Authority and shall be forthwith placed on the Agenda of the next meeting.

## 14. Motion to Reconsider

If a motion is made to reconsider a previous motion, a two-thirds majority vote shall be required in order for reconsideration to take place. If a motion to reconsider is passed, the original motion shall then be placed on the agenda at a future meeting to be debated and voted upon, and the result of that vote, based on a simple majority, shall supersede.

## 15. Duties of the Meeting Chair

It shall be the duty of the Chair, with respect to any meetings over which he/she presides, to:

- a) Preserve order and decide all questions of order, subject to appeal; and without argument or comment, state the rule applicable to any point of order if called upon to do so;
- b) Ensure that the public in attendance does not in any way interfere or disrupt the proceedings of the Members;

- c) Receive and submit to a vote all motions presented by the Members, which do not contravene the rules of order or regulations of the Authority;
- d) Announce the results of the vote on any motions so presented;
- e) Adjourn the meeting when business is concluded.

## 16. Conduct of Members

Members shall maintain a high standard for conduct and at all times comply with applicable laws and the Authority's Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

No Member at any meeting of the Authority shall:

- a) Speak in a manner that is discriminatory in nature based on an individual's race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, colour, marital status, family status or disability;
- b) Leave their seat or make any noise or disturbance while a vote is being taken or until the result is declared;
- c) Interrupt a Member while speaking, except to raise a point of order or a question of privilege;
- d) Speak disrespectfully or use offensive words against the Authority, the Members, staff, or any member of the public;
- e) Speak beyond the question(s) under debate;
- f) Resist the rules of order or disobey the decision of the Chair on the questions or order or practices or upon the interpretation of the By-laws.

## 17. Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of all meetings of the Authority shall be recorded by the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer or his/her designate.

Minutes of all meetings shall include the time and place of the meeting and a list of those present and shall state all motions presented together with the mover and seconder and voting results.

Within 30 days after any meeting, the General Manager or his/her designate shall include draft minutes of the previous meeting available to each member of the Authority at the same time as agendas for the next meeting are distributed.

After the minutes have been approved by resolution, original copies shall be signed by the General Manager/ SecretaryTreasurer or his/her designate and the Chair of the meeting. Copies of all non-confidential minutes shall then be posted on the Authority's website within 30 days of the meeting. Such minutes shall also be available for review by any member of the public at the Authority's Administration Centre or provided in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

## **D. Other**

### **Fee Schedule and Revenue Sharing**

The Authority acknowledges the Province of Ontario Policy and Procedures for the charging of fees and the Province of Ontario Policy and Procedures for revenue sharing and will conduct business accordingly.

### **Employment Equity and Pay Equity**

The Authority is committed to the principles of fairness and non-discrimination in the workplace and to the development and implementation of policies and practices that prevent barriers to employment equity and pay equity.

### **Health and Safety**

The Authority is committed to a comprehensive Health and Safety Program to ensure a safe working environment for all Directors and staff.



## E. Approval of By-law and Revocation of Previous By-law(s)

By-law number \_\_\_\_\_ (#BD 90/18) is hereby repealed;

By-law number \_\_\_\_\_ shall come into force on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

## F. Appendices to the Administrative By-law

### Appendix 1 - Code of Conduct

#### 1. Background

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority demands a high level of integrity and ethical conduct from its General Membership. The Authority's reputation has relied upon the good judgement of individual Members. A written Code of Conduct helps to ensure that all Members share a common basis for acceptable conduct. Formalized standards help to provide a reference guide and a supplement to legislative parameters within which Members must operate. Further, they enhance public confidence that Members operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy.

The Code of Conduct is a general standard. It augments the laws which govern the behaviour of Members, and it is not intended to replace personal ethics.

This Code of Conduct will also assist Members in dealing with confronting situations not adequately addressed or that may be ambiguous in Authority resolutions, regulations, or policies and procedures. Additionally, any agricultural representative appointed by the Minister will be required to follow the provincial ethical framework set out for government public appointees in the Management Board of Cabinet's Agencies and Appointments Directive.

#### 2. General

All Members, whether municipal councillors or appointed representatives of a municipality, or whether appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Authority.

All Members shall serve in a conscientious and diligent manner. No Member shall use the influence of office for any purpose other than for the exercise of his/her official duties.

It is expected that Members adhere to a code of conduct that:

- i. upholds the mandate, vision and mission of the Authority;
- ii. considers the Authority's jurisdiction in its entirety, including their appointing municipality;
- iii. respects confidentiality;
- iv. approaches all Authority issues with an open mind, with consideration for the organization as a whole;
- v. exercises the powers of a Member when acting in a meeting of the Authority;
- vi. respects the democratic process and respects decisions of the General Membership, Executive Committee, Advisory Boards and other committees;
- vii. declares any direct or indirect pecuniary interest or conflict of interest when one exists or may exist; and

- viii. conducts oneself in a manner which reflects respect and professional courtesy and does not use offensive language in or against the Authority or against any Member or any Authority staff.

### 3. *Gifts and Benefits*

Members shall not accept fees, gifts, hospitality or personal benefits that are connected directly or indirectly with the performance of duties, except compensation authorized by law.

### 4. *Confidentiality*

The members shall be governed at all times by the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

All information, documentation or deliberations received, reviewed, or taken in a closed meeting are confidential.

Members shall not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, either in verbal or written form, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, except when required by law to do so.

Members shall not permit any persons, other than those who are entitled thereto, to have access to information which is confidential.

In the instance where a member vacates their position on the General Membership they will continue to be bound by MFIPPA requirements.

Particular care should be exercised in protecting information such as the following:

- i. Human Resources matters;
- ii. Information about suppliers provided for evaluation that might be useful to other suppliers;
- iii. Matters relating to the legal affairs of the Authority;
- iv. Information provided in confidence from an Aboriginal community, or a record that if released could reasonably be expected to prejudice the conduct of relations between an Aboriginal community and the Authority;
- v. Sources of complaints where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence;
- vi. Items under negotiation;
- vii. Schedules of prices in tenders or requests for proposals;
- viii. Appraised or estimated values with respect to the Authority's proposed property acquisitions or dispositions;
- ix. Information deemed to be "personal information" under MFIPPA.

The list above is provided for example and is not exhaustive.

## **5. Use of Authority Property**

No Member shall use for personal purposes any Authority property, equipment, supplies, or services of consequence other than for purposes connected with the discharge of Authority duties or associated community activities of which the Authority has been advised.

## **6. Work of a Political Nature**

No Member shall use Authority facilities, services or property for his/her election or re-election campaign to any position or office within the Authority or otherwise.

## **7. Conduct at Authority Meetings**

During meetings of the Authority, Members shall conduct themselves with decorum. Respect for delegations and for fellow Members requires that all Members show courtesy and not distract from the business of the Authority during presentations and when others have the floor.

## **8. Influence on Staff**

Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the Authority as a whole and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective, without undue influence.

## **9. Business Relations**

No Member shall borrow money from any person who regularly does business with the Authority unless such person is an institution or company whose shares are publicly traded and who is regularly in the business of lending money.

No Member shall act as a paid agent before the Authority, the Executive Committee or an advisory board or committee of the Authority, except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

## **10. Encouragement of Respect for the Authority and its Regulations**

Members shall represent the Authority in a respectful way and encourage public respect for the Authority and its Regulations.

## **11. Harassment**

It is the policy of the Authority that all persons be treated fairly in the workplace in an environment free of discrimination and of personal and sexual harassment. Harassment of another Member, staff or any member of the public is misconduct. Members shall follow the Authority's Harassment Policy as approved from time-to-time.

Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to an individual's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disabilities, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. The Authority will also not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images; practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; unwelcome invitations or

requests, whether indirect or explicit and any other prohibited grounds under the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

## **12. Breach of Code of Conduct**

Should a Member breach the Code of Conduct, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary Treasurer, as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Code of Conduct shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.

## Appendix 2 - Conflict of Interest

### 1. *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*

The Authority Members commit themselves and the Authority to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct when acting as the General Membership. The Authority is bound by the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. This appendix to the by-law is intended to assist Members in understanding their obligations. Members are required to review the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* on a regular basis.

### 2. *Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest*

Where a Member, either on his or her own behalf or while acting for, by, with or through another, has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any matter and is present at a meeting of the Authority, Executive Committee, Advisory Board or committee at which the matter is the subject of consideration, the Member:

- a) shall, prior to any consideration of the matter at the meeting, disclose the pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof;
- b) shall not take part in the discussion of, or vote on any question in respect of the matter; and,
- c) shall not attempt in any way whether before, during or after the meeting to influence the voting on any such question.
- d) shall file a written statement of the Conflict of Interest and its general nature with the **General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer** or his or her designate.
- e)

### 3. *Chair's Conflict of Interest or Pecuniary Interest*

Where the Chair of a meeting discloses a conflict of interest with respect to a matter under consideration at a meeting, another Member shall be appointed to chair that portion of the meeting by Resolution.

### 4. *Closed Meetings*

Where a meeting is not open to the public, a Member who has declared a conflict of interest shall leave the meeting for the part of the meeting during which the matter is under consideration.

### 5. *Member Absent*

Where the interest of a Member has not been disclosed by reason of their absence from the particular meeting, the Member shall disclose their interest and otherwise comply at the first meeting of the Authority, Executive Committee, Advisory Board or Committee, as the case may be, attended by them after the particular meeting.

## **6. Disclosure Recorded in Minutes**

The recording secretary shall record in reasonable detail the particulars of any disclosure of conflict of interest or pecuniary interest made by Members and whether the Member withdrew from the discussion of the matter. Such record shall appear in the minutes/notes of that particular meeting of the General Membership, Executive Committee, advisory board or committee, as the case may be.

### **6B. Registry Maintained for Public Inspection**

The Authority shall maintain a registry in which shall be kept:

- a) A copy of each statement filed under Section 2d) of this policy; and,
- b) A copy of each declaration recorded in the Minutes.

The registry shall be available for public inspection.

## **7. Breach of Conflict of Interest Policy**

Should a Member breach the Conflict of Interest Policy, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary Treasurer, as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the said breach shall be communicated the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Conflict of Interest Policy shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.

## Appendix 3 - Procedure for Election of Officers

### 1. *Voting*

Voting shall be by secret ballot and no Members may vote by proxy.

### 2. *Acting Chair*

The General Membership shall appoint a person, who is not a voting Member, as Acting Chair or Returning Officer, for the purpose of Election of Officers.

### 3. *Scrutineer(s)*

The appointment of one or more scrutineers is required for the purpose of counting ballots, should an election be required. All ballots shall be destroyed by the scrutineers afterwards. The Acting Chair shall call a motion for the appointment of one or more persons, who are not Members or employees of the Authority, to act as scrutineers. A Member, who will not stand for election, may be appointed as an additional scrutineer if requested.

### 4. *Election Procedures*

The Acting Chair shall advise the Members that the election will be conducted in accordance with the Act as follows:

- a) The elections shall be conducted in the following order:
  - i. Election of the Chair, who shall be a Member of the Authority
  - ii. Election of one or more Vice-chairs, who shall be Members of the Authority.
- b) The Acting Chair shall ask for nominations to each position;
- c) Only current Members of the Authority who are present may vote;
- d) Nominations shall be called three (3) times and will only require a mover;
- e) The closing of nominations shall require both a mover and a seconder;
- f) Each Member nominated shall be asked to accept the nomination. The Member must be present to accept the nomination unless the Member has advised the Secretary-Treasurer in writing or by email in advance of the election of their willingness to accept the nomination.

If one Nominee:

- g) If only one nominee the individual shall be declared into the position by acclamation.

If More than One Nominee:



- h) In the event of an election, each nominee shall be permitted not more than three (3) minutes to speak for the office, in the order of the alphabetical listing by surnames.
- i) Upon the acceptance by nominees to stand for election to the position of office, ballots shall be distributed to the Members by the scrutineers for the purpose of election and the Acting Chair shall ask the Members to write the name of one individual only on the ballot.
- j) The scrutineers shall collect the ballots, leave the meeting to count the ballots, return and advise the Acting Chair who was elected with more than 50% of the vote.

A majority vote shall be required for election. If there are more than two nominees, and upon the first vote no nominee receives the majority required for election, the name of the person with the least number of votes shall be removed from further consideration for the office and new ballots shall be distributed. In the case of a vote where no nominee receives the majority required for election and where two or more nominees are tied with the least number of votes, a special vote shall be taken to decide which one of such tied nominees' names shall be dropped from the list of names to be voted on in the next vote.

Should there be a tie vote between two remaining candidates, new ballots shall be distributed and a second vote held. Should there still be a tie after the second ballot a third vote shall be held. Should there be a tie after the third vote, the election of the office shall be decided by lot drawn by the Acting Chair or designate.

# ABCA Program Report

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** September 18, 2025  
**From:** Andrew Bicknell, Manager of Water and Planning  
**Subject:** Applications for Permission  
Ontario Regulation 41/24 – Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits  
**Report Type:** ACTION REQUIRED

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## Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors affirm the approval of the permits issued by ABCA staff as outlined in the *Applications for Permission* Program Report.

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The following *Applications for Permission* have been issued by staff since the last Board of Directors Meeting.

\*A Coastal Assessment was provided as part of the application

\*\*Work commenced without a permit

## Major Permits

- (1) PERMIT # 2025-11  
NAME: Jane Walker  
ADDRESS: 10298 Shoreline Drive, Grand Bend  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores  
PERMISSION TO: Re-Development of Lot  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 2, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 17, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 11  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (2) PERMIT #2025-14  
NAME: Municipality of Bluewater  
ADDRESS: Bell's Line, 1.2km S. of Kippen Road  
MUNICIPALTY: Bluewater (Hay)  
PERMISSION TO: Undertake culvert repairs  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: March 17, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: June 23, 2025

NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 68  
STAFF NAME: Andrew Bicknell

(3) PERMIT # 2025-26  
NAME: Paul and Linda Willemse  
ADDRESS: 30541 Sylvan Road  
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (West Williams)  
PERMISSION TO: Construct a new residential dwelling and associated work.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 19, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 3, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 10  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken

(4) PERMIT # 2025-18  
NAME: Municipality of West Perth  
ADDRESS: Lot 34, CON 1 West Perth (Former Township of Logan)  
MUNICIPALITY: West Perth  
PERMISSION TO: Conduct Section 78 (Drainage Act) drain improvements.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 18, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 23, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 22  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(5) PERMIT # 2025-32  
NAME: The Municipality of North Middlesex (c/o Faishal Diwan)  
ADDRESS: Cassidy Road, 1.54km from New Ontario Road  
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (East Williams)  
PERMISSION TO: Culvert Replacement and associated work.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 29, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 30, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken

(6) PERMIT #2025-33  
NAME: Loretta Ayotte  
ADDRESS: #3 Parkside Ave, Zurich  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Zurich)  
PERMISSION TO: construct a residential building addition in a regulated area

- |      |  |                  |
|------|--|------------------|
|      | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE:                                    | July 9, 2025     |
|      | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:  | July 31, 2025    |
|      | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:   | 16               |
|      | STAFF NAME:  | Andrew Bicknell  |
|      |  |                  |
| (7)  | PERMIT # 2024-33A  |                  |
|      | NAME: Brett Lavier c/o CM Excavating                                       |                  |
|      | ADDRESS: 74231 Homestead Heights Drive, Bluewater                          |                  |
|      | MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  |                  |
|      | PERMISSION TO: Permit Renewal for Shoreline Protection                     |                  |
|      | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE:                                    | August 5, 2025   |
|      | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:  | August 7, 2025   |
|      | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:   | 2                |
|      | STAFF NAME:  | Jaden Schoelier  |
|      |  |                  |
| (8)  | PERMIT # 2025-38   |                  |
|      | NAME: Angela Van Geel c/o Christine Traher                                 |                  |
|      | ADDRESS: 5818 William Street, Lucan  |                  |
|      | MUNICIPALITY: Lucan-Biddulph   |                  |
|      | PERMISSION TO: Develop a residential lot                                   |                  |
|      | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE:                                    | August 14, 2025  |
|      | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:  | August 18, 2025  |
|      | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:   | 4                |
|      | STAFF NAME:  | Jaden Schoelier  |
|      |  |                  |
| (9)  | PERMIT # 20254-37A   |                  |
|      | NAME: Rod Lough and Pam Collison   |                  |
|      | ADDRESS: 75129A Lakewood Drive   |                  |
|      | MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)  |                  |
|      | PERMISSION TO: Permit renewal allowing renovation of residential structure |                  |
|      | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE:                                    | August 8, 2025   |
|      | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:  | August 20, 2025  |
|      | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:   | 9                |
|      | STAFF NAME:  | Ellen Westelaken |
|      |  |                  |
| (10) | PERMIT #2025-36  |                  |
|      | NAME: Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy                                   |                  |
|      | ADDRESS: #76520 Bluewater Highway (Bayfield River Flats)                   |                  |

MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Bayfield)  
PERMISSION TO: construct riverbank erosion protection and habitat enhancement  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 5, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED ON STAFF DATE: August 14, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 48  
STAFF NAME: Andrew Bicknell

(11) PERMIT # 2025-37  
NAME: Rob Jarmuth  
ADDRESS: 189 Elgin Street, Centralia  
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen)  
PERMISSION TO: Construct a new residential dwelling.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 18, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 18, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 1  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken

(12) PERMIT # 2024-43A (Renewal Permit)  
NAME: Municipality of Lambton Shores c/o Nick Verhoeven  
ADDRESS: road allowance / municipally owned lands adjacent Ontario St., S. of Main St.  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Grand Bend)  
PERMISSION TO: Widening of bridge crossing at Parkhill Creek  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 21, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: September 02, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 12  
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

(13) PERMIT # 2025-42  
NAME: Scott Rourke  
ADDRESS: 7467 Sanderson Road, Port Franks  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Port Franks)  
PERMISSION TO: Construct a replacement residence in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 15, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 21, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 26  
STAFF NAME: Andrew Bicknell

- (14) PERMIT #2025-43  
NAME: Martin Feeney  
ADDRESS: 3908 Perth Road 180, Dublin  
MUNICIPALITY: West Perth ( Hibbert)  
PERMISSION TO: construct a detached accessory building  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 15, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 26, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 29  
STAFF NAME: Andrew Bicknell
- (15) PERMIT # 2025-41  
NAME: Robert Kress  
ADDRESS: 77203 Bayfield Highlands Dr.  
MUNICIPALITY: Central Huron  
PERMISSION TO: construct an accessory building – Garage  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 12, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 26, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 14  
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

## Minor Permits

- (1) PERMIT # MW2025-49  
NAME: Alair Huron Homes c/o Scott Koeslag  
ADDRESS: 73791 Crest Beach Road, Zurich  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Construct a porch on existing residence  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 25, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 2, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 5  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (2) PERMIT # MW2025-50  
NAME: West Coast Leisure Sales c/o Darin Dick  
ADDRESS: 76735 Wildwood Line, Bayfield – Site #70  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Replace existing trailer with park model and associated works.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 20, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 8, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 12  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (3) PERMIT # MW2025-51  
NAME: Roddy MacDonald  
ADDRESS: 74329 Driftwood Drive  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)  
PERMISSION TO: Install a replacement septic system.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 7, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 9, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken
- (4) PERMIT # MW2025-53  
NAME: Robert Wilson  
ADDRESS: 29 Oakwood Links Lane  
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen)  
PERMISSION TO: Extend an existing deck in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 19, 2025

PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:	July 25, 2025
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:	5
STAFF NAME:	Ellen Westelaken

(5) PERMIT # MW2025-55  
NAME: Enbridge Gas Inc c/o Caitlin Collins  
ADDRESS: 70747 B Line, Grand Bend  
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron  
PERMISSION TO: Conduct emergency replacement of Gas Main.  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 17, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 23, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 4  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(6) PERMIT # MW2025-56  
NAME: Enbridge Gas Inc. (c/o Caitlin Collins)  
ADDRESS: 6 Old Driftwood Lane  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)  
PERMISSION TO: Install gas line in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 17, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 25, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 6  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken

(7) PERMIT # MW2025-47  
NAME: Enbridge Pipelines Inc.  
ADDRESS: 30415 Centre Road, Strathroy, ON  
MUNICIPALITY: Adelaide-Metcalf  
PERMISSION TO: Install Gas Main in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 10, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 5, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 18  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(8) PERMIT # MW2025-59  
NAME: Brad Boere  
ADDRESS: 75559 Lidderdale Street, Bayfield – Site #101 (Paul Bunyan)  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater



PERMISSION TO: Replace a residential trailer in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 24, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 8, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 10  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(9) PERMIT # MW2025-57  
NAME: XPLORE  
ADDRESS: Multiple Locations, Hwy 8 from 182 Rd to Maple Line  
MUNICIPALITY: Huron East (McKillop)  
PERMISSION TO: Install fiber optic cable in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 6, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 7, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2  
STAFF NAME: Ellen Westelaken

(10) PERMIT # MW2025-61  
NAME: Brad Boere  
ADDRESS: 75559 Lidderdale Street, Bayfield – Site #185 (Paul Bunyan)  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Replace a residential trailer in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 6, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 27, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 15  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(11) PERMIT # MW2025-62  
NAME: Brad Boere  
ADDRESS: 75559 Lidderdale Street, Bayfield – Site #349 (Paul Bunyan)  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Replace a residential trailer in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 6, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 27, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 15  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

- (12) PERMIT # MW2025-54  
NAME: Fred & Maria Tennant  
ADDRESS: 76735 Wildwood Line, Bayfield – Site#71 (Wildwood by the River Bayfield)  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Replace a residential trailer in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 24 , 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 24 , 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 1  
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani
- (13) PERMIT # MW2025-52  
NAME: Enbridge Gas Inc. (c/o Caitlin Collins)  
ADDRESS: 76625 Jowett Dr.  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater  
PERMISSION TO: Install 30m of 1/2' PE gas service in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 17 , 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 24 , 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 7  
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani
- (14) PERMIT # MW2025-58  
NAME: Martin David Cox Noel  
ADDRESS: 9992 Huron St., Port Franks  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores  
PERMISSION TO: Install a porch roof over structure in a regulated area  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 07, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 26, 2025  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 19  
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

# *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** September 18, 2025  
**From:** Nathan Schoelier - Stewardship, Lands and Education Manager  
**Subject:** Mileage Rate Policy  
**Report Type:** ACTION REQUIRED

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the proposed Mileage Rate Policy.

## **Background:**

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) determines its mileage rate annually, during budget preparation. The mileage rate is detailed on the Fee Schedule and is approved as a component of the annual budget.

The mileage rate is applied as an internal chargeback rate for use of a vehicle from the motor pool, and for reimbursing employees for the use of their personal vehicles, as per ABCA's Personnel Regulations.

The ABCA has applied this approach since 2022. Adopting a policy in accordance with this approach supports staff by prescribing a consistent approach to adhere to.

## Mileage Rate Policy

Effective Date	
Approved By	

### Purpose

This policy establishes the process by which Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) sets and applies its internal chargeback rates for the use of motor pool vehicles, as well as the mileage reimbursement rate for employee use of personal vehicles.

### Policy Statement

ABCA will set its annual mileage rate based on the Federal rates prescribed under '*Automobile or Motor Vehicle Benefits – Allowances or Reimbursements Provided to an Employee for the Use of Their Own Vehicle.*'

### Scope

The approved mileage rate will be applied in the following circumstances:

1. Employee Reimbursement – To reimburse employees for the use of their personal vehicle for employment-related travel (*Personnel Regulation #22: Use of Employee-Owned Vehicles*)
2. Internal Chargeback – As the internal chargeback rate for use of a vehicle from the motor pool

### Definitions

Prescribed Federal Rate: The per-kilometre rate published annually by the Federal Government under '*Automobile or Motor Vehicle Benefits – Allowances or Reimbursements Provided to an Employee for the Use of Their Own Vehicle:*'  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/payroll/benefits-allowances/automobile/automobile-motor-vehicle-allowances.html>

Mileage Rate: The rate per kilometre established by the organization for reimbursement or internal chargeback purposes

Internal Chargeback: The internal accounting process by which vehicle use from the motor pool is charged back to the appropriate department or project.

### Responsibilities

#### Finance Department

- Monitor prescribed Federal mileage rates and apply updates as required.
- Incorporates the mileage rate into the organization's annual budget process.
- Ensure that internal chargebacks are submitted and applied in compliance with this policy.

### All Managers

- Ensure that mileage reimbursement claims are submitted and approved in compliance with this, and all other applicable policies and regulations.

### Employees

- Submit accurate mileage reimbursement claims using the approved forms and processes.
- Record accurate use of ABCA owned vehicles by the applicable department, and program, using the approved forms and processes.

### **Policy Guidelines**

1. If the prescribed per-kilometre rates for the applicable budget year are not available at the time the ABCA prepares its annual budget, the rates in effect for the current year will be used.
  - a. If the prescribed rates for the applicable year are lower than those used in the budget, the mileage rate will be adjusted downwards to align with the prescribed rates, when the information is made available.
  - b. If the prescribed rates for the applicable year are higher than those used in the budget, the rate used for budget preparation will be maintained for that year.
2. For all motor pool equipment that is not tracked based on mileage, the internal chargeback rate shall be adjusted annually at the same percentage rate applied to organizational pay grid adjustments.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the organization's budget preparation process to ensure compliance with Federal prescribed rates.

# *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** September 18, 2025  
**From:** Nathan Schoelier  
**Subject:** Draft Rock Glen Conservation Area Master Plan  
**Report Type:** ACTION REQUIRED

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the draft Master Plan update for Rock Glen Conservation Area to be made available for public and stakeholder feedback.

## **Background:**

The 2025 recreation budget included funds for updating the Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA) Master Plan. The original master plan was developed in 1979, with updates being completed in 1988 and 2004.

Appended to this report is the first draft of the Master Plan update for RGCA. One of the primary goals that staff had for the update was to reintroduce institutional knowledge to the master plan. Reintroducing this information allows decisions to be made that consider historic information, alongside new tools and resources.

The update is being completed according to the process approved at the March 20, 2025 Board of Directors meeting. The next step is to make the plan available for public and stakeholder feedback. Staff have identified the following stakeholders:

- Arkona Lions Club
- County of Lambton
- Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nations
- Municipality of Lambton Shores
- Township of Warwick
- Residents of the Town of Arkona and surrounding area
- RGCA season pass holders

Staff will utilize various engagement methods and tools to complete meaningful engagement within the organization's capacity and resources. Upon completing engagement, any necessary changes will be reflected in the final draft of the plan and it will return to the Board of Directors for approval.

## Preface

The Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA) Master Plan is the guiding document for the management of this conservation area which is owned and managed by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA). The recommendations in this master plan are intended to help direct property management that considers the needs of the environment, and the needs of the community.

This master plan was developed using the goals, objectives, and considerations described in ABCA's Conservation Lands Strategy (CLS), approved November 21, 2024. This master plan includes the collective input from (contributing partners to be listed in final draft).

This master plan was approved by ABCA's Board of Directors on (approval date to be included in final approved plan).

## Land Acknowledgement

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority acknowledges the original stewards of this land, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. We recognize the Huron Tract Treaty signed in 1827. We recognize this territory was subject to the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and resources, including plants and animals, in peace. As shared stewards of this land and water, ABCA is grateful to work in this territory.

## Executive Summary

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) has updated the Rock Glen Conservation Authority (RGCA) Master Plan, building on the original (1979) and revised (1988 and 2004) plans. This update reflects current usage and management challenges, offering a progressive framework that balances conservation goals with sustainable operations. The plan was guided by the Conservation Lands Strategy (2024).

Located at 8680 Rock Glen Road in Arkona, Municipality of Lambton Shores, RGCA is a 26-hectare conservation area formed through the acquisition of three parcels between 1954 and 1969. Originally established to protect the Ausable Gorge and support compatible recreation, its core goals – protection, preservation, and public access – remain unchanged, despite evolving challenges and opportunities. The Ausable River borders the property to the east, while the Hobbs – Mckenzie Drain runs through the property, featuring the Rock Glen Falls, an 11-metre waterfall and RGCA's most popular attraction. RGCA also contains an abundance of fossils, providing a key attraction for visitors.

It is an ecologically significant site within the Ausable Gorge, part of the Ausable River watershed and the biodiverse Carolinian zone. The Carolinian zone supports a high level of biodiversity, including species at risk (SAR) and species that are not found anywhere else in Canada.

RGCA is primarily used for passive, nature-based recreation such as hiking, birdwatching, and picnicking. It also hosts events like family reunions, weddings, and community gatherings. Visitation continues to grow, with approximately 38, 000 annual visits at the time of this update. A key attraction is the Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre, developed in partnership with the Arkona Lions Club, which welcomes thousands of the visitors each year.

The original, and 1988 master plans focus on the environmental degradation caused by intensive, uncontrolled use and a two-part strategy to balance environmental and community needs. The two-part strategy included adding recreational amenities to the more resilient tablelands to reduce pressure on sensitive valley lands and creating a defined trail system to guide access. This approach successfully supported a balance between conserving natural areas and recreation by addressing the insufficient availability of sustainable recreational features relative to the public use and demand of the property. This updated plan builds on past challenges and successes, with recommendations that reinforce this strategy.

ABCA works to adapt to the needs of the environment, and the needs of the community, using the best available information at the time; therefore, the master plan will be updated every ten years.

## Master Plan Process

*Placeholder: This Master Plan is being updated according to the process approved by the ABCA Board of Directors at its March 20, 2025 meeting. In the final draft of this Master Plan, this section will describe how that process was applied to this specific plan update.*

## What We Heard – Engagement Summary

*Placeholder: This section will be incorporated into the final draft of this Master Plan.*

## Conservation Lands Strategy

The development of this master plan was directed by the goals, objectives, and management considerations detailed in the CLS (2024) and reinforced by the Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy (2024). Some conservation areas may have CLS goals and objectives that are not, or are less applicable to the property, and its management; however, due to the dynamic and multifaceted nature of RGCA, all CLS goals and objectives are applicable. The public recognizes RGCA primarily for its nature-based public use opportunities, highlighting the importance of other CLS goals, such as balancing recreational use, with responsible conservation-based management.

## Management Goal

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and its partners are dedicated to conserving the ecological integrity of Rock Glen Conservation Area, while offering compatible recreational and educational opportunities that encourage nature appreciation and help fund the sustainable management of conservation lands.



## Background

### Land Acquisition and Disposition

RGCA, as it exists today, was formed through the acquisition of three separate parcels of land. In 1954, the Ausable River Conservation Authority purchased a 4.1-hectare parcel from the Arkona Lions Club, which had managed the site as a park from 1948 to 1954. In 1958, and 1969, the adjacent parcels were purchased to enlarge the conservation area to its current size, 26 hectares. The area was established to help preserve and protect the Ausable Gorge, while offering recreational opportunities compatible with its natural environment. Since then, its development and management have followed this vision, making RGCA a successful nature-based destination for thousands of visitors.

No property disposition has occurred at RGCA.

### Connections with Other Publicly Accessible Lands

RGCA is not connected to any other publicly accessible lands. The Rock Glen Family Resort, a private campground with recreation facilities, is directly across the road from RGCA.

### Land Use History

While RGCA is located in an area with a rich cultural heritage, spanning much longer than described in this master plan, this section focuses on the period documented by ABCA through aerial imagery and past master plans, beginning in 1947.

Before ABCA's ownership, the land that now forms RGCA was primarily used for agriculture. A 1947 aerial image (Figure 1) shows sparse tree cover, suggesting that the property was used for pasturing livestock, and growing row crops or forage in the small fields. Areas with difficult access due to watercourses and steep slopes appear less disturbed. In 1948, the Arkona Lions Club began managing a 10-acre parcel of the property as a park, which the Ausable River Conservation Authority purchased in 1954.



*Figure 1: 1947 aerial image of Rock Glen Conservation Area. The red polygon denotes the approximate property boundary of RGCA in 2025.*

Figure 2 shows the property and surrounding area in 1972, shortly after ABCA acquired the final parcel in 1969. Figure 2 suggests that the most intensive agricultural use occurred just before ABCA's ownership of the complete area. The 1972 aerial image (Figure 2) highlights the transition in agricultural practices that likely occurred at the property. More land was cleared for fields to support row crops, and it appears that the forest matured where it was not cleared, suggesting that livestock were no longer present to inhibit regeneration.

By 1979, several elements of the conservation area were already in place, as outlined in the original master plan. The property included a picnic area, pavilion, and sports area, all located north of the gorge. A gatehouse, and parking lot were located at the entrance, and the two areas were connected by three bridges that were all located above the falls, one of the bridges supported vehicular access. The washroom was also nearing completion when the plan was developed in August 1979.



*Figure 2: 1972 aerial image of Rock Glen Conservation Area. The red polygon denotes the approximate property boundary of RGCA in 2025.*

In the 1970s and 1980s, staff recognized that intensive, uncontrolled use of the gorge was degrading its condition, as evidence by a maze of random, intersecting trails. A two-part strategy was implemented: developing recreation within the more resilient tablelands, and creating a defined trail system to minimize ecological impact. The 1988 Master Plan built upon the original plan, emphasizing sustainable recreation through responsible development of the site. Early improvements to the tablelands are visible in the 1989 aerial image (Figure 3). To guide access, stairs to the Ausable Gorge were also constructed during this time. The Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre was constructed in 1986.





*Figure 3: 1989 aerial image of Rock Glen Conservation Area. The red polygon denotes the approximate property boundary of RGCA in 2025.*

By the late 1990's, development at RGCA was substantially complete. The 1999 aerial image (Figure 4) shows a layout similar how RGCA is at the time of this update. According to the 1988 Master Plan, deciduous and coniferous plantations – planted between 1974 and 1976 using species such as soft maple, white ash, white pine, and spruce – had reached heights of 2 to 5 metres in height by 1988. Some plantations are visible in the 1999 image, though the sparse conifers in the northwest suggest low survival rates. A single row of each, white pine, cedar, and spruce, was also planted along the northern boundary.



*Figure 4: 1999 aerial image of Rock Glen Conservation Area. The red polygon denotes the approximate property boundary of RGCA in 2025.*

The 2004 Master Plan proposed converting a low-quality ash plantation into a more suitable ecosystem, such as tall grass prairie or old-field transition. Soon after, Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) killed the ash trees at RGCA, prompting significant staff resources to remove hazardous trees. In 2014, ABCA and community groups planted native species, including sugar maple, silver maple, tulip tree, sycamore, Kentucky coffee tree, red oak, chinquapin oak, Ohio buckeye, and redbud, to reforest the area. Some areas, particularly in the northwest have naturally transitioned to old-field conditions, this is visible in Figure 5.

To promote safe areas for children to play, and build upon the early strategy established for RGCA, two playgrounds were established in 2008. These playground structures are located in the tablelands of RGCA.





*Figure 5: 2020 aerial image of Rock Glen Conservation Area. The red polygon denotes the approximate property boundary of RGCA in 2025.*

In response to high visitor numbers in 2020, staff implemented several upgrades to increase capacity while protecting RGCA's ecological integrity. The lower parking lot, west of the Hobbs-McKenzie Drain crossing was expanded to accommodate an additional 24 vehicles. Additional parking spaces were also added to the upper loop, to support increased use of the pavilion. To reduce pressure on heavily used amenities, a new trail was established in 2023. It encourages visitor dispersion and offers an alternative route through the Ausable River Valley, linking the lower drain crossing to the tablelands near the north pavilion.

### Staffing

RGCA has a dedicated on-site team consisting of a Superintendent, and two Conservation Area Assistants who staff the property from May through October. Additional staff from ABCA's Administration Centre provide support as needed.

The Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre is managed by volunteers from the Arkona Lions Club, with assistance from ABCA staff.

#### Permitted Activities

Birdwatching	Geocaching	Snowshoeing
Cross-country skiing	Hiking	Picnicking
Fishing*	Walking dogs on leash	

*\*Fishing is only permitted in the Ausable River. Fishing is not permitted in the Hobbs-McKenzie Drain due to the high volume of visitors in this area.*

#### Programs and Services

RGCA is a key part of ABCA's conservation lands, and passive recreation programs. It supports the organizations broader mandate by contributing to several core programs and services, including:

- Conservation Education Program
  - RGCA is a primary site for hands-on, nature-based learning that fosters environmental awareness and appreciation.
- Flood Forecasting and Warning Program
  - RGCA is a site where snow depth and water equivalent measurements are collected, contributing critical data for assessing flood risk throughout the watershed
- Biomonitoring
  - RGCA offers access to the Ausable River for long-term monitoring of fish and mussel species – hosting a long-term index station for both fish and mussels
- Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network
  - RGCA hosts a monitoring well as part of Ontario's Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN), a partnership between the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and Conservation Authorities. Water quality at the RGCA well is assessed annually, while groundwater levels are recorded hourly to track hydrological trends.

Beyond these defined programs, RGCA plays a vital role in integrated watershed management. Natural areas support essential ecological and hydrological functions, which support the core mandate of conservation authorities: protecting people and property from flooding and other natural hazards.

#### Infrastructure

RGCA contains a significant amount of infrastructure relative to ABCA's other conservation areas. This includes, but is not limited to: an entry gatehouse, mid-level watercourse crossings, museum and information centre, and a fully serviced washroom. The infrastructure at RGCA is a valuable asset to its operations, supporting visitor satisfaction and, ultimately, the viability of its operations.

Unless specifically addressed in the recommendations of this Master Plan, existing infrastructure is considered an asset to both the conservation area and the organization. Its maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement will be guided ABCA's Capital Asset Management Plan (2024) and will be integrated into financial forecasts and annual budget preparations to ensure existing infrastructure remains safe and continues to support a high level of visitor satisfaction.

## Visitor and Community Use

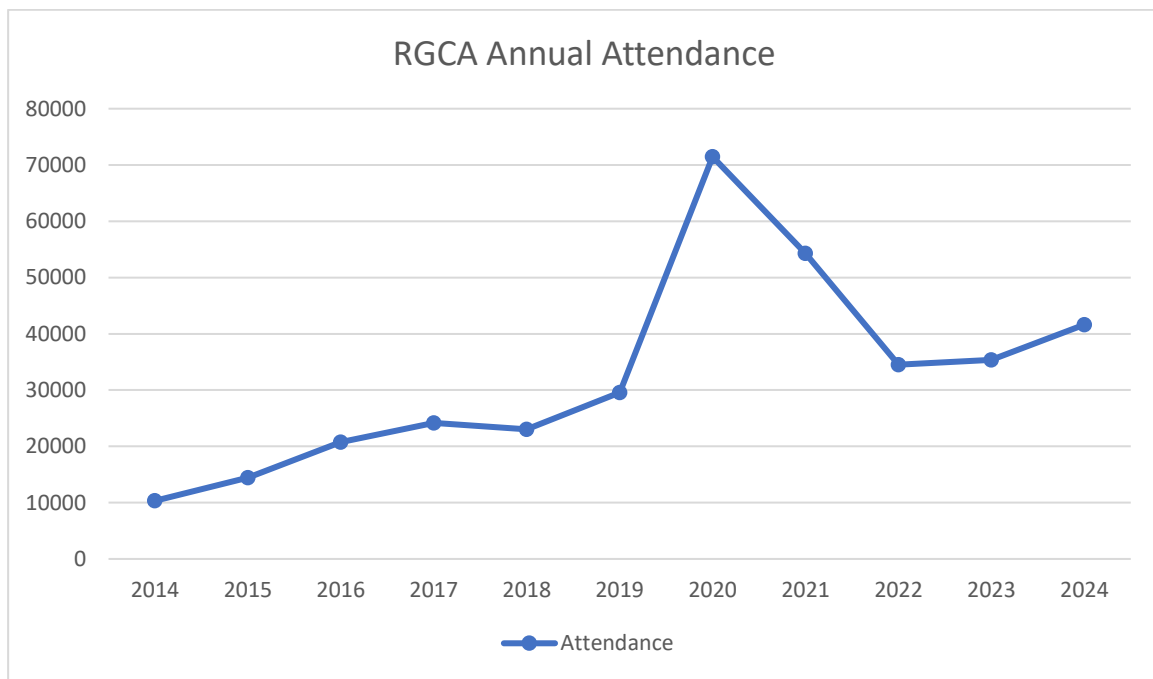
### Visitor Numbers

The numbers described in this section include gate entries from day-use visitors, event and program attendees, and visits from season pass holders.

The number of people visiting RGCA has increased steadily over the past decade (Figure 6), increasing from approximately 10,000 visitors in 2014, to approximately 41,000 visitors in 2024. The pandemic was an exception to the otherwise, linear growth realized at RGCA. The pandemic generated exceptionally busy times for conservation areas across the province; during this time, RGCA realized an annual attendance as high as 71, 461 people. Since that time, the visitor numbers have returned to a pattern, consistent with the linear growth that was occurring prior to the exceptional years of 2020, and 2021. During the post-pandemic period of 2022 – 2024, RGCA has averaged approximately 38, 000 people per year, but the growth from 2014 – 2024 suggests that this may continue to increase steadily.

Approximately 20% of the total number of annual visitors is realized during statutory holiday long weekends. Canada Day, Civic Holiday, and Labour Day weekends receive the highest number of visitors, often having more than 2000 visitors over the course of three days during each of these weekends.





*Figure 6: Total attendance by year*

Figure 7 demonstrates how visitor numbers are distributed across the season when RGCA has staff present. Understanding how visitor numbers are distributed across the year helps guide management decisions that conserve the ecological integrity of RGCA, while ensuring sustainable growth and outdoor opportunities.

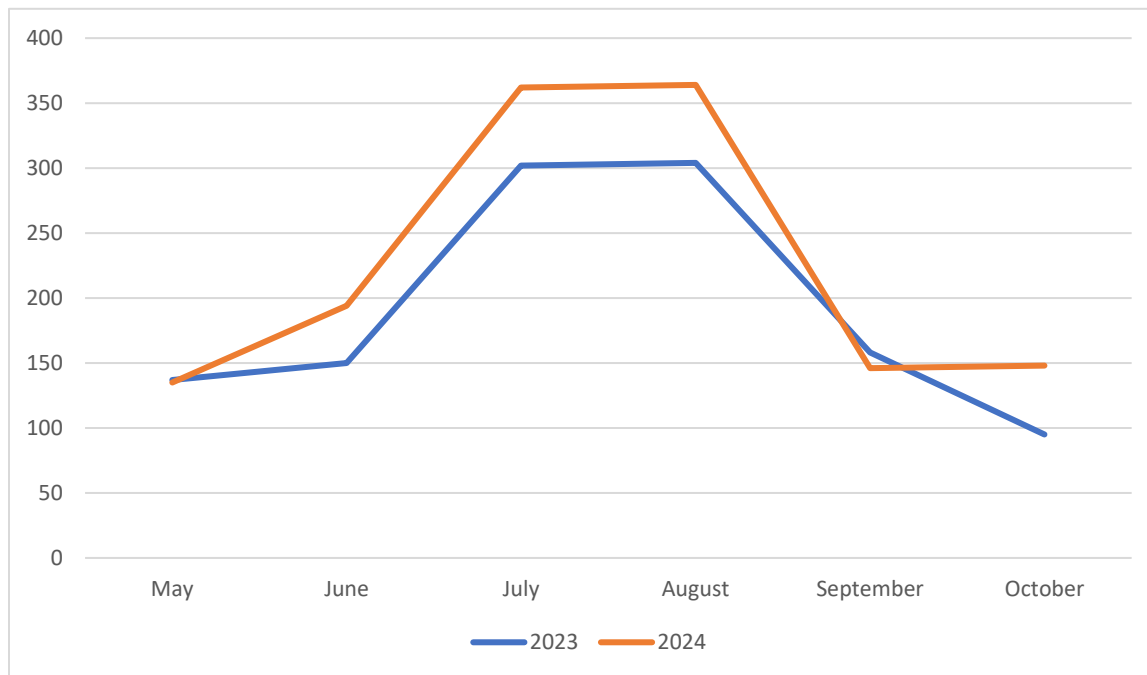


Figure 7: Average of daily entries by month for 2023 and 2024

### Season Pass Holder Numbers

RGCA offers two options for season passes, including a season pass for an individual person, as well as a season pass for a family. The season pass program is an appreciated, and growing program. In 2024, 62 family passes, and 11 individual season passes were purchased.

### Events

RGCA hosts a variety of events each season, including community partner events (e.g., Bruce Redman Car Show by the Arkona Lions Club) and private functions (e.g., weddings, reunions, and corporate gatherings).

Event fees, set annually, help cover staff time and contribute to funding conservation area operations. Fee waiver requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, considering community benefit, ABCA resource requirements, and potential impacts to RGCA operations. All waivers require approval by the ABCA Board of Directors.

### Cultural and Heritage Resources

While RGCA is situated in an area with a rich cultural heritage that extends beyond what is described in this plan, this section includes only the information documented in previous plans. RGCA provides a unique cross-section of ancient history as well as examples of the more recent cultural history of the immediate area.

When the area was covered by the Devonian Sea, deposits containing simple life forms were left behind. Erosion by the Ausable River and Hobbs – McKenzie Drain has since exposed these layers, exposing these fossils. The abundance, and ability to view these fossils have made RGCA well known.

Cultural history, including early agricultural practices is also evident on the property. The foundation from a grist mill may be viewed immediately below the falls; three different mills have been constructed on the site since 1837. Only the foundation of the last mill, built in 1870 remains. The ruins of the McGibbon homestead, once home to the last mill owner, are located near the pavilion in the lower picnic area.

Nearby in the Ausable River, remnants of a hydroelectric dam that was removed in 1937, reflect early power development in Arkona. The original dam was constructed in 1907, only to be destroyed by flooding in 1908. The dam was blown out in 1937, following pressure from upstream anglers who demanded a fish ladder, or an end to the dam, to allow for natural movement of fish.

Though only remnants of these structures remain, a considerable amount of history is known and recorded in publications about the history of Arkona.

## Natural Areas

### Watershed Context

RGCA is located within the Ausable River watershed, in an area of the watershed known as the Ausable Gorge. For much of its course, the Ausable River runs alongside the Wyoming Moraine, with RGCA situated near the point where the river cuts through the moraine as it continues toward its outlet at Lake Huron.

While the broader watershed is dominated by agricultural land use, RGCA and the surrounding Ausable Gorge support diverse forest habitats.

### Site Characteristics

The property includes several ecosystem types, ranging from restored areas transitioning from former land use to natural conditions, to relatively undisturbed natural areas.

The riparian and valley lands of the Ausable River, which forms the property's eastern boundary, are dominated by natural forest habitat, including Carolinian species. This ecosystem extends into the Hobbs-Mckenzie Drain watershed upstream to Rock Glen Falls. The forest shows minimal signs of disturbance from invasive species or past land use practices, likely due to steep valley terrain limiting access.

Outside of the valley lands, the landscape features flat to rolling terrain sloping toward the Ausable River and Hobbs-Mckenzie Drain. Several intermittent watercourses cross these areas, some with steep terrain similar to the valley slopes. The flattest areas show the most disturbance and are either used for access and recreation or have been reforested to support natural regeneration.

## Environmental Designations and Protections

Environmental designations and protections are an important component of conserving the ecological integrity of RGCA. This master plan may not present a comprehensive inventory of environmental designations and protections.

### *Area of Natural and Scientific Interest*

Approximately 80% of RGCA is provincially designated as being part of the Ausable River Valley Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). ANSIs are areas of land and water containing unique natural landscapes or features. There are two types of ANSIs, Earth Science, and Life Science. Life Science ANSIs represent significant biodiversity and natural landscapes.

### *Conservation Authorities Act*

Areas of RGCA are subject to *Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits* under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Ontario Regulation 41/24 directs development away from natural hazards, supporting the core mandate of conservation authorities of managing watershed resources and protecting life and property.

### *Municipal Zoning By-Law*

The Municipality of Lambton Shores Municipal Zoning By-Law establishes and regulates land use by implementing the general policies from the Municipality of Lambton Shores Official Plan. The zoning regulations applicable to RGCA are Open Space – 1 (OS1), Environmental Protection – Hazard (EP-H), and Environmental Protection – Woodlot (EP – WD).

### *Woodlands Conservation By-Law*

The forested areas of RGCA are subject to regulation under the County of Lambton's Woodlands Conservation By-Law. The Woodlands Conservation By-Law aims to promote good forestry practices, and conserve forest habitat, and forest resources for future generations.

## Natural Heritage Augmentation

The ecosystem benefits provided by the natural areas at RGCA extend beyond property boundaries by contributing to overall ecosystem health.

The natural areas at RGCA build upon the forests and other ecosystems that line the Ausable River. From approximately Sylvan Road, through RGCA, and downstream to just north of Elginfield Road, the Ausable River valley is some of the most intact natural areas in the entire Ausable River watershed. This forms a natural connection that supports movement and migration of floral and fauna species.

The watershed model recognizes the direct link between land management and aquatic health. The natural areas at RGCA, along with those throughout the broader valley, play a positive role in

supporting healthy aquatic ecosystems. This contribution is both in the aquatic ecosystems adjacent to the terrestrial ecosystems, as well as throughout the larger, downstream areas of the Ausable River.

### Species at Risk

Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) provides species-at-risk (SAR) data using one-kilometre grids, two of which apply to RGCA. Several SAR have been documented within this area.

It is essential that staff are aware of these species, or their potential presence, and manage the site accordingly. Staff maintain detailed records and monitor for new occurrences. Responsible management not only supports terrestrial species, but also protects and enhances conditions for nearby and downstream aquatic species.

To help safeguard SAR from potential threats, detailed information is not published in this plan.

### Summary of Prior Management Plan Implementation

Status	Action Item
<b>Implemented.</b> ABCA and the Arkona Lions Club maintain a strong partnership at RGCA.	Continue the partnership with the Arkona Lions Club.
<b>Implemented.</b>	Develop signs to educate visitors about the geological and cultural history of the park and species at risk.
<b>Implemented/ Ongoing.</b> Conserving the ecological integrity of RGCA while providing compatible recreational and educational opportunities continues to be the top management priority.	Continue current management techniques which focus on visitor use in non-sensitive parts of the park in order to protect the geological features, Carolinian species and species at risk.
<b>Implemented/ Ongoing.</b> Aquatic and terrestrial inventories have been completed since the last plan. It is important to inventory and update this information periodically; therefore, it is considered an ongoing action item.	Update the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems inventory.
<b>Implemented.</b> The primary ash plantations have succeeded to old-field habitat. A smaller, centrally located, ash plantation was replaced with deciduous trees after it was impacted by the EAB.	Convert the low-quality ash plantation to a more appropriate ecosystem such as tallgrass prairie or old-field transition.
<b>Ongoing.</b> ABCA's Stewardship and Healthy Watersheds departments continue to promote best management practices (BMPs),	Encourage good land use upstream of the park to improve water quality for recreation and aquatic species.

and facilitate technical and financial support to landowners to implement BMPs.	
<b>Ongoing.</b> ABCA permits research and scientific study through a Special Use Permit system. Researchers provide their findings to ABCA, augmenting institutional knowledge of the site.	Encourage research and scientific study.
<b>Addressed in this Master Plan.</b>	Remove invasive, exotic tree species.

## Management Statements

To support the Management Goal for RGCA, the ABCA provides the following management statements:

- To preserve and protect the unique natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.
- To promote an appreciation and awareness of unique natural, cultural, historical and geomorphological features.
- To foster appreciation through experience by providing opportunities for low-impact, passive recreational activities, and educational programs.
- To foster and support partnerships that align with the management goal.

## Implementation

The following recommendations support implementation of the Master Plan in line with management goals, statements and the CLS (2024). The recommendations propose enhancements and operational changes at RGCA, with existing operations assumed to continue unless specifically addressed.

### Partnerships

**Recommendation 1.1:** Collaborate with the Arkona Lions Club and County of Lambton to develop a plan to enhance accessibility, self-guided interpretation, and security at the museum.

**Description:** The museum is an important asset to the conservation authority. Through collaboration, partners - including ABCA – can enhance the museum to support the long-term viability of its operations and improve the visitor experience. Collaboration also strengthens the partners’ ability to secure external funding to support these efforts.

**Recommendation 1.2:** Work with local partners to explore ways to improve the pedestrian link between Arkona via Ann Street and Rock Glen Road.

**Description:** RGCA is an integral part of the Arkona community, with many residents visiting regularly and holding season passes. The Arkona Lions Club enhanced local access by installing a pedestrian bridge at the Community Centre Playground, linking the town with Rock Glen Road. With support from the Municipality and community partners, a defined pedestrian corridor could further strengthen this connection and promote active transportation. While ABCA recognizes this is a major project, it expresses interest in discussing its potential with the Municipality prior to future major maintenance of Rock Glen Road.

**Recommendation 1.3:** Work with the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nations to better incorporate traditional knowledge, as well as indigenous history, and modern uses of the land.

**Description:** ABCA acknowledges the original stewards of this land and is grateful to have the opportunity to meet and work in this territory. Through collaboration with the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nations, traditional knowledge can be integrated into management decisions. To further acknowledge the long-standing connection Indigenous people have to the land, Indigenous history, traditional ceremonies and modern land uses can be better reflected in cultural heritage resources and educational programming.

### **Visitor Numbers, Activities, and Programming**

**Recommendation 2.1:** Host recreation and education events that encourage people to visit during non-peak times.

**Description:** Unique and attractive recreational and educational events may be facilitated during the 'shoulder-season' months of May, June, September, and October, when attendance is historically lower than the peak-busy season. Strategically timed events may encourage a more consistent distribution of visitors throughout the season, supporting sustainable growth that mitigates potential ecological impacts, and enhances visitor satisfaction.

**Recommendation 2.2:** Implement a tiered-rate system to the season pass program which offers a pass at a lesser rate for those who utilize active transportation methods (e.g., walking or cycling).

**Description:** Available parking space is often a limiting factor for visitor capacity. Implementing this recommendation may help to encourage active transportation, provide an affordable option for those who live within walking, or cycling distance; and increase capacity at RGCA. ABCA recognizes the importance of consulting with the Municipality of Lambton Shores, to mitigate any unintended consequences, such as people parking on the roadside and walking into RGCA to receive a pass at a reduced rate.

**Recommendation 2.3:** Host an annual appreciation event for RGCA season pass holders.

**Description:** The season pass program helps foster relations between staff and regular visitors. Often these pass holders help report unauthorized use, vandalism, and provide feedback and ideas

to staff for improvement that may be made. An appreciation event both recognizes the commitment of season pass holders to RGCA, and encourages new season pass holders.

### **Environmental**

**Recommendation 3.1:** Remove all Norway maple trees from RGCA; continue to monitor and manage Norway maple regeneration.

**Description:** Norway maple is an invasive species that impacts biodiversity in forested areas. It is often planted as a shade tree in residential areas; however, some Norway maple trees were planted throughout RGCA in the past. Removing the mature Norway maple trees from RGCA will reduce the immediate seed source; however, ongoing monitoring and management will be required due to seeds from Norway maple trees on adjacent properties.

**Recommendation 3.2:** Complete bi-annual invasive species monitoring by trained staff to ensure the 'Early Detection and Rapid Response' (EDRR) framework for managing invasive species is utilized.

**Description:** EDRR is recognized as the most effective, and cost-effective approach for managing invasive species. Staff who are trained to identify invasive species will monitor for their presence, and if invasive species are detected, management will be employed accordingly. Invasive species management may be prioritized at the direction of trained staff; species of greater concern for ecological health and risk management (e.g., Giant hogweed, invasive phragmites, oak wilt) will be prioritized.

**Recommendation 3.3:** Update terrestrial and aquatic species inventories.

**Description:** Terrestrial and aquatic species inventories should be updated periodically, as resources permit, to ensure that management decisions are based on up-to-date, and accurate species information.

### **Infrastructure**

**Recommendation 4.1:** Consider the most southern staircase and trail, adjacent to Rock Glen Road, an end-of-life asset.

**Description:** The staircase, and trail that are located between the Hobbs-McKenzie Drain and Rock Glen Road will be considered an end-of-life asset and will be removed prior to their condition degrading to a level that is no longer safe for visitor use. The infrastructure is located adjacent to the watercourse and its steep bank, which are subject to ongoing erosion which may eventually compromise the integrity of the infrastructure and create a hazard for visitors. The infrastructure will be maintained through regular maintenance efforts to prolong its suitability, but should the erosion progress expeditiously or the overall condition of the infrastructure degrade to an unsafe condition, the infrastructure should be closed, and removed. The infrastructure may be removed



entirely, or in phases (e.g., the lower section may be left up to the main landing to create a viewing platform), as it determined by its condition at the time.

The eventual closing of this infrastructure will limit access and trampling at the top-of-bank, allowing native vegetation to regenerate and increase the buffer between the table lands, and the watercourse, mitigating erosion. The trail established in 2023 provides an alternative route for continued enjoyment of the property. Although this may be a significant change to RGCA, it is one of the recommendations that achieves ABCA's commitment to balance the recreational enjoyment of the property, with its ecological integrity.

### Master Plan Review

To ensure this management plan remains current, a review and update will be conducted every ten years. If changes are required during the term of the strategy, the Board of Directors may approve updates accordingly.

The Board of Directors will guide the public engagement process that is completed for the review of the strategy based on the scope of the updates recommended by staff.

## *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** September 18, 2025  
**From:** Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer  
**Subject:** General Managers Report  
**Report Type:** INFORMATION

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### **Recommendation:**

**THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the General Managers Report for information as presented.**

### **Introduction**

I am pleased to provide the Board of Directors with a brief update on ABCA projects, programs, partnership updates, funding opportunities and activities over the spring. Information about Conservation Ontario(CO) and some of its activities on behalf of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities will also be included when new information is available. If you have any questions, feel free to discuss with me. This is not an inclusive list, only some highlights.

### **Conservation Ontario**

Conservation Ontario's Federal Pre-Budget Submission 2025-2026 was successfully submitted on behalf of the CA network. The submission asks that the funding be continued to safeguard Canada's flood insurance market and reduce disaster recovery costs by continuing to invest in resilient critical infrastructure, businesses, and homes. Programs include the Disaster Mitigation and Adaption Fund (\$4 billion from 2018-2032), Climate Resilient Coastal Communities (\$41 million from 2024-2028), and the Flood Hazard Identification Mapping Program (\$164.2 million from 2022-2026). These values are Canada-wide totals. Further initiatives include the Resilient Agriculture Lands Program (RALP), with \$56.7 million for Ontario through 2028, and the Canadian Nature Protection Fund investment of \$12 million through 2026. The submission also included ongoing support for the Canada Summer Job Program, the Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA), and the Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative.

### **ABCA Meetings and Special Events**

1. More than 35 people attended the very successful Vilis Family Wildlife Area Dedication Ceremony on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. ABCF Chair, Charles Miner; Adrian Cornelissen, ABCA Vice-Chair; Lianne Rood, MP for Middlesex – London; and Rita Vilis, donor, shared remarks at the ceremony.
2. The Serenity Nature Reserve Grand Opening occurred June 28<sup>th</sup>. Angela VanNeikerk and Ian Jean attended on behalf of ABCA. ABCA partnered with the Phil McNamee Charitable

Foundation on a wetland restoration and reforestation project on 8 acres of open land at the Nature Reserve.

3. Christie Brown represented ABCA at the Ailsa Craig Family Fishing Day event on July 6<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the Ailsa Craig Lions Club. 64 kids registered for the event, with well over 100 attendees.
4. Cristen Watt and Angela VanNiekerk presented on invasive species at the 'Invasives Around Us' event at the Port Franks Optimist Community Center on July 26.
5. The Conservation Auction Committee met on August 19, 2025 to develop ideas for fundraising to reimagine this longstanding fundraising initiative.
6. ABCA staff attended the Bayfield Fair (August 16/17) and Kirkton Fair (September 6).
7. A fundraiser, celebration and meet-and-greet took place August 27, 2025 at the Bayfield Town Hall, for the River Flats canoe and kayak launch project.
8. The tenth annual Turtle Release Event was held August 28, 2025, with about 850 attendees.
9. Oaks and Acorns will be ongoing through September at Morrison Dam CA with funding from Sunset Community Foundation and ABCF, and through October 14 at the Clinton CA with funding from Central Huron Donation Fund.
10. Through the first half of 2025, the Conservation Education has delivered 107 programs, to 2,256 students, and 455 adults
11. Rosalind Chang met with University of Guelph's MicroScope lab team to coordinate the addition of Microbial Source Tracking samples for this summer. Samples are collected during the regular Bluewater Shoreline Residents Association sampling. The analysis can differentiate between human and non-human E. coli.
12. Mari Veliz attended Grain Farmers of Ontario meetings and hosted at the Huronview Farm.
13. Rosalind led a pond study for the Emmanuel Baptist Church camp (40 campers and 10 leaders).
14. Nathan Schoelier and Rosalind participated in a career-coach program at South Huron District Highschool and Central Huron Secondary School. They spoke to more than 50 grade 9 and 10 students about their career journey.
15. Ian Jean presented at the Forests Canada post plant (tree plant) meeting on ABCA's tree planting program. Forest Canada provides funding for projects of 500 or more trees.
16. The Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy (HTLTC) meeting was held June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Woodburne Farm. The meeting included a tour of the property for land trust directors, followed by the HTLTC meeting. A director recruitment process, and term limits for directors was approved.
17. The third Huron Clean Water Project (HCWP) meeting of the year was held June 13<sup>th</sup> at the ABCA office. 15 of 18 applications were approved for approximately \$32,000 funding.
18. Abbie, Christie and Davin attended the ABCA Water Response Team meeting on July 10<sup>th</sup>.
19. Daniel King and Christie attended the Lambton Public Health Flood Management Meeting in Wyoming. Daniel presented in partnership with SCRCA on Conservation Authorities flood management role and how the planning and regulations program relates to social determinants of health and risk management.
20. Brooklyn Rau & Reese Thompson held the first Huron County Phragmites Management Area Working Group Meeting on Aug. 13<sup>th</sup>. This meeting was funded by a grant through the Invasive

Species Action Fund to assist in phragmites management efforts across Huron County. The meeting was very successful with 15 municipal partners and other representatives present.

21. Nathan, alongside Maitland Valley CA staff hosted a Huron Clean Water Project booth at the Huron County Plowing Match on August 15<sup>th</sup>.
22. Andrew Bicknell, Jaden Schoelier and Millie Ghornbankhani have attended various meetings with municipal and county staff on various planning related matters. Staff have responded to an increased volume of permit inquiries and site visits.

## **ABCA Projects, Programs and Studies**

1. Elizabeth Balfour and Tim Cumming have been working on getting assessment report and source protection plan files press-ready for printing. The files include Section 34 amendments (July 24, 2024) to the Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan (SPP) and maps.
2. Risk Management Official work: Donna Clarkson and Ellen Westelaken have been visiting wellhead protection areas, conducting site inspections, and reviewing the risk management plans to determine if they require updating, or if they can be rescinded.
3. Angela and Kari Jean continue to work with Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) partners on reporting and financials for our current federal Canada Nature Fund (CNF) and Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) agreements. This funding supports stewardship, education and monitoring projects in the Ausable River, Bayfield River and Lake Huron tributaries
4. Kari and Ben Riffin completed the reservoir fish and habitat assessments at both Morrison and Parkhill Dams. This work builds on a long-term monitoring program that helps to identify changes in the fish communities over time (reservoirs were last sampled in 2015).
5. Christie has been coordinating and conducting fish and flow surveys in unrated municipal drains within the MVCA watershed as part of the DFO Municipal Drain Classification project. The information collected will help streamline future drain maintenance.
6. Mari and Rosalind received confirmation of funding from the Canadian Water Agency for funds to support restoration efforts in the mouth of the Ausable River and the Old Ausable Channel.
7. Mari and Hope Brock prepared MECP project summaries for Main Bayfield and Bayfield North watersheds for funding for the next 3 years for continued outreach, stewardship and monitoring.
8. Brooklyn prepared the first issue of the HTLTC newsletter that provides updates on events and projects happening on HTLTC properties. Further, the HTLTC Facebook page is live.
9. ABCA was successful in securing funding of \$50,000 from the Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) to support on farm stewardship. RALP is funded by the governments of Canada and Ontario under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership and the program is administered by OMAFA and Conservation Ontario.
10. Jeff VanNiekerk, Derek Dolmage and Reese are working at keeping the conservation areas safe and maintained, while completing the major maintenance projects that are scheduled for 2025. They have worked on bridges at Bannockburn and Morrison this summer.

11. Jeff, Reese and Derek managed hogweed at a few sites across the watershed. It is essential to manage Hogweed as it presents both ecological concerns, and human-safety concerns.
12. Jeff, Reese, Derek and Brooklyn are beginning Phragmites management on private landowner properties as well as Huron County and municipal roadsides.
13. Christie completed the annual Huron County Sentinel Well sampling on Aug 20<sup>th</sup>.
14. ABCA has received the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP) funding agreement from the province. FHIMP will provide 50% funding for the new Flood Model.
15. Brooklyn continues to accept applications for the Cover Crop Incentive Program. Just over 2700 acres are currently eligible for funding.
16. ABCA launched its fall tree planting program and a new parallel program targeted to backyard planting called *Planting with Purpose: Native Tree Sale*. The new program is targeted to landowners who wish to buy 5 or fewer native trees to plant on their property. Tree purchases for the new program are online through a new purchasing portal on the ABCA website. The tree pick-up event was held at the Stanley Community Centre On September 6<sup>th</sup> in partnership with the Municipality of Bluewater, the ABCF and Blue Flag Beaches and Marina program.
17. Nathan supported staff from the Municipality of North Middlesex with applying to the Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone Grant. If successful, this grant will support the trail at Parkhill CA.

## ABCA Training

1. Working at Heights training is complete for Jeff, Reese, Derek, Christie and Daniel.
2. Aaron Clarke and Christie attended WISKI training this summer. The session was hosted by UTRCA and delivered by the software manufacturer, KISTERS.
3. Ellen met with Donna and Elizabeth for Risk Management Official (RMO) training – Virtual tour of watersheds and discussed Risk Management Plans in each WHPA.

## Other Items

1. Effective July, Andrew Bicknell has been appointment as Manager of Water and Planning.
2. Ellen has switched roles to become DWSP Specialist and RMO during Elizabeth Balfour's maternity leave and through succession, will continue with DWSP.
3. In August, ABCA issued a Level 1 Low Water Advisory for the entire watershed.
4. With our local input, Conservation Ontario has released a video, documenting 25 years of source water protection in Ontario since the 2000 water contamination event, in Walkerton, Ontario: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUhKuGy5Tss](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUhKuGy5Tss).
5. Rock Glen has been incredibly busy. August alone saw over 13, 000 visitors during the month.