



St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Meeting Highlights – June 26, 2025

Below is a list of highlights from the SCRCA board meeting held in June. For details, please refer to the entire meeting package which can be found at www.scrca.on.ca/about-us/board-meeting-packages.

2025 Compensation Review Update: In 2024, the Board of Directors directed staff to conduct a joint salary review with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) to minimize the financial impact on budget. In April 2025, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) and the LTVCA issued a joint Request for Proposals to retain a qualified consultant to provide a job evaluation system and a competitive salary grid in compliance with pay equity legislation. Eight proposals were received and after review by both the SCRCA and LTVCA, Pesce and Associates was awarded the contract. A final report outlining the results of the salary review is expected to be presented to the Executive Committee in July 2025.

McKeough Dam Asset Management Plan: At the December 2024 meeting, the Board of Directors approved an asset management plan for all SCRCA assets. Through this plan, discussions were initiated between the SCRCA and the Regional Municipality of Chatham-Kent on the feasibility of developing a reserve funding model that will ensure there is dedicated capital reserve for any repairs or replacement required for the McKeough Dam. The municipality will begin to apportion costs for the McKeough Dam beginning in 2026 and will continue to contribute to the fund over the next 50 years.

York1 Waste Disposal Site Project – Environmental Registry of Ontario: As part of Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act*, 2025, the Province of Ontario removed the requirement for the proposed York1 Waste Disposal Site to undertake a comprehensive environmental assessment. Comments regarding the then proposed legislation were open from April 17, 2025, to May 17, 2025. The SCRCA submitted comments related to concerns around the site's potential impacts on local drinking water sources and impacts of a flooding event on the property.

A.W. Campbell Conservation Area Master Plan: As part of the objectives outlined in the 2024 Conservation Areas Strategy and as identified in the strategic goals listed in the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, staff have completed a draft Master Plan for the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area. The goal of the plan is to create an updated vision and a clear set of objectives that will inform decision-making related to the management of this Conservation Area. The Board of Directors approved the draft plan and directed staff to proceed with stakeholder and public consultation.

Watershed Conditions: Despite precipitation trends being above or near normal over the last 3-, 6-, and 12-months, the current flood threat in the St. Clair Region is low owing to low water levels on the surrounding Great Lakes and over 70 cm of freeboard recorded on the Sydenham River at Wallaceburg. At the time of this report, water levels

on the Great Lakes are down from the same time last year, with a general trend of being near or below the long-term average.

Planning and Regulations Activity: Between March 1st and May 31st, 2025, staff issued 68 permits and responded to 178 inquiries under O. Reg 41/24 – Prohibited Activities, Exemptions, and Permits. Planning activity between March 1st and May 31st, 2025, included the review and comment on 83 municipal plan input and review files, 4 environmental assessments, and 14 legal inquiries.

2025 Tomorrow's Greener Schools Today – Lambton: The SCRCA and Lambton Public Health were excited to partner on the Tomorrow's Greener Schools Today – Lambton program this spring, which sees Authority and Health Unit staff and students from County elementary schools, plant trees to increase greenspace and shade in their schoolyards. Through funding provided by Lambton Public Health, 41 trees were planted at five schools located in Petrolia, Watford, and Sarnia throughout the month of May. Close to 200 students participated in the 2025 initiative which includes an educational component that introduces students to the benefits of trees from both a health (e.g., sun protection) and environmental (e.g., wildlife habitat) perspective.

2025 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Student Conference: Funded through the Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative (GLFEI), the 2025 SHSM Student Conference was held at the Greenwood Recreation Centre in Petrolia on May 28th, 2025. Seventy-four Grade 11 and 12 Specialist High Skills Major students (focusing on agriculture and the environment), and University of Guelph agricultural students attended the one-day event. Students had the opportunity to participate in four engaging sessions covering topics such as agricultural technology, water monitoring and testing, land stewardship, and nutrient management. The nine available sessions offered were led by local farmers, equipment dealers, lab technicians, and representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Agribusiness and St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. The overall focus of the conference was to educate students on the challenges of phosphorus run-off and how agriculture can play a role in addressing this critical issue.

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