



# Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Thursday, April 6, 2023

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# Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held in person for Board of Directors members and designated, limited staff only.

The public may view the meeting live on HCA's You Tube Channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>

1. **Call to Order** – Santina Moccio
2. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Delegations**
  - 4.1. Patrice Valeriano, Dundas Resident Access to Waterfalls
5. **Section 28 Hearing**
  - 5.1. 46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton  
Permit Application No. SC/F,C,A/23/06 Page 1
6. **Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence**
  - 6.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Page 31
  - 6.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – March 2, 2023 Page 35
  - 6.3. Approved December 15, 2022 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only Page 45
  - 6.4. Letter from Minister of Natural Resources & Forestry to City of Hamilton Mayor Andrea Horwath re. exception to Conservation Authorities Act requirement for 70% elected official appointments to HCA Board of Directors, dated March 9, 2023 Page 49
  - 6.5. Five emails regarding federal government recourse for wetland protection, received between March 9 and March 20, 2023 Page 51

6.6. City of Hamilton Notice of Motion re. Reconsideration of Ministry's Decision respecting HCA Board of Directors composition, Council Meeting date March 29, 2023 Page 57

**7. Foundation Briefing** Foundation Chair – Jennifer Stebbing

**8. Member Briefing**

8.1. HCA 2022 Annual Report – Lisa Burnside Page 59

8.2. Watershed Report Card – Scott Peck Page 79

**9. Business Arising from the Minutes**

9.1. HCA Quarterly Report #4 to MNRF – Lisa Burnside Page 89

**10. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board**

10.1. Budget & Administration Committee – March 16, 2023 (Recommendations) – Santina Moccio

10.1.1. BA 2303 Casual Staff Eligibility for “other holidays” Page 95

**11. Other Staff Reports/Memorandums**

Reports to be approved

11.1. Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Endorsement – Lisa Burnside Page 99

11.2. Water Quality Program Funding – Scott Peck Page 101

Memorandums to be received

11.3. Watershed Conditions Report – Jonathan Bastien Page 105

11.4. Conservation Areas Experiences – Gord Costie Page 113

**12. New Business**

**13. In-Camera Items**

**14. Next Meeting – Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

**15. Adjournment**

# Hearing Report

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Director, Watershed Management Services

**PREPARED BY:** Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Elizabeth Reimer, Conservation Planner, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

**DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Hearing under Section 28(12) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for an Application by Rashmi Gowda for Development in a Regulated Area of Lake Ontario at 46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton (Stoney Creek) – Permit Application No. SC/F,C,A/23/06

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT HCA staff recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the Board of Directors refuse the application made by Rashmi Gowda for development of two dwellings in a regulated area of Lake Ontario at 46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton (Stoney Creek), as the development does not conform to the requirements of the Hamilton Conservation Authority's *Planning & Regulation Policies and Guidelines (October, 2011)* as they relate to the implementation of *Ontario Regulation 161/06 (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses)* made under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990*.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Site Description**

The property at 46 Seabreeze Crescent is a 0.15 ha (0.37 ac) property located on the north side of Seabreeze Crescent adjacent to the Lake Ontario shoreline (Attachment A). The lot is more or less rectangular, ±46 m deep, and ±32 m wide. The lot contains an existing split-level residential dwelling, approximately 170 m<sup>2</sup> (1800 sq ft), including a single car attached garage.

The property is regulated pursuant to to *Ontario Regulation 161/06 (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses)* made under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990* due to the proximity of Lake Ontario and its associated flooding and erosion hazards.

### **The Proposal**

The subject application proposes to demolish the existing dwelling, and to construct a new shore wall and two separate dwellings on the lot (See Site Plan in Attachment D).

### **Application Review to Date**

HCA staff participated in a virtual meeting with the applicant and Pat Prodanovic of True Consulting on April 8, 2022. At the meeting, HCA staff provided information on the regulations and policies guiding property development adjacent to the flood and erosion hazards associated with Lake Ontario.

In August, 2022, HCA staff reviewed a coastal report prepared by Pat Prodanovic at TRUE Consulting geotechnical study prepared by Terraprobe, Inc., and topographic survey prepared by MMP Land Surveyors for a proposed shore wall revetment on the property at 46 Seabreeze Crescent. Based on technical review by HCA staff, some comments were provided, including a request that the applicant provide additional clarification on a number of technical issues, namely providing justification for a single row of shore wall toe stones, clarification on the slope stability setback, including erosion protection, construction access and stockpiling locations on the plans, and including an elevated groundwater condition in the geotechnical report.

On November 29, 2022, a coastal assessment report prepared by Dillon Consulting for the property at 46 Seabreeze Crescent was submitted to HCA in support of the proposed construction of two dwellings on the subject property. On December 12, 2022, staff advised that the proposed development was within the shoreline hazard, and as such the application would not be supported by HCA policy. The applicant requested to have the proposal reviewed at a Hearing in front of the HCA Board of Directors, and accordingly submitted a completed permit application form and a revised site plan on January 31, 2023.

HCA staff provided information to the applicant that the permit application submission for the proposed addition was deemed complete but could not be supported by staff

given the proposal did not conform to policy. In accordance with *Conservation Authority Act Hearing Guidelines* (MNR October 2005, Amended 2021) and the *Hamilton Region Conservation Authority Administrative By-law* (HCA, Amended January 5, 2023), HCA provided the Notice of Hearing to the applicant, as well as a copy of this Hearing Report, which outlines HCA staff's analysis of the application and reasons for recommending refusal, on March 9, 2023.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

### **Applicable Policy**

HCA has a mandate to ensure that people and property are protected from impacts associated with natural hazards. The Province has delegated the authority for representing and implementing the provincial interest in natural hazards to Conservation Authorities. In evaluating the subject application, HCA staff must ensure that Provincial and HCA policies regarding development and hazardous lands are considered and met. The following outlines the key provincial and HCA hazard policies relevant to the subject application.

### ***Provincial Policy***

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS provides a policy framework for allowing appropriate development, while protecting resources of provincial interest, conserving the natural and built environment, and ensuring public health and safety.

With respect to hazards, the PPS states that development shall generally be directed to areas outside of hazardous lands, including hazardous lands adjacent to the shorelines of the Great Lakes, which are impacted by flooding and erosion hazards (PPS 3.1.1). Notwithstanding these restrictions, development may be permitted in those portions of hazardous lands where the effects and risks to public safety are minor and can be mitigated in accordance with provincial standards, and new hazards are not created or existing hazards aggravated (PPS 3.1.7).

### ***HCA Policy***

In accordance with *Ontario Regulation 161/06 (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses)* made under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990*, no person shall undertake development in a regulated area without permission from the HCA. HCA may grant permission (issue a permit) for development in a regulated area if, in its opinion, the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, pollution or the conservation of land will not be affected by the development.

HCA's *Planning & Regulation Policies and Guidelines*, as approved by the HCA Board of Directors in October 2011, were developed to support the administration of HCA's

Regulation (*Ontario Regulation 161/06*) and to implement provincial policy (PPS) direction, including provincial natural hazard policies. HCA applies these policies to its review of planning and regulation proposals.

HCA policies generally do not permit development within the shoreline hazard limits associated with Lake Ontario. The shoreline hazard limit is the furthest landward extent of the combined flooding hazard, erosion hazard, and dynamic beach hazard. The following policies are particularly relevant to the subject application.

### **2.2.1.1. Flooding Hazard Limits**

- b. For the Lake Ontario shoreline, excluding Hamilton Harbour, the flooding hazard limit has been determined to be 78.5 m IGLD 1955 (International Great Lakes Datum). This elevation includes the 100-year flood level (76.0 m IGLD) plus the wave action and other water-related hazards (2.5 m) [Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System and Large Inland Lakes Technical Guides (MNR & Watershed Science Centre, 2001) and Lake Ontario Waterfront Study, Stoney Creek (F.J. Reinders and Assoc. and Conroy Dowson Planning Consultants Inc., March 1980)].

### **2. 2. 1. 2 Erosion Hazard Limits**

Where Authority staff consider development proposals and/or site alterations in or on the areas adjacent or close to the Lake Ontario shoreline the erosion hazard limit shall be applicable.

- a. Erosion hazards are based on a combined influence of:
  - i. Stable slope allowance of 3(H):1(V);
  - ii. A 30 m toe erosion allowance (measured from stable slope allowance); and
  - iii. The existence or absence of shoreline protection works.
- b. A valid engineering study, undertaken by a qualified coastal engineer and at the expense of the proponent, may be undertaken or may be required to be undertaken, in areas where the exact extent of the erosion hazard limit needs to be verified. The need for greater hazard land limits may be demonstrated through the completion of this study.

### **2. 2. 2 Development**

- b. The Authority will generally direct development to occur outside of hazardous lands adjacent to the Lake Ontario shoreline that are impacted by flooding and/or erosion, unless the following conditions are met:
  - i. The ecological function of areas adjacent or close to the shoreline have been evaluated and it has been demonstrated through the submission of an EIS that there will be no negative impacts on natural features or their ecological functions;

- ii. The hazards can be safely addressed, and the development and/or site alteration is carried out in accordance with floodproofing standards, protection works standards, and access standards;
- iii. Vehicles and people have a way of safely entering and exiting the area during times of flooding, erosion and other emergencies;
- iv. New hazards are not created and existing hazards are not aggravated; and
- v. No adverse environmental impacts will result.

### 2. 2. 2. 1 Shoreline Protection Works

a. Where shoreline protection works are proposed the applicant must meet the following requirements:

- i. The purpose of the proposed works must be clearly defined;
- ii. Shoreline works must be designed for the *100 year flood level, wave uprush*, and according to accepted scientific coastal engineering principles, where viable;
- iii. The works must be designed and/or approved by a professional engineer with experience and qualifications in coastal engineering;
- iv. Slope stability must be assessed by a professional engineer with experience and qualifications in coastal/geotechnical engineering;
- v. The ownership of land, where the protection works are proposed, must be clearly established by the applicant;
- vi. The design and installation of protection works must allow for access to and along the protection works for appropriate equipment and machinery for regular maintenance purposes and/or to repair the protection works should failure occur;
- vii. The works will not aggravate existing hazards and/or create new hazards at updrift/downdrift properties;
- viii. In areas of existing *development*, protection works should be coordinated with adjacent properties, where possible; and
- ix. The *Authority* requires that the protection works incorporate a minimum *erosion access allowance* of 6 m, where possible, and that the *erosion access allowance* permit access from a municipal roadway to and along the shoreline protection works for regular maintenance purposes and/or to repair the protection works, where possible. Side yard access allowances may be shared between adjacent landowners provided that the shared easement is registered on title.

b. The *Authority* will generally not support shoreline protection works that:

- i. Do not consider natural coastal processes;
- ii. Are not effective against long-term erosion;
- iii. Do not preserve cobble/shingle beaches;
- iv. Do not protect/regenerate aquatic and terrestrial habitat;
- v. Encroach on *fish habitat* (in accordance with the *Authority's* agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada – *DFO*); and
- vi. Negatively impact neighbouring shorelines.

In addition, determination of a stable slope (where required) shall be at the loss of the proponent's land, not *fish habitat*. If *fish habitat* loss occurs, compensation for the loss of habitat may be required under the direction of a Fisheries Act authorization.

- c. The *Authority* will notify and encourage shoreline property owners with existing protection works on their properties of the importance of regular maintenance of these structures to ensure long-term protection.
- d. Where shoreline protection works exist, the *Authority* may request that the integrity of that protection works be assessed by a qualified coastal engineer, at the expense of the proponent, and any recommendations for improvement be incorporated into the *development* proposal.

### **Application Assessment**

The property at 46 Seabreeze Crescent is affected by shoreline hazards associated with Lake Ontario. A recent survey (Attachment C) of the subject property identifies that the crest of the existing shore protection structure is at  $\pm 80.0$  m, suggesting the property is protected from the flooding hazard associated with Lake Ontario, which is identified at the 78.5m elevation. However, the rear of the property is subject to erosion hazards associated with the lake.

The erosion hazard was more specifically reviewed in erosion hazard assessments prepared by Dillon Consulting in 2022. The erosion hazard setback assumes that the property will be protected with a structure having a design life of 50 years (Attachment B). HCA staff have reviewed a preliminary proposed shore wall design prepared by TRUE Consulting (Attachment E). The applicant and their consultant both indicate that they will work with HCA staff to identify a final design for the shorewall that satisfies HCA staff's technical requirements. The current plan is generally acceptable, but requires that the adequacy of the toe protection is demonstrated.

The report prepared by Dillon Consulting identifies the erosion hazard extending 15 m from the stable top of lake bank (Attachment B). This is consistent with HCA policy, if it is assumed that a shorewall with a 50-year design life is constructed. This is also consistent with the development setbacks approved on the adjacent property, for which HCA issued a permit in 2015. The applicant is proposing to allow the development to encroach on the erosion hazard up to 5 m, that is, to reduce the erosion hazard setback from the stable top of bank from 15 m to 10 m.

HCA policy also identifies that a side yard access of 6 m be provided, wherever possible. The current application proposes a side yard access allowance of 4 m, rather than the 6 m that is recommended by HCA policy. The purpose of the access allowance is to permit equipment access from the municipal roadway to the shoreline to allow for maintenance and repair of the shore wall protection works over the long term.

HCA policies, as outlined above, do not permit development within the shoreline erosion hazard. HCA policy permits a reduction in the erosion hazard, in recognition that the

hazards may be partially mitigated with the construction of adequate shoreline protection works. HCA staff are of the opinion that further reduction in the setback, as proposed by the applicant, would pose a hazard to the proposed development and therefore further reduction is not warranted. In considering the applicable policies, it is HCA staff's opinion the conditions under which a permit can be issued under *Ontario Regulation 161/06 (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses)* are not met.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

HCA's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 outlines its major strategic priority areas and related initiatives for advancing HCA's Vision to provide a healthy watershed for everyone. HCA implements a wide variety of programs to fulfill this mandate, including programs to manage water resources and protect people and property from natural hazards. Administration of HCA's regulation (*Ontario Regulation 161/06*) contributes to the achievement of these program objectives and HCA's Strategic Plan more generally.

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

None

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is important to note that approval of this application may create liabilities for the Hamilton Conservation Authority in that the proposal would allow construction within the erosion hazard associated with Lake Ontario. The HCA Board of Directors need to be aware of the possible associated liability to the Hamilton Conservation Authority if this application is approved.

## **CONCLUSION**

The subject application proposes development within the erosion hazard associated with Lake Ontario, and provides less side yard access than HCA policy recommends. Provincial and HCA policies take a preventative approach to addressing the potential risks and impacts associated with natural hazards by generally directing development to areas outside of hazardous lands. It is HCA staff's opinion the policy framework outlined in HCA's *Planning and Regulation Policies and Guidelines (October, 2011)* does not support the proposed development.

On this basis, the proposed development does not meet the conditions under which HCA may issue a permit under *Ontario Regulation 161/06 (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses)* made under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990*. As such, it is the recommendation of HCA staff that the application be refused.

## Attachment A – Site Location

46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton (Stoney Creek)

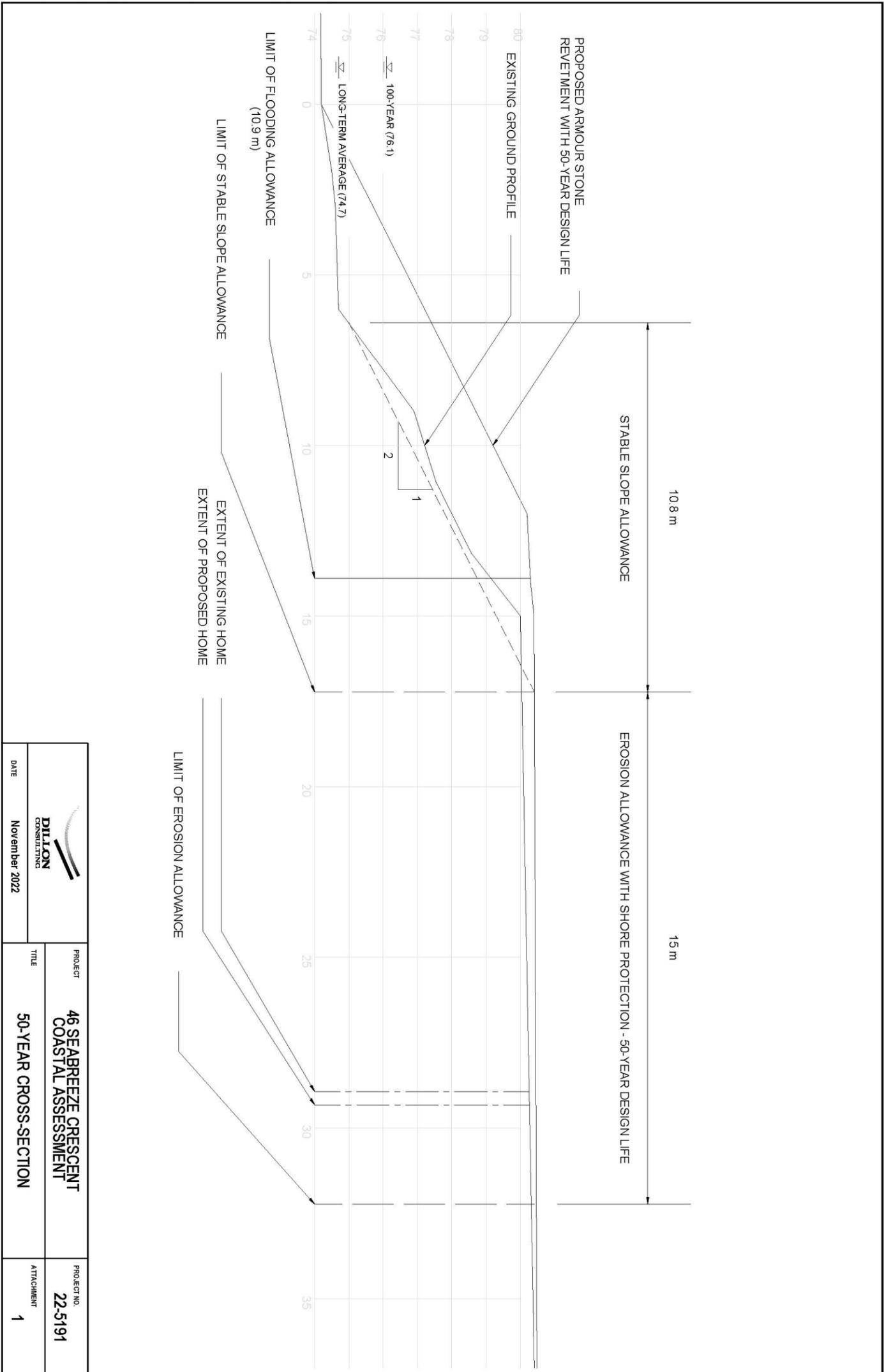


Figure 1. Location of property (red rectangle)

**Attachment B – Erosion Hazard Delineation**  
**Prepared by Chris Gibbons, Dillon Consulting**

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 <p><b>DILLON</b> CONSULTING</p>	PROJECT	PROJECT NO.
	<p><b>46 SEABREEZE CRESCENT COASTAL ASSESSMENT</b></p>	<p><b>22-5191</b></p>
DATE	TITLE	ATTACHMENT
<p>November 2022</p>	<p><b>50-YEAR CROSS-SECTION</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>



# Attachment D – Proposed Development

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 <b>DILLON</b> CONSULTING	PROJECT	PROJECT NO.
	DATE	TITLE
November 2022	46 SEABREEZE CRESCENT COASTAL ASSESSMENT  PLAN VIEW	22-5191  3





Hamilton  
Conservation  
Authority

A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

March 9, 2023

File: SC/F,C,A/23/06

**BY EMAIL**

Rashmi Gowda  
46 Seabreeze Cr.  
Stoney Creek, ON L8E 5C9

Dear Ms. Gowda:

**RE: NOTICE OF HEARING  
DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO  
SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION 161/06 APPLICATION  
Rashmi Gowda  
46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton**

This letter serves to inform you that the application by Rashmi Gowda, received January 31, 2023, for development in a regulated area of Lake Ontario will be considered by the Board of Directors at the meeting scheduled for:

**6:00 p.m. on April 6, 2023  
Please note this Hearing will be held by Webex video conference.  
Details on the video meeting link will be sent separately.**

This is a Hearing under Section 28, Subsection 12 of the Conservation Authorities Act. Please note that Authority staff is recommending **refusal** of the application on the basis that the development does not comply with the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) *Planning & Regulation Policies and Guidelines (October, 2011)*. A copy of the staff report outlining staff's reasons for recommending refusal is included with this notice. Also attached is a copy of the HCA's Hearing Guidelines.

You are invited to speak in support of your application and submit supporting written material for the Hearing. You will be allotted approximately 20 minutes to speak at the Hearing. You may be represented by legal Counsel or have advisors present information to the Board of Directors. If you intend to appear, or if you believe that holding the hearing electronically is likely to cause significant prejudice, please contact Mike Stone, Manager, Watershed Planning Services. Written material will be required to be submitted by March 24, 2023, to enable the Board members time to review the material along with the staff report.

This Hearing is governed by the provisions of the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. Under the Act, a witness is automatically afforded a protection that is similar to the protection of the Ontario Evidence Act. This means that the evidence that a witness gives may not be used in subsequent civil proceedings or in the prosecutions against the witness under a Provincial Statute. It does not relieve the witness of the obligation of this oath since matters of perjury are not affected by the automatic affording of the protection. The significance is that the legislation is Provincial and cannot affect Federal matters. If a witness requires protection of the Canada Evidence Act, that protection must be obtained in the usual manner.

The Ontario Statute requires the tribunal to draw this matter to the attention of the witness as this tribunal has no knowledge of the effect of any evidence that a witness may give.

If you do not attend at this Hearing, the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Conservation Authority may proceed in your absence, and you will not be entitled to any further notice of proceedings.

Please contact the undersigned at ext. 133 at this office if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Yours truly,



Mike Stone MCIP, RPP  
Manager, Watershed Planning Services

Enclosures: Hamilton Conservation Authority Hearing Guidelines  
Hamilton Conservation Authority Hearing Report

## APPENDIX B

### Hearing Procedures

1. Motion to sit as Hearing Board.
2. Roll Call followed by the Chairperson's opening remarks. For electronic hearings, the Chairperson shall ensure that all parties and the Hearing Board are able to clearly hear one another and any witnesses throughout the hearing.
3. Staff will introduce to the Hearing Board the applicant/owner, his/her agent and others wishing to speak.
4. Staff will indicate the nature and location of the subject application and the conclusions.
5. Staff will present the staff report included in the Authority/Executive Committee agenda.
6. The applicant and/or their agent will present their material
7. Staff and/or the conservation authority's agent may question the applicant and/or their agent if reasonably required for a full and fair disclosure of matters presented at the Hearing.<sup>1</sup>
8. The applicant and/or their agent may question the conservation authority staff and/or their agent if reasonably required for full and fair disclosure of matters presented at the Hearing.<sup>2</sup>
9. The Hearing Board will question, if necessary, both the staff and the applicant/agent.
10. The Hearing Board will move into closed session for deliberation. For electronic meetings, the Hearing Board will separate from other participants for deliberation.
11. Members of the Hearing Board will move and second a motion.
12. A motion will be carried which will culminate in the decision.
13. The Hearing Board will move out of closed session . For electronic meetings, the Hearing Board will reconvene with other hearing participants.
14. The Chairperson or Acting Chairperson will advise the owner/applicant of the Hearing Board decision, including providing the Board's reasons for the decision for approval or refusal.
15. If decision is "to refuse" or "approve with conditions", the Chairperson or Acting Chairperson shall notify the owner/applicant of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal within 30 days of receipt of the reasons for the decision.
16. Motion to move out of Hearing Board and sit as the Board of Directors.

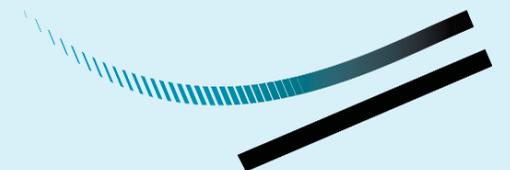
<sup>1, 2</sup> As per the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act* a tribunal may reasonably limit further examination or cross-examination of a witness where it is satisfied that the examination or cross-examination has been sufficient to disclose fully and fairly all matters relevant to the issues in the proceeding.

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# 46 Seabreeze Crescent

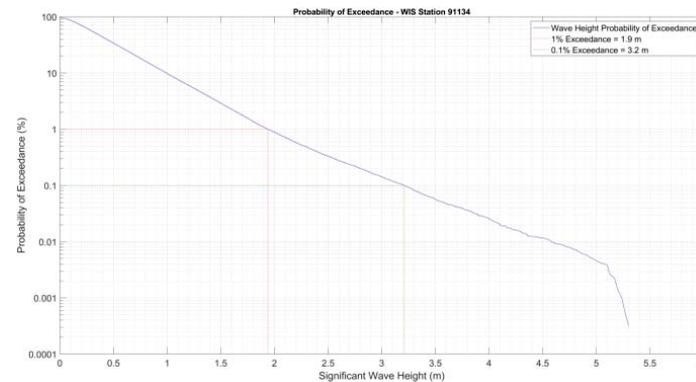
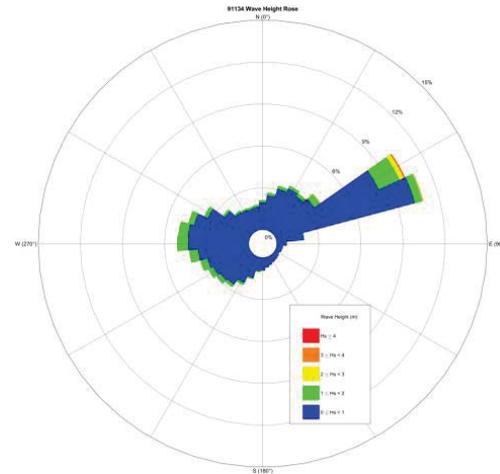
Coastal Hazard Assessment

April 6, 2023



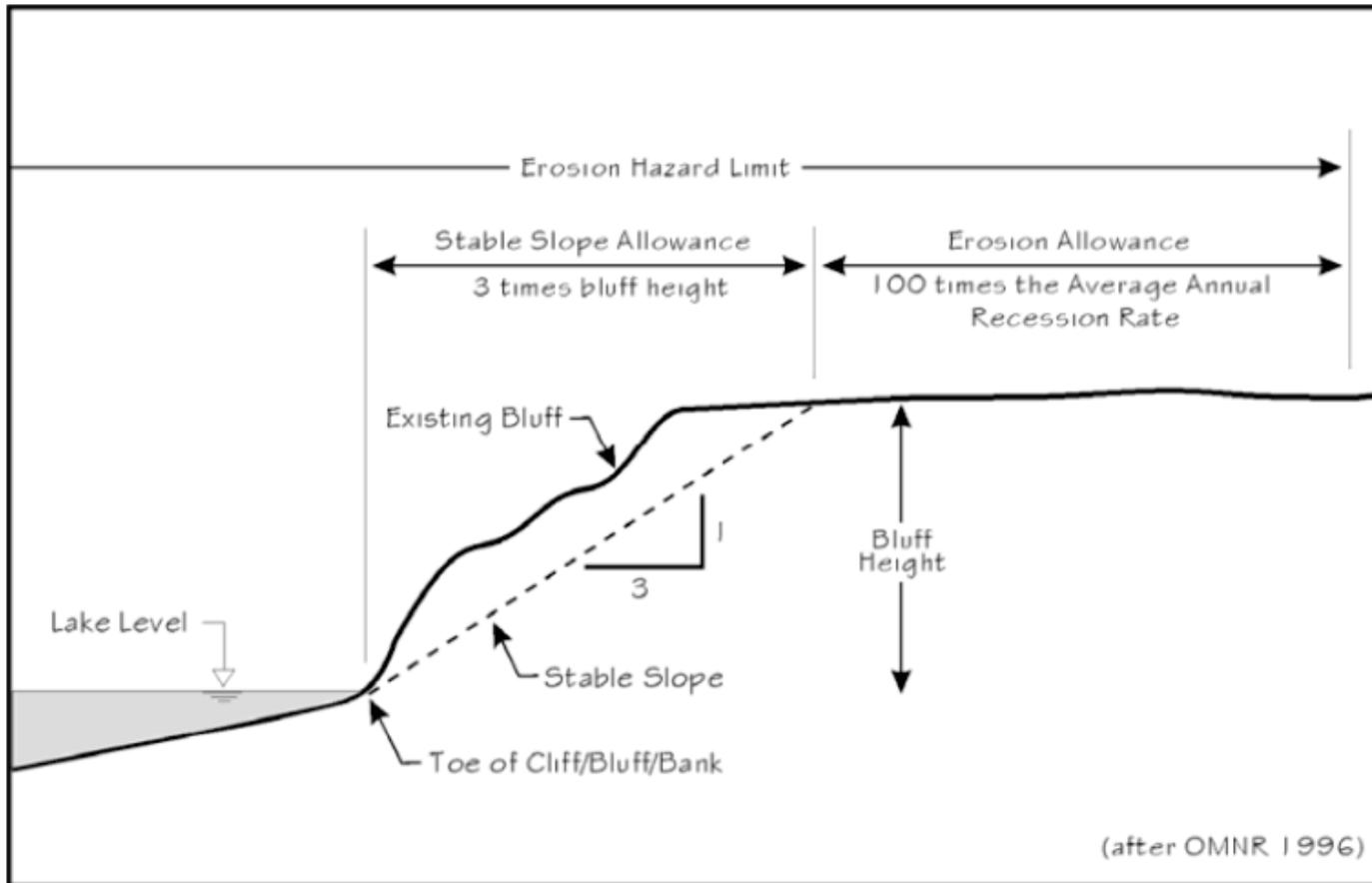
**DILLON**  
CONSULTING

# Property Description and Coastal Conditions



- 3.5 km West of Fifty Point
- 32 m of Lake Ontario shoreline
  - Profile Azimuth = 22 (~NNE)
- Bluff is 6 m above shoreline (~+80 m)
- Failed concrete block wall
- 100-year flood level +76.1 m
- $H_{so,max} = 5.3 \text{ m}$ ,  $T_p = 9.3 \text{ s}$ 
  - Predominantly from E, ENE
- $H_{sb,max} = 1.4 \text{ m}$

# Property Description and Coastal Conditions



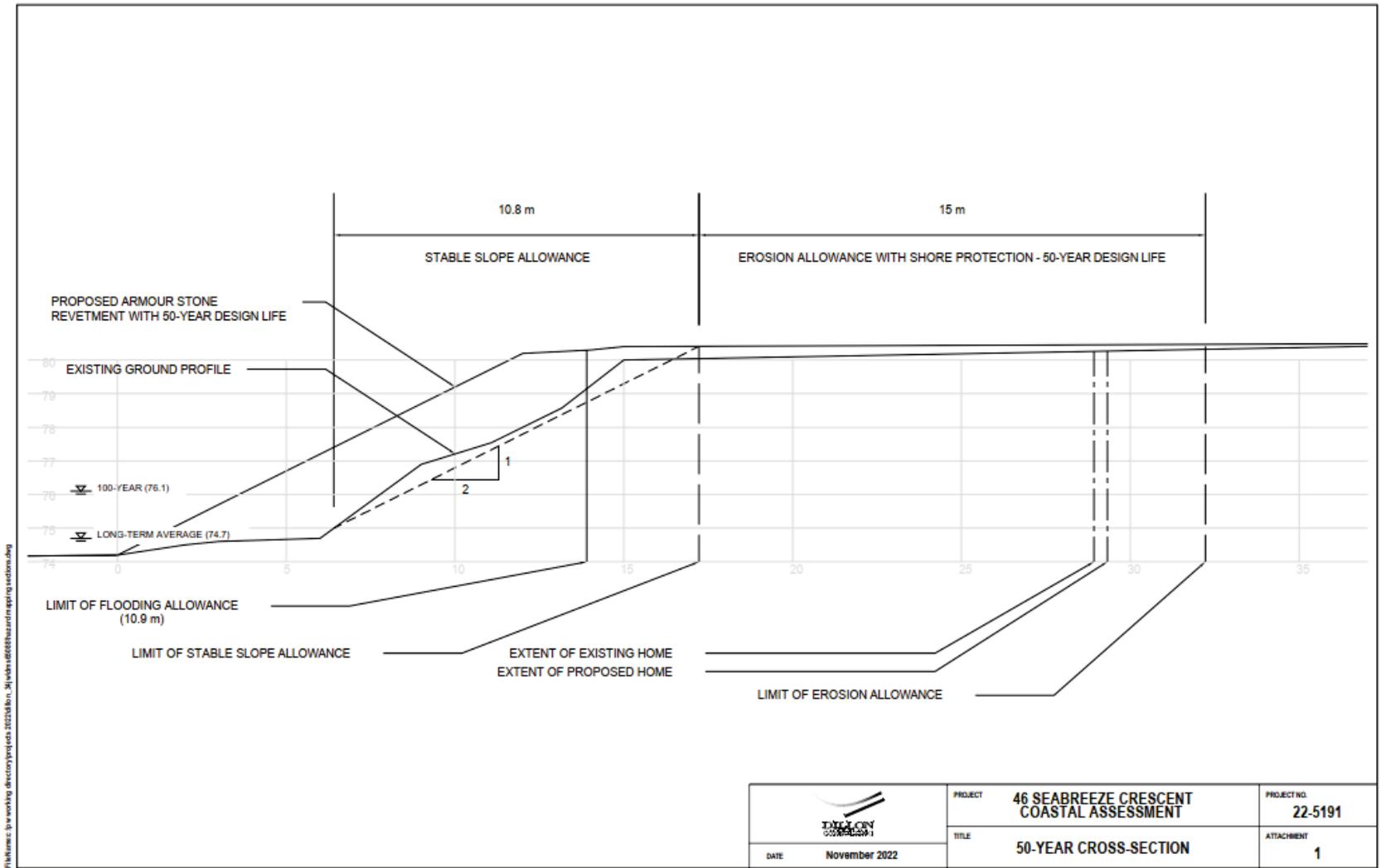
- Erosion Allowance

- Long-Term (100-year) Recession of Unprotected Shoreline
  - 0.3 m/year
  - EA with unprotected shoreline = 30 m
- Can be Reduced by Constructing Shore Protection
- Generally reduced by the design life or residual life of a structure
  - EA with 50 year Design Life = 15 m

- Stable Slope Allowance

- Geotechnical Properties of Soil
- 2:1 (Terraprobe Report)
  - SSA = 10.8 m

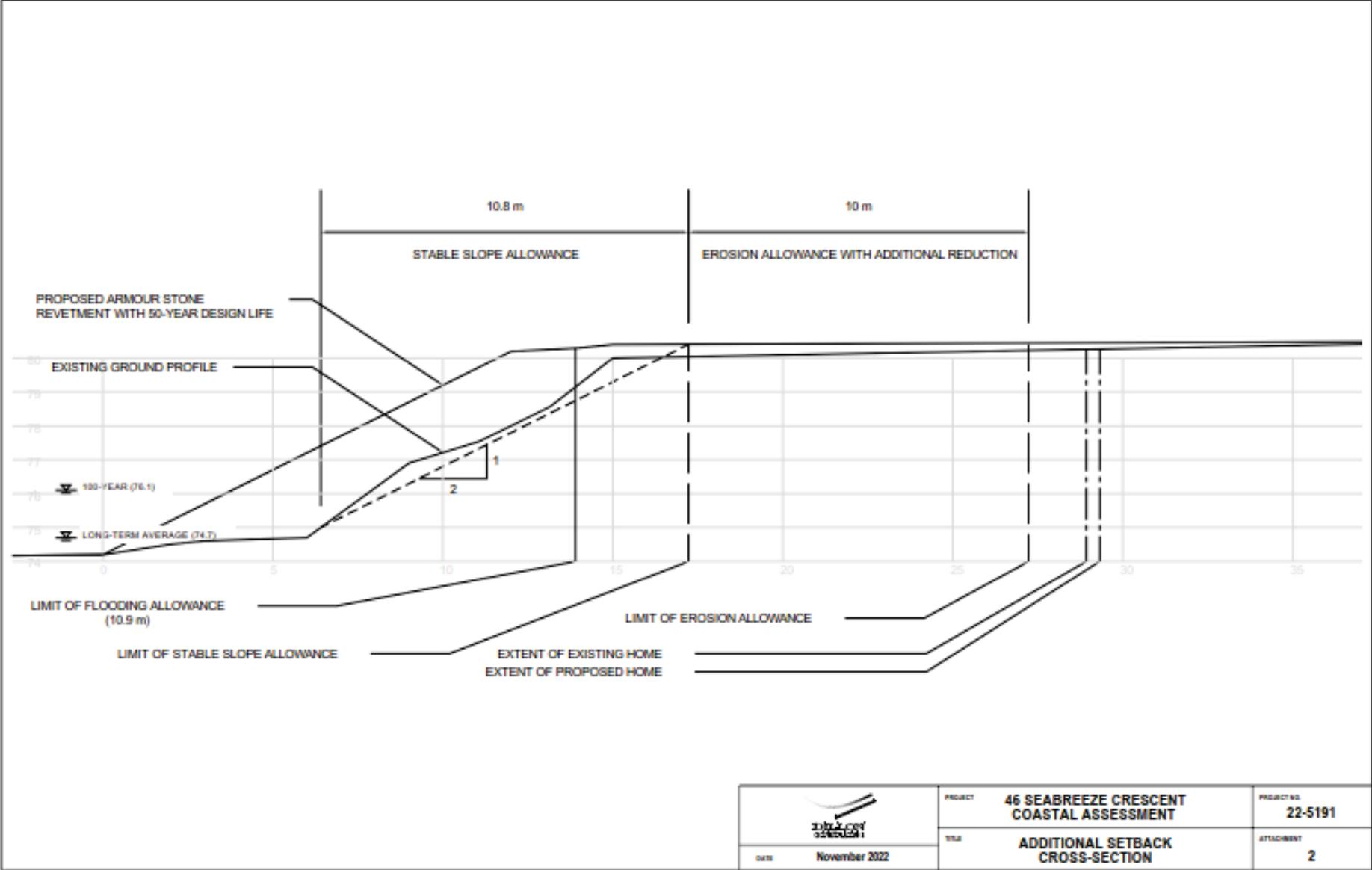
# Erosion Hazard Limit with Shore Protection (50 Year Design Life)



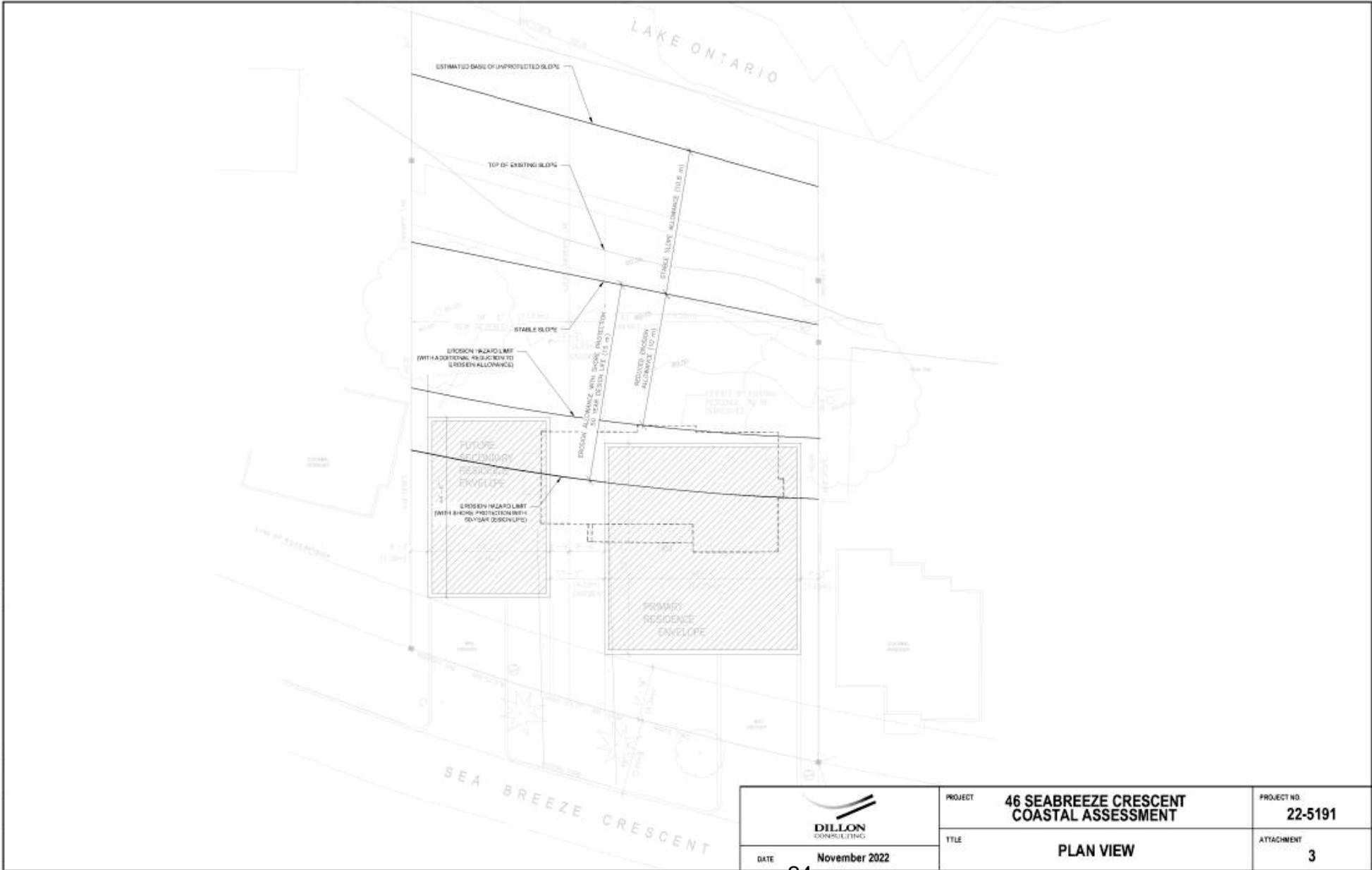
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# Erosion Hazard Limit with Shore Protection (50 Year Design Life) and Additional Reduction



# Erosion Hazard Limits – Plan View



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 <b>DILLON</b> CONSULTING	<b>PROJECT</b> 46 SEABREEZE CRESCENT COASTAL ASSESSMENT	<b>PROJECT NO.</b> 22-5191
	<b>DATE</b> November 2022	<b>TITLE</b> PLAN VIEW



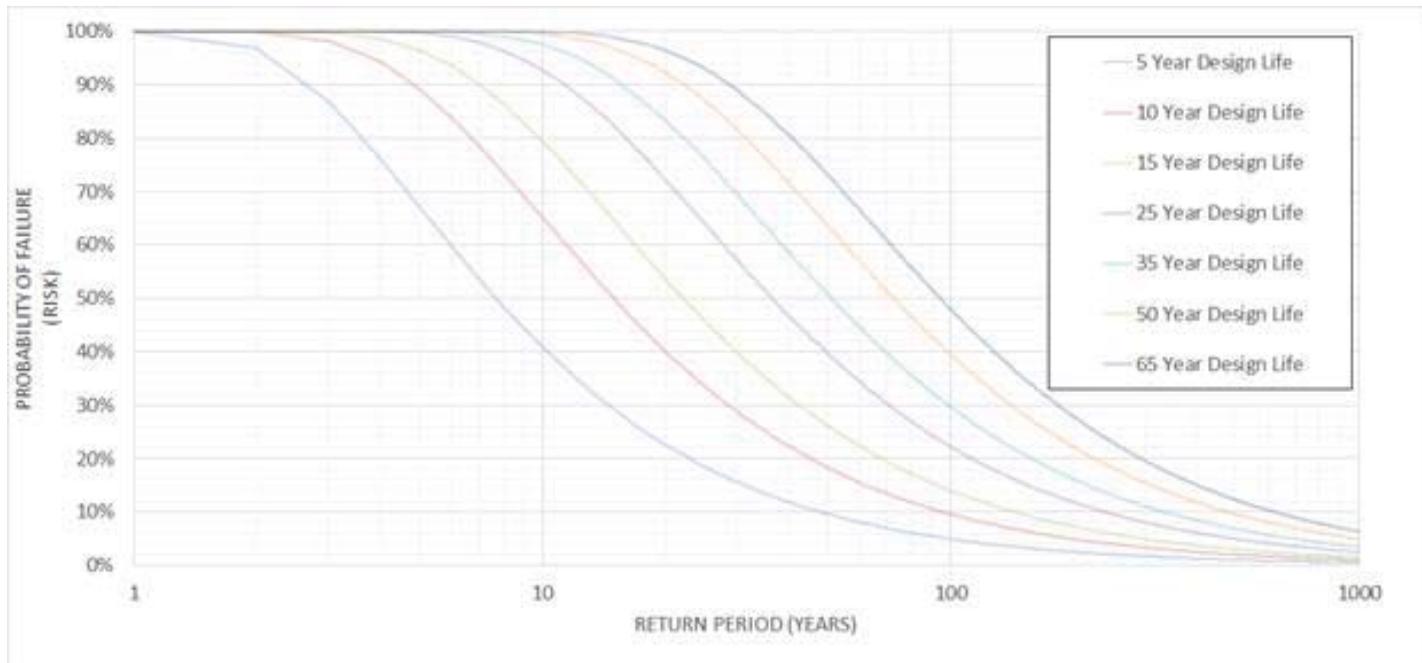
# Hazard Summary for Proposed Improvements



- Outside of Flooding Allowance
- Outside of Stable Slope Allowance
- Partially within Erosion Allowance
  - With Shore Protection with 50-year Design Life Installed
- Outside of Erosion Allowance with Additional (5 m) Reduction
- Do not extend lakeward of existing home
  - No additional encroachment within erosion hazard

# Design Life and Acceptable Levels of Risk – Increase Risk Tolerance

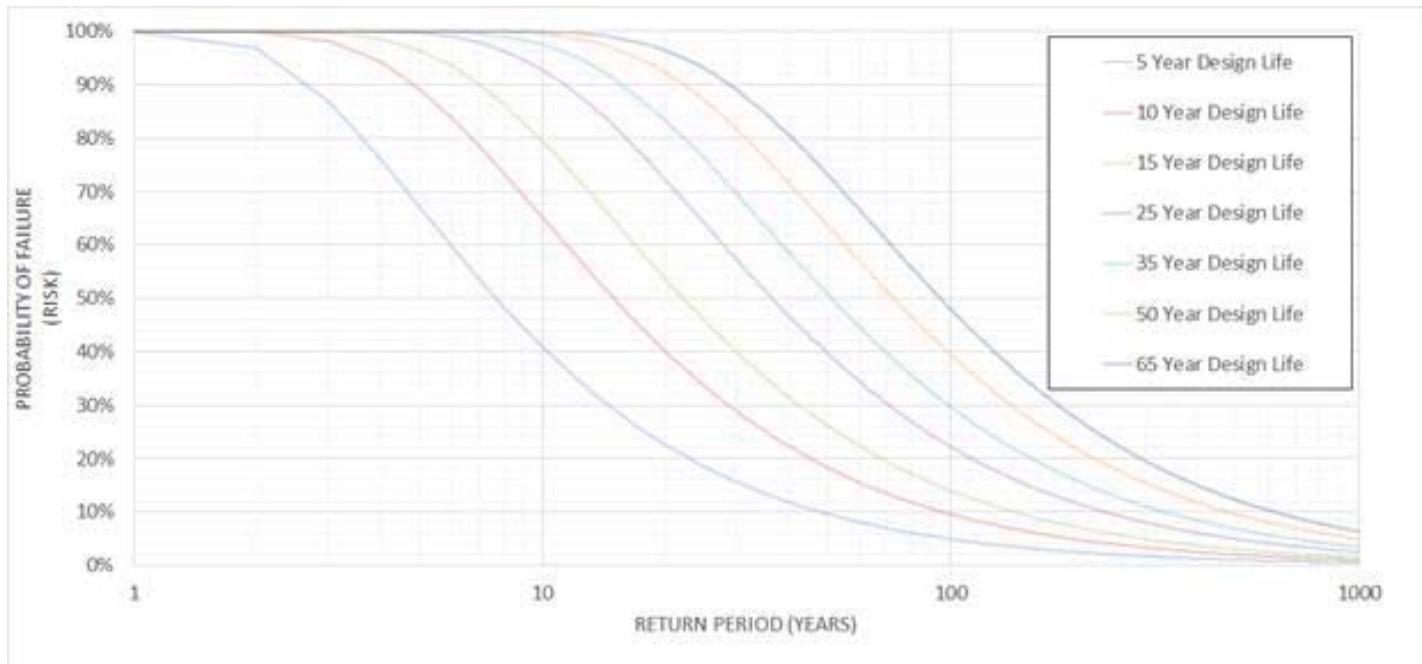
$$p = 1 - \left( \frac{1}{T_R} - 1 \right)^n$$



- The request is to reduce the erosion allowance by 5 m
  - Essentially to decrease planning horizon by an additional 15 years.
    - Another way to consider this is to extend the design life of the structure from 50 years to 65 years.
- Selection of design life is based on acceptable levels of risk for applicable safety class.
  - Safety class for Residential structures – **Very low** (40-50% probability of failure)
    - Design life with 40% risk = 50 years
    - Design life with 48% risk = 65 years

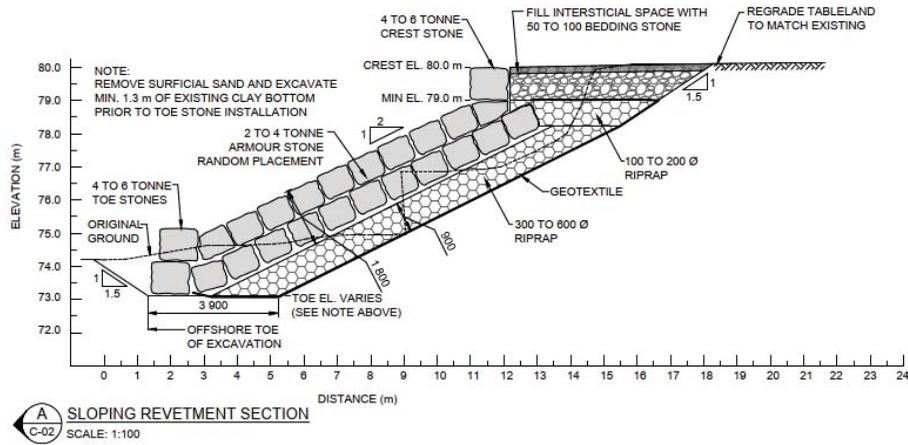
# Design Life and Acceptable Levels of Risk – Increase Return Period

$$p = 1 - \left( \frac{1}{T_R} - 1 \right)^n$$



- Maintain 40% tolerance
  - 50-year Design Life,  $T_R = 100$  years
  - 65-year Design Life,  $T_R = 125$  years
- Depth-limited conditions at 100-year flood level
- Increasing the design life beyond 50 years does not significantly influence design conditions.
  - Small differences in design conditions will not practically impact design of the structure.

# Armour Stone Revetment



- Sloping, quarried armour stone placed over underlayer of rip rap or gabion stone and a geotextile.
- Local experience has shown that well designed and constructed armour stone revetments are reasonably durable, have a good track record, and perform well under the prevailing lake conditions.
- Although an armour stone revetment may be damaged by coastal hazards over time, the revetment will continue to function. Well-constructed armour stone revetments tend to fail gradually, as opposed to failing catastrophically, allowing homeowners to maintain the structure and make repairs, as needed.
- If this revetment is properly maintained, the structure will continue to address the erosion hazard beyond its design life.



# Summary

- The risk profile of the existing conditions and the proposed conditions are the same.
  - The existing home without new shore protection is at greater risk to impact from coastal hazards than the proposed home with new shore protection
- From a coastal engineering perspective, there is minimal risk in building a new home or new homes on the subject property, provided they do not extend beyond the lakeward limit of the footprint of the existing home.
- Shoreline stakeholders must recognize that there are inherent risks associated with flooding and erosion hazards along the shorelines of the Great Lakes. Appropriately engineered shore protection works, such as the proposed armour stone revetment, can reasonably mitigate these hazards, but these hazards cannot be entirely eliminated. Shore protection should be monitored for any damage or failure, and repaired, as required.
- HCA requires a 6 m corridor for shoreline maintenance
  - Local experience has confirmed that a 4 m corridor is sufficient for access to the shoreline.
  - This access corridor must be maintained throughout the life of the structure.

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# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer

**RECOMMENDED  
& PREPARED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Director, Watershed Planning and Engineering

Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

**DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Summary Enforcement Report  
Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation 161/06

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HCA Regulation applications approved by staff between the dates of February 16, 2023 and March 24, 2023 are summarized in the following Summary Enforcement Report (SER-4/23).

## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board of Directors receive this Summary Enforcement Report SER-4/23 as information.

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**HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS, AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES APPLICATIONS**

March 24, 2023

Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Applications Report to the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, April 06, 2023

The proposed works are subject to Ontario Regulation 161/06, and in particular Section 2, Subsection (1).

**SUMMARY ENFORCEMENT REPORT SER 4/23**

File Number	Date Received	Date Permit Issued	Review Days	Applicant Name	Location	Application Description	Recommendation / Conditions
D/F,C,A/22/11	12-Jan-22	06-Mar-23	181		7 Governors Rd Lot 51, Concession 1 Dundas	Rehabilitation of Bridge 296 in a regulated area of Spencer Creek.	Approved subject to standard conditions.
H/F,C/23/20	27-Feb-23	24-Mar-23	52		1411 and 1415 Upper Wellington St Lot 12, Concession 7 Hamilton	Construction of a new long-term care home and parking in a regulated area of Upper Ottawa Creek (karst hazards).	Approved subject to standard conditions.

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The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda. Lisa Burnside advised of an additional item regarding a property matter to be added as item 12.2 in camera.

**BD12, 3152**

**MOVED BY: Craig Cassar  
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

**THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.**

**CARRIED**

#### **4. Delegations**

There were none.

#### **5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence**

The following consent items were adopted:

- 5.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses
- 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – February 2, 2023
- 5.3. Approved November 10, 2022 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only

#### **6. Foundation Briefing**

Jennifer Stebbing reported on the following:

The Foundation received a total of **\$2,059** in new donations from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup> 2023, directed to the Area of Greatest Need, Dundas Valley Trails, Westfield Locomotive Restoration, Land Securement and *Step Into Nature* Education Fund.

This brings their fiscal year-to-date fundraising total to **\$104,560**, and still well ahead of the same time last year.

Fundraising efforts for this year will again focus on fully funding the Environmental Education Program, funding future work at Saltfleet Conservation Area, the Westfield Locomotive Restoration, as well as possible other projects identified through HCA master plans.

**BD12, 3153**

**MOVED BY: Brad Clark  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

**THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.**

**CARRIED**

**7. Member Briefing**

There was none.

**8. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

**9. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board**

9.1. Conservation Advisory Board – February 9, 2023 (Recommendations)

9.1.1. CA 2304 Westfield 2022 Accessions List

Dan Bowman brought forward the report recommending a number of items to be added to the permanent artifact collection at Westfield.

**BD12, 3154**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:**

**THAT the Westfield 2022 Artifact Accessions List as noted in the February 9, 2023 Accessions report be accepted as the artifacts to be added to the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area and the Hamilton Conservation Authority collection.**

**CARRIED**

9.1.2. CA 2305     Advance Purchase Day Use Passes – 2023 Pilot Program

Dan Bowman brought forward a staff report to pilot advanced day entry purchase. This new method of payment and method of entry is expected to help speed up entry and alleviate congestion at Conservation Area gates. Staff answered a number of questions on customer experience and technology that will be used for the new feature.

**BD12, 3155            MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
                          SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

**WHEREAS HCA continues to identify and act upon investment in visitor services opportunities in our conservation areas;**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report entitled "Advanced Purchase Day Use Passes – 2023 Pilot Program" be received and further;**

**THAT the Conservation Advisory Board (CAB) recommend to the Board of Directors that staff be authorized to initiate the 2023 pilot program as outlined in the report at Christie Lake, Valens Lake, Fifty Point and Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Areas; and further**

**THAT staff report back to CAB on the outcome and success of the 2023 pilot program.**

**CARRIED**

9.1.3. CA 2306     Invasive Species Program Plan 2023

Dan Bowman brought forward a staff report outlining work undertaken in 2022 toward meeting the goals of HCA's Invasive Species Strategy, as well as an overview of the priorities planned for 2023 for endorsement.

Scott Peck and Mike Stone answered a number of questions regarding Ecology and Stewardship programming related to invasive species. Additionally, it was noted that HCA will be updating its existing invasive species strategy later this year and will include additional initiatives to educate the public and businesses about invasive species. As 2024 budget is prepared, staffing needs will also be reviewed.

**BD12, 3156**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar  
THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to  
the Board of Directors:**

**THAT the Invasive Species Program Plan for 2023 be  
adopted.**

**CARRIED****10. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda****10.1. Amendment to Inventory of Programs and Services**

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the report noting HCA had included a service to provide planning review outside of natural hazards in our initial inventory. As a result of Bill 23, CA's are no longer permitted to provide this service (can only comment on natural hazards). Therefore, this service was amended to reflect a watershed monitoring program to support the objectives of both HCA and our two municipal partners. This amendment continues to work within the costs noted in the inventory and this program would be considered a non-mandatory program requiring an agreement, just as the previous service.

It was clarified that the watershed monitoring program includes some existing work in HCA's ecological monitoring program and will also build on the existing ecological monitoring program.

There was discussion regarding the financial implications of changes through Bill 23 for planning applications. It was noted that it is too soon to understand the financial implications, however, staff are not anticipating a significant impact as HCA will still be circulated applications to comment on natural hazard considerations.

**BD12, 3157**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba  
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the Board of Directors approve the amendment in  
the Core Watershed Based Resource Management  
Strategy (program CW3) in the HCA Inventory of  
Programs and Services as outlined in this report.**

**CARRIED**

### 10.2. Stage 4 Archeological Quote for SC-8 Wetland

Scott Peck presented a summary of the report and quote for archaeological work on the SC-8 wetland, part of the Saltfleet Conservation Area. Scott shared that stage 4 assessments need to be completed for two of four identified sites, however, that cost estimates for two of the four locations were cost prohibitive and therefore the existing design will be altered to avoid and protect these two sites. As a result, the wetland will be smaller and will withhold less water than originally planned. However, as this is the smallest of the four proposed wetlands for Saltfleet, staff are confident the project will meet the overall intent of the Environmental Assessment completed to inform the project, to withhold water and protect lands downstream from flooding and erosion. Capacity may be added to the remaining two wetlands to account for the decreased size of SC-8.

There was discussion regarding the ultimate possession of archeological artifacts found on the various sites. Scott will inquire with the consultant to confirm the process.

**BD12, 3158**

**MOVED BY: Craig Cassar  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**THAT the Board of Directors approve the quote submitted by Detritus Consulting Ltd., to complete the required Stage 4 Archeological Assessments for the SC-8 Wetland for an upset limit of \$106,700 excluding HST; and further**

**THAT staff be permitted to fund the archaeological consultant fee along with all associated costs for Aboriginal engagement from the East Mountain Wetland reserve.**

**CARRIED**

### 10.3. Permit Review and Approval Timelines – 2022 Annual Report

Mike Stone presented the annual report flowing from a 2019 Conservation Ontario initiative intended to support the province's strategic objectives for development through improved client service and accountability among Conservation Authorities. CA's have been tracking review times for permit applications since previous service standards were set in 2010. New service standard guidelines aim for permit application review times that are approximately 50% shorter than the previous standards. As is typical for HCA, in 2022, HCA generally met the 2010 standards for review times, however, due to staffing shortages and, in some cases, complex applications and multiple revisions and submissions, was not always able to meet

the standards in the 2019 guidelines. Some staff positions have been filled and the department is currently recruiting to return to the full staffing complement.

**BD12, 3159**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

**THAT the memorandum entitled Annual Reporting on CA Permit Review Timelines – January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 be received.**

**CARRIED**

#### 10.4. HCA Land Acknowledgement

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the memorandum noting that staff and the Acting Chair of the Board recognized and identified an Indigenous land acknowledgement as important for HCA. An internal working group of senior staff and Acting Chair was struck to participate in an indigenous-led facilitation process to guide us through the development of the land acknowledgement. Once completed, Board meetings will begin with the reading of the land acknowledgement. It is anticipated it will be completed this April.

The qualifications of Cambium Indigenous Professional Services were noted and an overview of the process utilized to develop the land acknowledgement was provided.

The members were supportive of the initiative and requested the final acknowledgement be brought forward for their endorsement

It was also noted that with the development our upcoming strategic plan, that this provides an opportunity to identify and include initiatives related to Indigenous engagement in the next five years.

**BD12, 3160**

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

**THAT the Land Acknowledgement will be brought to the Board for endorsement.**

**CARRIED**

#### 10.5. Watershed Conditions Report

Jonathan Bastien presented a summary of the memorandum, noting that during the reporting period, there were no observations or reports of significant watercourse flooding events or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events. However, there was a

potential watercourse flooding event that warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of conditions. There is an ongoing potential for Lake Ontario shoreline flooding, which HCA engineering staff continue to closely monitor. HCA issued a Flood Watch regarding this potential flooding earlier today.

Currently, there are no significant watercourse flooding, public safety concerns, or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. Current flows range from baseflow conditions to elevated above baseflow conditions but below the adopted thresholds for significant public safety concerns or for significant watercourse flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is currently about 17 cm above average for this time of year. Current Christie Lake and Valens Lake levels are just above the preferred winter operating levels.

There are currently no significant rainfall or snowmelt events (+20 mm in a day) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks.

The most recent drought assessment indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed. HCA will be suggesting a return from a Level 2 Low Water Condition to Normal watershed conditions to the Hamilton Low Water Response Team.

**BD12, 3161**

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding**

**SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

#### 10.6. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Gord presented a summary of the memorandum, sharing details that advanced reservations are required for maple syrup experience at Westfield and also of the reservation service for Spencer Gorge in 2023. The evolution of the reservation service for Spencer Gorge was reviewed by the Conservation Advisory Board, including changes to the service in 2023 which allows for greater access. The reservation system continues to assist with managing visitation levels and visitor experience at both areas.

The Chair noted that a report was recently brought forward to the City of Hamilton regarding changes to by-law enforcement. Gord advised that the report commits to making additional resources available to continue to provide dedicated by-law enforcement to address parking issues for HCA, particularly in special enforcement areas.

**BD12, 3162****MOVED BY: Brad Clark  
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding****THAT the memorandum entitled Conservation Areas Experiences Update be received.****CARRIED****11. New Business**

There was none.

**12. In-Camera Items****BD12, 3163****MOVED BY: Susan Fielding  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar****THAT the Board of Directors moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.****CARRIED****During the *in camera* session, one property matter was discussed.****12.1. Confidential Verbal Update – BD/Mar 01-2023  
(Property Matter)**

Scott Peck provided a verbal update regarding a property matter and answered the members' questions.

**BD12, 3164****MOVED BY: Susan Fielding  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar****THAT the confidential verbal update entitled BD/Mar 01-2023 be received and remain in camera.****CARRIED****12.2. Confidential Discussion – BD/Mar 02-2023  
(Property / Legal Matter)**

Lisa Burnside presented a legal matter and answered the members' questions.

**BD12, 3165****MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar****THAT the confidential legal matter entitled BD/Mar 02-2023 be approved and remain in camera.****CARRIED****BD12, 3166****MOVED BY: Brad Clark  
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding****THAT the Board of Directors moves out of *in camera*.****CARRIED****13. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

**14. Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

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Scott Fleming  
Secretary-Treasurer

## Hamilton Conservation Authority

### Minutes

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#### Budget & Administration Committee

**December 15, 2022**

Minutes of the Budget & Administration Committee meeting held on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., by Webex videoconference and livestreamed on YouTube.

**Present:**                 **Santina Moccio, in the Chair**  
                                  **Dan Bowman**  
                                  **Maria Topalovic**

**Regrets:**                 **Jim Cimba**

**Staff Present:**       **Lisa Burnside, Scott Fleming, Matt Hall, Scott Peck, Jaime Tellier, and Nancy Watts**

**Others Present:**     **None**

#### **1. Welcome**

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

#### **2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the HCA Administrative By-law. There were none.

#### **3. Approval of Agenda**

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

**BA 2245**

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic  
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**CARRIED**

#### **4. Delegations**

There were none.

#### **5. Consent Items**

The following consent items were adopted:

- 5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – November 17, 2022

#### **6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

#### **7. Staff Reports/Memorandums**

##### **7.1. Annual General Meeting 2023**

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

Clarification was sought regarding the protocol as the position of Chair of the Board of Directors is vacant. Lisa Burnside advised that as provided for in our administrative by-laws, the Vice-Chair assumes the duties of Chair during an absence until a new Chair is appointed. Past practice has been that the Vice-Chair has continued as the Acting Chair until the Annual General Meeting.

**BA 2246**

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic  
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee  
recommend to the Board of Directors:**

**THAT the HCA Annual General Meeting (AGM) be postponed until the completion of all appointments from HCA's participating municipalities.**

**CARRIED**

## **8. New Business**

### **8.1. Email Voting**

Santina Moccio presented a summary of the motion proposing amended language for the administrative by-law to address email voting.

**BA 2247**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:**

**THAT the Administrative By-law under Section C - Meeting Procedures related to Electronic Meetings and Participation for electronic votes be revised with the following wording:**

**The Chair or the Chair's designate may administer a vote on a motion by electronic means if the motion is required on an urgent basis, or for any other reason as deemed necessary by the Chair or the Chair's designate. A deadline will be prescribed within which the votes must be cast, and the motion will pass by a majority vote; and further**

**THAT staff be directed to amend the Administrative Bylaw with this update.**

**CARRIED**

## **9. In-Camera Items for Matters of Law, Personnel and Property**

**BA 2248**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.**

**CARRIED**

**During the *in camera* session, one personnel and one personnel matter and one property matter were discussed.**

9.1. Confidential Verbal Update – BA/Dec 01-2022  
Personnel Matter

Lisa Burnside provided a verbal update regarding a personnel matter.

9.2. Confidential Verbal Update – BA/Dec 02-2022  
Property Matter

Scott Peck provided a verbal update regarding a property matter and answered the members' questions.

**BA 2249**

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic**  
**SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves out of *in camera*.**

**CARRIED****10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

**11. Next Meeting Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

Ministry of Natural  
Resources and Forestry

Office of the Minister

99 Wellesley Street West  
Room 6630, Whitney Block  
Toronto ON M7A 1W3  
Tel: 416-314-2301

Ministère des Richesses  
naturelles et des Forêts

Bureau du ministre

99, rue Wellesley Ouest  
Bureau 6630, Édifice Whitney  
Toronto ON M7A 1W3  
Tél.: 416 314-2301



354-2022-1038

March 9, 2023

Her Worship Andrea Horwath  
Mayor  
City of Hamilton  
[mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:mayor@hamilton.ca)

Dear Mayor Horwath:

Your predecessor submitted an application on behalf of the City of Hamilton seeking a Minister's exception under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) from the requirement for at least 70 per cent of municipal appointments to a conservation authority to be selected from among members of municipal council.

After carefully considering the application requesting approval to appoint five elected and five citizen members to the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) membership, I have decided to not grant the City of Hamilton an exception to subsection 14(1.1) of the CAA pursuant to my authority under subsection 14(1.2).

Allowing the City of Hamilton to appoint five elected and five citizen members to the HCA, thereby avoiding the requirement for at least 70 per cent of a participating municipality's appointees to be selected from among members of municipal council, does not meet the intent of the changes made through Bill 229, the *Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020*, to section 14 of the CAA which was to ensure greater elected council representation in conservation authorities. In this instance, it is important for the City of Hamilton to comply with this requirement, and it is not appropriate to grant an exception. I request that the City of Hamilton ensure that the necessary steps are taken so that members of council be appointed to the HCA in compliance with the requirements of subsection 14(1.1) of the CAA.

Once council members have been appointed, please confirm in writing via email to my ministry ([ca.office@ontario.ca](mailto:ca.office@ontario.ca)) that the City of Hamilton has taken the necessary steps to comply with this provision.

Please share this correspondence with municipal council as well as the HCA.

Yours Sincerely,



The Honourable Graydon Smith  
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

- c: Lisa Burnside, CAO, Hamilton Conservation Authority  
Craig Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Division, MNRF  
Jennifer Keyes, Director, Resources Planning and Development Policy Branch, MNRF  
Conservation Authority Office  
Stephanie Paparella, Office of the City Clerk, City of Hamilton

**From:** [Sonia & Rick](#)  
**To:** [Jaime Tellier](#)  
**Subject:** Wetlands  
**Date:** Thursday, March 9, 2023 6:53:49 PM

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Jaime Tellier,

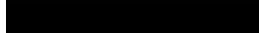
I am taking a minute to ask you to urge the federal government to intercede concerning Bill 23 and the gutting of the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System.

The Conservative government's actions demonstrate they are climate change deniers; in that they are unable to connect development decisions and the rising carbon dioxide levels leading to death and misery here and around the world. When provided the opportunity, the Ford government used its majority to quash a declaration of a climate emergency in Ontario.

The federal government has overarching jurisdiction concerning acting on climate action. Also, OWES is a joint Federal/Ontario project and the Federal government has a responsibility for endangered species and the protection of fish habitat - despite premier Ford's claim that this is none of the Federal government's business.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Richard MacKinnon



Hamilton, Ontario

**From:** [Deborah Martin](#)  
**To:** [Jaime Tellier](#)  
**Subject:** Protecting Ontario's Wetlands  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 15, 2023 12:02:49 AM

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To: Jaime Tellier  
Conservation Hamilton

I am emailing today to simply state that our Ontario wetlands need protection from Doug Ford. He is a damaging force and should not be changing anything in the Ontario Wetlands Evaluation System.

We need federal involvement urgently and he needs to stop interfering with what is a natural part of Ontario and serves a purpose in the overall health and climate of Ontario.

Please speak up where you can and let Doug Ford know that his interference in the wetlands regeneration will only be hampered and endangered by anything that he is suggesting.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent matter.

Best regards,  
Debbie Martin

**From:** [Don Mclean](#)  
**To:** [Jaime Tellier](#)  
**Subject:** Changes to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System  
**Date:** Saturday, March 18, 2023 9:15:19 PM

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Dear Jaime,

Could you please share this letter with the Board members of the HCA.

I have been examining the problematic changes made to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System by the current provincial Progressive Conservative government. I think there is a great need and clear reasons for federal government intervention to challenge these changes. So I'm urging HCA board members to ask the federal minister of the Environment Steven Guilbeault and his colleague Jonathan Wilkinson, the Minister of Natural Resources, to urgently act in defence of wetlands and their benefits.

As you know the changes to the OWES have many disturbing aspects. These include the abolition of the category of wetland complexes; the elimination from scoring of the presence of endangered species and their habitat; and the removal of required oversight of wetland evaluations by provincial ministry officials. This appears to leave us with a situation where a landowner or developer can hire someone to evaluate or re-evaluate wetlands and the only remaining required oversight is at the municipal level where there is no or very limited ecological expertise. It appears that the expertise of the Conservation Authorities is also bypassed both by changes to the OWES and by Bill 23 rules that forbid CA advice to municipalities. I believe you are disturbed by these changes. Conservation Ontario has strongly expressed these concerns on your behalf but without achieving the necessary changes.

However, the federal government can and should intervene to advance the CA and public concerns about the changes to the OWES. The OWES originated in 1980 as a joint federal-Ontario project where the Canadian Wildlife Service played a key role. This was entirely reasonable and appropriate because there are multiple federal interests and responsibilities associated with the protection of wetlands. Specifically, these include federal responsibilities for the protection and recovery of endangered species, and for the protection and enhancement of fish habitat. The federal government has also long been constitutionally mandated to ensure Indigenous Rights and the implementation of treaties with First Nations. More recently, federal responsibility has been recognized, including by the courts, to address the climate crisis, and wetlands play crucial roles in sequestering carbon and limiting the effects of extreme weather events. Recently, the federal government hosted the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties on the UN Convention on Biodiversity and committed Canada to protection of at least 30 percent of our nation's lands and waters by 2030. I would argue the protection of our remaining wetlands is crucial to Canada's successful implementation of this Convention. For further evidence of the critical role of the federal government I invite you to review this short federal public service announcement currently on social media at <https://youtu.be/bDoAK7iyweA>.

In light of all of these reasons, I urge your Board to publicly urge the federal government to press Ontario's government to repeal the recent changes to the OWES and to consult thoroughly with Conservation Authorities on these matters.

Sincerely,

Don McLean

**From:** [ellen.tolmie](mailto:ellen.tolmie)  
**To:** [ahorwath-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:ahorwath-gp@ndp.on.ca); [jburch-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jburch-co@ndp.on.ca); [fhassan-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:fhassan-co@ndp.on.ca); [trakocevic-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:trakocevic-gp@ndp.on.ca); [mstiles-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:mstiles-gp@ndp.on.ca); [clover-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:clover-co@ndp.on.ca); [jbelle-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbelle-gp@ndp.on.ca); [jandrew-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jandrew-gp@ndp.on.ca); [smorrison-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:smorrison-gp@ndp.on.ca); [tabunsp-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:tabunsp-gp@ndp.on.ca); [rberns-mcgown-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:rberns-mcgown-gp@ndp.on.ca); [dbequm-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:dbequm-gp@ndp.on.ca); [mmantha-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:mmantha-gp@ndp.on.ca); [qsingh-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:qsingh-gp@ndp.on.ca); [pmiller-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:pmiller-gp@ndp.on.ca); [mtaylor-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:mtaylor-gp@ndp.on.ca); [sshaw-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:sshaw-co@ndp.on.ca); [gbourgouin-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:gbourgouin-gp@ndp.on.ca); [smamakwa-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:smamakwa-gp@ndp.on.ca); [iarthur-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:iarthur-gp@ndp.on.ca); [llindo-gp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:llindo-gp@ndp.on.ca); [Jaime.Tellier.Tamara.Chipperfield@cvc.ca](mailto:Jaime.Tellier.Tamara.Chipperfield@cvc.ca); [qbivol@npca.ca](mailto:qbivol@npca.ca); [espencer@grandriver.ca](mailto:espencer@grandriver.ca); [admin@hrca.on.ca](mailto:admin@hrca.on.ca)  
**Subject:** Protecting Ontario's Wetlands  
**Date:** Monday, March 20, 2023 11:47:55 AM

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PLEASE!

**We need to act now to protect wetlands in Hamilton and across Ontario!**

Major Ontario wetlands are threatened by changes to their protected status in Ontario. Doug Ford's provincial Progressive Conservative government has drastically changed the long-standing Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES).

OWES was designed in 1980 as a federal-Ontario joint project and therefore the federal government must intervene to preserve it. The key outcome of establishing OWES was identifying Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs) and their legislated protection. PSWs in the Hamilton area include the Beverly Swamp, the Wainfleet Bog, Fletcher Creek Fens and Cootes Paradise, all of which have been identified as "wetland complexes".

The major changes made by the Ford government to OWES include:

- Abolishing the Wetland Complexes and Locally Significant Wetland categories.
- Removing the presence of endangered species as a factor.
- Removing oversight by provincial ministries of decisions affecting wetlands.
- Eliminating input from Conservation Authorities and other recognized experts, resulting in oversight limited to municipalities without ecological expertise.
- Delegating wetland evaluation to any private company that has taken a five-day training course, the consequence of which is that developers will be able to effectively decide whether a particular wetland has any importance.

The federal government is responsible for: Protecting endangered species and fish habitats; Ensuring Indigenous rights and promoting reconciliation; Taking the lead on climate action; Providing bailouts for damage caused by major flooding and extreme weather events.

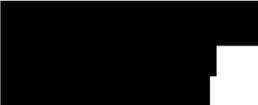
The federal government recently hosted COP 15 and signed the UN Convention on Biodiversity, committing to 30-by-30 (protection of at least 30 percent of Canada's lands and waters by 2030).

Challenging Ontario's dismantling of OWES is a must to keep this promise.

Please add your voice to demands for federal action.

Sincerely,

**Ellen Tolmie**



Toronto Ontario M4Y 1M3

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Jaime Tellier](mailto:Jaime.Tellier); [Tamara.Chipperfield@cvc.ca](mailto:Tamara.Chipperfield@cvc.ca); [gbivol@npca.ca](mailto:gbivol@npca.ca); [espencer@grandriver.ca](mailto:espencer@grandriver.ca); [admin@hrca.on.ca](mailto:admin@hrca.on.ca)  
**Subject:** Letters to the Federal Government??  
**Date:** Monday, March 20, 2023 10:55:15 AM

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Dear Conservation Authorities,

I am one of your biggest fans!! I tell everyone about the wonderful work that you do to keep us safe and to protect our drinking water. I know you are patrolling flood waters at night, while the rest of us sleep peacefully in our beds.

I am always surprised that so few people know that Ontario is the only province lucky enough to have Conservation Authorities – the only province to have experts like you, with decades of experience and knowledge, to make our homes and cities safer. Many thanks for all that you do, on a daily basis.

I know that the provincial government has made a terrible mistake in limiting your oversight, your permitting regulations, your advice to municipalities. Flooding, erosion, lack of clean drinking water are only a few of the risks that citizens now face as a result of Premier Ford's decision to reduce your capabilities. I also know that writing to the provincial ministers is a waste of time as they will blindly follow where Ford leads.

Consequently, I ask you to please write to the members of the Federal government, both local MPs and Ministers, such as Steven Guilbault, to request their intervention in Ford's decisions. The federal government is responsible for the protection of endangered species and of fish habitat (both of which are now threatened by Ford's new regulations) so they have the moral obligation AND the legal jurisdiction to repeal Bill 23 and its adjacent rules, e.g. the gutting of the Greenbelt. Also, OWES originated as a joint Federal-Ontario project so the fact that it will now be misused by self-proclaimed experts should be of grave concern to Federal government officials. The Environment and Climate Change are also part of Minister Guilbault's portfolio.

There are many reasons that the Federal government should intervene swiftly to stop unsafe developments, **especially in view of the climate crisis**. I am sure you can write very convincing, comprehensive letters to members of the federal government to request their immediate interference with Ford's plans to put the province in jeopardy. We must escalate the issues at this point. Write to PM Trudeau! I'm sure you have seen the new television commercials and Facebook ads where the Feds tout the value of wetlands and grasslands. If they are earnest in this appeal, they must intervene.

Sorry for the length of this e-mail. I live in Dundas, just below the Ancaster Hill and we already see evidence of development in the area around the airport. Trees are being clear cut and there is no plan to preserve any natural features; it is all about \$\$\$'s. There is an urgency here as trees have already been razed and excavators are on site.

Thank you for all that you have done and will do in the future to stem the destruction of our natural heritage.

Regards,  
Marie Covert

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# CITY OF HAMILTON NOTICE OF MOTION

City Council: March 29, 2023

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR T. JACKSON.....**

**Request that the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry Reconsider the Ministry’s Decision respecting the composition of the Hamilton Conservation Board of Directors**

WHEREAS the Hamilton Conservation Authority has long been supported by engaged citizens which enrich the Board of Directors, and all participating municipalities agree to the value of citizen representatives on the Hamilton Conservation Authority Board;

WHEREAS the City of Hamilton sought an exemption to certain sections of the *Conservation Authorities Act* which require 70% of representation from the City be members of Council to ensure that citizen representatives would continue to provide value and continuity to the conservation authority;

WHEREAS the City of Hamilton requested 50% of their representatives be City Councillors and the remainder be citizen representations.

WHEREAS recent correspondence from the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry in denial of this request, and there is no formal appeal process in the *Act*;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That Council appeal to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to approve the City of Hamilton’s original request (50% of their representatives be City Councillors and the remainder be citizen representations).

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# 8.1

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT HAMILTON CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



## Our Vision

A healthy watershed for everyone.

## Our Mission

To lead in the conservation of our watershed and connect people to nature.

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## 2022 HCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### MUNICIPALITY

City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Hamilton  
 Township of Puslinch

### MEMBER

Councillor Lloyd Ferguson, Chair  
 Santina Moccio, Vice-Chair & Acting Chair  
 November 2022  
 Dan Bowman  
 Jim Cimba  
 Cynthia Janzen  
 Maria Topalovic  
 Councillor Brad Clark  
 Councillor Tom Jackson  
 Councillor Esther Pauls  
 Councillor Russ Powers  
 Susan Fielding

# MESSAGE FROM HCA'S CAO & ACTING CHAIR

We are pleased to present our annual report for 2022. We have so much to celebrate in terms of what we accomplished last year in all of our strategic plan priority areas, even as we adapted to legislative changes at year end and coped with lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic early in the year.

We were very excited to reach a milestone in the development of the new Saltfleet Conservation Area on Hamilton's east mountain with the completion of the first of four wetland areas located in the upper Stoney Creek and Battlefield watersheds. These wetlands will reduce the impacts of flooding and erosion in lower Stoney Creek and further the long-term vision of the entire Saltfleet Conservation Area which will provide increased natural areas, additional trails and recreation opportunities for the public and protect property and residents downstream. The Heritage Green Community Trust has been a key contributor to the Saltfleet Conservation Area and wetlands. A new trail, named the Heritage Green Community Trust (HGCT) Trail, gives visitors a view of the eastern wetland from the top of the berms that surround it, and connects the area to the Dofasco 2000 Trail, an 11.5-kilometre path for both hikers and cyclists.

2022 also saw the advancement of many other projects on HCA conservation area lands including the completion of cabins at Valens Lake available for reservation in 2023, upgrades to the boat launch ramp at Fifty Point, significant internal roadway enhancements, and many improvements to trails and bridges across our conservation areas.

We ceased the long running Christie Antique and Vintage Show following the two-year COVID interruption. Increasing costs to run the show and the unprecedented surge of public interest in enjoying our conservation areas in their natural state made it the logical decision to step away. We were able to welcome the return of the Maple Syrup event at Westfield and outdoor environmental education classes. We were also thrilled to reopen the Wild Waterworks waterpark which we manage for the City of Hamilton, overcoming the challenge of a national lifeguard shortage by holding our first ever in-house training course to help train and certify new lifeguards.

We undertook key watershed restoration projects with significant progress made regarding removal, mapping and management of invasive species. We also acquired additional lands for the Saltfleet Conservation Area. We continued to protect people and property by undertaking natural hazard projects including updated floodplain mapping and enhancements to our dams.

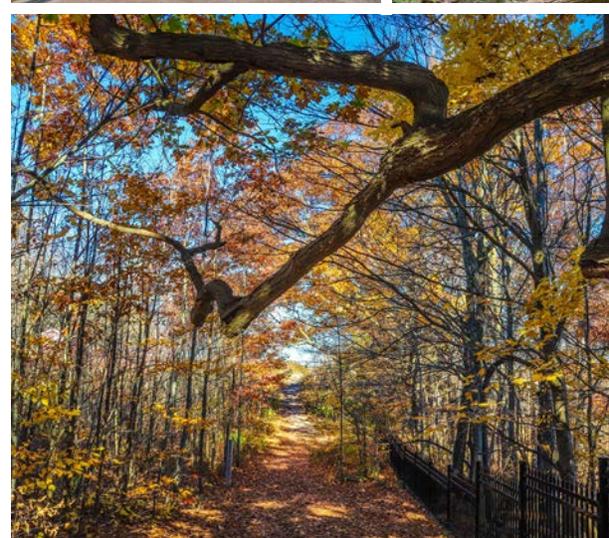
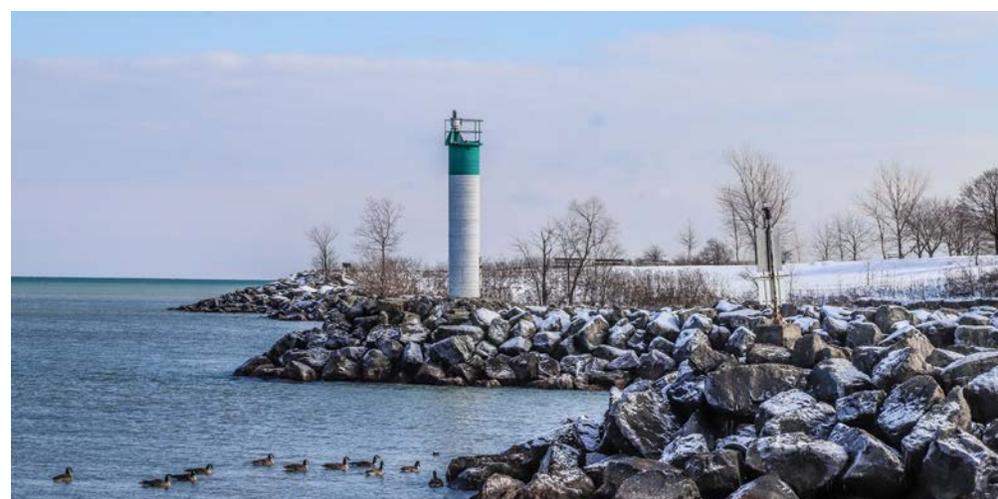
Following the municipal election, we bid farewell to City of Hamilton councillors who were board members: Lloyd Ferguson, Tom Jackson, Esther Pauls and Russ Powers. We thank those City of Hamilton councillors for their dedication and contributions. We also welcomed our new City of Hamilton councillors to our board: Craig Cassar, Matt Francis, Alex Wilson, and Maureen Wilson.

We have received much acknowledgment and appreciation for all we do at HCA and the value and protection it provides to local communities. We are resilient and confident that we can successfully adapt to any changes or challenges that may come our way. Through the efforts of our dedicated board and hard-working staff, we continue to deliver the important programs and services which support our vision of a healthy watershed for everyone.

**Lisa Burnside, CAO**

**Santina Moccio, Acting Chair**







## Organizational Excellence

Organizational Excellence is focused on ensuring corporate and financial viability and the HCA's relevance in the community.

### HCA WEBSITE STATISTICS

- Users: 561,987
- Sessions: 782,691
- Page Views: 1,491,130
- Devices:
- Mobile: 68%
- Desktop: 30%
- Tablet: 2%

There were 17 media releases sent out related to our various programs.

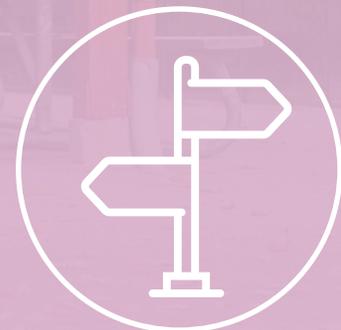
HCA was mentioned in 433 news articles in 2022.

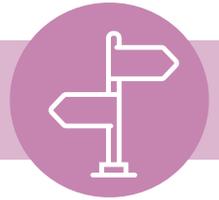
### HCA SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

- Facebook – 22,489
- Twitter – 9,080
- Instagram – 12,045
- LinkedIn – 2,615

### HCA FINANCIAL STATISTICS

- 65% of operating revenue is self-generated.
- Top three self-generated revenue sources continue to be gate admission, marina operations and camping fees.



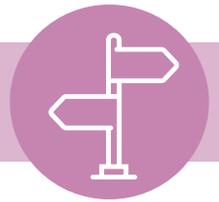


## 2022 Highlights

- Successful grant applications which resulted in \$541,065.13 for projects such as the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project, stewardship work, summer student positions and Westfield Heritage Village programs.
- Supported a dynamic work culture, safe working environments, professional development, and effectiveness of staff through:
  - Revising and updating eight existing safe working procedures and creating two new procedures for the safety of staff.
  - Providing health and safety training related to First Aid, Chainsaw use, Brush Chipper operation, Trenching Safety Awareness, Mobile Elevated Work Platform training, Confined Space Entry and Working at Heights training.
  - Creating new employee training videos to help orient all new staff on HCA and our membership pass program.
  - Undertaking a mental health and resiliency workshop for HCA managers and supervisors.
  - Providing a health and wellness lunch and learn session for staff on “Breaking Down Mental Health Barriers and Managing Stress”.
  - Recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous awareness workshops for all HCA staff at Westfield. HCA staff were provided orange shirts with a design by local Indigenous artist Kyle Joedicke.
  - Initiated discussions in late 2022 regarding the development of a Land Acknowledgment unique to the HCA which is anticipated to be implemented in 2023.
- Held our inaugural HCA Staff Social at the Dundas Trail Centre. It was great for staff to interact and catch up in person as pandemic restrictions eased.
- Participated in the consultation/commenting process regarding proposed legislative changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*.
- Hosted 26 film shoots at various HCA conservation areas, providing revenue for those areas.
- Refreshed HCA’s Membership Pass program for 2022 with new rewards and a new look.
- Introduced online gift cards that can be used to buy HCA Memberships, or make reservations for camping, pavilions, and events.



# ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE



- Completed 20 blogs, eight photoshoots and five video shoots to help communicate both internally and externally about what HCA does and why. Photoshoots included the reopening of Saltfleet Conservation Area, special events at Westfield Heritage Village, invasive species work, and stewardship projects. The photoshoots both document the work carried out, and give HCA materials to be able to share that work with the public.
- Increased effective communication and engagement by using Bang the Table, an online stakeholder engagement tool on projects such as our pilot trail app while in the development stages and components of the Saltfleet Conservation Area's Master Plan.
  - Over 1,200 people visited the HCA Bang the Table site, [www.conservationtalkhca.ca](http://www.conservationtalkhca.ca).
  - 196 respondents completed surveys.
  - 370 people were informed, by downloading documents, utilizing site tools like key dates, or visiting multiple project pages.
  - 971 people visited at least one project page.
- Streamlined policies to enhance business service delivery including:
  - Endorsing an Inventory of Programs and Services to guide our compliance with the *Conservation Authority Act* regulations.
  - Implementing Right to Disconnect and Electronic Monitoring policies to guide our compliance with updates to the *Employment Standards Act*.
- Continued our efforts to modernize HCA's records management systems by:
  - Creating new procedures to document the disposition of records according to our policy and industry standards.
  - Initiating development of a file classification scheme for HCA's records. This system will complement and facilitate implementation of HCA's records retention schedule.
- Collaborated and shared services and expertise through numerous forums and working groups with neighbouring conservation authorities and other partners. HCA staff participated, presented and assisted with the organization of events.
- Undertook a network assessment to identify priorities for modernization of our IT infrastructure, which resulted in a number of network upgrades.



# Water Management

Water Management is undertaken to protect the watershed for people, property, flora and fauna, and natural resources through flood and erosion control, water quality programs, low flow augmentation and adaption strategies to adapt to changing climatic conditions.

## SECTION 28 CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT PERMIT PROCESSING

- 87 Total Permits
- 31 Total Major Permits
- 94% of Major Permit applications were processed within the required time period
- 56 Total Minor Permits
- 88% of Minor Permit applications were processed within the required time period (based on the 2010 MNRF standard, per our Client Service Commitment)
- 48% of major permits and 50% of minor permits were processed within 2019 CO recommended standards

## NUMBER OF WATERSHED CONDITION STATEMENTS / MESSAGES

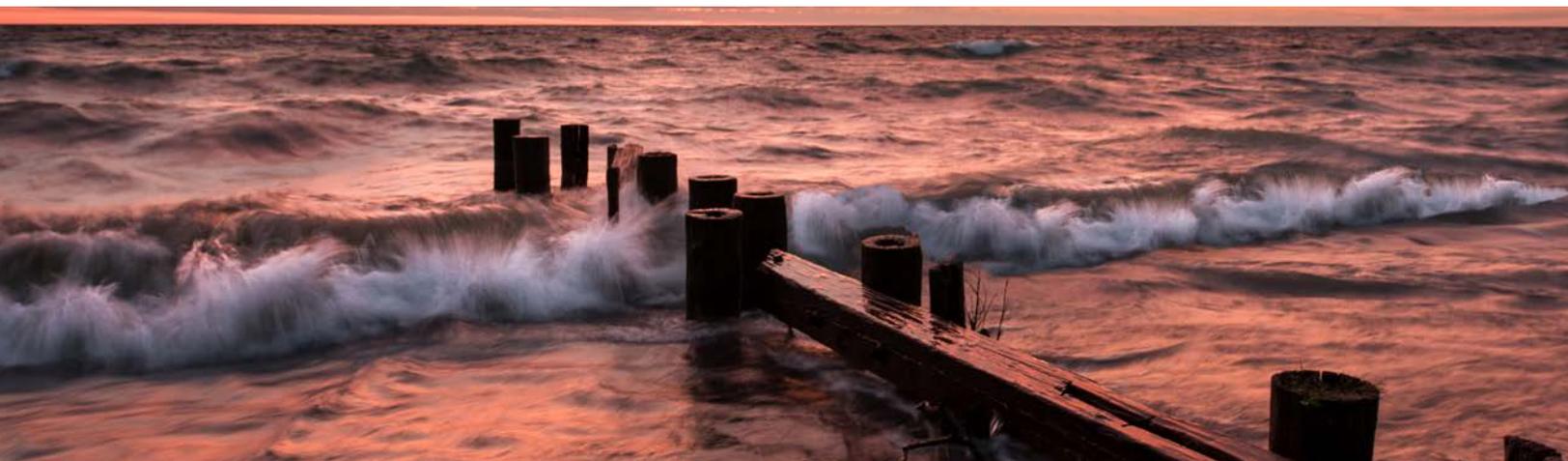
- Water Safety: 3
- Flood Outlook: 0
- Flood Watch: 5
- Flood Warning: 1
- Flood Outlook – Lake Ontario Shoreline: 0
- Flood Watch – Lake Ontario Shoreline: 2
- Termination Messages (Return to normal watershed conditions): 7
- Low Water Level 1: Summer
- Low Water Level 2: Fall





## 2022 Highlights

- Worked with consultants on floodplain mapping for: Red Hill Creek, Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek. Floodplain mapping is key in HCA's review of planning and permit applications to direct development outside of hazardous areas. The eastern end of the watershed will now have completed and updated floodplain mapping.
- Worked with consultants to undertake a Lake Ontario and Hamilton Harbour Shoreline Plan. This work will:
  - Identify hazards associated with lake related flooding and erosion.
  - Provide information regarding existing shoreline protection measures and near shore characteristics, allowing for a better understanding of how the shoreline functions.
  - Assist with reviewing shoreline development proposals, shoreline protection measures, and will assist in directing development to safe location, away from hazardous areas.
- Enhanced flood control infrastructure with projects at Christie Lake and Valens Lake related to:
  - Installation and operation of a new safety boom for the dam at Christie Lake.
  - Installation of new fencing and signage at both Christie Lake and Valens Lake for public safety enhancement.
- The water quality monitoring program continues to assess our long-term watershed health as it relates to water quality for surface water and groundwater with the following program work undertaken:
  - Monitoring for the provincial surface water and groundwater quality monitoring network.
  - Surface water quality monitoring for the Cootes Paradise contributing watercourses.
  - The above program work feeds into the provincial water quality monitoring network and the HCA's work with the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan.
  - Working with the City of Hamilton, staff completed erosion monitoring of local watercourses to determine the impacts of erosion and potential restoration areas.
- Continued to invest in monitoring programs and networks including assessing impacts of nutrient and sediment loading through:
  - Provincial water quality and groundwater quality monitoring completed for seven surface water sites and nine groundwater sites.
  - Annual City of Hamilton water monitoring projects including groundwater well inspections and groundwater well water quality sampling at 72 wells (33 sampled in year one, 39 sampled in year two) and erosion monitoring at 15 sites.





## Natural Heritage Conservation

Natural Heritage Conservation is the conservation, restoration and enhancement of watershed natural areas and ecology.

Forestry staff removed over 870 hazard trees and pruned an additional 60 with the majority of hazards continuing to be ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash Borer beetle.

### INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT ON HCA PROPERTIES

- Managed 23 species over 13 Conservation Areas.
- Controlled 11,215 invasive trees and shrub mechanically and chemically.
- Controlled 2.9 hectares of invasive herbaceous plants mechanically and chemically.
- Removed 102 industrial sized garbage bags of invasive herbaceous plants.
- Treated 2.2 hectares of non-native phragmites.
- Removed approximately 3389 Spongy Moth (LDD) egg masses and 1648 caterpillars from five conservation areas.
- Held five invasive removal events on HCA land.
- Hosted our Hamilton invasive species workshop which brings together all organizations that work with invasive species within the City of Hamilton.





## 2022 Highlights

- Implemented and invested in the further development of the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project to offset the impacts of climate change:
  - Completed a milestone with the construction of the first of four wetlands and the opening of the area to the public.
  - Secured an additional 50 acres of land key to the project.
  - Initiated design work for the second and third wetlands.
- Carried out invasive species control and removal strategies in our watershed including:
  - Undertook monitoring and removal for Spongy Moth (formerly LDD moth).
  - 64 plots and 26 trails were surveyed at Felker's Falls, Dundas Valley, Iroquoia Heights, Borer's Falls, Westfield Heritage Village, and Valens Lake Conservation Areas.
  - Egg masses were scraped by staff and volunteers from trees of concern at Valens Lake, Christie Lake, Dundas Valley and Westfield and burlap was also put up on trees as a preventative measure.
  - Finished photo monitoring with a significant difference in defoliation compared to 2021.
  - Piloted an independent volunteer effort scraping egg masses along the Dundas Valley trails, and scraped over 2,330 egg masses.
- Mapping of phragmites completed with 22 new populations mapped.
- Sprayed 5.4 acres of phragmites from 58 different populations across eight conservation areas. Began cutting to drown phragmites at Valens Lake and Fletcher Creek where we are unable to chemically treat.
- Specific invasive species removals were completed as follows:
  - Dog strangling vine was treated at five locations across HCA, and three bags of pods were removed from where we were unable to chemically treat.
  - Six populations of Japanese Knotweed were treated chemically and mechanically. 61 bags of knotweed were removed in the process.
  - Dug out a small population of over 70 stems of Wild Parsnip at Fifty Point.
  - Treated 513 Tree of Heavens within Dundas Valley and Spencer Gorge.
- Stewardship work on Invasive Species:
  - Four Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Programs (WQHIP) projects on private lands, controlling phragmites and Japanese Knotweed.
  - Worked with 26 private landowners related to invasive species on their properties.
  - Held 11 invasive removal events at nine different properties.
  - Managed 14 species, removing over 4200 plants and nine garbage bags of herbaceous plant material.
  - Hosted a virtual invasive species workshop for the public focusing on the identification and control of species.
- A volunteer invasive removal event was held in the spring, focusing on hundreds of buckthorns and roses on private landowners' agricultural property in the headwaters of Sulphur Creek.
- Continued and expanded aquatic and terrestrial monitoring programs to assess watershed health and assist with HCA land management:
  - Conducted winter hawk and owl surveys as well as spring bird and waterfowl surveys at the Hamilton Mountain Conservation Areas. The spring surveys revealed 2,888 individuals and 30 species of birds (ten species of waterfowl) observed. Highlights included Cackling Goose, Blue-winged Teal, and Wilson's Snipe.



- Conducted forest regeneration and deer browse surveys in Dundas Valley.
  - Monitored the beaver dams and beaver activity at Fifty Point, Lower Spencer Creek, Spring Creek, Ancaster Creek, and Crooks' Hollow.
  - Completed frog surveys at Christie Lake, Windermere Basin and East Mountain in addition to benthic sampling for annual and year 1 sites for the Aquatic Resources Monitoring Program (ARMP).
  - Conducted ecological land classification (ELC) surveys on Hamilton Mountain Conservation Area properties in support of master plan projects.
  - Initiated engineering related monitoring and ecological photo monitoring at the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetlands Project to assess function and document changes over time.
  - Completed monitoring at ten forest health monitoring plots across the watershed.
- Enhanced natural heritage features with plantings across our watershed including:
    - Installed 225 live stakes made from cut down dogwoods into Spencer Creek, where phragmites control have taken place over the last two years.
    - At least ten different types of native plant seeds have been collected by Ecology staff across the watershed and redistributed to areas where invasive species removals have occurred to encourage regeneration.
    - Planted over 1,700 trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants with volunteers on four separate projects, in two sub-watersheds (Spring and Sulphur Creek). All were directly or indirectly adjacent to HCA conservation lands.
    - Delivered "Soil Safari", an interactive workshop, on the importance of soil to students at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre. This event was hosted by the Compost Council of Canada.
    - Seven Ecocise events were held by our Stewardship staff, with volunteers learning about common invasive species in the watershed and how to effectively remove them.

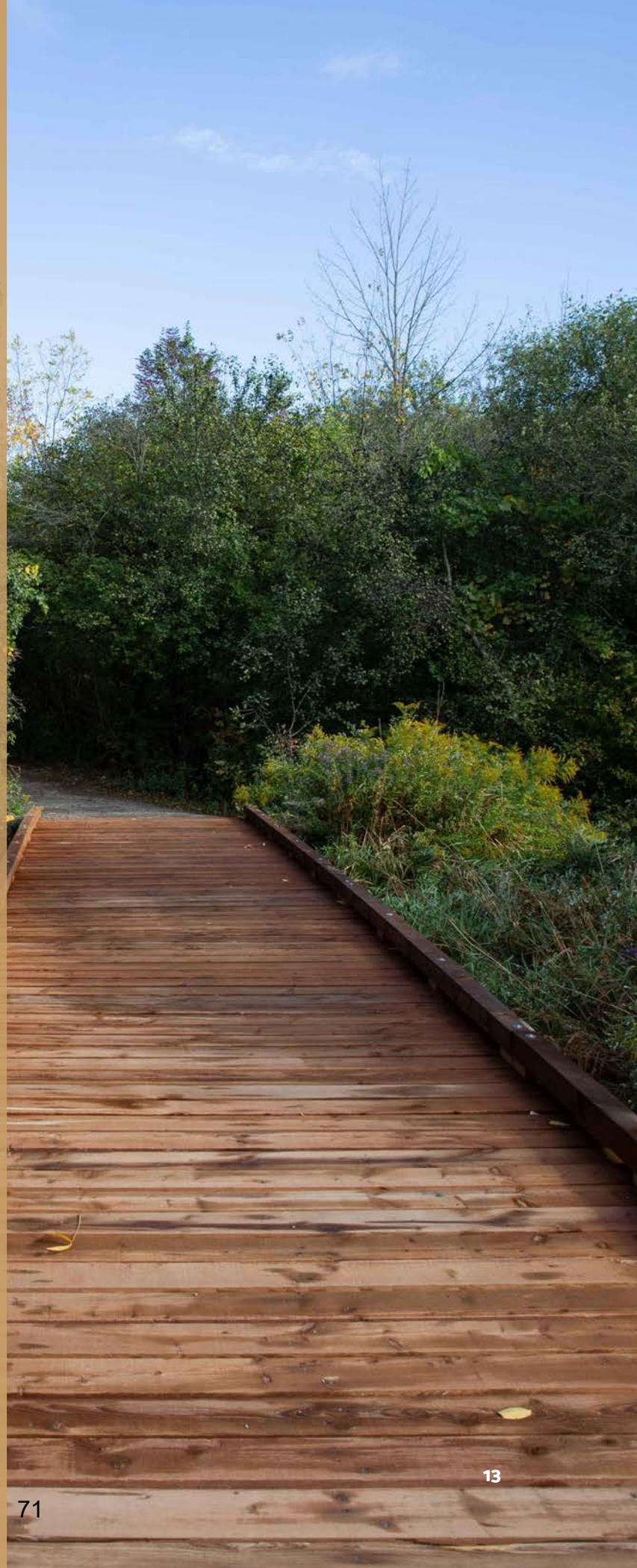


## Conservation Area Experience

Conservation Area Experience is the provision of high quality, diverse conservation areas that promote outdoor recreation, health and well-being and strengthen public awareness of the importance of being in or near our conservation areas.

### HCA welcomed over 1.7 million visitors to our conservation areas in 2022

- 50 acres of land acquired to expand our landholdings for the Saltfleet Conservation Area and contribute towards the Saltfleet Wetland Restoration Project.
- Westfield's first Christmas event since the pandemic "Christmas in the Woods" sold out all 858 reservations.
- Fifty Point was awarded a Diamond rating by the Clean Marine Eco-Rating Program. Marinas voluntarily join the program to participate in a 220-point assessment.
- Valens Lake cabins were completed. Eight cabins will be available for reservation in 2023.





## 2022 Highlights

- Completed and adopted the Fifty Point Conservation Area Master Plan with the work being done in house by HCA staff.
- Spencer Gorge Conservation Area reservation service successfully continued to manage visitations, bringing visitors to Dundas Peak, Tew Falls and Webster Falls. 7,435 reservations were made on weekends and holidays throughout the spring and summer, and daily through the fall colour season.
- Invested in projects to enhance and expand recreation experiences including:
  - Installed new fencing at Webster Falls and Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Areas.
  - Upgraded the Crooks' Hollow trail system with gravel, a new more accessible entrance, and culverts to divert water in areas where the trail would rut regularly.
  - Created and installed new interpretive signage at the Dundas Valley Trail Center which are featured throughout the building. These signs inform patrons of the trails, as well as providing information on wildlife in the Valley.
  - Installed a new bridge at Tiffany Falls as well as trail and parking lot upgrades.
  - Installed a Mobi-Matt at the Christie Lake beach, providing accessible wheelchair access to the water.
  - Installed new kayak launcher at Christie Lake.
  - Added a second seasonal side entrance to Fifty Point Conservation Area on Kelson Road for HCA Members as part of a pilot project. The entrance was used at peak times to alleviate long lines and traffic congestion at the main entrance.
  - Completed dredging of the Fifty Point marina channel to ensure clear and safe passage for boaters.
  - Newly constructed boat ramp at Fifty Point was completed, upgrading the marina's original interlock ramp from 1984.
  - Initiated planning work for the west campground expansion at Valens Lake.
  - Enhanced 1.8km of existing trails at Westfield, along with finalizing designs on 2.4km of new trails, including three bridges over water crossings which will be completed in 2023.
  - Improved over 175m of the Dofasco 2000 Trail boardwalk with new material, with the remaining 200m of the boardwalk replacement work currently underway and nearing completion.
  - Created and installed new interpretive signage for the Hermitage Ruins in Dundas Valley, detailing the history and restoration of the site.
  - Renovated several area offices including for the Hamilton Mountain, Confederation Beach Park, and Westfield Heritage Village. A new storage yard was also completed for the Hamilton Mountain Conservation Areas.
  - Christie Lake entrance road was rebuilt, ensuring a smoother entrance for visitors.
  - Wild Waterworks reopened with an upgraded point of sale system following a two-year pause caused by the pandemic.



# CONSERVATION AREA EXPERIENCE



- Deer harvest agreement with the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority was renewed for a further three years.
- Rolled out online bookings for pavilions at Christie Lake and Valens Lake Conservation Areas.
- With the eased COVID restrictions many large-scale events returned to the conservation areas throughout the year, including trail races, fundraisers, “learn to fish” activity, school cross-country meets, and more.
- HCA held six bird hikes in the spring and fall, and also saw the return of Films in the Forest at Fifty Point, with screenings of Luca in July and Jurassic World Dominion in September.
- Westfield Heritage Village introduced a new reservation system to manage visitor numbers and ensure an enjoyable experience for those attending their events. 2022 weekly Sunday programs and large events returned, including Maple Syrup, Fairies in the Forest, Halloween Pumpkin Party, and Christmas in the Woods.
- The 2022-2023 winter camping program at Valens Lake was sold out shortly after it opened for registration with 60 campers participating.





## Education & Environmental Awareness

Education and Environmental Awareness is the opportunity to provide outdoor learning experiences for students, teachers, and the community, increasing knowledge and awareness of the value of our environment and heritage.

### TOP STUDENT QUESTIONS POSED TO OUR OUTDOOR EDUCATORS REFLECTING THEIR CURIOSITY AND INTEREST IN THE ENVIRONMENT:

- Other than squirrels, what animals hide food for the winter?
- What is the top predator in the Dundas Valley?
- How often do evergreen trees drop their needles?

### CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF ALL HCA VOLUNTEER EVENTS:

- A total of 30 volunteer events were hosted, with organizations such as Mohawk College, Guest Plumbing, Carmen's, Rotary Club, MTE Consulting, Nature Canada, and Kin Canada
- 547 volunteers participated for a total of 1,318.5 hours
- Approximately 291 lbs of garbage was collected and removed at clean-up events
- Volunteers helped our ecology team plant 2,071 native species and remove 2.54 hectares of invasive species

### WESTFIELD HERITAGE VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS:

- 102 volunteers provided over 6,400 volunteer hours towards programs and upkeep of the historical buildings





## 2022 Highlights

- HCA Outdoor Education staff offered a series of teacher training sessions, along with the regular scheduled virtual bookings. Teachers who wanted to utilize their own school yards for outdoor education were assisted with curriculum programs such as: Plants and Animals, Habitats and Communities, Biodiversity, Seed Saving, and Climate Impacts.
- A new HCA-HWDSB contract was negotiated for another five years of programming. The agreement included three key programming options for the teachers when booking with the HCA. These included in person programming in the Dundas Valley, and options for online and mobile session with HCA staff attending the schools.
- In September, schools could once again book their Environmental Education field trips with HCA. 63 classes and approximately 1,500 students came out by year end and students were eager to be on field trips for the first time in two years! Grade 8 students from Lake Avenue Public School were enthralled by the sighting of a young four point buck along the trail edge in the Dundas Valley.
- Westfield Heritage Village was able to restart their education programs. Teachers were eager to bring their students for the refreshed 'Down on the Farm' program. In total, 136 bookings were made for the program in 2022.
- Promoted the connection between environmental health and human wellness through the Healthy Hikes campaign to encourage residents to step into nature at our conservation areas.
- Stewardship staff worked with a student teacher studying at the University of Windsor and a local high school to produce bat boxes, turtle nest protectors and swallow boxes for Valens Lake.
- Provided stewardship programs for both urban and rural areas to help private landowners learn about how they can protect, enhance and restore natural areas and waterways on their properties:
  - One well decommissioned.
  - Two low impact development projects funded through stewardship program grants to support a permeable driveway and a rain garden which diverts 123,250 litres of stormwater annually.
  - Nine projects funded through the Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program.
  - Over 670 metres of riparian area improved.
  - Undertook habitat creation and enhancement for species at risk (Barn Swallow and Bobolink).



# MESSAGE FROM HAMILTON CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

## WHO WE ARE

The Hamilton Conservation Foundation protects and enhances natural and cultural legacies by raising and stewarding funds for the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

The Foundation raises funds in three key areas:

- Acquiring and Protecting Environmentally Sensitive Land.
- Teaching Children About Nature.
- Celebrating Cultural Heritage.

## 2022 AT A GLANCE

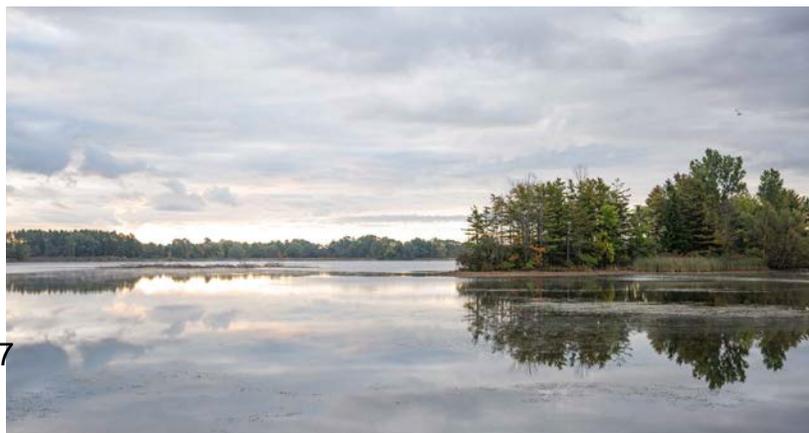
The Foundation raised a total of \$762,446 in our 2021-2022 fiscal year. The first installment on a \$2 million pledge from Heritage Green Community Trust contributed greatly to the Foundation's fundraising success this year.

The return of the Environmental Education Program to the outdoors also resulted in increased donations to the program which, together with generous support of our Unrestricted (Highest Priority) Fund, allowed us to continue to meet our commitment to fully fund HCA's Outdoor Environmental Education Program.

Because of our generous donors, the Foundation was able to contribute \$525,000 toward the construction of the first wetland at Saltfleet Conservation Area.

In addition, the Foundation was also able to contribute to improvements in several conservation areas, including trail upgrades at Crooks Hollow, the addition of horse hitching posts and an accessible fountain in Dundas Valley, bridge work at Tiffany Falls, accessible beach mats at Christie Lake, and interpretive signage at the Hermitage to highlight the restoration work done and funded in previous years. We were also able to fund a scope of work study for the restoration of the locomotive tender at Westfield Heritage Village.



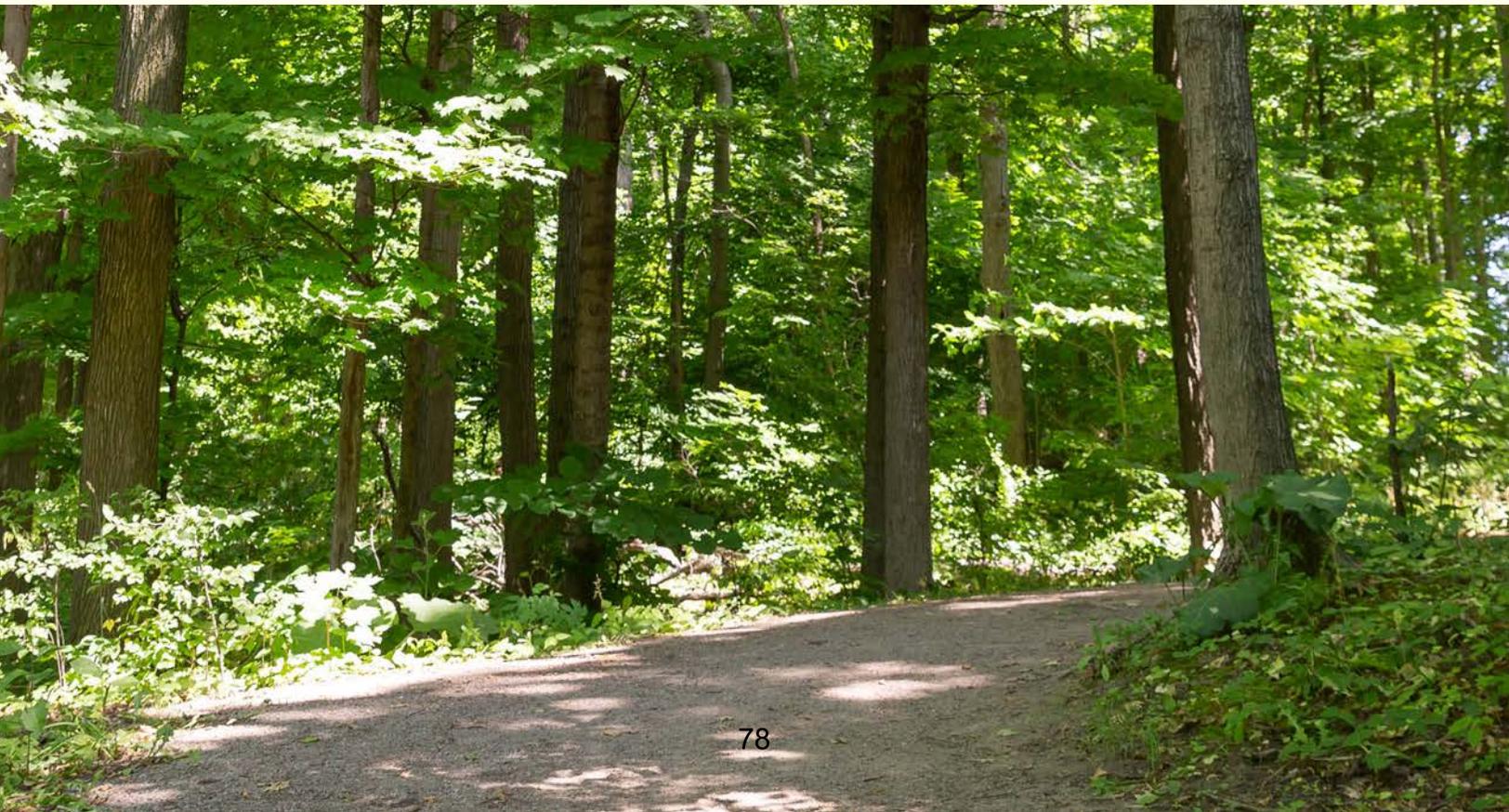




**Hamilton  
Conservation  
Authority**

A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

838 MINERAL SPRINGS ROAD  
P.O. BOX 81067  
ANCASTER, ONTARIO L9G 4X1  
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# Hamilton Conservation Authority

## Watershed Report Card 2023



Hamilton Conservation Authority has prepared this report card as a summary of the state of your forests, wetlands and water resources.



# WHERE ARE WE?



## What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land drained by a creek or stream into a river which then drains into a body of water such as a lake. Each of the streams or creeks within a watershed have their own sub-watersheds. Everything in a watershed is connected. Our actions upstream can affect conditions downstream.

## Why Measure?

Measuring helps us better understand our watershed. We can target work where it is needed and track progress. We measured:



**Groundwater Quality**



**Surface Water Quality**



**Forest Conditions**



**Wetland Conditions**

## GRADING

<b>A</b> Excellent
<b>B</b> Good
<b>C</b> Fair
<b>D</b> Poor
<b>F</b> Very Poor
Insufficient Data

## What is a watershed report card?

Ontario's Conservation Authorities report on watershed conditions every five years. The watershed report cards use Conservation Ontario guidelines and standards developed by Conservation Authorities and their partners.



# Hamilton Conservation Authority

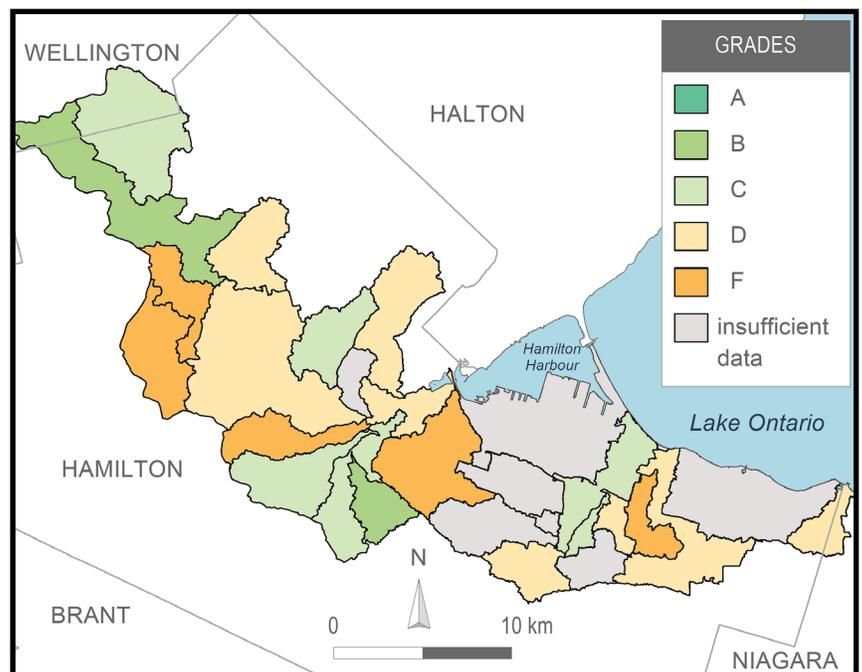
## SURFACE WATER QUALITY

Monitoring stream-water quality can help us understand the impacts of land-use activities on water quality, enabling us to make informed decisions about managing and protecting our water resources. We measured three indicators that reflect key issues related to surface water quality across the province: nutrients (total phosphorous), bacteria/waste (E. coli), and aquatic health (benthic macroinvertebrates).

Twenty-one subwatersheds within the greater Hamilton watershed had sufficient water quality indicator data in order to be included in this Watershed Report Card. This is an increase over the 2018 Watershed Report Card and is a result of increased monitoring efforts over the last several years.

### What Did We Find?

- Subwatersheds with higher grading tend to be in areas with more natural cover, including higher amounts of forest cover.
- Subwatersheds with lower grades tend to be in more urban or suburban areas due to reduced natural vegetation and a high level of impervious or paved surfaces.
- Grades for subwatersheds are as follows: two grade 'B', six grade 'C', eight grade 'D' and five grade 'F'.
- Five subwatersheds increased their grade from 2018, ten experienced a decrease and two remained the same.
- In some instances, the reported change in water quality could relate to the expansion of water quality and benthic monitoring programs to encompass more data than was contained within the 2018 Watershed Report Card, as well as improvements made to stormwater infrastructure and Low Impact Development initiatives.



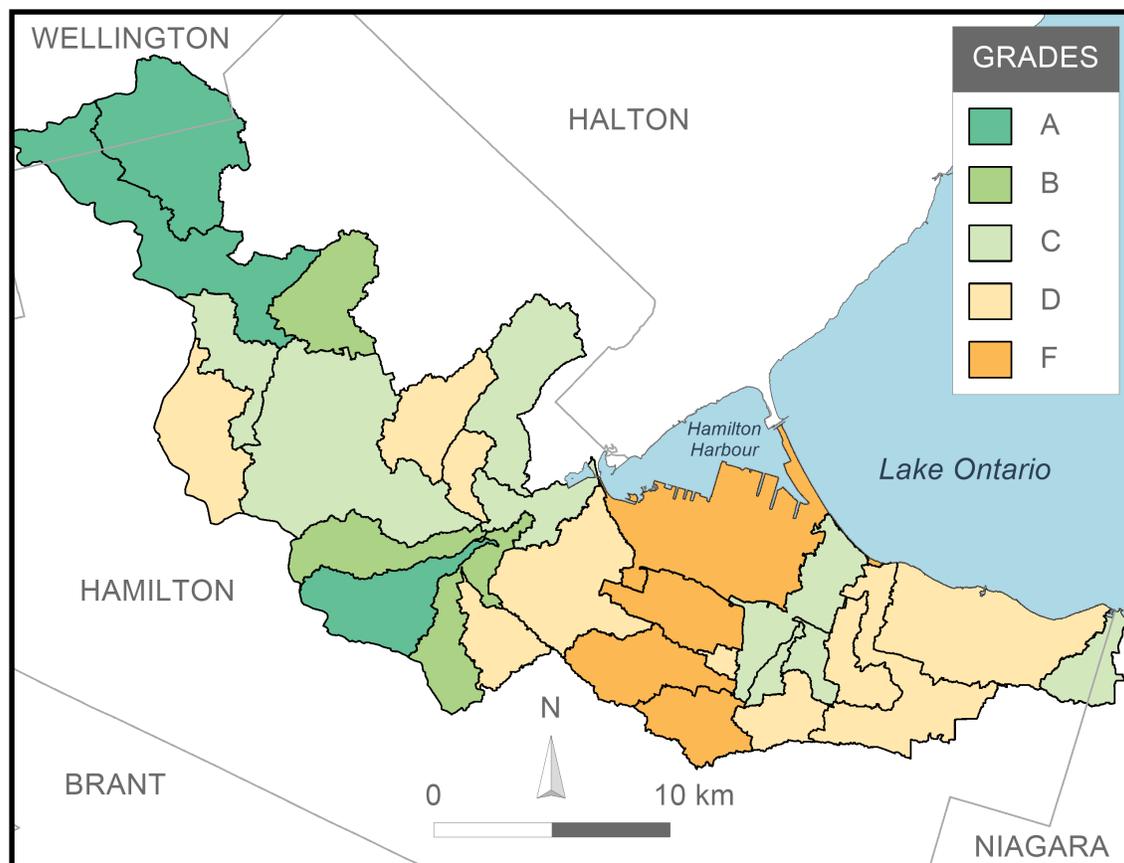


# Hamilton Conservation Authority **FOREST CONDITIONS**

Forests help to clean our air and water, provide habitat and shade, improve water infiltration, and help to reduce both erosion and flooding. Percentages of forest cover, forest interior (100m from the forest edge), and streamside cover were measured based on an analysis of aerial photographs using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and combined to provide a grade for twenty-eight subwatersheds. Windbreaks, street trees, shrublands, thickets, early successional woodlands and young plantations do not count as forest cover in this report card.

## What Did We Find?

- Large tracts of forest cover can be found in the areas of Dundas Valley, upper Flamborough and Puslinch.
- Subwatersheds with lower grades tend to be in urban, urbanizing and agricultural subwatersheds.
- Grades for subwatersheds are as follows: three grade 'A', three grade 'B', eight grade 'C', ten grade 'D' and four grade 'F'.





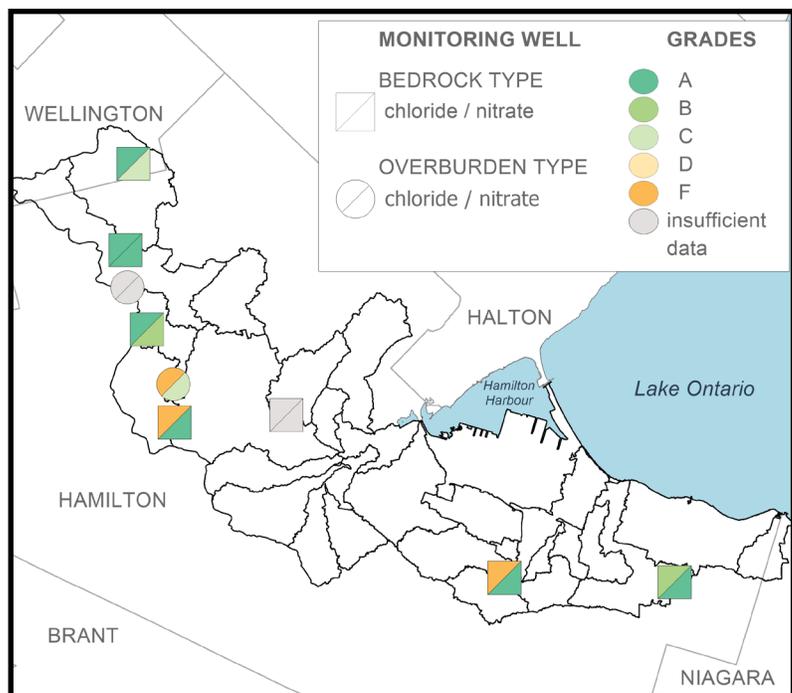
# Hamilton Conservation Authority **GROUNDWATER QUALITY**

Groundwater chemistry data is measured in order to protect groundwater sources. Concentrations of nitrate + nitrite as well as chloride were measured at seven Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks groundwater monitoring wells.

An important factor in assessing the results of a wells water quality is its depth. The Hamilton Conservation Authority differentiates its wells into two different categories; overburden and bedrock. Shallow overburden wells are generally underlain by bedrock, whereas bedrock wells are drilled deep below the ground into the underlying bedrock. Of the seven wells assessed in this Watershed Report Card, six are below bedrock and one is within the overburden. These wells are used for monitoring purposes only.

## What Did We Find?

- No change from 2018 grades.
- For nitrate + nitrite concentrations: four wells grade 'A', one well grade 'B' and two wells grade 'C'.
- For chloride concentrations: three wells grade 'A', one well grade 'B' and three wells grade 'F'.
- The overburden well near the former Beverley School received the lowest overall grade.
- The well with the best overall grade was in the heavily vegetated area of Beverley Swamp.
- Chloride concentrations at some monitoring wells approached or exceeded the drinking water standard or guideline.
- Although road salt is a commonly known source for chloride in groundwater, other sources are weathering of soils and salt-bearing geological formations.





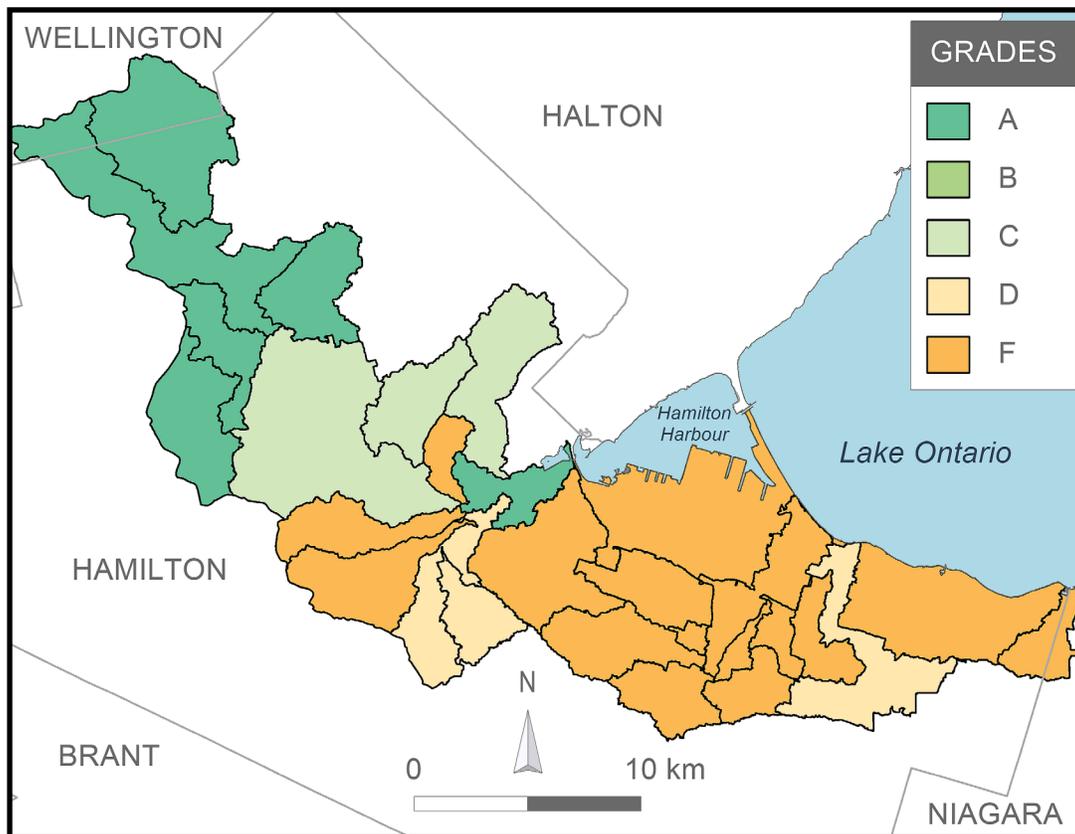
# Hamilton Conservation Authority

## WETLAND COVER

There are many benefits to wetlands including groundwater recharge and discharge. They filter water and store floodwaters during rain events. Wetlands are also areas of high biodiversity and productivity, providing habitat and food to many plant and animal species. Percentages of wetland cover was measured based on an analysis of aerial photographs using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to provide a grade for twenty-eight subwatersheds.

### What Did We Find?

- There are large wetland systems in the western portion of HCA's Watershed, such as some subwatersheds of Spencer Creek and Fletcher Creek.
- Subwatersheds with lower grades tend to be in urban, urbanizing and agricultural subwatersheds.
- Grades for subwatersheds are as follows: six grade 'A', zero grade 'B', three grade 'C', three grade 'D' and sixteen grade 'F'.

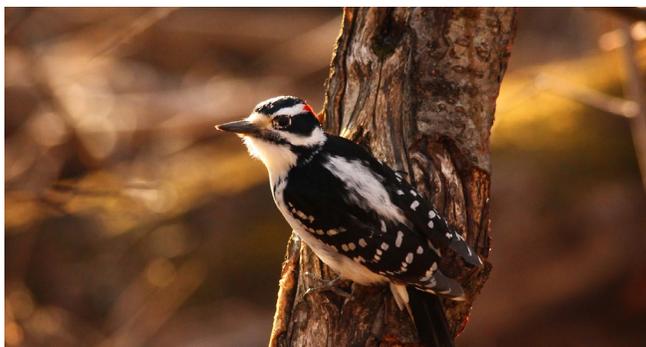


# WHAT IS OUR WATERSHED'S KEY ISSUE?



## Changing Climate

- In the Hamilton area, records show that our climate has changed over the last 40 years.
- Scientists attribute increasing temperatures to the burning of fossil fuels, such as gasoline from cars.
- The warmer atmosphere causes shifts in normal climate patterns and these changes can result in more severe weather and larger storms.
- With changing climate conditions there is potential for increased flooding along area watercourses and the Lake Ontario Shoreline.
- Climate change is impacting our local ecosystems and the wildlife within them. Extended drought, heat waves and milder winters with minimal snowfall and below freezing temperatures can result in the introduction of disease and invasive species.



## Urban Land Uses and Stormwater Runoff

- Water from rain or snow (known as stormwater) runs off hard surfaces, like buildings and pavement, into nearby sewers or streams.
- Stormwater runoff causes streams to become “flashy”, where stream flow quickly rises and falls because of urbanization.
- The high stream flows associated with stormwater result in streambank erosion.
- Stormwater is associated with poor water quality because it carries sediments and contaminants, such as road salt directly into streams.
- Flooding can occur as a result of overburdened municipal infrastructure.

## Invasive Species

- Invasive species are terrestrial or aquatic plants, animals, diseases or pests that threaten, harm or out-compete native species when introduced outside of their natural environment. Invasive species threaten Canada's ecosystems, economy and society.
- Invasive species can come from across the country or across the globe.
- Invasive species have been increasing and are recognized as one of the greatest threats to biodiversity.

# HOW CAN WE ENHANCE THE WATERSHED?



## What can you do?

### Support the need for:

- More natural areas like forests, wetlands, meadows, hedgerows, living fencerows, urban trees and parks to help provide recreation opportunities and improved mental health benefits for people, and to reduce stormwater runoff, flooding and erosion.
- Local environmental monitoring programs and ecological restoration initiatives on public and private lands.
- Inclusion of ecological linkages and stormwater low impact development in new and existing developments.
- Protection of existing natural areas like woodlots, thickets, shrublands, fields, valleys, streams, floodplains.

### Reduce:

- Stormwater runoff on your property by redirecting stormwater to permeable surfaces such as lawns and gardens.
- Nutrients entering streams by adopting agricultural best management practices.
- The amount of waste your household creates by purchasing products with limited packaging, re-using, composting and recycling.

### Take action by:

- Contacting the Hamilton Conservation Authority and the municipality to learn about services and programs for private property owners to help you manage your property in an ecologically conscious way.
- Never dumping anything down a storm drain.
- Properly disposing of harmful pollutants – check with the municipality for more information.
- Using alternatives to road salt and pesticides.
- Learning to identify and control invasive species on your property.
- Planting locally native trees, shrubs, and flowers in your property.
- Donating to the Hamilton Conservation Foundation.
- Getting involved and attending community meetings, joining groups and staying informed.
- Making your voice count and advocating for the environment.

The logo for the Watershed Report Card features a stylized blue and green leaf icon to the left of the text. The word "Watershed" is in blue and "Report Card" is in green.

## Watershed Report Card



*Do you have questions not answered by this document?  
Visit [conservationhamilton.ca](http://conservationhamilton.ca) or contact us for more information:*

**Hamilton Conservation Authority**

**838 Mineral Springs Rd, Ancaster, ON L9G 4X1**

**E-mail:** [nature@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:nature@conservationhamilton.ca) | **Website:** [conservationhamilton.ca](http://conservationhamilton.ca)

**Phone:** 905-525-2181

*The Watershed Report Card is available online and in other formats upon request.*

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# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

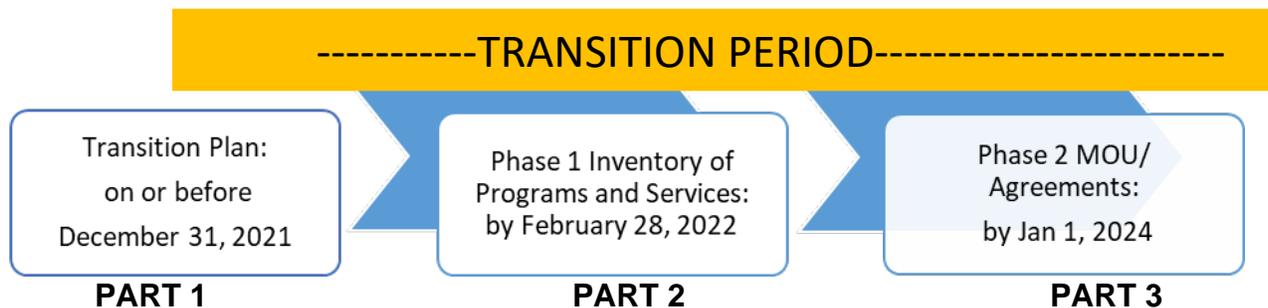
**MEETING DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** HCA Quarterly Report #4 to MNR – Ontario Regulation 687/21

## BACKGROUND

On October 7, 2021, Ontario Regulation 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services Under Section 21.1.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* was passed.

The key components and deadlines for [Transition Plan and Agreements Regulation \(O.Reg. 687/21\)](#) are illustrated in Figure 1 below. As required, HCA developed and approved a Transition Plan and Inventory of Programs and Services in Part 1 and Part 2 as noted below. The inventory is based on the three categories identified in the Regulation which include (1) Mandatory, (2) Municipally requested, and (3), Other programs and services an Authority determines are advisable.



HCA currently is in part 3 of the Transition period.

Six quarterly reports will be required in total with the fourth report required April 1, 2023. A final Conservation Authority report will be due January 31, 2024.

## STAFF COMMENT

As required under Ontario Regulation 687/21 and identified in HCA's Transition Plan, quarterly Progress Reports are required to be submitted. Under the Regulation the Progress Reports must include the following;

- a summary of any comments or feedback on your inventory that were submitted by your participating municipalities or by any others;
- a summary of any changes that were made to your inventory;
- an update on the progress towards negotiating cost apportioning agreements with your participating municipalities, including any difficulties you are experiencing that might impact the ability to conclude any cost apportioning agreements by the transition date;
- a copy of your updated inventory, clearly indicating changes that have been made since your initial inventory was submitted in February 2022.

Staff have prepared the attached report which was submitted April 1, 2023 to meet the fourth quarterly report deadline outlining the consultation steps that have been undertaken to date with our two participating municipalities, the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch.

The inventory has been well received and there have been no formal comments or concerns to date on the service areas and program areas included.

Municipal engagement and negotiations regarding Category 2 and 3 programs and services have been delayed by the introduction and passage of Bill 23 and additional amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. HCA did update its inventory of programs and services to reflect an amendment to a program in our core Watershed Based resource management strategy section, which was approved by the HCA Board of Directors at its March 2, 2023 meeting. This has been shared municipal staff.

Meetings between HCA and municipal staff are now beginning to be scheduled as we work towards securing MOUs with our two participating municipalities.

At this time, it is very possible for the need to request an extension to the January 1, 2024 deadline for having MOUs in place with participating municipalities. Staff will continue to re-assess whether an extension request may be required in 2023 and we will provide an update on these matters for the next quarterly report due July 1, 2023.

## STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The proposed updates refer directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019-2023:

- **Strategic Goal – Organizational Excellence**

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is no immediate financial impact, however, it should be noted that this undertaking will continue to involve significant time from staff, along with municipal partners.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Staff will continue to bring forward quarterly update reports to the Board of Directors and comply with the requirements of the Phase 1 regulations. Future update reports will be brought forward to the Board according to timelines that align with the following Progress Report deadlines set out in the Phase 1 regulations:

- July 1, 2023
- October 1, 2023

HCA staff will also continue to carry out discussions and review of our inventory, as well as MOU development with both participating municipalities.

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*HCA Quarterly Report #4 to the  
Ministry of Natural Resources and  
Forestry (MNRF)*

*As required for Conservation Authority Act  
Amendments*

[Transition Plan and Agreements Regulation \(O.Reg. 687/21\)](#)

*April 1, 2023*

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# HCA Quarterly Report #4 Details – April 1, 2023

## 1. HCA Engagement with City of Hamilton staff to review Inventory of Programs and Services and updates on municipal agreements

- Last meeting held March 20, 2023
- Review process continues with meetings being scheduled
- No formal comments or concerns regarding the Inventory have been received at this time

## HCA Engagement with Township of Puslinch staff to review Inventory of Programs and Services and updates on municipal agreements

- Last discussion March 7, 2023
- Review process continues with meetings being scheduled
- No formal comments or concerns regarding the Inventory have been received at this time

## 2. Summary of Changes to the Programs and Services Inventory

- HCA had noted in the Core Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy of its Inventory, a category 2 service related to municipal plan review not related to natural hazards. As a result of Bill 23, this one section of the existing inventory requires amendment and staff have noted a replacement category 2 and/or 3 program.

### Core Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy

<p><b>CW3</b>  <del>Plan Review not Related to Natural Hazards</del></p> <p><b>Watershed Monitoring Program</b></p>	<p><del>Technical information and advice to municipalities on circulated municipal land use planning applications (Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, Subdivisions, Consents, Minor Variances).</del></p> <p>Planning and undertaking an ecological monitoring program on a watershed basis to support the objectives of both HCA and our two municipal partners. This includes the collection, storage, assessment and distribution of ecological data and information regarding watershed conditions and health and participation on any working groups.</p>
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## 3. Update on the progress towards negotiating cost apportioning agreements with your participating municipalities

- Municipal engagement and negotiations regarding Category 2 and 3 programs and services has been delayed by the by Bill 23 that impacts our participating municipalities and conservation authorities
- there is definite potential for difficulties in meeting transition plan milestones
- Staff will continue to re-assess whether an extension request may be required in 2023 based on changes required to the inventory and the status of MOU approvals at that time.

# Report

**TO:** Budget & Administration Committee

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**PREPARED BY:** Scott Fleming, Director of Finance & Central Services  
Nancy Watts, Director of Human Resources & Wellness

**MEETING DATE** March 16, 2023

**RE:** Casual Staff Eligibility for “other holidays”

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:**

**THAT casual staff eligibility for the three “other holidays” provided by HCA be effective immediately upon commencement of employment as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.**

## BACKGROUND

HCA provides for all Public holidays as per the *Employments Standards Act* for all staff. The nine Public holidays currently are: New Year’s Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day. Employees are paid for the nine public holidays in accordance with the *Employment Standards Act*.

HCA also provides for staff three "other holidays" which are Easter Monday, Civic Holiday and Remembrance Day. However, for casual staff, eligibility for these three “other holidays” are currently limited to those staff returning for a third consecutive season and become eligible immediately upon commencement of their third season of employment.

## STAFF COMMENT

The HCA policy in regard to the three “other holidays” provided to staff has been in place for many years and it is timely to review the policy given the increasingly competitive market for summer students and seasonal staff.

The original intent of extending eligibility to casual staff for the three “other holidays” was to provide an incentive for students to return year over year to assist with seasonal staff retention. In the current tight market for seasonal staff, organizations are providing various incentives to attract and retain staff in any hiring year and the three-year waiting period to gain eligibility to the “other holidays” is no longer seen as an enticement.

Over 90% of casual staff hired each year would have an employment period that would include the one additional “other holiday”, the August Civic holiday. Consequently, it takes time by supervisors and human resources to explain why some summer staff qualify and receive remuneration for the “other holidays” and why others do not. This does not help with our team building goals and creates a level of inequity.

Furthermore, on the practical side, it takes considerable administrative time by payroll to track and apply eligibility criteria by individual as this must be undertaken manually as it cannot be automated within the existing payroll system.

Given the operational considerations above, staff recommend a policy change that provides immediate eligibility for casual staff for the three “other holidays” those being Easter Monday, Civic Holiday and Remembrance Day, effective April 1, 2023.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
  - Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce and promoting staff training, mentoring and succession planning

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

None

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

HCA includes benefit costs in its operating budget to cover all mandatory employer required contributions and other benefit outlays. As the cost would vary in any given year to provide the “other holidays” to casual staff, an estimation was made to include some cost to cover casual staff. As noted above, the greatest cost applies for the Civic Holiday. The additional cost based on 2022 casual staff is approximately \$16,000 to the HCA budget and \$16,000 to the Confederation Beach Park budget which both budgets will be capable of handling. It is noted that HCA has been very successful with federal grant programs in the past few years for summer student hiring and these grants are not factored into our budget process. In 2022, HCA qualified for over \$250,000 and grant applications have again be submitted for 2023.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The policy change to extend immediate eligibility for the three 'other holidays' to casual staff ensures HCA remains competitive in the summer and casual staff market, provides equity, and streamlines the administrative workload.

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# Report

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**MEETING DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Endorsement

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the Board of Directors endorse the following Land Acknowledgement for HCA:**

**The Hamilton Conservation Authority joins in stewardship of lands and waters with the Indigenous peoples who have cared for them since time beyond memory. HCA partnerships today with the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg reflect both our shared stewardship and our history of treaty relations based on respect, trust and friendship.**

**As an organization, we are mindful of our responsibility to learn the truth and realities of our shared history with Indigenous peoples. We also share their gratitude to every aspect of the natural world, acknowledging our place and responsibilities as part of the circle of life. In our shared purpose of maintaining and restoring the health of the watershed, may we create a lasting legacy now and for future generations.**

## BACKGROUND

At the March 2, 2023 Board meeting, members were advised that following discussions initiated in late 2022 regarding the development of a Land Acknowledgement for the HCA, that the Land Acknowledgment Working Group (LA Working Group) comprised of the Executive Team along with two other senior staff and Acting Chair Moccio, was nearing completion of its work. The Board directed staff to bring the Land Acknowledgement forward for endorsement prior to its implementation.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

As reviewed at the March meeting, the LA Working Group felt the process should include Indigenous engagement and be Indigenous-led. CAO Burnside connected with Cambium Indigenous Professional Services for guidance, training and collaboration to develop a Land Acknowledgement particular to the HCA. Cambium began with training focusing on history and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The process also included research and learning amongst member of the LA Working Group. This was followed by several facilitated sessions to guide creation of a draft Land Acknowledgement.

Discussion and engagement with the Haudenosaunee was undertaken to gain further perspectives, knowledge and input. The Land Acknowledgment incorporates shared knowledge to support and represent best thinking, intent and action with a focus on creating and maintaining long-term relationships, rather than focusing on distinct treaty events.

The LA Working Group for HCA is now bringing forward the Land Acknowledgement as noted in the recommendation, for endorsement.

Once endorsed, Board meetings will begin with the reading of the Land Acknowledgment and will be launched internally to staff and noted on the HCA website.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
  - Initiatives – Identify opportunities to engage the community, adjacent landowners and Indigenous Peoples

# Report

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer CAO

**RECOMMENDED & PREPARED BY:** Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Director, Watershed Management Services

**MEETING DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Tributary Watercourses to Cootes Paradise (Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek) Water Quality Monitoring Program

---

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**THAT HCA staff be authorized to draw from Watershed Management Services reserve as needed to fund the Tributary Watercourses to Cootes Paradise (Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek) Water Quality Monitoring Program for the remainder of 2023;**

**THAT staff be directed to continue efforts to obtain funding for this project from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks; and,**

**THAT funding requirements and allocations for this program continue be considered as part of the 2024 Watershed Management Services program for the HCA and the HCA Inventory of Programs and Services be amended as required to reflect 2024 funding sources.**

## BACKGROUND

Since 2014, the Hamilton Conservation Authority has undertaken a water quality monitoring program for the contributing watercourses to Cootes Paradise. This program has grown from being a seasonal base line water quality monitoring program to an annual program that that undertakes base-line and event-based water quality samples in Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek.

The objectives of the program are to:

- maintain and expand the existing water quality monitoring of Cootes Paradise tributaries;
- provide information from the monitoring to understand inputs, loadings, and impacts from the tributaries and their watersheds on Cootes Paradise/Hamilton Harbour;
- identify key areas of erosion, sediment loading and nutrient inputs from the monitored tributaries and watersheds into the marsh systems;
- identify key areas for potential remedial efforts to assist in meeting delisting targets and restoring Beneficial Use Indexes (BUIs) for the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan (HHRAP); and
- identify changes/improvements in marsh and harbour conditions to support re-designation and eventual delisting of the HHRAP.

The program has been funded since its inception on a 1-Year or 2-Year funding cycle with HCA funds, funding from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and in-kind funding from the City of Hamilton for lab analysis services. The most recent funding agreement with the MECP commenced in September 2020 and expired on May 31, 2022. The funding provided by the MECP for this 2-Year funding period was \$150,000.

HCA staff and MECP staff have been in discussions to develop a new agreement for the next funding cycle that would expire March 31, 2024. Unfortunately, while a program plan has been developed with anticipated costs and proposed funding allocations from the HCA, MECP and in-kind support from the City of Hamilton, the MECP has recently confirmed the anticipated MECP funding will not be available for this program for this funding cycle. The MECP comments in this regard are included in the Agency Comments section of this report.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

The Tributary Watercourses to Cootes Paradise (Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek) Water Quality Monitoring Program has continued since May 31, 2022 utilizing funding allocated in the HCA 2022 and 2023 budget as well as reserve funds from the Watershed Management Department. There are sufficient reserve funds available to continue this water quality monitoring program for the remainder of 2023. Beyond that timeframe, HCA staff are hopeful that MECP funding will become available for this program in order for it can continue. Failing that, the funding for the program will need to be reviewed as part of the budget process for 2024.

The purpose of this report is to advise the HCA Board of Directors of the funding status of this program and to seek approval for the continued use of reserves as required to fund this program for the remainder of 2023.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Water Management**
  - Initiatives – Invest in programs to address the impacts of nutrient and sediment loading on watershed streams, creeks, rivers and receiving water bodies
  - Work with the City of Hamilton, and our partners on the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan to address nutrient and sediment loading within the Hamilton Harbour Watershed.

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

At this time the ministry's Great Lakes Program targeted transfer payments will focus on larger investments across fewer higher impact multi-year projects. The purpose of this year's approach is to streamline project management and implementation and to ensure key actions are supporting measurable results for key priority commitments. The ministry was unable to fund all projects that were initially considered.

The Great Lakes Program encompasses targeted projects, as well as the Great Lakes Local Action Fund and the Wetlands Conservation Partner Program projects. We remain committed to implementing the 2021 Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health and are continuing to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada and other partners to improve the health of the Great Lakes and their connecting rivers. We look forward to future working with our partners.

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Budget allocations earmarked for this program as well as reserves have been utilized to ensure this program continues. There is sufficient budget allocation and reserves available as needed for this program to continue until the end of 2023. Staff will continue efforts to obtain funding for this project from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks as well as considering funding requirements and allocations for this program as part of the 2024 budget program for the HCA.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Tributary Watercourses to Cootes Paradise (Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek) Water Quality Monitoring Program provides critical water quality data that is utilized by the HCA, City of Hamilton and other HHRAP partners. HCA staff are hopeful that MECP funding will be made available moving forward to ensure this program continues. The use of allocated funds and reserves as needed will allow this program to continue in the short-term with the intent that MECP funding will become available or failing that, the program can be considered as part of the HCA 2024 budget process.

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# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer / Director, Watershed Management Services

**PREPARED BY:** Jonathan Bastien, Water Resources Engineer

**DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Watershed Conditions Report

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## SYNOPSIS

There is an ongoing spring melt, with public safety concerns for Spencer Creek given the currently elevated flows. A Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) message was issued recently to communicate this public safety concern. In addition, two potentially significant rainfall events (15 – 25 mm on March 31<sup>st</sup> and 25 – 40 mm on April 10<sup>th</sup>) are forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. These rainfall events may occur while watercourses continue to be elevated due to the spring melt. HCA staff continue to regularly monitor weather forecasts, watercourse conditions, and reassess the potential for flooding. Necessary actions, including issuing additional flood messages will be completed as required.

That said, during the period of February 21 2023 to March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023, there were no observations or reports of significant watercourse flooding events or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events. There were 2 potential Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events that warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of conditions.

Currently, there is no significant watercourse flooding or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding.

The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is currently about 23 cm above average for this time of year.

Current Christie Lake and Valens Lake levels are above the preferred winter operating levels, but there are no flooding concerns at this time.

In the next 9 days, no significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding is expected.

The most recent drought assessment indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed. HCA will be terminating the active Level 2 Low Water Conditions, with a return to normal conditions.

## **CURRENT WATERSHED CONDITIONS – March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### Current Flows in Major Area Watercourses

The five available streamflow gauges are Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road, Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5, Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street, Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street, and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street.

There are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding at this time. However, at the three available Spencer Creek streamflow gauges, there are public safety concerns given the current elevated flows. There is an active Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) message pertaining to this concern.

Conversely, at the available streamflow gauges in Ancaster Creek and Red Hill Creek, current flows are elevated above baseflow conditions but with no significant public safety concerns.

Current flows are well above to significantly above long-term average monthly flows for March at the three Spencer Creek gauges (178% to 240% of long-term averages). Current flows are near long-term average monthly flows for March at the Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street gauges (101% and 109% of long-term average, respectively).

The average monthly flows for March so far have ranged from slightly below to near long-term averages at most gauges. Average monthly flows at the Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street gauges have been 86% and 89% of the long-term averages, respectively (considered slightly below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows have been 100% and 94%, respectively (considered near average). The exception was Red Hill Creek at Barton Street gauge, where flows have been 156% (considered well above average).

February 2023 flows were near long-term averages at most gauges. Average monthly flows at most gauges ranged from 89% to 103%. The exception was Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street gauge, where flows were 75% (considered slightly below average).

Below average flow trends were found in many of the previous months. January 2023 flows were slightly below to below average at most gauges. Average monthly flows at the Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road gauge were 83% of the long-term average (considered slightly below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 55% and 57%, respectively (considered below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows were 76% (considered slightly below average). The exception was Red Hill Creek at Barton Street gauge, where flows were 102% (considered near average).

December 2022 flows were significantly below long-term averages, at the three Spencer Creek gauges. Average monthly flows at the Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road gauge were 35% of the long-term average. Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 23% and 32%, respectively. Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 59% and 63%, respectively (considered below average).

November 2022 flows were below to significantly below average. Average monthly flows at the Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road gauge were 61% of long-term average (considered below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 12% and 18%, respectively (considered significantly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows were 52% (considered well below average). Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 30% (considered significantly below average).

October 2022 flows were significantly below long-term averages, at most gauges. Average monthly flows at the Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street gauges were 13% and 10% of long-term averages, respectively. Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 37% and 29%, respectively. The exception was Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road gauge, where flows were 93% (considered near average).

September 2022 flows were well below to significantly below average, at most gauges. Average monthly flows at the Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 gauge were predominantly lower than recordable limits during September, while Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 22% of the long-term average (considered significantly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 47 and 42%, respectively (considered well below average). The exception was Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road gauge, where flows were 76% (considered slightly below average).

August 2022 flows were well below to significantly below average at all gauges. Average monthly flows at the Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 gauge were predominantly lower than recordable limits during August, while Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 38 to 39% of the long-term average, respectively (considered significantly below average). Ancaster

Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 55 and 45%, respectively (considered well below average).

July 2022 flows were significantly below average in Spencer Creek (10 to 35% of the long-term average monthly flows), and below average in Ancaster Creek and Red Hill Creek (66 and 65% of averages, respectively).

June 2022 flows were well below average in Spencer Creek (41 to 55% of the long-term average monthly flows), and slightly below average in Ancaster Creek and Red Hill Creek (74 and 75% of averages, respectively).

Furthermore, May 2022 flows were slightly below average at all available gauges (69 to 89% of the long-term average monthly flows), and the average monthly flows in April 2022 were below to well below average (47 to 68% of the long-term average monthly flows).

### Current Lake Ontario Water Levels

At this time, there are no observations, reports or expectations of significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level in the Hamilton area was 74.98 m IGLD85 as of yesterday. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake (74.95 m IGLD85 as of yesterday) is about 23 cm above average for this time of year.

### Current Storages in HCA Reservoirs

Current Christie Lake levels (766.84 ft) are above the preferred winter operating levels (765.3 to 765.8 ft), but there are no flooding concerns. Current Valens Lake levels (274.69 m) are slightly above the preferred winter operating levels (274.15 to 274.40 m), but there are no flooding concerns.

### Current Soil Conditions

The surface and root-zone soils are currently considered moist and fully thawed.

## **RECENT STORM EVENTS**

There is an ongoing spring melt, with potentially significant rainfall events forecasted in the next two weeks.

However, during the period of February 21 2023 to March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023, there were no observations or reports of significant watercourse flooding events or Lake Ontario

shoreline flooding events. There were 2 potential Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events that warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of conditions.

### Ongoing Spring Melt

*March 24<sup>th</sup> to ongoing*

There is an ongoing spring melt, with public safety concerns for Spencer Creek given the currently elevated flows. A Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) message was issued recently to communicate this public safety concern.

In addition, there are currently two potentially significant rainfall events (15 – 25 mm on March 31<sup>st</sup> and 25 – 40 mm on April 10<sup>th</sup>) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. These rainfall events may occur while watercourses continue to be elevated due to the spring melt.

HCA staff continue to regularly monitor weather forecasts, watercourse conditions, and reassess the potential for flooding. Necessary actions, including issuing additional flood messages will be completed as required.

HCA engineering staff have previously issued the following messages related to this ongoing spring melt, to communicate the potential watercourse flooding and public safety risks to the City and public:

- Flood Watch - Watercourse Flooding on March 24<sup>th</sup>
- Active Flood Watch Downgraded to Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) on March 27<sup>th</sup>

### Potential for Lake Ontario Shoreline Flooding

*February 21<sup>st</sup> to February 24<sup>th</sup>*

Forecasts ahead of this high wave event expected sustained shore-bound winds of up to 41 km/hr, with wind gusts of up to 72 km/hr. Wave heights of up to 2.3 m were forecasted.

There was an increased risk of significant localized flooding along Hamilton's shoreline, due to the forecasted storm surge and wave action.

However, there were no observations or reports of significant shoreline flooding due to this event.

In the lead up to and during this potential event, HCA engineering staff closely monitored conditions, and issued the following messages to communicate the potential Lake Ontario Shoreline flooding risks to the City and public:

- Flood Watch – Lake Ontario Storm Surge on February 21<sup>st</sup>
- Termination of Flood Watch – Lake Ontario Storm Surge on February 24<sup>th</sup>

### *March 2<sup>nd</sup> to March 6<sup>th</sup>*

Forecasts ahead of this high wave event expected sustained shore-bound winds of up to 43 km/hr, with wind gusts of up to 65 km/hr. Wave heights of up to 2.2 m were forecasted.

There was an increased risk of significant localized flooding along Hamilton's shoreline, due to the forecasted storm surge and wave action.

However, there were no observations or reports of significant shoreline flooding due to this event.

In the lead up to and during this potential event, HCA engineering staff closely monitored conditions, and issued the following messages to communicate the potential Lake Ontario Shoreline flooding risks to the City and public:

- Flood Watch – Lake Ontario Storm Surge on March 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Termination of Flood Watch – Lake Ontario Storm Surge on March 6<sup>th</sup>

## **RECENT WATERSHED LOW WATER CONDITIONS**

The most recent drought assessment (including data up to February 28) indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed. This was the second consecutive recent monthly assessment that indicated normal conditions. As such, HCA will be terminating the active Level 2 Low Water Conditions, with a return to normal conditions.

The Hamilton Low Water Response Team declared a Level 2 Low Water Condition for the entire HCA watershed on October 20<sup>th</sup>. This includes Spencer Creek, Chedoke Creek, Redhill Creek, Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek, Stoney Creek Numbered Watercourses, as well as all of their tributaries and other minor watercourses. The HCA watershed had been in a Level 1 Low Water Condition since July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

A Level 2 press release was issued encouraging a 20 percent voluntary reduction in normal water use and a fact sheet provided suggested strategies for reducing water use. This water conservation request applies to all users of water supplied from watercourses, waterbodies, and groundwater sources within the HCA watershed. Also, this message was posted on HCA's website and social media. In addition, letters were sent to local Permit to Take Water holders communicating this message. Furthermore, Hamilton LWRT members are sharing the water conservation message with other water users in their area / sector.

## **FORECASTED WATERSHED CONDITIONS**

### Watercourse Flooding

The two potentially significant rainfall events forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks are discussed in the “Ongoing Spring Melt” section.

### Lake Ontario Shoreline Flooding

In the next 9 days, no significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding is expected. According to International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board information, weather conditions, including temperatures and precipitation, will primarily determine the rate and magnitude of water level fluctuations over the coming weeks.

### Watershed Low Water Conditions

HCA staff will continue to undertake monthly drought assessments, and coordinate with the Hamilton Low Water Response team as required if drought conditions are identified.

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# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**PREPARED BY:** Gordon R. Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services

**MEETING DATE:** April 6, 2023

**RE:** Conservation Areas Experiences Update

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## BACKGROUND:

HCA provides high quality, diverse conservation areas that promote outdoor recreation, health and well being and strengthen public awareness of the importance of being in or near our conservation areas.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- Maple Syrup Season at Westfield Heritage Village – post event updating – Staff and volunteers continue to deliver this spring event despite the lingering cold weather temperatures. Families and nature lovers alike have made the best of the conditions with over 2,000 reservations to date as the event wraps up April 7<sup>th</sup> Good Friday. The demonstration sugar bush has collected more than 16 barrels of tree sap from approximately 105 tapped maple trees providing a tasty sample for all visitors. The volunteer run Gift Shop has been busy selling all sorts maple syrup products and other keepsakes throughout the event.
- Valens Lake Drumlin Cabins – Since their launch date last month, the eight cabins have been trending in reservations and in exceeding visitor expectations. To date there has been over 800 nights booked through September. Reservations are available to be booked up to six months in advance of arrival. The most popular rentals have been in the larger deluxe cabins (called the Canada Goose and Loon), with family cabin (called Owl) rounding out the top three cabin selections.
- Conservation Areas - all locations continue to be busy on multiple fronts from regular operations to staff recruitment and summer staff orientation with over 200 positions to fill. Spring also signals another level of increased visitor attendance for all Conservation Areas with a long weekend imbedded in the calendar for the next six months.

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