



## St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Meeting Highlights – December 9, 2021

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

**SCRCA Transition Plan in Accordance with Changes to the Conservation Authorities Act under Bill 229:** As part of new regulations prescribed under the provincial changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2020, the Board of Directors approved the SCRCA transition plan that provides a timeline and work plan by which the SCRCA will meet its legislative requirements. Of particular importance is the categorization of mandatory and non-mandatory programs and services and the development of Memorandums of Understandings with member municipalities for non-mandatory services. The transition plan covers the time period between July 2022 and January 1, 2024, and is the first deliverable required by the MECP as part of these legislative changes. The plan can be accessed on the SCRCA website.

**Watershed Conditions:** Current flood potential in the St. Clair Region watershed is moderate owing to above-normal precipitation amounts in September and October that saturated soils, limiting their ability to quickly absorb precipitation inputs. Compared to November 2020, lake levels have dropped by 37 cm, 13 cm, and 5 cm, for Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, and Lake Erie, respectively. All continue to be above their averages but below their record monthly means for November recorded in 1986. Lakes are expected to continue their annual drop but remain above average water levels.

**Shoreline Projects:** The SCRCA continues to work with contractors and local municipalities to complete shoreline protection projects along the Lake Huron and St. Clair River shorelines.

- **Old Lakeshore Road near Penhuron Drive** – Three tenders were submitted for shoreline works on Old Lakeshore Road near Penhuron Drive. The contract was awarded to Van Bree Drainage and Bulldozing with construction expected to begin in January 2022.
- **Port Lambton Park** – Design work is complete, and the permit process is ongoing. The SCRCA is currently accepting tenders for the construction phase of this project which are due on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 2:00 pm. Construction is expected to begin in early 2022.
- **Groyne Only Project** – Permit applications have been submitted for two groynes that will be installed west of Penhuron Drive and east of Kenwick Street in Brights Grove in 2022.

**St. Clair River Area of Concern Program:** The SCRCA was awarded the Environment and Climate Change Canada contract to “Coordinate Data Compilation, Report Writing, and Engagement for Fish Consumption and Habitat Beneficial Use Impairments”, a requirement needed for the advancement of the St. Clair River Area of Concern Remedial Action Plan. The initial contract period will run until March 31, 2023, with an optional extension until March 31, 2024.

**St. Clair River Contaminated Sediment Engineering and Design Project:** In August 2021, Parson’s Inc. submitted the draft design plan for management of the three remaining areas of contaminated sediment in the St. Clair River to the project Oversight Committee consisting of the SCRCA, Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks, and Dow Canada. The plan is expected to be final and approved by the Oversight Committee by the end of December 2021, following discussions with appropriate agencies and experts on the proposed water quality monitoring plan and sampling during the implementation phase of the project, and compliance with the *Species at Risk Act* and *Endangered Species Act*, among others.

**2022 Budget:** The 2022 Authority budget was approved at \$9,596,597. The General Levy (matching and non-matching) of \$1,378,513 accounts for approximately 14% of the total budget. The remainder of the funds come from fundraising, government grants and self-generated funds such as camping fees, and fees for services (e.g., tree planting, permits, natural heritage planning, education programs, etc.).

**Highland Glen:** The Highland Glen Conservation Area is a 10.5 hectare (26 acre) property located on the Lake Huron shoreline. The property is primarily wooded land but contains an access roadway, parking lot, pavilion, and boat ramp with seawall and groyne protection. In 2020, the boat ramp was closed due to safety concerns and a consultant (AECOM) was hired to assess local damage and provide recommendations on repair options and associated costs. The consultants report provided a number of short and long-term options with preliminary cost estimates for each. The SCRCA Board of Directors formed a Highland Glen Boat Ramp Committee that met in November. The SCRCA approved the committee’s recommendation to change the designation of the Highland Glen Conservation Area from a regional to a local/rural Conservation Area in 2022 and begin discussions with the Town of Plympton-Wyoming regarding the transfer of ownership to the municipality.

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