



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday, September 17, 2026

**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 June 18, 2026, and Budget Committee Minutes from August 20, 2026, and Email Vote on August 21, 2026
7. **Business Out of the Minutes**
 - Proposed 2027 Budget – Nathan Schoelier
8. **General Manager's Report**
9. **Program Reports**
 - Report 1: (a) Development Review (O Reg 41/24) – Jaden Schoelier
(b) Violations/Appeals Update – Andrew Bicknell
 - Report 2: South Huron Trail Memorandum of Understanding – Nathan Schoelier
 - Report 3: Morrison Dam Conservation Area Management Plan – Nathan Schoelier
 - Report 4: Geospatial Data Capture Proposal: Ausable River Estuary 2D Flood Modelling – Tracey McPherson/Rosalind Chang
 - Report 5: Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council – Nathan Schoelier
10. Committee Reports
11. Correspondence
12. New Business
13. **Committee of the Whole**
14. Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings and Events

October 22, 2026
November 19, 2026

Board of Directors Meeting – 10:00 a.m.
Board of Directors Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Steve Herold, Jaden Hodgins (via Zoom), Dave Jewitt, David Marsh, Wayne Shipley

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Joey Groot, Marissa Vaughan

STAFF PRESENT

Andrew Bicknell, Tina Crown, Millie Ghorbankhani, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Ben Riggin, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Mari Veliz

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

Chair Ray Chartrand asked to amend the agenda to move Committee of the Whole to the beginning of the meeting.

MOTION #BD 63/26

Moved David Marsh

Seconded by Wayne Shipley

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the July 16, 2026, Board of Directors Meeting be approved as amended.”

Carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MOTION #BD 64/26

Moved by Adrian Cornelissen

Seconded by Steve Herold

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors go into Committee of the Whole at 10:02 a.m. to discuss a personnel and property matter, with Davin Heinbuck and Abbie Gutteridge remaining in attendance, as well as Nathan Schoelier for the latter half of the discussion.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 65/26

**Moved by David Marsh
Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors rise and report at 10:48 a.m.”

Carried.

Staff members returned to the Boardroom, and Chair Ray continued with the meeting.

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.

Chair Ray noted that, before continuing with the remainder of the meeting, there were several matters discussed in Committee of the Whole that require decisions from the Board of Directors. As Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary Treasurer, was selected as Project Executive for the Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, he will be stepping back from his role at the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA), although remaining an employee of ABCA through an agreement with the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA). As such, the Human Resources Committee recommended that Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship, Lands and Education Manager, be appointed as Acting GM until consolidation of conservation authorities takes place. In addition, it was discussed that Nathan would also be an appropriate staff representative appointed to the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority as staff representative.

MOTION #BD 66/26

**Moved by David Marsh
Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors appoint Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship, Lands and Education Manager, as ABCA Acting General Manager, effective July 27, 2026, until the end of the Transition Period.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 67/26

**Moved by Wayne Shipley
Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors appoint Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship, Lands and Education Manager, to the Transition Committee for the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 68/26

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

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

Carried.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOTION #BD 69/26

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

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on June 18, 2026, and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None.

PROGRAM REPORTS

1. (a) Development Review

Jaden Schoelier, 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 7 *Minor Works Applications*.

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell, Water and Planning Manager, did not have an update regarding ongoing violations, but noted that staff were pursuing a number of smaller violations.

MOTION #BD 70/26

Moved by Adrian Cornelissen

Seconded by Dave Jewitt

“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. 2nd Quarter Profit and Loss Statement

Tina Crown, Financial Services Coordinator, presented the 2nd quarter profit and loss statement for the ABCA. She noted that ABCA had received funding grants from several organizations including the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Ontario Ministry Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, as well as many others. She also reminded Directors that the interim billing for the levy was completed in May. Tina noted that sales and services are higher in 2026, than in 2025.

MOTION #BD 71/26

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen
Seconded by David Marsh**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the 2nd Quarter Profit and Loss Statement as presented.”

Carried.

3. Morrison Dam Conservation Area Master Plan

Nathan Schoelier presented a draft of the updated Master Plan for Morrison Dam Conservation Area. It was last updated in 2004. As with other recently updated Master Plans, one of the primary goals is to reintroduce institutional knowledge to the plan to allow for decisions to be made that consider the history of the area, alongside new resources. Nathan took a few minutes to go through some of the goals and recommendations in the plan.

The next step is to make the plan available for stakeholders and public feedback. Staff have identified several stakeholders to engage directly and will use other methods and tools to complete meaningful engagement. Any changes resulting from public consultation will be reflected in the final draft and will be brought before the Board of Directors for approval.

MOTION #BD 72/26

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

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the draft Master Plan update for Morrison Dam Conservation Area to be made available for public and stakeholder feedback.”

Carried.

4. Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA) – Powerline Replacement

Reese Thompson, ABCA Field Services, presented the results from the Request for Quote (RFQ) opportunity regarding the replacement of the utility pole line at RGCA, which is original to the construction of the Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre. The RFQ was distributed to contractors who had previously bid on similar projects at other Conservation Authorities, and was made available on the ABCA website. Two mandatory site meetings were held with interested contractors. Two bids were received and reviewed by Nathan Schoelier and Reese Thompson on Tuesday, June 30, 2026. In consultation with Hydro One, the RFQ included several requests from both ABCA and Hydro One. While both quotes were within budget and met the requirements, staff recommend the quote received from D&D Electric Ltd. For \$17,350, plus taxes.

Some of the work identified by Hydro One are unforeseen expenses, which were not accounted for at the time of ABCA's 2026 budget preparation. The deficit for the project is in the amount of \$9,328.26. Staff recommend using property management reserves to fund this balance.

MOTION #BD 73/26

**Moved by David Marsh
Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors awards the Rock Glen Conservation Area Utility Pole Replacement (RFQ-26-RGCA-01) to D&D Electric Ltd., in the amount of \$17,350.00 plus HST, and

“FURTHER, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the use of property management reserves to fund the balance of the project.”

Carried.

5. Watershed Monitoring Strategy (2026-2030)

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager, and Ben Riffin, Healthy Watersheds Technologist presented the Board of Directors with a draft Watershed Monitoring Strategy, as well as a Summary Document. Staff used past watershed strategies and institutional knowledge to prepare these documents, which will help to guide the ABCA monitoring program. Some of the core recommendations from the Strategy include emphasizing the link between soil and water quality, maintaining strategic relationships in the watershed, filling gaps in the monitoring network, moving beyond baseline monitoring and continuing to build capable staff at ABCA. Directors continued to encourage staff to seek out funding opportunities that will help ABCA to fill some of these gaps.

MOTION #BD 74/26

**Moved by Wayne Shipley
Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the Ausable Bayfield Watershed Monitoring Strategy (2026-2030).”

Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

a) Reference: Great Canadian Hideaway Lease

File: L.9.29

Brief: The ABCA received a request from the owners of the Great Canadian Hideaway, who lease ABCA property in Parkhill. Earlier in 2026 a water line under the Parkhill Reservoir broke. The location of the leak was found and repaired at cost to the Great Canadian Hideaway, as per the lease agreement. However, they are asking for some assistance to help cover these costs, as well as lost revenue from the Victoria Day weekend as they had to cancel bookings. They have requested that the ABCA consider waiving the 5 % payment on sales exceeding \$250,000 for the next two years.

MOTION #BD 75/26

Moved by David Marsh

Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors agrees to waive the 5 percent payment on sales greater than \$250,000.00, for 2026-2027, to assist with cost recovery due to the unexpected water line repair in 2026.”

Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Dave Jewitt at 11:46 a.m.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

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

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 20, 2026

**Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area**

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Steve Herold, Jaden Hodgins, Dave Jewitt, David Marsh, Wayne Shipley, Marissa Vaughan

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Joey Groot

STAFF PRESENT

Elizabeth Balfour, Andrew Bicknell, Aaron Clarke, Tina Crown, Cassie Greidanus, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Ian Jean, Tracey McPherson, Nathan Schoelier, Mari Veliz

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., welcomed everyone in attendance and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 76/26

Moved by Steve Herold

Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the August 20, 2026 Board of Directors Budget Committee 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 PROCEEDINGS

None.

PROPOSED 2027 BUDGET

Acting General Manager Nathan Schoelier provided an overview of the 2027 budget preparation by staff, as well as the format for the information session. Each department will present the budget for their program and a summary of the individual projects that are proposed for 2027. The five-year forecast will also be presented with the draft budget. Staff prepared the budget with a 2.8% wage increase on the pay grid, as defined by the recently developed Pay Grid Adjustment Policy approved by the Board of Directors in April 2026. Overall, in the 2027 Proposed Budget, staff leverage 3.5 dollars for every levy dollar. As is typical, there will be some fluctuations in grants. The Proposed Budget does not include funding for any new staff in 2027.

Corporate Services

Nathan Schoelier presented the consolidated Corporate Services budget and provided an overview of the services provided by this department. In general, Corporate Services provides assistance to all departments, the Board of Directors, the Foundation, Land Trust, municipalities and the general public, and is responsible for the coordination of the body of the ABCA. A new project proposed for 2027 is listed under Administration Centre Major Maintenance, and includes two components. The first is an upgrade of the Administration Centre's HVAC System, and the second is an upgrade of the Administration Centre's security camera system. The current HVAC system is comprised of three furnaces and associated air conditioning units for each. One of the furnaces, as well as all air conditioning units are original to the construction of the building. The current security camera system was installed in 2016, and therefore the technology is aging. It is proposed that the cost of these upgrades be split evenly between the Category 1 Operating Levy and reserves.

Education

Cassie Greidanus, Conservation Education Coordinator, presented the Conservation Education budget. Revenue for providing effective and meaningful outdoor education experiences comes from the municipal levy, program fees, donations, foundations, and fundraising. Staff promote environmental awareness through classroom programs, field trips, day camps, the water safety awareness program, community presentations and special events. In 2026, staff increased the number of weeks of nature day camp offered in the summer, due to increased appetite for this service in the community. She also noted that there have been good grant opportunities in 2026, and some of those grant dollars are lined up to aid the 2027 budget for conservation education programming.

Floodplain Management

Andrew Bicknell, Water and Planning Manager, presented the four main components of the floodplain management program, which are all Category 1 programs. They include the maintenance of 16 erosion control projects, 7 flood control projects, the flood forecasting and warning system and the Port Franks ice management project. Since 1996, these projects are eligible for a 50% grant from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR); however, for 2027 it is estimated that the MNR funding will only cover 14.7 – 17.2% of the actual program cost. In 2027, there are no new projects

proposed under these programs. However, the Port Franks Ice Management and Erosion Control ongoing projects are to continue. These projects include the annual channel configuration monitoring, which is eligible for a small grant from the MNR, as well as inspection and maintenance of the Armstrong West erosion control efforts. The remaining funds for these projects will come from the Category 1 Operating Levy, as well as the Special Benefitting levy.

Environmental Monitoring

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager, Andrew Bicknell, Aaron Clarke, GIS/IT Supervisor, and Tracey MacPherson, GIS/IT Coordinator, presented Environmental Monitoring and the Planning and Regulations program project factsheets and budgets. In some cases, funds are deferred to the following year to meet the funder's year end. Mari Veliz explained that some projects are fully funded through other partners, but that the project levy contribution often leverages other sources of funding, some substantial, to undertake environmental and monitoring projects. While more grants may become available as the year continues, they are not included in the Proposed Budget.

Some of the ongoing projects will continue in 2027, such as the CA Maps Project, Core Dataset Updates and Maintenance, Water Monitoring (including both provincial and local programs), Planning, Permitting and Regulations work, Drain Review and Fisheries, Low Water Response, Spills Response, Healthy Watersheds projects and Ausable Bayfield River Stewardship. The GIS and IT related projects support all staff in their daily work. Mari noted that there is an increase in Category 3 levy funding, as this is a Watershed Report Card year, which occurs every five years, and gives a snapshot of the overall base conditions of the watershed. Another new project includes updates to the Shoreline Management Plan through Photographic Monitoring Stations. Students from the University of Waterloo presented this program to the Board of Directors in June 2026, and staff believe that the installation of several of these stations will be helpful in monitoring the condition of the shoreline as it changes, and will be useful for climate change research.

Drinking Water Source Protection

Elizabeth Balfour, Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Program Supervisor presented the Drinking Water Source Protection budget. There are no levy dollars allocated to the Drinking Water Source Protection budget, as the Province funds ongoing mandatory implementation responsibilities for Source Protection Authorities. The implementation body for each source protection policy coordinates implementation costs. The current approved budget is in place until March 2027, at which time staff will submit another 3-year workplan and budget to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

By agreement, ABCA delivers Risk Management Services for eight municipalities. The current agreement expires at the end of 2026, but staff have liaised with municipal staff, and all eight municipalities have agreed to another three year service agreement (2027 – 2029)

Property Management & Recreation Services

Nathan Schoelier, noted that the Property Management and Recreation Services program is one of the longest standing programs of the ABCA. The primary goal of the program is to manage lands for conservation and to help mitigate the impacts of natural hazards. However, these lands are also valued by the community for various recreation opportunities. The ABCA owns 3720 hectares of land and includes management areas, conservation forests, agricultural land, as well as conservation areas (CAs). These lands contribute to the health of the watershed by promoting forest cover, surface and groundwater protection, flood control, aquatic species and wildlife habitat and community well-being. Revenue is generated from timber harvests, farmland rental and the Parkhill CA campground lease, as well as gate fees at Rock Glen Conservation Area, and hunting permit sales. This revenue offsets the cost of property taxes, insurance, risk management inspections and property maintenance.

In 2027, staff will be continuing with some ongoing projects, including invasive species management, as well as updating management plans for the conservation areas. New for 2027 are some major maintenance projects at some conservation areas. These include replacing the current the playground structure with “natural playground” structures at Clinton CA, creating an accessible trail loop at Parkhill CA in partnership with Friends of the North Middlesex Trails, and reconstructing a section of the stairs at Rock Glen CA.

Private Land Stewardship

Ian Jean, Stewardship and Forestry Specialist, reviewed the private land stewardship budget wherein staff provide one-on-one technical advice, site visits, and assistance with paperwork in connecting landowners with cost-share funding to maximize grants for their stewardship projects. ABCA staff aim to help complete at least 100 projects each year and typically do more. Expenses in the stewardship program are offset with tree sales, providing tree planting plans, phragmites management spraying and forest management plans for private landowners. Pending funding, some of the cost share programs that may support projects include Forests Canada, Lambton County Stewardship Program, Perth County Stewardship Program, the Habitat Stewardship Program and Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program.

Vehicles and Equipment

Nathan Schoelier presented the vehicle and equipment motor pool budget. There is no operating levy required for the vehicle and equipment budget as the revenue received when charging mileage and equipment rates to the users’ programs offsets expenses. At the September 18, 2025 Board of Directors meeting, a policy was passed that ties ABCA’s mileage rate to the Federal rate. In 2027, the Vehicles and Equipment Program budget accounts for the replacement of the 2016 Dodge Caravan in ABCA’s motor pool.

Operating Levy – Category 3

Nathan Schoelier presented the proposed operating levy for Category 3 projects for 2027 at \$197,557 as compared to \$168,057 in 2026. This includes ongoing, phased, and new projects proposed for 2026. The Operating Levy – Category 3 dollars will be leveraged with other sources of funding to undertake projects totaling \$1,487,015.

Operating Levy – Category 1

The Operating Levy for Category 1 programs proposed for 2027 total \$1,378,994 in comparison to \$1,347,884 in 2026.

Proposed 2027 Budget

Staff prepared the budget using a pay grid with an increase of 2.8% for cost of living, as per the principle laid out in the Pay Grid Adjustment Policy. Nathan Schoelier also presented the fee schedule. As part of the Conservation Authorities Act Update, there is a freeze on fees related to permitting and regulations, however, ABCA was able to implement a reasonable increase in February 2026 before the new fee freeze came into effect. The combined Operating Levies (Categories 1 and 3) and Capital Levy total \$1,636,696 (5.18 per cent increase) as compared to \$1,556,035 in 2026. Nathan reminded the directors that not every program area is sustained by levy dollars, and that levy dollars leverage further funding from other sources.

Nathan also presented the five-year forecast, noting that in the five-year forecast the initial budget for 2027 was an 11.91 per cent increase over 2026, but through staff discussion, the increase was decreased to 5.18 per cent.

As the July CPI was released following the budget preparation, the Board of Directors ask that staff adhere to the policy, and use the CPI rates from May, June and July to adjust the Pay Grid. This will bring the increase up to 3%. However, all Directors noted that they would be more comfortable with a budget increase in 2027 between 3 and 4 % over 2026, and asked staff to investigate some ways to bring the budget down, such as using more from reserves or interest earned on investments.

MOTION #BD 77/26**Moved by Jaden Hodgins****Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

“RESOLVED, THAT staff review the Proposed 2027 Budget and investigate options to bring the overall budget increase closer to 3%.

Carried.

Further direction and discussion will be held at the next Board meeting on September 17, 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Nathan Schoelier noted that at the end of July, the Province posted the proposed composition of Regional Conservation Authority Boards on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO). While the reasoning behind the proposed composition does include representation from every upper and single tier municipality, the numbers should be based on actual watershed population size rather than a percentage based on the area that falls within the watershed boundary. Staff have developed some comments and plan to send them to the Board as an email vote, as the ERO posting will close prior to the next Board of Directors meeting. Board members asked that staff copy local MPPs on our comments, once approved.
- 2) Chair Ray Chartrand reported that ABCA will be hosting the first official Transition Committee meeting for the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority. It is planned for September 3, 2026.
- 3) Jaden Hodgins asked if there was potential for Board members to acquire some ABCA branded clothing as a legacy to the organization, as the logo and name will eventually be changing.
- 4) Staff asked Board members for feedback from today's presentation. Some Board members asked to change the wording of "Deferred From/To Prior" year to "carried forward" or something similar, for clearer understanding.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Jaden Hodgins at 12:24 p.m.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Corporate Services Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS EMAIL VOTE

Friday August 21, 2026
Vote Via Email

ERO #026-0740 – AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE

On July 29, 2026, the Province of Ontario posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (#026-0740) – Consultation on Proposed Governance Regulations for Regional Conservation Authorities and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency. This notes the proposed composition of Regional Conservation Authorities Boards. While the reasoning behind the proposed composition does include representation from every upper and single tier municipality in the watershed, there is some concern over the methodology used to calculate population of each municipality within the watershed area.

The ERO posting closes on September 12, 2026. As the ABCA Board of Directors does not meet before the closing date, staff requested an email vote regarding their comment that was developed as a response. Staff recommend that the ABCA response be approved, and that staff be directed to submit the response to the ERO posting.

An email was sent to Directors on Friday, August 21, 2026, requesting that votes be received by the end of the day on August 28. All nine Directors provided votes affirming staff's recommendation.

MOTION #BD 78/26

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the draft submission to ERO posting 026-0740: Consultation on Proposed Governance Regulations for Regional Conservation Authorities and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, and

“FURTHER, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorize staff post the submission to the ERO prior to September 12, 2026.”

Carried by Consensus.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: September 17, 2026
From: Nathan Schoelier, Interim General Manager and Secretary - Treasurer
Subject: General Manager's Report
Report Type: INFORMATION REPORT

Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the General Manager's Report for information as presented.

Background:

The General Manager's report provides an overview of highlights from ABCA's ongoing work to deliver on its mandate, support its partners and contribute to the broader conservation authority network. The highlights reflect the scope and impact of ABCA's work and are not intended to provide an operational overview.

- To commemorate ABCA's 80th anniversary, we continue to present the Decades Award: 1970's – Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation; 1980's – local community service groups; 1990's – innovators in agriculture; 2000's – local trail groups.
- Brooklyn Rau worked with Festival Hydro, as well as the Municipalities of Bluewater and Huron East to launch the Tree Power program in their respective areas. ABCA also partners with Upper Thames River CA on Tree Power in the Municipality of Lucan-Biddulph.
- Stacey Palen coordinated the donation of two automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to Rock Glen Conservation Area from the Dave Mounsey Memorial Fund.
- Ontario Thinning Services completed forest management work in Parkhill Conservation Area. The management was completed under the guidance of ABCA's Registered Professional Forester, Ian Jean. The goal was to thin the planted conifer trees to allow more space for naturally regenerating species. Revenue realized from the timber harvest supports ABCA's conservation lands program.
- The Education Team hosted its inaugural 'Junior Leaders' camp, which hosted 6 youth, ages 13 to 17, who learned new skills and gained valuable workplace training. These skills were then put into action by the Junior Leaders, who collectively volunteered with ABCA for more than 600 hours throughout 7 seven weeks of Day Camp, hosting 140 youth, ages 5 to 12.
- Matt Pearson was reappointed as the Chair of Ausable Bayfield Maitland Drinking Water Source Protection Committee

- Mari Veliz and Michael Gibbs presented alongside Rick Kootstra, of the Huron Soil and Crop Improvement Association at the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association Summer Farm Day and Tour. Michael, Mari and Rick presented about innovative drainage techniques and solar-powered sub-irrigation at the Huronview Demonstration Farm.
- Angela Van Niekerk led a wetlands walk at the SpringRush Farm Conservation Easement Agreement (CEA) dedication ceremony. James Handyside and Janette Richards entered a CEA with Thames Talbot Land Trust (TTLT) to permanently protect the natural features of the property. ABCA staff have worked with James and Janette on stewardship projects over several decades. These projects, including wetland restoration, tree planting and erosion control helped to bring their vision to life. Congratulations to James, Janette and TTLT!
- Hope Brock worked with Huron Stewardship Council to host the 11th Annual Turtle Hatchling Release Event at Morrison Dam Conservation Area. Approximately 1000 people attended.
- Ben Riffin and Christie Brown led municipal drain assessments in the Ausable Bayfield and Maitland Valley watersheds, twenty-six drains were assessed. The data is used by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to guide municipal drain maintenance.
- Andrew Bicknell and Daniel King attended a working group meeting for Maitland Conservation's Southern Lake Huron Adaption Action Plan, working to build climate resilient coastal communities.
- Andrew Bicknell and Jaden Schoelier attended a regional engagement session at Upper Thames River CA, that was facilitated by Conservation Ontario. The session provided the opportunity for staff to provide input on two draft MNR documents, which informed CO's ERO #026-0239 submission.

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation

- Ben Harter completed his position as Junior Conservationist with the ABCA. Read about Ben's experience with ABCA: <https://www.abca.ca/post/?ID=1694> The position is funded by ABCF.
- A dedicated group of volunteers revitalized the South Huron Trail Run, in partnership with ABCF. Almost 80 runners made the best of a rainy day and completed the trail run.
- In partnership with the Huron Stewardship Council (HSC) and the ABCA, the Adopt-A-Turtle program has raised over \$6000 since May. The program saw a wide reach, receiving donations from Thunder Bay to Nova Scotia. Donor support was also strong, averaging more than \$100 per donation. These funds directly support turtle nest protection, egg incubation, hatching care and community outreach; with any remaining proceeds dedicated to wetland conservation. The program offers support certificates, educational items, monthly updates and behind-the-scenes tours.

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: September 17, 2026
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

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.

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 #2026-22-A *
NAME: George Sedra
ADDRESS: 33908 Sunnyridge Road
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)
PERMISSION TO: Construct shore protection
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 4, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 9, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 9
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

- (2) PERMIT #2026-22-B *
NAME: Moira Wills
ADDRESS: 41229 – 0329 Sunnyridge Road
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)
PERMISSION TO: Construct shore protection
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 4, 2026

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | July 9, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 16 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (3) | PERMIT #2026-22-C * | |
| | NAME: Bonnie Johnston | |
| | ADDRESS: 41229 – 0326 Sunnyridge Road | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Repair and reinforce shore protection | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | June 4, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | July 9, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 16 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (4) | PERMIT #2026-29 | |
| | NAME: Hayter's Turkey Farms Ltd. | |
| | ADDRESS: 37451 Dashwood Road, South Huron | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Install stormwater sewer, outfall structure, and conduct site grading | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | July 16, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | July 21, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 3 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (5) | PERMIT #2025-30-R * (Renewal) | |
| | NAME: Jean Ann Crawford-Smith | |
| | ADDRESS: 75569 Elliot Street, Bayfield | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Construct armourstone revetment feature | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | July 24, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | August 5, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 8 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (6) | PERMIT #2025-31-R * (Renewal) | |
| | NAME: Juliet Promnitz | |
| | ADDRESS: 75561 Elliot Street, Bayfield | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley) | |

PERMISSION TO: Construct armourestone revetment feature
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 24, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 5, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 8
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(7) PERMIT #2026-33
NAME: Shawn Gibson
ADDRESS: 34407 Saintsbury Line, Lucan
MUNICIPALITY: Lucan Biddulph (Biddulph)
PERMISSION TO: Construct new residence, accessory structures, and associated works
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 13, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 28, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 11
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(8) PERMIT #2003-25 Q
NAME: 552556 Ontario Ltd. (Sugarbush Campground)
ADDRESS: 33900 Sugarbush Road, Bayfield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)
PERMISSION TO: Blanket Permit for Campground
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 19, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 31, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 8
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(9) PERMIT #2026-28
NAME: Sandra Dunning
ADDRESS: 74871 Dr George Smith Ave, Bayfield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)
PERMISSION TO: Construct additions to the existing cottage
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 26, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 14, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 13
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

(10) PERMIT #2026-31
NAME: Todd White

ADDRESS: 71607 Old Cedar Bank Ln., Bluewater
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)
PERMISSION TO: Construct additions to the existing cottage
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 29, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 31, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

(11) PERMIT #2026-26
NAME: Jake & Christine Clegg
ADDRESS: 73051 Ducharme Beach Road
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)
PERMISSION TO: For the purposes of repairing a foundation
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 01, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 06, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 26
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

(12) PERMIT #2026-32
NAME: Barb & Mark Ducharme
ADDRESS: 72182 Blackbush Line, Dashwood
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Hay)
PERMISSION TO: Construct additions to the existing shed
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 31, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 11, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 7
STAFF NAME: Millie Ghorbankhani

Minor Permits

- (1) PERMIT #MW2026-45
NAME: Municipality of South Huron c/o Don Giberson
ADDRESS: 31 Snider Crescent, Exeter
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen)
PERMISSION TO: Upgrade sanitary trunk sewer
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: June 18, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 7, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 7
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (2) PERMIT #MW2026-47
NAME: Avon Maitland District School Board
ADDRESS: 39978 Centennial Road, Brucefield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)
PERMISSION TO: Construct portable classroom
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 20, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 20, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 1
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (3) PERMIT #MW2026-49
NAME: Laura Connolly
ADDRESS: 373 Marlborough Street, Exeter
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen)
PERMISSION TO: Replace deck and add roof structure
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 20, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: July 20, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 1
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (4) PERMIT #MW2026-48
NAME: Tom Keough
ADDRESS: 101 George Street, Ailsa Craig
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (East Williams)
PERMISSION TO: Replace deck structure
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 13, 2026

PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:	July 21, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:	6
STAFF NAME:	Jaden Schoelier

(5) PERMIT #MW2026-51
NAME: Paul Bunyan Lakefront Resort c/o Jaclyn Vandebussche
ADDRESS: Lot #108 – Paul Bunyan Lakefront Resort – 75559 Lidderdale Street, Bayfield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)
PERMISSION TO: Construct sunroom addition
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 9, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 4, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 18
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(6) PERMIT #MW2026-52
NAME: Paul Bunyan Lakefront Resort c/o Jaclyn Vandebussche
ADDRESS: Lot 83 – Paul Bunyan Lakefront Resort – 75559 Lidderdale Street, Bayfield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)
PERMISSION TO: Construct awning feature
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: July 9, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 4, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 18
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(7) PERMIT #MW2026-53
NAME: Hydro One Networks Inc.
ADDRESS: 125 Market Street, Lucan
MUNICIPALITY: Lucan Biddulph (Biddulph)
PERMISSION TO: Upgrade electrical infrastructure in a regulated area
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: August 4, 2026
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: August 10, 2026
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 4
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(8) PERMIT #MW2026-57
NAME: Randy Sackfield
ADDRESS: Lot #17 – Wildwood by the River – 76735 Wildwood Line, Bayfield
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)

- | | | |
|------|---|---------------------|
| | PERMISSION TO: Construct deck | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | August 7, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | August 18, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 7 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (9) | PERMIT #MW2026-59 | |
| | NAME: Don Boersma | |
| | ADDRESS: 71560 London Road, Exeter | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Usborne) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Construct access lane | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | August 13, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | August 18, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 3 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Jaden Schoelier |
| | | |
| (10) | PERMIT #MW2026-50 | |
| | NAME: Jeremy & Tessa Hiltz | |
| | ADDRESS: 193 Queen St, Ailsa Craig | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (East Williams) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Construct an In-ground Pool | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | July 03, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | July 14, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 7 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Millie Ghorbankhani |
| | | |
| (11) | PERMIT #MW2026-55 | |
| | NAME: Laurie Engel | |
| | ADDRESS: 11293 Argyle St, Ailsa Craig | |
| | MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (East Williams) | |
| | PERMISSION TO: Construct a pool house | |
| | COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: | August 06, 2026 |
| | PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: | August 10, 2026 |
| | NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: | 3 |
| | STAFF NAME: | Millie Ghorbankhani |
| | | |
| (12) | PERMIT #MW2026-54 | |
| | NAME: Judith McLeod | |

ADDRESS: 9955 Prince Philip St, Thedford

MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Bosanquet)

PERMISSION TO: Construct a roof over the existing porch

COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE:

July 31, 2026

PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE:

August 11, 2026

NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW:

7

STAFF NAME:

Millie Ghorbankhani

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: September 17, 2026
From: Nathan Schoelier, General Manager and Secretary – Treasurer (Acting)
Subject: South Huron Trail Memorandum of Understanding
Report Type: ACTION REQUIRED

Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorize staff to enter the Memorandum of Understanding with the Municipality of South Huron for the South Huron Trail.

Background:

The South Huron Trail (SHT) was created in 2004 through a strong partnership that continues today. The SHT crosses privately-owned lands, municipally owned lands, and lands owned by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) to connect the Town of Exeter to the Morrison Dam Conservation Area. The ABCA is responsible for maintaining the trail, and holds agreements with the private landowners, that permit the trail. The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation (ABCF) fundraises to support trail management and enhancement.

A formal agreement with the Municipality of South Huron was not formed when the agreements with private landowners were completed. The attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is intended to document the specific, and joint roles and responsibilities of the Municipality of South Huron, and ABCA. The MOU also includes the expansion of ABCF's Morrison Dam Commemorative Woods, which is managed by ABCA.

The agreement has been reviewed by ABCA's, and the Municipality of South Huron's insurers. The MOU was approved by Municipality of South Huron Council.

This agreement is subject to approval by the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) in accordance with Minister's direction regarding temporary restrictions, issued to conservation authorities on May 1, 2026.

Memorandum of Understanding
-Between-
“The Municipality”
And
The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority
“ABCA”

Preamble

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) is an independent, corporate body established in 1946, under the Conservation Authorities Act in Ontario. The ABCA’s mission is to protect, improve, conserve, and restore the watershed in partnership with the community.

The South Huron Trail (SHT) is an excellent community-based asset, that provides a place for outdoor recreation, and community connection. The trail is approximately eight kilometres, connecting the MacNaughton Park, and Town of Exeter, to the Morrison Dam Conservation Area (MDCA).

The MacNaughton – Morrison Trail (MMT) is a critical link of the SHT, spanning from MacNaughton Park in Exeter, to the MDCA on Morrison Line. The Municipality owns the following properties that support the SHT:

Assessment Roll Number	Property Description
40 10 080 026 01001 0000	Plan 376 Part Lots 1018, 1019 & 1020 (MacNaughton Park)
40 10 080 026 00900 0000	Plan 376 Part Lots 1018, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1090
40 10 080 011 02420 0000	Plan 625 Block 52
40 10 010 002 04400 0000	Concession 2 Part Lot 20

The Municipality and ABCA worked closely with the community to establish the MMT section of the SHT in 2004 and have worked together since to maintain this community asset.

Purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will assist ABCA to formalize a working relationship with the Municipality of South Huron and assist in their mission and management of the SHT for the South Huron community and beyond.

Terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Municipality of South Huron and ABCA agree to the following responsibilities:

The Municipality of South Huron will:

1. Maintain areas of the aforementioned properties when the required maintenance does not directly impact the SHT. This includes, but is not limited to work where the municipal properties abut privately owned properties;
2. Be responsible for maintaining the lands, including the trail and its related infrastructure, on the lands known as MacNaughton Park;
3. Provide enforcement by Provincial Offences Officers, trained and appointed to enforce applicable laws, and by-laws of the municipality for the area known as MacNaughton Park;
4. Maintain appropriate liability insurance for the lands, including the trail and its related infrastructure, on the lands known as MacNaughton Park;
5. Reserve the right to review and approve all proposals for further development of the aforementioned properties.

The ABCA will:

1. Maintain areas of the aforementioned properties, excluding MacNaughton Park, that have an impact on the SHT. Maintaining the lands shall include the SHT, and its related infrastructure.
2. Maintain appropriate liability insurance for the SHT and its related infrastructure, excluding the area known as MacNaughton Park;
3. Provide enforcement by Provincial Offences Officers, trained and appointed to enforce Trespass to Property Act (TPA) and Conservation Authorities Act for the area known as SHT;
4. Complete risk management inspections in accordance with ABCA's Risk Management Inspection Policy (2017);
5. Where ABCA deems necessary, provide limited grass maintenance in the areas along the walking path. All other areas will be left in a naturalized state;
6. Propose any further developments to the aforementioned properties to the Municipality.

Mutual Responsibilities:

1. Both parties agree that the priorities outlined above are the scope and purpose of the MOU;
2. Both parties agree to maintain insurance coverage for the term of this MOU in accordance with the following:

- a. Maintain Commercial General Liability insurance with minimum limits of CAD \$5 million per occurrence and aggregate, including coverage for bodily injury, property damage, non-owned automobile and contractual liability
 - b. Maintain Automobile Liability Insurance with minimum limits of CAD \$2 million per occurrence for vehicles used in operations
 - c. Maintain insurance for sudden and accidental spills with minimum limits of CAD \$1 million per occurrence. Sudden and accidental spills must be reported within 120 hours of occurrence
 - d. Name the other party as Additional Insured on relevant policies with primary and non-contributory coverage
 - e. Ensure any contractors of the party carry appropriate insurance and name both parties as Additional Insured, where applicable
 - f. Provide the other party with Certificates of Insurance and endorsements prior to commencement and upon renewal
 - g. Provide the other party with prompt notice, up to a maximum of 30 days, of any claims made applicable to the scope and purpose of the MOU;
3. In the event that this MOU terminates, both parties agree to maintain insurance coverage in accordance with the aforementioned requirements for a period of 30 days beyond the termination of the MOU;
4. To provide and pay for Workers Compensation as governed by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, for its respective employees;
5. Both parties agree to collaborate on funding opportunities that maintain and enhance the South Huron Trail;
6. Both parties agree to work collaboratively; and
7. Both parties agree to meet annually to review the partnership and report as appropriate to the Municipality of South Huron and ABCA.

Term and Termination

This Memorandum is in full force and effect until superseded or cancelled by either party.

Any changes to the Memorandum must be mutually agreed upon in writing by both parties.

Either party may terminate this MOU. The terminating party shall provide ninety (90) days written notice to the other party to terminate this MOU.

Ray Chartrand, Chair

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

Nathan Schoelier, Interim General Manager and Secretary – Treasurer

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

George Finch, Mayor

Municipality of South Huron

Alex Wolfe, Clerk

Municipality of South Huron

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: September 17, 2026
From: Nathan Schoelier
Subject: Morrison Dam Conservation Area Master Plan (2026 – 2036)
Report Type: ACTION REQUIRED

Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the Morrison Dam Conservation Area Master Plan (2026 – 2036).

Background:

Appended to this report is the final draft of the *Morrison Dam Conservation Area Master Plan (2026 – 2036)*.

Staff utilized past master plans, institutional knowledge, and public feedback; guided by the Conservation Lands Strategy (2024) to prepare a Master Plan that guides the management of Morrison Dam Conservation Area (MDCA).

Upon Board of Directors approval, the Master Plan will be made available on Ausable Bayfield Conservation's website, on the *Conservation Lands Strategies and Plans* page (www.abca.ca/recreation/land-strategies/).

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2026
From: Tracey McPherson, GIS/IT Coordinator and Rosalind Chang, Healthy Watersheds Coordinator.
Subject: Geospatial Data Capture Proposal for the Ausable River Estuary 2D Flood Modelling
Report Type: ACTION REQUIRED

Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors accepts the proposal from Northway/Photomap/Remote Sensing Ltd. (Northway) for all deliverables outlined in the table, in the amount of \$38,455 plus HST.

Background:

Project Summary

The *Community Protection and Enhancement of the Ausable River Estuary and Wetland* project is funded through the *Canada Water Agency* (CWA), with \$793,126 in funding over four years, and is being delivered by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority in partnership with GEI Consultants.

The multi-year project is focused on improving the resilience of the Ausable River estuary and coastal wetlands through restoration planning and natural channel design, while supporting community engagement. The project includes hydraulic modelling, field investigations, engineering and restoration design, and development of implementation plans to improve channel function, wetland health, and long-term climate resilience.

The geospatial data collected this fall will provide a seamless digital terrain model (DTM) and digital surface model (DSM) required to create a 2-dimensional (2D) hydraulic model for wetland restoration planning.

This data also supports the ABCA Category 1 Port Franks Ice Management and Erosion Control Project (4401 and 4403). The deliverables from Northway also include a high-quality three-dimensional (3 D) digital baseline channel configuration for the annual monitoring of the channel, and inspections of the Armstrong West Erosion Control Structures (Benway weirs).

Tender Process and Bids

Given the highly specialized nature of the work, staff conducted an invitational request for proposals rather than a public tender. The combination of specialized equipment, field expertise, data processing capabilities, and experience working in river and coastal environments is available from a limited number of firms.

Three qualified firms with demonstrated experience in similar river and coastal survey projects were invited to submit proposals. Two proposals were received, from Northway/Photomap/Remote Sensing Ltd. (Northway) and J.D. Barnes.

Deliverables	Northway	JD Barnes
Lidar deliverables include: 3 D point clouds, ortho imagery *, and digital terrain model (DTM)	\$13,950	\$11,832 *May be provided
Main and side channel bathymetry with DTM generated. *	\$32,385	\$ 13, 991 *Separate CAD files with profiles for the channel
All deliverables above plus: Lidar and bathymetry DTMs “merged” together into a seamless DTM ready for modelling. Digital surface model (DSM) with topographic features extracted such as buildings and roads for 2 D flood model.	\$38,455	Not quoted. Additional ABCA staff time needed to acquire all permits before the project can begin, and staff or contractor time to produce “model ready” DTM and features.

All funding for this project is provided by the Canada Water Agency.

Evaluation

While J.D. Barnes submitted lower pricing for the individual quoted survey components, its proposal did not include production of a fully integrated, model-ready digital terrain model. Additional ABCA staff time or external consulting services would be required to obtain necessary permits, integrate the datasets, and prepare the final model ready deliverable.

Northway is a fully qualified and licensed contractor who has worked with the ABCA in the past to deliver aerial photos for monitoring of the channel configuration. Their proposal includes all required deliverables as an integrated package, providing a seamless digital terrain model suitable for immediate use by GEI for hydraulic modelling. The proposal also provides value beyond the CWA-funded project by supporting ABCA’s mandatory Category 1 responsibilities associated with flood and erosion management in Port Franks.

ABCA Program Report

To: Board of Directors
Date: September 17, 2026
From: Nathan Schoelier, Interim General Manager and Secretary - Treasurer
Subject: Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council
Report Type: ACTION REQUIRED

Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves Nathan Schoelier, Interim General Manager and Secretary – Treasurer as second alternate voting representative to Conservation Ontario Council.

Background:

The Administration Regulations for the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) define ABCA's Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council. The regulations state that:

The Authority may appoint up to three Representatives to Conservation Ontario Council ("Council") in accordance with 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 – 1st Alternate, General Manager/ Secretary Treasurer – 2nd Alternate.

Recent staffing changes at ABCA require the representatives to be updated.