



## NVCA June 2022 Board Meeting Highlights

**Next Meeting: August 26, 2022, held at the John Hix Administration Centre**

*For the full meeting agenda including documents and reports, visit [NVCA's website](#).*

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### Presentation on Forestry

Rick Grillmayer, NVCA's Manager, Forestry gave a presentation on the 2022 Spring tree plant.

This year is NVCA's 58th consecutive tree planting season, where 115,000 trees were planted on 23 properties in eight municipalities in the Nottawasaga Watershed.

Over 5,000 trees were sold at NVCA's 2022 Arbour Day Tree Sale – an annual event held for people who only require a small number of trees.

NVCA works with a number of partners including Forests Ontario, Simcoe County, Town of New Tecumseth and others to ensure cost effectiveness for all program participants.

### Benefits of Forests

- Moderate the effects of drought and flooding
- Reduce soil erosion
- Provide habitat for wildlife
- Important economic resource

### Presentation on Grassland Restoration

Shannon Stephens, NVCA's Healthy Waters Program Coordinator gave a presentation on native grassland projects in the Nottawasaga Watershed.

In Southern Ontario, native grasslands once covered more than 400,000 hectares of land. Today, over 97% have been lost in Ontario. This puts species that depend on them, such as the Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, at risk.

NVCA started native grassland restoration projects five years ago and currently have 16 projects on the go. In the Spring of 2022, 54

hectares of land was seeded, representing a 75% increase in grasslands that is restored in the watershed.

All projects see sizeable landowner contributions, which are matched with dollars from Forests Ontario, World Wildlife fund and EcoAction. Bird and soil carbon monitoring data helps determine carbon offsetting contributions.

### Benefits of grasslands

- Important habitat for pollinators and species at risk like the bobolink and eastern meadowlark
- Native grasses are very drought resistant and can be good feed for livestock, especially during years with low water
- Native grasses have roots that can extend 2-4 metres into the ground, it can help loosen up compact soil and allow flood waters to better infiltrate into the ground
- Help store carbon and can contribute to reducing the effects of climate change

### Presentation on Spring Volunteer Tree Planting events

Sarah Campbell, NVCA's Aquatic Biologist gave a presentation on the 2022 Spring community tree planting events.

For the last 20 years, NVCA's Community Tree Planting Program has supplemented NVCA's Professional Forestry Program.

By building future forests with local volunteers, communities learn and experience the value of local environment restoration.

NVCA staff deliver presentations on site to ideally develop long term appreciation for the importance of trees and tree planting.

This Spring, NVCA hosted 19 community tree planting events with over 8,000 trees planted by 500 volunteers. Volunteers included students, community members, local politicians and service clubs.

NVCA staff are able to leverage municipal levy and other funding to obtain a minimum of four times the amount of funding for these projects.

Projects are made possible through partnerships with community partners, municipalities, corporations, landowners, residents, volunteers.

## Hybrid Model for Future Board Meetings

Virtual meetings have shown an increase in effectiveness and efficiency for Board meetings. However, in person meetings can be either more effective or easier to communicate on some occasions.

Starting in August 2022, NVCA's board meetings will be held in a hybrid model format, using the following schedule:

- January – In-Person
- February – Virtual
- March – Virtual
- April – In-Person
- May – Virtual
- June – Virtual
- July – No Meetings currently held in July unless at the Call of the Chair
- August – In-Person
- September – In-Person
- October – Virtual
- November – Virtual
- December – In-Person

This schedule would not prevent the Chair from calling a meeting in-person versus virtual should it be required, or vice versa.

NVCA will continue to save on mileage paid to Board members in the amount of approximately \$10,000 per year.

## Appointment of New Provincial Offences Officer

Tyler Mulhall, NVCA Regulations Technician, has been appointed as an officer for NVCA and is designated as a Provincial Offences Officer.

Mr. Mulhall fulfilled the criteria established by the Ministry, which included training under the *Provincial Offences Act*.

## Grant for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

NVCA has received \$80,000 that will cover 100% of the costs to install electric vehicle (EV) chargers at the Tiffin Conservation Area.

Members of the public will have access to a EV charger located in the trailhead parking lot for a fee.

Chargers will also be placed in the shop compound for staff and fleet vehicles.

The installation of EV chargers is one of the many steps that NVCA is taking to address climate change at a local, watershed level.

This initiative also supports the Government of Canada's mandated target that 20% of light-duty car and passenger truck sales must be electric by 2026, and 100% emission free by 2035.

## July 1st Quarterly Transition Report for Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks

Under the revised *Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act)*, NVCA and municipalities must work together to advance Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

In support of this process, NVCA strives to communicate all progress and information to the NVCA Board of Directors, municipal partners and relevant stakeholders by:

- Meeting with municipal partners to continue development and execution of MOUs based on municipal preferences and needs
- Working with municipalities, where required, to address any potential procurement policy approvals or required by-law amendments to support updated MOUs and SLAs
- Continue working with neighbouring conservation authorities to coordinate MOU development
- Updating existing MOUs, and finalize new MOUs and SLAs, as appropriate

- Exploring costs of operations and fees charges as they relate to the *CA Act* changes.

Consensus amongst municipal CAOs is that several appear to be waiting until the municipal election is completed and new Councils are installed before beginning more fulsome conversations and negotiations of MOUs and SLAs.

### **Permits Approvals under the CA Act**

NVCA's permit application service timelines are governed by the Conservation Authority Liaison Committee (CALC), which requires NVCA to complete a policy review within 21 days, and complete a technical review within 30 days for minor applications and 90 days for major applications.

NVCA Regulations staff provided a summary of the permits issued during the period November 23, 2021 to June 13, 2022. A total of 333 permits and clearances were approved by staff for this time period, with 96.4% of the permits were processed within the provincial timelines.

### **Pretty River Dike Maintenance**

NVCA's Board of Directors approved staff to withdraw up to \$40,000 for the maintenance of the Pretty River Dike.

The Pretty River Dike is a flood conveyance structure through the Town of Collingwood, approximately 2.1 kilometres in length. It was built in the 1970's in response to historic flooding that occurred in the surrounding urban areas.

The floodway provides flood risk reduction to surrounding areas and is primarily owned by NVCA. It is currently generally in good visual condition but is lined with dense shrubs and trees which may cause potential spills on the floodway during a regulatory storm event.

NVCA has been granted \$230,000 from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry's Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) program to remove vegetation on the dike.

The WECI program requires that local communities contribute 50% towards the grant.

In the case of the Pretty River Dike, the Town of Collingwood will contribute \$100,000, while NVCA will contribute \$15,000 from its Capital Asset Management Program.

Additional funds are also requested in the maximum amount of \$58,302.50 in order to take full advantage of the available WECI funding.

The Town of Collingwood is considering the request for additional funds towards this project. NVCA may be drawing \$38,302.50 from its reserves to contribute to this additional funding request.