

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors'
Meeting Agenda
Tuesday November 23, 2021 at 9:30 A.M

Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Approval of Agenda

Mover: P.Mitchell

Secunder: A.Murray

THAT the Board of Directors approve the Agenda as posted.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings: Tuesday October 26, 2021

Mover: B.Petrie

Secunder: J.Reffle

THAT that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated October 26, 2021, including any closed session minutes, as posted on the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority web-site.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

5. Delegations

6. Correspondence

6.1 Concerns about Continued Dumping of Sewage into the Thames River –
Email from Mayor Strathdee, St. Marys

Mover: J.Salter

Secunder: M.Schadenberg

THAT the Board of Directors receives the correspondence for information.

7. Business for Approval

7.1. Conservation Authorities Act Inventory and Transition Plan Update –
T.Annett Admin #4327

Mover: A.Westman

Secunder: M.Blosh

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

- 7.2. 2022 Fees Policy and Fees Schedule Updates – T.Annett Admin #4321
Mover: A.Hopkins
Seconder: T.Jackson
THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendations as presented in the report.
- 7.3. 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Dates – T.Annett Admin #4315
Mover: S.Levin
Seconder: M.Lupton
THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.
- 7.4. John St. Weir Removal – C.Tasker FC #2053
Mover: N.Manning
Seconder: H.McDermid
THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendations as presented in the report.
- 7.5. Investment Policy Revision – C.Saracino FIN #1232
Mover: A.Murray
Seconder: P.Mitchell
THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

8. Business for Information

- 8.1. Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report – J.Allain
ENVP #11068
Mover: J.Reffle
Seconder: B.Petrie
THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.
- 8.2. 2022 UTRCA Elections Preparations – T.Annett Admin #4313
Mover: M.Schadenberg
Seconder: J.Salter
THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.
- 8.3. Draft Budget Progress Update Presentation – C.Saracino/T.Annett
Mover: M.Blosh
Seconder: A.Westman
THAT the Board of Directors receives the presentation as presented.

9. November 2021 For Your Information Report

10. Other Business (Including Chair and General Manager's Concluding Remarks)

11. Closed Session – In Accordance with Section C.13 of the UTRCA Administrative By-Law

Mover: T.Jackson

Seconder: A.Hopkins

THAT the Board of Directors adjourn to Closed Session – In Camera, in accordance with Section C.13 of the UTRCA Administrative By-Law, to discuss litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals affecting the Authority.

11.1. Litigation Affecting the Authority – J.Howley CA #10040

Moved by: M.Lupton

Seconded by: S.Levin

THAT the Board of Directors Rise and Report progress.

Mover: H.McDermid

Seconder: P.Mitchell

THAT the Board of Directors receive the reports as presented in closed session for information.

12. Adjournment

Mover: A.Murray



Tracy Annett, General Manager

Agenda Item 6.1
November 2021

Email Correspondence from Mayor Al Strathdee, sent November 3, 2021.

To: Alan Dale, Brian Petrie

CC: Tony Jackson, Brent Kittmer, Jenna McCartney, Michelle Viglianti

Mr. Dale and Mr. Petrie,

Please see attached a copy of an article from the London Free Press published on October 26th 2021, which outlines the dumping of untreated and partially treated sewage into the Thames River during a recent storm. As I have discussed previously with the UTRCA Board of directors, I remain very concerned about this continued practice by the City of London. There appears to be no firm date or firm plan to stop this polluting of our watershed.

The Upper Thames has done a good job of education with many in the watershed about the dangers of Phosphorus and other contaminants. Your mandate statement says in part” ...to ensure that Ontario’s rivers, lakes and streams are properly safeguarded, managed and restored...” Should the Board not be discussing this practice and pushing for an end to it? I feel that this subject is worthy of discussion by your Board of Directors.

Respectfully,
Al Strathdee

Al Strathdee
Mayor

Town of St. Marys – Town Hall
175 Queen St. E., PO Box 998, St. Marys, ON
Phone: [519-284-2340](tel:519-284-2340), ext. 246

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Storm pushes 60M litres of sewage into river

Another 118M litres only partly treated

MEGAN STACEY

A record-setting rainfall that flooded paths and streets across London last month underlined the toll of one of the city's persistent dirty habits.

The Sept. 22 storm led to major sewage overflows at wastewater treatment plants, with 60 million litres of raw, untreated sewage sent into the Thames River.

It's a persistent problem in London, usually linked to dramatic rainfalls that overwhelm old sewers that handle both stormwater and sewage and ultimately the city's wastewater treatment plants.

"Any amount of raw sewage in the river is too much. This has been an issue ongoing in London for many years and will continue to be until the combined sewers are separated and we have the infrastructure to address it," said Skylar Franke, head of the London Environmental Network.

The rainfall from that one storm was nearly seven centimetres.

There are big efforts in place to prevent polluting the Thames, said city hall's division manager of wastewater treatment, Kirby Oudekerk.

Those strategies, combined, contained or treated about 77 million litres of the raw sewage that otherwise would have hit the river on Sept. 22, Oudekerk said.

"We're quite proud of how well we did with it, but we can still understand those very big numbers can be concerning to a lot of people," he said.

"We're working to address it and with every year that goes by we're

doing better and better at capturing more and more."

More than 77 million litres were kept in holding tanks or other storage systems and gradually released from water treatment plants once the water flows had dropped. Another 118 million litres were partially treated to remove solid and biological materials before they were discharged.

"They are big numbers, no question, but by and large, the system performed the way we expected it to," Oudekerk said.

Franke wonders why municipalities aren't hit with the same kind of fines private companies face for polluting waterways.

"This water goes downstream to Indigenous communities where there are boil-water advisories," she said.

"It is up to council to allocate the funding to rectify this issue."

She also urged a green infrastructure program to emphasize "nature-based solutions," which Londoners and businesses also can champion. Rain gardens and other efforts, such as "blue roofs" used to capture water during extreme weather, can prevent water from overwhelming the city system, she said.

Separating old combined sewers is part of council's strategic plan.

A bid by Ward 11 Coun. Stephen Turner to speed up the sewer separation work across the city failed during budget talks.

London has pledged to replace 80 per cent — or 17 kilometres — of combined sewers by 2025. About 7.7 km of combined sewers will be done by the end of this year.

mstacey@postmedia.com

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: November 15, 2021
Filename: Admin #4327
Agenda #: 7.1
Subject: CA Act Inventory and Transition Plan Update

Recommendation:

That the Transition Plan be approved by the Board of Directors.

Purpose:

To present to the Board of Directors with an updated work plan for the establishment of an Inventory of Programs and Services and Transition Plan to comply with 21.1.4 (2) of the Conservation Authorities Act. Following the release of Ontario Regulation 687/21 "[Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services](#)", the Transition Plan for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority has been finalized. Transition Plans are to be submitted to the MECP prior to December 31, 2021.

Report Summary

A previous report to the Board of Directors in September, proposed a draft transition plan noting timelines may change once regulations were provided. With the release of Ontario Regulation 0687/21 the proposed transition plan has been revised to reflect the amended timelines. The Ministry is now proposing **January 1, 2024** as the prescribed date by which municipal agreements must be in place for non-mandatory programs and services. The purpose of the Transition Plan is to ensure the UTRCA has in place the necessary cost apportioning agreements with participating municipalities within our jurisdiction prior to January 1, 2024.

The attached Transition Plan has been finalized to meet the regulatory requirements.

Recommended by:
Tracy Annett, General Manager

Enclosure: UTRCA's Transition Plan

Transition Plan in accordance with Section 21.1.4 of the Conservation Authorities Act

November 2021

Ontario Regulation 687/21 "[Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services](#) under Section 21.1.2 of the Act" requires the development of Transition Plans by each conservation authority. The Key components and deadlines for the Transition Period are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

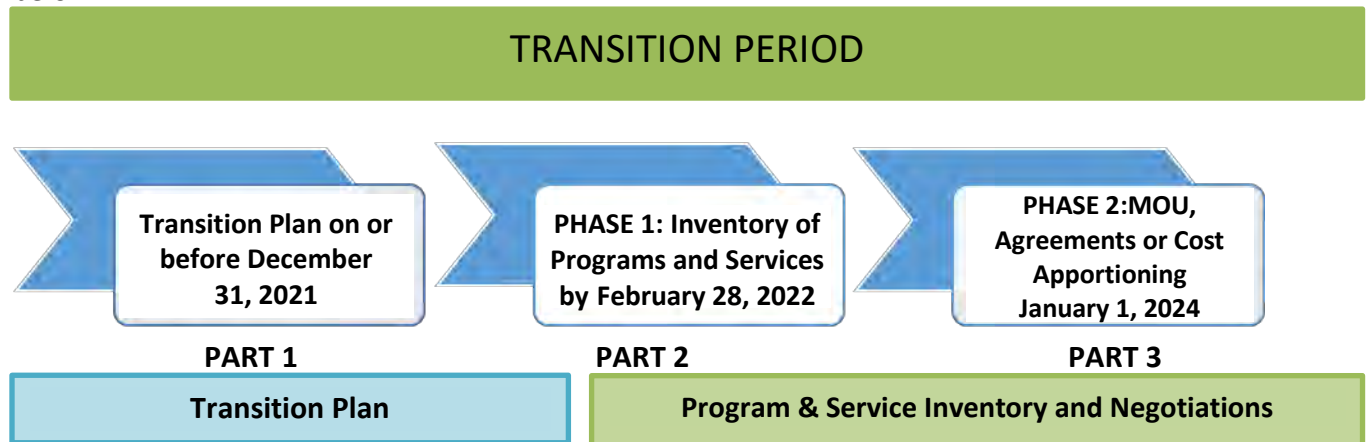


Figure 1. Key Components and deadlines for Transition Period

The purpose of the transition period is to provide conservation authorities and municipalities with the time to address changes to the budgeting and levy process based on the delivery of, and the need, in some cases, to reach agreements for;

- mandatory programs and services (Category 1),
- municipal programs and services (Category 2), and
- determined programs and services where the CA determines the programs and services are advisable to implement (Category 3)

Conservation authorities are required to develop a Transition Plan on or before December 31, 2021. There are two phases to the Transition period. The first phase is to develop and circulate an Inventory of Programs and Services. The second phase of the Transition Period includes developing and finalizing the conservation authority/municipal agreements in accordance with the regulations. These agreements must be complete by January 1, 2024.

Timelines & Deliverables:

Part 1: Transition Plan:

Item	Deliverable	Due Date
Obtain Board approval of the Transition Plan	Staff report with proposed Transition Plan	Nov. 23, 2021
Dialogue with participating municipalities about the regulatory requirements and seek feedback on engagement and negotiations	Outgoing letter to municipalities to establish staff leads regarding preliminary discussion on the details of the inventory.	December 2021

Item	Deliverable	Due Date
Make Transition Plan available to the public (per subsection 3c of the regulation)	Publish a copy of the Transition Plan on UTRCA's website	Dec. 31, 2021

Program & Service Inventory and Negotiations:

Part 2 of the Transition Period

Item	Deliverable	Due Date
Development of Inventory or Program and Services – identification of category classification, funding sources, average annual costs	Staff report with Program & Service Inventory provided to Board	January, 2022
Share draft program & service inventory with neighboring conservation authorities	Draft Program & Service Inventory sharing	Jan. 31/2022
Obtain Board approval of the Program & Service Inventory	Staff report with Program & Service Inventory	February, 2022
Submit Inventory to the Minister, circulate to participating municipalities	Program & Service Inventory	Feb. 28, 2022
Make Inventory available to the public (per subsection 5 (1) of the regulation)	Publish a copy of the Program Inventory on UTRCA's website	Feb. 28, 2022

Part 3 of Transition Period:

Item	Deliverable	Due Date
60-day engagement window to address questions, present to Councils and establish municipality specific negotiating timelines	One-on-one outreach	Apr. 30, 2022
Maintain a record of municipal feedback (per subsection 5 (1) (c) of the regulation)	Input/feedback documentation	Ongoing after Feb. 28, 2022
Adjust Program & Service Inventory as required – advise participating municipalities and the Minister of any changes	Maintain a log of changes and include in mandatory reporting (per subsection 5 (3) (a) of the regulation)	See *mandatory reporting dates below
Complete negotiations of cost apportioning agreements (per subsection 2 (1) of the regulation)	Executed cost apportioning agreements and 2024 levy submission	Target October, 2023
Transition date		Jan. 1, 2024

***Mandatory Reporting:**

Item	Deliverable	Due Date
Progress Report #1	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	July 1, 2022
Progress Report #2	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	Oct. 1, 2022
Progress Report #3	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	Jan. 1, 2023
Progress Report #4	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	Apr. 1, 2023
Progress Report #5	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	Jul. 1, 2023
Progress Report #6	Per subsection 7 (3) of the regulation	Oct. 1, 2023
Final Report	Per subsection 9 of the regulation	Jan. 30, 2024

Notes:

- The Transition Plan and Program & Service Inventory will be endorsed by the Board prior to submission.
- The Board will receive, for information, all progress reports and the final report.
- Cost apportioning agreements to be in place, prior to the preparation of the 2024 budget.
- The Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc (a non-CA member) will be kept informed throughout the process.
- The non-CA members of the Thames-Sydenham Region Source Protection Area will also be kept informed.
- The regulation describing how on-going organizational costs (governance & administration) that are not directly related to a program and service should be dealt with is anticipated to be available with the phase 2 regulations.

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett
Date: November, 2021
Filename: Admin #4321
Agenda #: 7.2
Subject: 2022 Fees Policy & Fee Schedules

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the proposed 2022 Fee Schedules be approved by the UTRCA Board of Directors.

BACKGROUND

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) approved the Fees Policy in 2019. In keeping with Board direction, UTRCA charges fees for its services on a cost-recovery basis and the benefit received by the applicant from specific types of services. The policy states the following:

This Fee Policy & Schedules will be reviewed annually by the UTRCA Management Team, in conjunction with the annual budgeting process. The Management Team will seek information regarding fees, from various sources, as identified in the process and public notification section above; prepare a proposed revised Fee Schedule with a report to members regarding recommendations. The Board of Directors shall receive and make recommendation as to the proposed Fee Schedule.

There are no changes to the Fee Policy proposed, some fee schedules have been revised as outlined below. We understand the province will be releasing an update to the *Policies and Procedures for the Charging of Conservation Authority Fees*, established by the Ministry of Natural Resources (June 1997, updated March 1999) as part of the Phase 2 Regulations. At this time, a comprehensive review of fees will be undertaken to ensure consistency with the Conservation Authorities Act, once proclaimed.

FEE SCHEDULES

Consistent with policy, an annual review of fee schedules for each program area has been undertaken. Amendments were provided for the following program areas:

Section 28 Permit fees

Fee increases currently reflect cost of living increases of 5%. Since fees were not increased in 2020, this amount is consistent with the Bank of Canada's inflation rate over the last two years. A comprehensive review of all planning, permitting, technical, and other fees associated with the Environmental Planning and Regulations Unit is currently being undertaken. Recent development pressures, associated inquiries, and a higher than normal volume of complaints has added to an already very heavy workload for our planning and regulations staff. As a result, we have found it difficult to keep up with demand. Some staff

capacity has been added this year to alleviate some of this pressure, but further hiring is planned for 2022. It is anticipated that the costs of adding further capacity will be realized through fee increases.

Several of our counterpart CA's have contracted consultants in recent years to undertake comprehensive reviews of planning and regulations services and fees, including one of our neighbours, the St. Clair Region CA (review completed in September 2021). These reviews have resulted in some strong comparators to base UTRCA's fee updates on.

Conservation Areas

Fee increases reflect the anticipated increases in operating costs including but not limited to wages, insurance, taxes, electricity and other operational incidentals. At Fanshawe Conservation Area, 28 sites are in the process of being upgraded to 50 amp service as part of the multi-year Hydro Infrastructure Improvement Project with fees adjusted to reflect this investment. Trends with respect to outdoor recreation continue to climb and staff anticipate similar activity in 2022.

Forestry

Price increases in 2022 were made to offset supplier price increases. Increases in nursery stock, as well as cost associated with herbicide, stakes, ties and rodent guards that are built into the planting fee.

Environmental Education Programs and Lands & Facilities

Fee increases noted for implementation in the fall of 2022 for environmental education programs reflect the intention to recover costs while at the same time keeping pricing competitive. A review of the Authorities Hunting Program Fees will be undertaken in 2022.

SUMMARY

The fee increases proposed reflect minor increases to account for inflation or costs associated with program delivery. The proposed increases are consistent with the UTRCA's fees policy. Amendments to the Fee Policy are expected to address proposed legislative amendments once approved.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager

Prepared by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Jennifer Howley, Manager, Conservation Areas

John Enright, Forester

Teresa Hollingsworth, Manager, Community and Corporate Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Fees Policy & UTRCA Fee Schedules

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Fees Policy

Approved by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Board of Directors November 26, 2019.

Fee Schedules Revised November 24, 2020 – Effective January 1, 2021

Fee Schedules Revised November 23, 2021 – Effective January 1, 2022



Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Fees Policy

Approved by the Upper Thames River
Conservation Authority Board of Directors
November 26, 2019.

Basis

This Fees Policy has been prepared to satisfy the requirement for a policy of administrative guidelines regarding fees for services and to document the principles and practices regarding fees charged under un-proclaimed provisions of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (section 21.2). This policy used the following documents as references:

- *Policies and Procedures for the Charging of Conservation Authority Fees*, established by the Ministry of Natural Resources (June 1997, updated March 1999);
- *Guideline for CA Fee Administration Policies for Plan Review and Permitting*, endorsed by Conservation Ontario Council June 24, 2019.

The attached Fee Schedules are based on the user-pay principle. The fees and revenues generated are designed to assist with recovering the costs associated with administering and delivering the services on a program basis. Fees take into account estimated staff time, travel, and materials costs to provide the service, but do not exceed the cost of the service.

Legislative Framework



Since 1996 the *Conservation Authorities Act* empowered conservation authorities to charge fees for services approved by the Minister of Natural Resources. Section 21 (m.1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* allows for this collection of fees for the following services, where the service is not supported through provincial grant funding:

- *Conservation Authorities Act* Section 28 permit fees
- Plan Review
- Response to legal, real estate and public inquiries
- Extension Services (e.g. technical advice/implementation of erosion control measures, forest management/tree planting, wildlife/fisheries habitat management, management of forests/recreational land owned by others, technical studies)
- Community relations/information/education services (e.g., tours, presentations, workshops, demonstrations, special events)
- Sale of products (e.g. reports, maps, photographs)
- Any services under other legislation authorized under agreement with the lead ministry



The un-proclaimed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* (December 2017) include the addition of Section 21.2 which clarifies that:

The Minister may determine classes of programs and services in respect of which an authority may charge a fee. The amount of a fee charged by an authority for a program or services it provides shall be,

- (a) the amount prescribed by the regulations; or*
- (b) if no amount is prescribed, the amount determined by the authority*

Policy Direction

When updating existing fee schedules or establishing new fees the following policy direction will be considered:

- 1) fees need to be set with regard to legislative requirements, ability to sustain programs, and be based on a user-pay philosophy
- 2) fee increases should include inflation
- 3) fees must not exceed the costs of delivering the services
- 4) refunds of fees may carry an administrative cost/penalty
- 5) fees are reviewed at least annually and regular adjustments to fees are desirable
- 6) the fee schedule will be approved on an annual basis to inform the budget for the following year

Exemptions & In-Kind Services

The Authority may waive fees for non-profit conservation groups contributing to the protection and restoration of the natural environment. Examples include but are not limited to; Ducks Unlimited (DU), Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and various 'Friends of' groups etc.

In addition, in-kind technical services are routinely provided by the Authority to assist non-profit conservation groups. Technical services may be require for non-profit groups that do not have qualified professionals nor the funding to acquire the expertise to undertake projects to further achieve the environmental targets of the Authority.



Process and Public Notification

When developing and establishing fees, the Authority also considers the fees of CA's offering the same level of service and technical advice, the fees set by neighbouring Conservation Authorities, fees charged by local municipalities and agencies and, fees charged by the private sector for similar services.

Fees account for estimated staff time, travel, equipment and material costs plus a reasonable charge to cover administration of the program, which normally includes an allocation for shared corporate services.

This Fees Policy has been established by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) Board of Directors and is administered and applied by staff of UTRCA. The Management Team, in consultation with the General Manager may, under extenuating circumstances, waive or reduce fees.

The public is notified of any proposed increases or revisions to the Fee Schedule, by way of posting a notice on the UTRCA website that the Fee Schedule will be reviewed on an identified date, at an open meeting of the Authority's Board of Directors.

Implementation

While cost recovery is a requirement for certain services, noted above, the Authority considers other factors when setting fees, such as fees of neighbouring Conservation Authorities, the nature and level of fees charged by local municipalities for related services and in some cases, the value of similar services provided by the private sector. It should also be noted that for some circumstances and programs, an attempt to charge a fee that would provide complete cost recovery is not feasible due to inability to pay and would result in reduced demand for the service, e.g., school education programs.

1) Planning & Regulations (Section 28 – Permit Fees, Planning Act & Technical Reviews)

UTRCA administers its fee program for Planning & Regulations to achieve a partial cost recovery to-date for the plan review function. UTRCA programs aims to achieve a 50-50 user fee to levy ratio to represent the maximum reliance on user-fees in order to safeguard the planning & regulations program and its services against economic volatility and subsequent budgetary uncertainty. It is also intended to reflect that significant effort and resources are used for pre-consultation related to activities, proposals and inquiries prior to application submissions as well as compliance



activities. The fee schedules are based on the complexity of the application and technical review required, which influences the staff time and resources needed for the review. Administration may consider the following issues and data, where and when relevant to revise the fee schedule:

- Analysis of trends in workload changes as a result of shifts in the development market and types of applications.
- Consultation with developers/municipalities about work effort, new planning/legislative requirements and streamlining.
- General overview of status of cost recovery.
- Statistics related to number of applications and annual changes, where required.
- Level of service/review expectation for processing timing.
- Areas of improvement of level of service/staffing demands.
- Cost cutting measures as required.
- Reserve fund requirements.
- Identification of specific/specialized municipal requirements.
- Trends in legal costs associated with appeals to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (formerly the Ontario Municipal Board), Mining and Lands Tribunal and other legal services.

It is the objective of the UTRCA to provide an effective and efficient delivery of services consistent with the *Client Service Standards for Conservations Authority Plans and Permit Review*, Endorsed by Conservation Ontario Council June 24, 2019.

Exemptions to the application of these fees include:

- Non-profit conservation groups contributing to the protection and restoration of the natural environment, examples include but are not limited to; Ducks Unlimited (DU), Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH),
- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) for permit applications, *Planning Act* applications, inquiries, and site assessments;

2) Conservation Area Fees

Conservation Area fees are reviewed annually by Conservation Unit staff following the end of the camping season in October. Criteria for setting fees are:

- Impact on or opportunity to support the Environmental Targets Strategic Plan;
- Anticipate operational expenses that will be incurred that will impact the budget;
- Comments and feedback from CA users;



- Comparison to similar operations and opportunities in the industry, including trends.

As part of the fee setting process, staff also review operational policies that pertain to the various aspects of the Conservation Area services and programs. Refund policies are included in this review and adjusted as necessary. Information pertaining to these policies is shared on our websites as well as available in print. Seasonal campers receive an electronic copy of both the fee schedule and policies annually.

In order to meet deadlines for print advertising as well as reservation system upgrades, fees are approved in November and come into effect January 1 of the new year. Once approved, new fees become public.

To be consistent with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (0.Reg. 429/07) and the Human Rights Code, the Conservation Areas permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties free of charge.

3) Forestry Services Fees

Fees for trees and services are reviewed and up-dated annually. An attempt is made to balance user fees with program costs while trying to maintain and, over the long-term, expand natural areas according to the Environmental Targets Strategic Plan. It must be noted that without cost-sharing opportunities such as the Clean Water Program, 50 Million Tree Program, Ontario Power Generation and others, the program would not be sustainable (i.e. tree numbers planted would drop considerably).

The cost of providing these services is based on the following principles:

- The costs of the trees are based on wholesale tree costs dependent on individual stock items. A mark-up is applied to cover the costs associated with delivery and storage requirements of the trees.
- Planting fees for both machine and hand planting are charged based on staffing and equipment costs.
- Where the UTRCA is asked to replant areas to comply with court orders (Woodlands Conservation By-Law, CA Act Permit requirements), the fees charged reflect full cost recovery.



4) Community Education Program Fees

Conservation Education program fees are reviewed annually and changes implemented in time for promotion of fall programs. The fees advertised in September are in place for the school year. UTRCA conservation education programs are funded through a number of avenues including fees charged directly to the school classes participating, fees charged directly to the School Board and through corporate, foundation or government sponsorships of specific programs.

The Authority offers programs on site (within Fanshawe or Wildwood Conservation Areas), off site (wetland, watercourse) and in-class and on the grounds of the school. The fees charged for an on-site program is a cost per student per half day program. There is a minimum fee per program. Most programs can accommodate 2 or 3 classes. This revenue is augmented by Authority levy funds to cover costs. Staff endeavour to control dependency on Authority levy funds by recovering as much of the program costs as the market will bear. To determine the fees charged directly to the school classes a number of factors are considered including:

- the availability of similar services,
- surveys of prices charged by organizations offering similar services, and
- demand for the program.

Off site, specialty programs are sponsored through corporate, foundation or government agencies. At times, a school board will arrange for the UTRCA to provide programming or professional development to a number of classes or staff. In these instances, the fees charged cover all costs incurred by the Authority.

5) Lands & Facilities Fees

Hunting Permits

Lands and Facilities fee for hunting will reviewed annually. Criteria for increasing the hunting program fees are:

- Anticipate operational expenses that will be incurred;
- Comments and feedback from applicants and permitted users of designated hunting areas;
- Comparison to similar operations and opportunities from other Conservation Authorities.

The fee setting process will include a review of operational policies. The Hunting Team will incorporate OMNR&F hunting regulation changes, UTRCA policy changes, admission



agreements terms and conditions (written permission) updates, GIS map updates, and applicable fee updates which is shared on our websites as well as available in print.

Refunds

Upper Thames River Conservation does not issue refunds for services or products once the application or order is submitted and the payment has been processed.

The Conservation Areas Unit has policies regarding refunds specific to the different programs and services offered. Policies regarding refunds are posted on the individual conservation area websites as well as copies are distributed to seasonal campers. Links to the websites are updated by January 1 for the upcoming operating season. Refunds are not offered for inclement weather nor are they offered when a permit holder is being evicted from the premises.

Appeal

The fee appeal process will be based on the principles of fairness, opportunity, and notification. Application for an administrative review may be received for 1) an appeal if a fee is contrary to the fees set out in the fee schedule, or 2) that the fee set out in the fee schedule is excessive in relation to the service or program received.

Requests for an administrative review must be in writing to the General Manager (or delegate) and specify the reason(s) for the request for review. Upon reconsideration of a fee that was charged by the authority the authority may;

- a) Order the person pay the fee in the amount originally charged;
- b) Vary the amount of the fee originally charged, as the authority considers appropriate; or
- c) Order that no fee be charged for the program or service.

If not satisfied with the outcome then an appeal will be directed to the CA Board of Directors for a decision. Once heard, the appeal will be dismissed or upheld through a resolution passed by the Board of Directors. The appellant will be notified accordingly of the Board's decision.

If a refund is approved, a 10% administration fee will apply.

Date of Effect

The Fee Policy becomes effective as of the date of UTRCA Board of Directors approval unless stated otherwise.



Transition

The establishment of this Fee Policy supersedes and replaces all previous fee policies and/or schedules. The Policy also applies to proposals not previously invoiced, such as draft approved plans of subdivision which predated any fee schedule.

Review

This Fee Policy & Schedules will be reviewed annually by the UTRCA Management Team, in conjunction with the annual budgeting process. The Management Team will seek information regarding fees, from various sources, as identified in the process and public notification section above; prepare a proposed revised Fee Schedule with a report to members regarding recommendations. The Board of Directors shall receive and make recommendation as to the proposed Fee Schedule. Once approved, the revised Fee Schedule to this policy will be published on UTRCA's website, distributed to Municipal Clerks for posting, and in other materials used by the public.



Fee Schedules

Schedule 1: Planning & Regulations Fees; Includes UTRCA Section 28 Permit Fees, Plan Review Fees and Technical Review Fees

Schedule 2: UTRCA Conservation Areas Fees

Schedule 3: UTRCA Forestry Services Fees

Schedule 4: UTRCA Environmental Education Program Fees

Schedule 5: UTRCA Lands & Facilities and Conservation Areas Hunting Fee



Schedule 1: Planning & Regulations Fees; Includes UTRCA Section 28 Permit Fees, Plan Review Fees, Technical Review Fees and other fees

SECTION 28 PERMIT FEES

CATEGORIES		2021 Fee	2022 Fee
PRECONSULTATION	Pre-consultation with the applicant regarding requirements	No Charge	No Charge
ALTERATIONS TO WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES	Routine - (no engineering drawings required)	\$500.00	\$525.00
	Minor - (engineering drawings required)	\$750.00	\$790.00
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS	Major - involves comprehensive review by various technical staff.	\$1,200.00	\$1,260.00
	Routine – Limited review, minor in nature relative to cost, location, or impact (decks, patios, etc.)	\$200.00	\$210.00
	Minor – Small scale (less than 500 square feet), and/or consistent with policy	\$750.00	\$790.00
	Major – Medium scale, primary structures (greater than 500 square feet) and/or consistent with policy	\$1,200.00	\$1,260.00
LINEAR UTILITY CORRIDOR	Routine – may include linear utility crossings adjacent to watercourses and wetlands	\$750.00	\$790.00
	Minor - may include linear utility corridors where a watercourse or wetland crossing is proposed	\$1,200.00	\$1,260.00
MUNICIPAL PROJECT REVIEW	Major - may include linear utility corridors where multiple watercourse or wetland crossings are proposed.	\$5,500.00	\$5,775.00
	Routine - Municipal Drain review Project is drain maintenance consistent with Standard Compliance Requirements in DART Protocol	\$200.00	\$210.00
	Minor - Municipal Drain review Review of engineers report and/or within regulated wetland limits	\$750.00	\$790.00
	Major - Municipal drain review of (requires multiple site visits, and /or detailed review of engineering reports and/or within regulated wetland limits	\$1,200.00	\$1,260.00
	Routine Municipal Project - does not	\$750.00	\$790.00

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Fees Policy



	require any technical reports or analysis (may include bridge or culvert repairs)		
	Minor Municipal Project – requires technical reports or analysis to support the application (may include, minor bridge or culvert replacements)	\$750.00	\$1,260.00
	Major Municipal Project works that cover large geographic areas such as multiple road culvert or bridge replacements	\$2,200.00	\$2,310.00
COMPLEX APPLICATIONS	Large scale development proposals, and/or inconsistent with policy (examples include, multi-lot developments, large scale municipal project, golf courses, renewable energy projects etc.	\$5,500.00	\$5,775.00
	Large Fill volumes > 1000 m ³	\$5,500.00 Plus \$0.50 m ³ of fill	\$5,775.00 Plus \$0.50 m ³ of fill
	Aggregate Resources Act – Above water table	\$5,500.00	\$5,775.00
	Aggregate Resources Act – Below water table	\$10,000.00	\$10,500.00
HEARING REQUEST	Request for a meeting before the Hearing Committee	\$200.00	\$210.00
CLEARANCE	Verification letter (Hazards or Areas of Interference)	\$200.00	\$210.00
EXTENSIONS	Minor application revisions and minor permit revisions and/or extensions	\$100.00	\$105.00
VIOLATION	Work commenced prior to first approval –	100% surcharge for first occasion; 200% for second and subsequent occurrences	100% surcharge for first occasion; 200% for second and subsequent occurrences

General Notes for All Permit Fees:

ROUTINE - Routine permit applications are activities that are documented through another approval process or are determined to have limited impacts on the control of flooding, erosion, pollution or the conservation of land. Routine permit applications could be those involving, Standard Compliance Requirements under the Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Act Protocol and non-habitable buildings and structures that are less than 10 m² in size.

MINOR - Permit applications for development projects could be considered minor in nature due to the project size, level of risk, location, and/or other factors. These have minor impacts on the control of flooding, erosion, pollution or the conservation of land. Based on the proximity of the project to the hazard, the minor permit applications are reviewed by CA staff and generally require standard recommendations or conditions. Minor permit applications could be those involving, for example, minor fill; minor development; and minor site alteration where there is a high degree of certainty that issues



associated with natural hazards are minimal.

MAJOR - Major applications for S. 28 permits require significant staff involvement. They could be highly complex projects, for example, large subdivisions requiring technical review supported by comprehensive analysis, or smaller scale site specific applications that require complex technical reviews. The proposals may involve developments with significant natural hazards, environmental impacts, or multiple approval processes requirements. Generally, these would include Plans of Subdivision and Condominium, large Site Plan Control applications, and major infrastructure development. Major applications could also include those where works have been undertaken, or are in process of being undertaken, without prior approval from the CA; and those where works have been undertaken that do not comply with the CA S. 28 policies and restoration/remediation measures are required.

1. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge technical report review fees over and above the permit fees for projects that require a detailed technical report or reports covering one or more issues.
2. Large fill projects involve proposals for fill movement which exceed greater than 1000 m³. Smaller fill projects will be covered under other categories of the fee schedule.
3. Applications that fall under one or more of the categories will be charged at the highest rate.
4. Large renewable energy projects are defined as:
 - i. Class 3 solar facilities with a nameplate capacity greater than 10 kW.
 - ii. Class 3, 4 or 5 wind facilities equal to or greater than 50 kW.
 - iii. Any waterpower project involving construction of a new dam or retrofit of an existing dam.
 - iv. Any bio-fuel project (anaerobic digestion, biofuel, biogas or thermal treatment facility) that would not fall under our general categories for buildings or building additions as outlined in the table above.
5. Large scale municipal projects – Projects that have generally come forward following a Class Environmental Assessment, where input from the UTRCA has been solicited and the need for Section 28 approval has been acknowledged. UTRCA costs are related to multiple technical report reviews, preparation of correspondence, attendance at pre-consultation meetings and site inspections. Estimated total project costs generally exceed \$1 million. Staff reserve the right to charge additional fees for significant technical report review.
6. For Environmental Assessments undertaken by private proponents (i.e., non-municipal EAs), minor and major categories are distinguished by the anticipated amount of staff time required for reviews. For the purposes of the fee schedule, major will be defined as projects with estimated cumulative staff review time requirements of greater than 25 hours. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge additional fees if peer review requirements warrant additional cost-recovery.
7. Municipal Drain applications where only a scoped review of the Engineers report is undertaken, the lesser fee may be charged.
8. Projects carried out by the UTRCA or under the supervision of the UTRCA Clean Water Program may be exempt from this fee schedule.

Please contact Regulations staff at 519-451-2800 to arrange a pre-consultation discussion prior to submission or email regulationsinquiry@thamesriver.on.ca



Plan Review Fees

	2021 Fee	2022 Fee	
Application Review Fees	Comprehensive OPA & Housekeeping amendments initiated by Municipality	No Charge	No charge
	Official Plan Amendment		
	Minor- (i.e. single family residence)		\$290.00
	Major – Major - large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$750.00	\$790.00
	Zoning By-law Amendment		
	Minor/Routine		\$290.00
	Major - large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$750.00	\$790.00
	Comprehensive ZBA initiated by Municipality		No charge
	Consent (severance)		
	Minor/Routine	\$275.00	\$290.00
	Major - large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies		\$790.00
	Variance		
	Minor/Routine	\$200.00	\$210.00
	Major - large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies		\$790.00
	Site Plan		
	Minor/Routine	\$500.00	\$525.00
	Major - large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies		\$2,310.00
Draft Plan of Subdivision or Condo	\$150.00 per Lot to a Maximum of \$10,000.00	\$160.00 per Lot to a Maximum of \$10,000.00	
Processing Fee	\$200.00	\$210.00	

General Notes for all Application Fees:

1. Fees are only collected for applications where natural hazard or natural heritage features affect the property.
2. The UTRCA reserves the right to waive the application fee or reduce the fee on a case by case basis.
3. Major Amendments include complex Natural Hazard and Natural Heritage issues involving multiple meetings and peer reviews to be completed by the UTRCA and/or other qualified professionals. The UTRCA reserves the right to determine what is considered to be Major application on a case by case basis.
4. Fees for multiple applications made for the same parcel within one year will be discounted as follows:
 - First application – full fee per lot/application
 - Additional applications – 50% of the lesser of the application fee per lot/application
5. A processing fee is charged in the following cases:
 - Provision of an extension letter
 - Provision of a letter for a Draft Plan of Condominium for those proposals that are limited to conversion of existing buildings with no new construction or as long as the design complies



with criteria established through a previous circulation (e.g. Subdivision or Site Plan)

TECHNICAL REVIEW FEES

(to support Section 28 and Plan Review Services)

	2021 Fee	2022 Fee
Scoped Environmental Impact Studies	\$500.00	\$525.00
Comprehensive Environmental Impact Studies	\$1075.00	\$1,130.00
Stormwater Management Studies	\$1075.00	\$1,130.00
Sediment and Erosion Control Plan	\$250.00	\$265.00
Hydrogeology Assessments	\$1075.00	\$1,130.00
Technical Expert Peer Review - External	\$500.00 + TBD	\$525.00 + TBD
Instance where there is a need for an outside	Technical	Technical
Technical Expert	Review	Review

Notes:

1. It is required that the proponent pre-consult with the UTRCA and the municipality prior to preparation and submission of a detailed technical report.
2. For the purpose of this fee schedule, Scoped Studies are generally recommended in situations where the nature of the natural heritage feature or hazard is well documented, similar development has been previously proposed, modelled and analyzed, impacts are not anticipated due to the location or nature of a proposed development, and mitigation options have been developed.
3. For the purpose of this fee schedule, Comprehensive Studies are generally recommended in situations that are more complex, where information is lacking, or where the risk or significance of the impact is high.
4. The fees for technical report review include one comprehensive report review and one revised report review. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge a processing fee or additional technical report fees for additional reviews.



OTHER FEES

	2021 Fee	2022 Fee
Inquiry or Release of Agreements	Written response provided	\$200.00 \$210.00
	Verbal response provided	No charge No charge
	Regulation Maps provided as digital pdf via email	No charge No charge
Maps	Printed Standard legal sized hardcopy	\$25.00 \$25.00
	Custom Map Fees Contact GIS for exact prices (per hour rate)	\$50.00 \$55.00
Other	GPS Surveying (generally involves a crew of two staff) - \$90.00/hr + expense, minimum charge 2h.	(unchanged)
	Aquatic Ecosystem – Preliminary Assessment (generally involves a crew of two staff) - \$90.00/hr + expense, minimum charge 2h	(unchanged)
	Terrestrial Ecosystem – Preliminary Assessment (generally involves a crew of two staff) - \$90.00/hr + expense, minimum charge 2h.	(unchanged)
	Photocopies	\$0.10 per standard copy



Schedule 2 – Conservation Area Fee Schedule

All Fees Effective January 1, 2022

	2021 Fees	2022 Fees
<i>Day Use Revenue Centres</i>		
DAY USE FEES		
Vehicle day pass	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
Non Vehicle Day Pass (new 2020)	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
Seasons Pass	\$ 130.00	\$ 135.00
Bus Day	\$ 130.00	\$ 150.00
WATERCRAFT FEES		
Motor/sail boat day	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
Motor/sail boat seasons pass	\$ 120.00	\$ 135.00
Wet dock seasonal	\$ 410.00	\$ 410.00
Wet dock monthly	\$ 185.00	\$ 185.00
Wet dock weekly	\$ 125.00	\$ 125.00
Wet dock daily	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
Dry dock seasonal	\$ 185.00	\$ 185.00
Dry dock monthly	\$ 110.00	\$ 110.00
Dry dock daily	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00
PAVILION RENTALS		
Watson Porter Weddings	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,300.00
Watson Porter Inclusive	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00
Watson Porter	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Lakeview Pavilion Weddings	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Lakeview Pavilion Inclusive	\$ 675.00	\$ 675.00
Lakeview Pavilion	\$ 270.00	\$ 270.00
Shelter Day Use	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00



Campground Revenue Centres

	2021 Fees	2022 Fees
NIGHTLY CAMPING FEES		
Reservation Fee - Call Centre	\$ 14.00	\$ 14.00
Reservation Fee - Internet	\$ 14.00	\$ 14.00
Reservation Fee - Campground	\$ 14.00	\$ 14.00
Change Fee	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
Cancelation Fee	\$ 21.00	\$ 21.00
Daily electricity - 15 amp	\$ 50.00	\$ 51.00
Daily electricity - 30 amp	\$ 50.00	\$ 51.00
Daily electricity - 50amp	\$ 58.00	\$ 59.00
Daily without electricity	\$ 40.00	\$ 41.00
Back Country Non Electric	\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00
Weekly electricity 15amp	\$ 325.00	\$ 357.00
Weekly electricity 30amp	\$ 325.00	\$ 357.00
Weekly electricity 50amp	\$ 377.00	\$ 413.00
Weekly without electricity	\$ 260.00	\$ 287.00
Back Country Non Electric Weekly	\$ 260.00	\$ removed
Additional Vehicle Pass (overnight pass daily)	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
SEASONAL CAMPING FEES		
Seasonal 50 amp	New for 2022	\$ 3,600.00
Seasonal 30amp	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 3,100.00
Seasonal 30amp - Waterfront	\$ 3,180.00	\$ 3,350.00
Seasonal 30 amp Premium	\$ 3,900.00	\$ 4,000.00
Seasonal 15amp	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 2,800.00
Seasonal Non Electric	\$ 1,990.00	\$ 2,030.00
Seasonal Non-Electric - Waterfront	\$ 2,065.00	\$ 2,110.00
Swipe Card Seasons Vehicle Pass	\$ 125.00	\$ 130.00
Seasonal Site Administration Fee	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
STORAGE FEES		
Trailer storage	\$ 315.00	\$ 350.00
Shed / Deck only	\$ 160.00	\$ 175.00
Boat Storage	\$ 185.00	\$ 200.00
SEWAGE FEES		
Sewage disposal - weekly	\$ 640.00	\$ 680.00
Sewage disposal - bi-weekly	\$ 320.00	\$ 340.00
Sewage disposal - single	\$ 50.00	\$ 53.00
Sewage disposal - unscheduled request	\$ 100.00	\$ 110.00
Sewage disposal - non camper	\$ 50.00	\$ 53.00



Schedule 3 - Community Education Programs

Fee Schedule effective September 2022 to align with the School Year

		2021 Fees	2022 Fees
Conservation Education on site program, includes Outdoor School, per half day, \$136 minimum per group	per person	\$7.50	\$8.00
In classroom and off-site programs, per group (sponsored)		\$150.00 to \$1000.00	\$175 To \$1200
Nature School	Per Session		\$100 To \$360
Specialist High Skills Major			
GPS, \$500 minimum – full day	per person	\$20.00	\$30.00
Project WILD & Below Zero Certificate (includes manuals)	per person	\$60.00	\$100.00
Project WILD Only (includes manual)	per person	\$60.00	\$65.00
Below Zero Only (includes manual)	per person	\$60.00	\$65.00
Intro to Stream Assessment Protocol, \$300 minimum	per person	\$10.00	\$15.00
Intro to Watershed Management, \$300 minimum	per person	\$10.00	\$15.00
Intro to Species Identification, \$300 minimum	per person	\$10.00	\$15.00
Intro to Habitat Restoration, \$300 minimum	per person	\$10.00	\$15.00
ICE Training – fully facilitated	per day	\$400.00	\$500.00
Co-facilitated		\$200.00	\$250.00

* In some instances educational program fees are supported by a sponsor or grant.



Schedule 4 - UTRCA Forestry Services

Trees			2021	2022 (+ HST)
	Coniferous (45-60 cm balled & burlap)	from	\$10.50	\$11.25
	price dependent on species	to	\$15.50	\$16.00
	UTRCA Planting Coniferous (plus cost of tree)	per tree	\$15.00	\$17.50
	includes 2 applications of herbicide			
	Deciduous (175-200 cm bare root)	from	\$27.00	\$30.00
	price dependent on species	to	\$30.00	\$37.00
	UTRCA Planting Deciduous (plus cost of tree)		\$35.00	\$37.50
	includes stakes, guards and 2 applications of herbicide			
	Landowner planting (minimum 25 tree purchase)			
Seedlings				
	Coniferous seedlings (18-40 cm)	from	\$1.00	\$1.00
	price dependent on species, minimum of 50	to	\$1.45	\$1.60
	Deciduous seedlings (26-90 cm)	from	\$1.15	\$1.25
	price dependent on species, minimum of 50	to	\$1.60	\$2.10
	UTRCA Planting with 2 applications of herbicide, plus cost of seedlings	each	\$0.90	\$0.95
	minimum of 250 seedlings			
	Landowner planting, admin fee		\$30.00	\$30.00
	seedlings purchased in lots of 50			
Shrubs				
	Wildlife Shrubs (20 - 35 cm)	from	\$1.15	\$1.25
	dependent on species	to	\$1.75	\$1.90



Schedule 5 – UTRCA Lands & Facilities and Conservation Areas Hunting Fee

<i>Lands & Facilities and Conservation Area Revenue Centers</i>	2021 Fees	2022 Fees
HUNTING FEE Hunting Permission (Permit) *A review of the UTRCA's Hunting Program Fee to be undertaken in 2022.	\$ 65.00	65.00

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: October 28, 2021
Filename: Admin #4314
Agenda #: 7.3
Subject: 2022 Board of Directors Proposed Meeting Dates

Recommendation:

That the Board approves the following meeting dates for 2022,

Tuesday, January 25, 2022
AGM – Thursday, February 17, 2022*
Tuesday, March 22, 2022
Tuesday, April 26, 2022
Tuesday, May 24, 2022
Tuesday, June 28, 2022
Tuesday, August 23, 2022
Tuesday, September 27, 2022
Tuesday, October 25, 2022
Tuesday, November 22, 2022

Meeting Procedures are outlined in Section C of the UTRCA's Administrative By-Law, updated August 25, 2020. It further states that the General Membership shall approve a schedule for regular meetings in advance. The above noted schedule provides the notice of regular meetings.

As in previous years all Board of Directors meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 9:30am with the exception of the *Annual General Meeting. There are no meetings scheduled during July and December. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, UTRCA Board meetings will continue to be held via Zoom until it is deemed safe to meet in-person in the WCC Boardroom.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager
Michelle Viglianti, Administrative Assistant

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Chris Tasker, Manager, Water and Information Management
Date: October 29, 2021
Filename: FC #2053-2
Agenda #: 7.4
Subject: John St Weir Removal

Recommendation:

That the Board

- 1. Support in principle the permanent removal of John St Weir as a free flowing river is the healthiest environmental option and permanent removal of the weir would reduce flood risks.**
- 2. Support staff continuing to work with the City of Stratford to assess community support and explore additional opportunities for improvements within the flood control channel**

Introduction:

In the past there have been informal discussions between UTRCA and the City of Stratford staff about the opportunities for removal of the John St Weir and naturalization of the flood control channel from R Thomas Orr Dam to the John St Weir. With a couple recent construction projects in the area, the weir was left out for extended periods resulting in questions about whether it could be left out permanently and improvements made to the channel through that reach. The extended periods when the channel was drawn down over the summer also resulted in questions about how long before it would be re-installed. The topic has also come up previously at Stratford's Energy and Environment Committee. Recently the topic was brought to council during discussions about conversion of adjacent streets to a multi-use trail. Following further discussion at the Energy and Environment Committee, council has requested the UTRCA's position on permanent removal of the weir.

This report considers the opportunities for improvements through this reach and challenges associated with the permanent removal of the weir to arrive at a formal position on the permanent removal of the weir.

Background:

The Stratford Flood Control Channel was created as part of the dam and flood control channel project in late 60s. The channel provides discharge capacity for Orr Dam reducing flooding along this reach of the river. The John St Weir maintains a water level during summer for esthetics. It does not provide any flood control benefits; in fact if the weir were permanently removed it would reduce impacts. The weir is removed for the winter and spring to reduce flood risk during the period when historically the largest annual events occur. Orr dam and other small recreational dams are also drawn down over the winter/spring for this reason. Given the John St Weir is seasonally removed and its permanent removal would reduce flood risks, it is a prime candidate

for permanent removal. Aesthetics and further environmental benefits could be realized with additional naturalization work along the channel.

The John St Weir raises water level by 5 feet at the weir. Its impact on water level is much less upstream at Huron St, but it does have some impact right up to the stilling basin immediately downstream of the gates of Orr Dam.

Recent discussion related to the development of a multi-use trail between St Vincent St and John St, once again brought up the topic of the possible permanent removal of the weir and naturalization of this reach of the channel. Part of the trail along the easterly portion has already been closed to traffic as it was never developed as a roadway. This fall work is expected to proceed to close the remainder to east bound traffic, but leave it open for west bound traffic. The parts of the road allowance not used for one-way traffic would then be used for walking, cycling, etc.

Operation and Maintenance

The Orr Dam and John St Weir are operated and maintained by UTRCA with day-to-day operations, monitoring and maintenance contracted back to the City of Stratford. The City has a Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system for monitoring of their water systems which has been extended to include the Orr Dam. The system monitors the water level in Lake Victoria above the dam and the position of the automatically operated gates. The City also has local staff who are trained and available for operation of the dam should the automatic system fail to operate properly. The weir however is not able to be operated during a flood event as the capacity through the slide gate is minimal and logs cannot be removed during high flows. As such the operation of the weir is limited to annual installation and removal of the stop logs which is undertaken by authority staff with a contracted crane.

In order for the flood control channel to operate at its designed capacity, the logs are removed. Historically major events have been spring events. As a result, the logs are removed in November and reinstalled following the spring events when risk of major flooding is reduced, generally in mid-May. More recently summer storms have generated some significant events and climate change suggests that summer and fall events may become more frequent. This raises concerns that the logs should be removed for a summer event which is currently not possible.

A wet fall can provide significant challenges to being able to remove the logs before winter. It is important that the area adjacent to the weir is dry enough to support the crane operating from the banks. To remove the logs, it is necessary to draw the impoundment down using the gate. Log removal requires wading across the sill to disconnect the mounts and hook up to the crane. This can only be accomplished at times of low flow due to the limited capacity of the gate to draw the impoundment down. Also, higher flows would not allow wading across the sill. While it may be possible to replace the log holding apparatus with something that allows for the logs to be removed during high flow events, this would be expensive and in most cases may mean the loss of some or all of the logs and requiring replacement prior to being able to reinstate the impoundment. This would likely require the water level to be left down until the subsequent operating season while replacement logs and gains are fabricated and any damage to the embedded or recovered parts are repaired.

Operation and Maintenance Costs

As with any structure, maintenance is required and should be considered in determining the costs and impacts of operating the structure. Permanent removal of the weir would reduce the

operation and maintenance costs. Stop logs had been replaced many times over the life of the weir, with a conversion from the previous lumber/plywood panels to solid wood timber panels. Replacement of the stop logs will be necessary in the next 5+ years. At that time we will need to consider the type of stop logs and how they are fastened in place with consideration to being able to remove the logs during high flow events. There is also painting and replacement of components at the weir which will be expected in the next 5 years. The weir would likely be considered as part of an upcoming Dam Safety Review if it was to be considered for decommissioning in the next few years. If the stop logs were to be permanently removed these regular maintenance costs would no longer be necessary.

The Dam Safety Review or a public safety around dams study that would likely follow are likely to identify a safety barrier should be installed across the watercourse upstream of the weir. A similar requirement would need to be considered at the Orr Dam as well. If the weir were to be permanently removed this would not need to be considered.

If the logs were permanently removed it would be possible to demolish the concrete pier, abutments, deck and sill. This may increase opportunities to naturalize the north bank along the reach upstream to the railway. Costs of demolition of these components would be significant, however, it would also be possible to retain these parts as long as they do not become unsafe, providing opportunities to defer some improvements in this area until later phases. There have been some suggestions that the deck at the weir could be incorporated into a pedestrian walkway across the channel; however this would need to be considered together with any flooding impacts of installing additional decking to complete the crossing. It may be necessary to consider mitigating any remaining barrier to fish passage that the sill may present, as discussed below. If the deck is to remain open to the public improvements to railings should also be considered.

In the 90's gabion baskets along most of the length of the channel were replaced. Armour stone was used as this type of protection had been installed by the City in the section from Orr Dam through Huron St bridge and the Shakespearean gardens downstream. From time to time this type of wall will require maintenance. Due to constraints along the channel, it is likely necessary to retain much of the wall.

Sediment

Sediment is an issue in installing the weir. Each year there is an accumulation of sediments on the sill which has to be moved prior to the installation of the gates and logs. Sediment transport interruption is a general impact of dams and weirs where they interrupt the natural transportation of sediment through a water course. The impoundment reduces water velocities causing sediment to drop out of the water. Seasonal impoundments such as this may allow for higher spring events to flush sediment downstream rather than having it occur gradually over multiple events. Also while the barrier is in place the downstream watercourse may be starved of sediment increasing erosion in downstream reaches.

In the case of John St Weir sediment transport through the system is also impacted by Orr immediately upstream. The nature of that impoundment may result in sediments being dropped in Lake Victoria, and only those finer sediments which get deposited in front of the gates would be passed downstream during any event which results in gate operation. With the logs installed at John St Weir this sediment would reside in the flood control channel until logs are removed in the fall.

Permanent removal of the John St Weir would allow natural sediment transport, rather than interrupting it with weir installation and seasonal transport.

Weir Removal Opportunities and Considerations

While the City of Stratford has asked the UTRCA's position on weir removal, it is also very important to gauge the City's interest in removal of the weir. Simply not installing the weir may provide some of the desirable benefits, but may result in other challenges. Other improvements could be made to return the watercourse to a more natural form however these opportunities are greatly limited by the infrastructure and property ownership constraints along the channel. In all likelihood a phased approach could be taken to additional improvements once the weir is permanently removed.

As discussed above, leaving the abutments, piers, sill and deck would greatly reduce the cost of any decommissioning, however it would retain structures which would still need maintenance. It may be necessary to demolish parts of the sill to eliminate the barrier. An alternative may be to consider designing riffles downstream to facilitate fish passage across the sill. Removal of parts of the abutments, pier and sill may provide additional opportunities for naturalization of the north bank upstream to the railway.

As the weir impacts the water levels at the Shakespearean Gardens and island immediately downstream of the Huron St bridge, it may be necessary to consider some riffle/pool steps leading up to this reach to maintain some water under the bridge to the island. This has been identified as a priority to the city.

Considerations should be given to in-channel improvements to the flow regime. Changes in low flow channel geometry can increase velocities and water surface roughness to improve oxygenation of the flowing water. Providing deeper pools and adding some substrate structure can also create habitat improvements. In most parts of the channel opportunities would be limited to working within the current channel banks, however there are still significant opportunities for making improvements.

Permitting

While the UTRCA would be very supportive of removing the barrier that is created by the weir, there would be permitting considerations. It will be important that work be done within fisheries windows and when the work is not expected to be impacted by higher flow conditions. It is expected that any work done related to this project would reduce flood risks and this would be considered during design, including any assessment of impacts to the regulatory floodplain which may be able to be realized after completion of the work.

Because the logs are installed and removed annually, it is not expected that Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) would have any concerns with the permanent removal of the weir. They may however have more interest in any of the channel improvements being proposed to return the watercourse to a more natural state. Timing of the work would also be important to securing any necessary permits from DFO.

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry would also have an interest in the decommissioning of the weir and it is expected that permits would be required from them.

With any Environmental Assessment (EA) it is expected that a Cultural Heritage Assessment be undertaken. While not installing the logs may not require an EA and would likely not have significant impacts on cultural heritage, it will be important that an evaluation be undertaken by appropriate experts. The area was entirely disturbed when channel was created and most work associated with weir removal and channel naturalization would be limited to the channel (and immediate banks in a few locations) which would have been disturbed during their original construction. It would be expected that there would be a greater cultural heritage impact related to Orr dam as it was the site of a historical dam and mill and creates an amenity which would be associated with the theatres and connected parks. First Nations interests would also need to be identified and considered.

While, depending on the scope of the decommissioning, a formal EA may not be required, it would be best to follow an accepted process for public input and assessment of alternatives. An EA provides a well-established process to follow. Public engagement will be very important including the engagement of stakeholder groups. It is expected that the scope would be such that a consultant would be required. Irrespective of whether the project would be led by the City or the UTRCA, it will be important that both are active participants in the planning, assessment and implementation of any alternatives, beyond any regulatory role they may have. A project steering committee would allow active involvement of the City and UTRCA, as well as any other stakeholders that should be included.

Fisheries/Aquatic Species at Risk

The permanent removal of the weir would allow opportunities for improvement from an aquatic perspective. These opportunities are somewhat limited by the Orr dam a kilometer upstream. Fish records available from downstream are likely adequate for any background studies. If it were necessary to assess fish within this reach UTRCA would be limited to conducting those inventories while the weir is removed. Past efforts to add habitat/structure within the channel during gabion replacement could be assessed once the water level is drawn down. If the sill of the weir is left intact it may be necessary to look at ways to ensure this is not a barrier to passage.

Infrastructure and other constraints

There are a number of infrastructure which place constraints on the full naturalization of the channel from Orr to John Street. These include:

- Major storm outfall upstream of St Vincent St
- Sanitary Sewer in vicinity of St Vincent St
- Bridges at Huron St, St Vincent St and John St
- Railway overpass between St Vincent St and John St
- Watermain crossings under river
- Roadway along river (TJ Dolan Dr)
- Shakespearean Gardens, pedestrian bridge and island downstream of Huron St.
- School board ownership of adjacent lands on the south side of the channel east of St Vincent St

Discussion:

While staff has discussed positions on other dams/barriers removals those discussions have been specific to each dam. We have had success with removing barriers with the support of the local community. Conservation Authorities and the Ministry of Northern

Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry in this region have long considered establishing a general position on barriers removals. This might go a long way to facilitating barrier removals and the related improvements to the watercourse health. A position paper would be expected to reiterate a free flowing river as the healthiest environmental option. It would also discuss, in general terms, the various benefits to barrier removal when a barrier is not able to meet its intended purpose (such as flood control). Staff is developing a position paper on dams/barriers removal which is expected to be presented to the board in the near future.

With regard to the John St Weir, in its simplest terms, there is no reason why the UTRCA would not support the permanent removal of the weir. It is removed each year to limit its impact on flooding. Leaving it out permanently would further that reduction in flood risk. Beyond the decision to leave the logs out permanently, the authority should also be supportive of further efforts to naturalize the watercourse to the extent reasonable with the constraints in this reach. We have had great success at naturalization around Lake Victoria. By pursuing additional opportunities for naturalization the improvement made by removing the barrier could be optimized to ensure the free flowing river as the healthiest environmental option. The following is a summary of the benefits and impacts of permanent weir removal.

The benefits of removing the weir include:

- Removal the barrier to fish migration allowing access all year round to the kilometer of channel up to the stilling basin of Orr Dam
- Reduced Maintenance costs including:
 - Log replacement
 - Gains and anchor maintenance
 - Slide gate maintenance
- Eliminated need for seasonal operation
- Elimination of the need to consider how the logs could be removed during a flood event
- Elimination of the need to consider a safety boom upstream of the weir
- Elimination of the need to complete a Dam Safety Review and a Public Safety Around Dams assessment.
- Future opportunities for armour stone revisions to allow water access, or other naturalization efforts are limited by infrastructure and property ownership constraints, but there should be opportunities for naturalization within the existing footprint of the channel with a couple localized opportunities to improve access and connection with the watercourse
- Improvements in fish habitat
- Improvements in water quality and aquatic health
- Potential to repurpose the weir deck

The impacts of weir removal include:

- Abutments, deck and piers would still require minimal maintenance, but no operating costs. A future phase could consider partial demolition and restoration of some or all of these components if not repurposed.
- Loss of impounded water may be seen by some as the loss of an amenity. Paddling along this reach is limited due to difficulty in accessing the water from the armour stone. Fishing opportunities would be different, but not eliminated.

- Odour and aesthetic concerns may be an impact for a year or two while vegetation establishes and channel settles into pattern.
- Potential impacts to esthetics at Shakespearean Gardens, which would need to be mitigated.
- General resistance to change always seems to be a significant factor in any effort to remove dams.

UTRCA Position on Weir Removal

The UTRCA is supportive of permanently removing the John St Weir. This is consistent with communication on past dam removal suggesting that “as staff, we have been clear in our position that a free flowing river is the healthiest environmental option”. This is equally true for John St Weir and could be applied to most barrier removal opportunities. Staff has been working toward a position on dams/barrier removal and is expecting it to be presented to the board at a subsequent meeting. Permanent removal of the weir would:

- Reduce operating and maintenance cost
- Allow free passage of fish into the reach adding some diversity during the summer
- Allow for natural passage of sediment
- Reduce the buildup of sediment and contaminants
- Reduce temperature, dissolved oxygen and nutrient impacts of an impoundment
- Allow other opportunities for naturalization of the watercourse through this reach

It should be acknowledged that the extent of these improvements is somewhat limited due to the Orr dam a kilometer upstream, however it is still felt to offer significant overall improvements to the reach.

It is therefore recommended that the board of directors of the UTRCA endorse in principal the permanent removal of John St Weir. It is further recommended that the board endorse the continued engagement with the City of Stratford to explore opportunities for naturalization and other improvements within the Stratford Flood Control Channel.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager/Secretary Treasurer

Prepared by:

Chris Tasker, Manager, Water and Information Systems

With support from aquatic biologist, regulations officers, conservation services and community partnership staff.

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Alan Dale, Chair, Finance & Audit Committee
Date: 15 November 2021
Filename: Admin #1232
Agenda #: 7.5
Subject: Investment Policy Revision

Recommendation

The Board of Directors approves revisions to the Investment Policy attached as to asset categories and weightings as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee.

The Finance and Audit Committee met twice recently to discuss a presentation from PH&N regarding first, a swap of bond funds we held and secondly, taking a position in the Canadian Core Real Estate fund. The swap was made.

The committee then agreed that putting a maximum 10% of our portfolio into a real estate fund was acceptable. This action necessitates a change to our policy to allow for this type of investment and a redistribution of the target weightings for each category of investment. Real estate is considered an alternative investment. The Real Estate fund invests in commercial properties in Canada's largest cities to produce income.

PH&N also advised that the distribution of dividends from the Mortgage Pension Trust fund, which we already hold, was going to be lengthened from daily to quarterly. As a result, PH&N itself has decided to re-categorize that fund from Fixed Income to Alternative due to the decreased liquidity the revised distribution would create. The committee feels that 10% in Real Estate plus 10% in the existing Mortgage Fund is too large a commitment in alternative investments and wishes to cap it at 15%.

As an asset class, alternative investments such as real estate or those with reduced liquidity had not been part of the list of eligible investments approved under policy so the addition of such a class is necessary. The weightings of assets have also been redefined to accommodate a 15% weighting.

The most recent quarterly report of the portfolio at September 30th indicates an annualized return of 9.7% since its inception in 2018.

Recommended by:

Alan Dale, Chair

UTRCA INVESTMENT POLICY

COMPANY PROFILE

Corporate Name: Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Type of Business: Watershed Management
Date of Incorporation: 1947
Jurisdiction of Incorporation (Province): Ontario

Annual Revenue: approx. \$19,000,000
Fiscal Year End: December 31st
Other Professional Advisors: Christine Saracino, Supervisor of Finance, CPA
Investment Knowledge of Signing Officers: Moderate

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the Investment Policy is to establish and define the investment parameters UTRCA Board of Directors wishes to promote. Specifically, the Investment Policy will:

- Identify the investment objectives and constraints of the organization within certain timelines.
- Suggest an appropriate asset mix that is consistent with these investment objectives and constraints.
- Establish an appropriate reporting and review process.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

It is an objective of the UTRCA to ensure that funds are available when required and securely invested to provide future benefit to the organization. The board recognizes that there are day-to-day cash requirements which must meet operational needs (i.e. meeting payroll and tax obligations, meeting the needs of vendors) as well as costs which may be fulfilled on a longer time horizon including the maintenance of funds recognized as reserves to the organization. These needs will be met with appropriate cash management procedures developed internally and approved by the General Manager.

Any secondary investment objective will vary dependent on the purpose of the funds in question and will dictate the strategy and specific type of investments purchased. However, in all cases, preservation or protection of capital will be the primary objective.

Portfolio Structure

Portfolio Portion	Minimum and Maximum Holdings in Expected Investments	Objective	Discretion	Governance	Minimum Expected Returns after fees
Current Portion Overnight to up to 1 year	.5 to 2 million in CAD and USD current accounts	Liquidity	Internal: Supervisor of Finance based on cash flow forecast	Cash Management procedures	0%
Mid-term Portion Over a year and up to 7 years	2 to 3 million in GICs, Treasury Bills or High Interest Savings Accounts	Income generation Liquidity	Internal: Supervisor of Finance in conjunction with GM and approved budget	Cash Management procedures and Quarterly Reports to the Board	2%
Long-term Portion representing reserves and future needs from approximately 5 years onwards	3 million and more (7 M in reserves and 6.5 M in deferred balances) in a selection of eligible investments outlined below	Growth Liquidity through capital appreciation	External: Selected committee of the Board with an investment firm	Annual review with investment advisor as to performance against benchmarks	5%

Withdrawals

Discretionary withdrawals from each of the three portions of the total portfolio will be conducted as necessary under governance procedures noted above and to meet the cash needs of the organization.

Withdrawals from the long-term portion of the portfolio are expected to be infrequent as it is the desire of the Board to maintain a long-term investment portfolio in perpetuity to support the continuing financial strength of the organization. Such withdrawals are expected to be planned in advance and can be directed towards specific needs, both operating (ie. strategic directives) and capital.

Eligible Investments, Allocation and Exposures

UTRCA holdings may include the following asset categories.

Asset	Range of Total Portfolio	Target of Total Portfolio
Equities: Publicly traded domestic or foreign equity securities, common and preferred stocks rights, warrants, convertible debentures, American and Global Depository Receipts	20%-60%	55%
Fixed Income: Investment grade bonds, high yield or global bonds, debentures (convertible or not), notes or other debt instruments of governments, government agencies or corporations including mortgage or asset-backed securities	15%-45%	30%
Cash or money market securities issued by governments or corporations, Treasury bills, commercial paper, bankers acceptances and certificates issued by banks, trusts and insurance companies	0%-30%	0%
Alternative Investments: for example, Canadian real estate and investments which may be typically more complex and less frequently traded than public bonds or stocks.	0%-15%	15%

RISK TOLERANCE

There is always some degree of uncertainty (investment risk) concerning the rate of return or growth of assets that may be generated over any future period. Investment risk may be defined as the frequency and magnitude of negative returns over a given period.

The directors' tolerance for risk and volatility is considered to be moderate which implies in any one year period, the organization can tolerate a drop in value of the portfolio of up to 10% before the directors feel distinctly uncomfortable with the investment strategy. This range is a representation of the directors' tolerance for risk and volatility; however, please note that in times of higher volatility in the financial markets the portfolio may experience fluctuations in value that are higher than this range.

Each portion of the total portfolio will be managed to minimize fluctuations in a manner that is consistent with stated objectives over the time horizon. While one portion may incur little risk, another portion may tolerate higher levels of risk.

CONSTRAINTS

Socially Responsible Investing

The directors have indicated that they would like the portfolio's investments to follow a socially responsible investment strategy. A socially responsible investment strategy means investment decisions are not based primarily on financial performance, but also on ethical, social and in particular, environmental considerations.

The directors acknowledge that a socially responsible investment strategy may exclude investment in certain types of businesses or geographic markets, which may impact overall

diversification and performance of the portfolio. In addition to incorporating Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance parameters (ESG) across the overall Portfolio, UTRCA has a preference for divesting of fossil fuels within its global equity holdings by excluding issuers that are directly involved in extracting, processing or transporting coal, oil or natural gas (fossil fuels), or issuers included in “The Carbon Underground 200”. Furthermore, UTRCA expects third party managers to exclude, on a best efforts basis, issuers who knowingly engage in child labour practices.

REPORTING AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Board has accepted the Finance and Audit committee’s recommendation of RBC PH&N Investment Counsel to advise on the investments of the long-term portion of the portfolio. It therefore will be relying on the Finance and Audit Committee to make recommendations for the general management of investments held by the organization.

For the current portion of the portfolio, any amounts varying from the maximum holding will be reported to the General Manager in conjunction with a review of the Cash Management policy.

For the mid-term portion of the portfolio, investment status will be noted on quarterly financial reports to the board and any material changes in holdings also reported then.

For the long-term portion of the portfolio, the advisor is required to meet with the Finance and Audit Committee annually to review the portfolio structure and reconfirm the organization’s objectives. The committee will provide an annual report to the Board for its review of the performance of the portfolio, a summary of the transactions during the period and a recommendation on the continuation of the advisor in its role.

POLICY REVIEW

The Board recognizes that as the organization grows and circumstances change, this policy may require review. To that end, it intends to revisit the information in this policy no less than every third year to revise and amend the objectives and details outlined here.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

All investment activities will be conducted in accordance with requirements of federal and provincial regulatory bodies, the CFA Institute Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct. The members of the Board here confirm their agreement with this policy.

Revision History:

First revision, April 2018 – Added minimum returns, ranges for asset allocation, socially responsible investments description

Second revision, November 2021 – Added alternative investment category to include Real Estate as eligible investment

To: UTRCA Board of Directors

From: Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Date: November 15, 2021

Filename: ENVP #11068-1

Agenda #: 8.1

Subject: Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report – *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06)*

Section 28 Report:

The attached tables are provided to the Board as a summary of staff activity related to the Conservation Authority's *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation* (Ontario Regulation 157/06 made pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act). The summary covers reports for October 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021.

Recommended by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Prepared by:

Jessica Schnaithmann, Land Use Regulations Officer

Brent Verscheure, Land Use Regulations Officer

Karen Winfield, Land Use Regulations Officer

Ben Dafoe, Land Use Regulations Officer

Cari Ramsey, Environmental Regulations Assistant

Sarbjit Singh, Environmental Regulations Assistant

SECTION 28 STATUS REPORT SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS FOR 2021

DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINE AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION
ONTARIO REGULATION 157/06

Report Date: November 2021

[Client Service Standards for Conservation Authority Plan and Permit Review \(CO, Dec 2019\)](#)

Permit #	Municipality	Location/Address	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Required By	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
138-21	London	2374 Concept Drive	Minor	Municipal Project	Proposed Removal of Sediment - Innovation Park Stormwater Management Channel	8-Sep-2021	21-Sep-2021	12-Oct-2021	5-Oct-2021	YES	Schnaithmann
150-21	Thames Centre	Part Lot 28, Concession 2	Routine	Alterations to Wetlands & Watercourses	Erosion Protection Works	22-Jul-2021	22-Jul-2021	5-Aug-2021	22-Oct-2021	NO	Winfield
151-21	Norwich	594619 Highway 59S	Minor	Restoration/Creation	Wetland Restoration/Creation	8-Oct-2021	8-Oct-2021	29-Oct-2021	12-Oct-2021	YES	Dafoe
152-21	Zorra	437117 43rd Line	Minor	Municipal Drain	WASCoB creation project	16-Sep-2021	18-Sep-2021	9-Oct-2021	18-Oct-2021	NO	Ramsey
153-21	Stratford	390 O'Loane	Minor	Utility Corridor	Fibre Line-Directional Boring under drain	2-Sep-2021	18-Oct-2021	8-Nov-2021	18-Oct-2021	YES	Dafoe
154-21	SW Oxford	343462 Ebenezer	Minor	Restoration/Creation	Wetland Restoration/Creation	28-Sep-2021	28-Sep-2021	19-Oct-2021	28-Oct-2021	NO	Ramsey
155-21	SW Oxford	343503 Ebenezer	Minor	Restoration/Creation	Wetland Restoration/Creation	28-Sep-2021	28-Sep-2021	19-Oct-2021	28-Oct-2021	NO	Ramsey
157-21	London	3493 Colonel Talbot Road	Minor	Development	Proposed Subdivision Development - Phase 2	4-May-2021	12-Oct-2021	2-Nov-2021	15-Oct-2021	YES	Verscheure
159-21	Zorra	314642 31st Line	Minor	Restoration/Creation	Wetland Restoration/Creation	8-Oct-2021	8-Oct-2021	29-Oct-2021	18-Oct-2021	YES	Ramsey

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: October 28, 2021
Filename: Admin # 4313
Agenda #: 8.2
Subject: 2022 UTRCA Elections Preparation

As required by the *Conservation Authorities Act*, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors conducts elections each year. Nominations for the following positions will be accepted verbally during the January 25, 2022 meeting:

- Board Chair (to be nominated and elected)
- Board Vice-Chair (to be nominated and elected)
- Five (5) positions on the Hearing Committee:
 - Past Chair (Appointed, if applicable. If there is no Past Chair, a 3rd “at large” member is to be nominated and elected)
 - Current Chair (appointed)
 - Current Vice- Chair (appointed)
 - Two (2) members elected at large (to be nominated and elected)
- Three (3) to five (5) positions on the Finance and Audit Committee:
 - Current Chair (appointed)
 - Two (2) to four (4) additional members elected at large (to be nominated and elected).
- Source Protection Striking Committee Member/ Committee Liaison

All Board members are eligible for any of the available positions. All appointments are for a one year term. As per the amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* proclaimed on February 2nd, Section 17:

(1.1), a chair or vice-chair appointed under subsection (1) shall hold office for a term of one year and shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

(1.2) An authority in respect of which more than one participating municipality has been designated shall appoint chairs and vice-chairs from among the members appointed to the authority by each participating municipality on a rotating basis so as to ensure that a member appointed to the authority by a particular participating municipality cannot be appointed to succeed an outgoing chair or vice-chair appointed to the authority by the same participating municipality. 2020, c. 36, Sched. 6, s. 4.

Exception

(1.3) Despite subsections (1.1) and (1.2), upon application by an authority or a participating municipality, the Minister may grant permission to the authority or participating municipality to, subject to such conditions or restrictions as the Minister considers appropriate,

- (a) appoint a chair or vice-chair for a term of more than one year or to hold office for more than two consecutive terms; or
- (b) appoint as chair or vice-chair of the authority a member who was appointed to the authority by the same participating municipality that appointed the outgoing chair or vice-chair. 2020, c. 36, Sched. 6, s. 4.

Election procedures and position descriptions are outlined in the Administrative By-Laws, Appendix 3 and Section II.B.2 respectively.

Members interested in any of these available positions are encouraged to communicate with their fellow board members to secure a nomination and support prior to the January meeting. Past practice has included calls and/or emails to fellow directors in an effort to secure support. In the event of more than one candidate seeking an individual position, elections will be held according to Robert's Rules of Order. Those interested in positions should be prepared to speak to their nomination and qualifications during the January meeting.

To ensure staff are properly prepared for the elections could you please advise either Michelle Viglianti at vigliantim@thamesriver.on.ca or Tracy Annett at annettt@thamesriver.on.ca you are planning to put your name forward for any of the above listed positions.

Prepared by:
Tracy Annett, General Manager
Michelle Viglianti, Administrative Assistant

fyi

November 2021



**Red-breasted Nuthatch
(photo: B Gallagher)**

www.thamesriver.on.ca

Twitter [@UTRCMarketing](https://twitter.com/UTRCMarketing)

Facebook [@UpperThamesRiverConservationAuthority](https://www.facebook.com/UpperThamesRiverConservationAuthority)

Autumn Groundwater Well Sampling is Well Underway

October and November are a busy time for staff collecting water samples and groundwater supply data at monitoring wells across the Upper Thames watershed. The UTRCA has 28 groundwater monitoring wells that are part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN), and additional monitoring wells with the City of London at sites including Sifton Bog.

The wells are sampled for a suite of water quality parameters to assist in understanding emerging issues in local groundwater quality. Each well station is also instrumented to take continuous water level measurements.

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks launched the province-wide groundwater monitoring program as a result of the significant drought years in 1998 and 1999. A comprehensive system of groundwater monitoring wells was installed across the upper Thames River watershed as part of this effort. The data is used in-house by the Low Water Response Team for the Ontario Low Water Response Program. The water quality and quantity data is used for plan review and is available at the [PGMN website](#).

This year, wet weather from August to October (approximately 50% to 75% above normal precipitation) created good conditions for water to recharge local aquifers and well supplies. This recharge is important as groundwater levels, measured at our monitoring wells, were lower



Kaela Orton, Monitoring Technician, takes water samples and collects continuous water level data at a groundwater monitoring well at Golspie Swamp.

at the end of 2020 and continued to be below normal levels this past spring as a result of reduced precipitation.

Groundwater is an important resource as a drinking water supply for municipal and private wells across the watershed. It is also vital to the supply of water in the Thames River system and for natural areas, such as wetlands.

Contact: [Karen Maaskant](#), **Water Quality Specialist**, or [Kaela Orton](#), **Monitoring Technician**

Perth Children's Water Festival

The [Perth Children's Water Festival](#) was launched virtually in mid October. The festival, which is normally a multi-day outdoor event, is a fun and educational way for students in grades 4 and 5 to learn about the importance of water in their daily lives. [See Water Festival video.](#)

This year, the Festival Organizing Committee is excited to share virtual opportunities and resources with classes across Perth County. Each month, from October to April, a new Google activity slide will be released, with teachers getting early access to the slides to help with planning.

The [first slide](#) was released to students on October 18, with links to fun and educational activities. The water festival slides are being created by different community partner organizations to showcase how they protect, conserve, and/or use water, and will be available until the end of the school year.

Funding for the festival is from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and UTRCA, and supported by many community organizations including:

- Avon Maitland District School Board
- City of Stratford
- Huron Perth Catholic School Board
- Huron Perth Public Health
- Ontario Clean Water Agency
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- RBC Wealth Management Dominion Securities
- St Marys Cement

- Stratford Perth Museum
- Thames River Clean Up
- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Contact: [Linda Smith](#), **Community Partnership Specialist**

OMAFRA ONFARM Tour

On a cold and very wet Friday afternoon, UTRCA staff assisted with a tour for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Assistant Deputy Minister. The tour visited a number of farm demonstration sites across our region. The upper Thames River watershed stop was in the Upper Medway Creek subwatershed and showcased the many ongoing projects under the OMAFRA-funded ONFARM (On-Farm Applied Research and Monitoring) program. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) delivers the program on behalf of the province.



The group listened with great interest as Tatianna, Tracy, and Mike presented information about the past, ongoing, and future work and opportunities in the Upper Medway Creek watershed.

The UTRCA's Tatianna Lozier and Mike Funk led the presentations, along with Aaron Briemer of Deveron Farm Management Inc., Kevin McKague from OMAFRA, and Angela Straathof from OSCIA. UTRCA General Manager, Tracy Annett, welcomed the group and participated in the discussions along with OSCIA provincial directors and staff, as well as OMAFRA management, office, and field staff.

The information being generated by the Upper Medway watershed projects is of great interest to all. The projects are providing excellent details on the best management practices utilized and their ability to protect and enhance our water resources while improving soil health.

More about the Upper Medway projects:

- [Measuring Stream Flow in the Upper Medway Watershed](#)
- [Medway Watershed Cover Crops](#)

Contact: [Brad Glasman](#), Manager, Conservation Services

Pine Plantation Restoration

A pine plantation in Fanshawe Conservation Area, south of the UTRCA's Watershed Conservation Centre, will be the target of ecological restoration work over the next couple of years, starting this fall. The plan is to transition this overly dense pine stand into a more open and diverse pine-oak-hickory savanna and tallgrass prairie habitat.



The 4 acre plot includes a treed area between the trailhead by the visitor's parking lot to the west, and the rowing club road to the east. Staff identified this highly visible area for ecological restoration as part of the UTRCA's Environmental Targets. The area is dominated by 40-year old planted Red and White Pines that are overly dense, stagnant, and ecologically uninteresting. Invasive plants such as Chinese Elm, Russian Olive, and buckthorn have spread throughout the area as well.

Approximately 20 years ago, staff planted a plot of native tallgrass prairie at the edge of the parking lot. Since then, the grasses have self-seeded to openings in the pine plantation, indicating prairie/savanna is an appropriate habitat for this gravelly, dry area.



Prairie grasses, which are thriving in sunny openings, will be expanded.

The work will be phased in over a few years as staff time and resources permit. With some matching private funding secured, Phase 1 starts this fall. The exotic trees, shrubs, and plants will be treated with herbicide. Later, the dead standing trees and shrubs and small dying pines will be cut down and chipped. With the canopy opened up, prairie grass and flower seeds will be hand broadcasted. Additional pine thinning will take place in the next phase. An educational sign will be installed to explain this unique project to visitors and trail users.

Contact: [Cathy Quinlan](#), Terrestrial Biologist

Fanshawe Community Education Update

It's been a very busy fall for the Fanshawe Community Education team! We look forward to offering more engaging and inclusive programs this winter for local students and community members. We're especially excited to transition to more in-person learning opportunities.

Virtual Sifton Bog Program

We had great success launching a new virtual [Sifton Bog](#) program for grade 3, 4 and 6 classes in the Thames Valley District School Board

(TVDSB) and London Catholic District School Board (LCDSB). Our staff were thrilled to be able to offer a “Live from the Bog” session with education staff filming on location from [Sifton Bog Environmentally Significant Area \(ESA\)](#). In total, 1400 students from both school boards participated in the program.



During our synchronous sessions with students, Fiona Navickas, Kim Gilbert, and Heather Hawkins Jensen offered students and teachers a 360 degree view of this locally rare habitat, including close-up views of the carnivorous Round-leaved Sundew, Sphagnum mosses, and some of the benthic invertebrates and amphibians that live in Redmond’s Pond.

Participating classes also received access to a “Guided Tour of Sifton Bog” video and a “Runoff Race” video, which highlight the importance and functions of wetlands, as well as a resource package full of curriculum-connected lesson plans and extensions to support more in-depth learning about the amazing bog ecosystem.

The virtual Sifton Bog program owes some of its successful to the support and funding provided by the two school boards, as well as filming support from UTRCA’s Steve Sauder.

Students learn about Water Testing

In another partnership with the TVDSB, Erin Mutch, the school board’s Learning Coordinator, distributed water-testing kit backpacks to grade 9 classes, giving students the opportunity to investigate the quality of water bodies near their own school and providing them with valuable hands-on experience.

UTRCA Community Education staff created a series of instructional videos at Medway Creek, to help students learn how to use the kit equipment, better understand the meaning of each test, and connect to the local watershed. In the videos, staff demonstrate how to conduct each test and provide background information on water quality metrics including dissolved oxygen, benthic invertebrate diversity, conductivity, and pH.

This project was a great opportunity to highlight the many career possibilities for students interested in water. We hope using these kits will spark the interest of some future scientists and encourage water stewardship for everyone.

In-person Programs at Fanshawe CA!

Community Education staff have also been fortunate to able to lead some in-person programming at Fanshawe Conservation Area for community groups and private schools this fall. We booked popular programs such as Orienteering, Sensory Nature Walk, Ecosystems, and Pond, Field and Forest.

We also hosted our first official Girl Guide Adventure Day at Fanshawe CA in collaboration with Rachel Kent, the Outdoor Experiences Coordinator from Girl Guides of Canada. Girls from smaller local units came out for a full Saturday in October to participate in a variety of activities including pond-dipping for aquatic invertebrates and exploring the trails. We are excited to deepen this relationship with Girl Guides of Canada in 2022.

Witchy Walk

UTRCA staff got a little spooky when we hosted a Witchy Walk at Fanshawe CA on October 30. This free community event highlighted some

of the scarier inhabitants of the forest and discussed how they might not be so scary after all, once you get to know them!



The Witchy Walk received an enthusiastic community turnout from families with young children. Participants enjoyed climbing through a spider's web between the trees, listening for coyote howls, spotting Halloween items hidden in the forest, and hopping like toads, before being sent home with a sweet treat. Thanks to all the ghouls and goblins who came out to play!

Accessible Birding Event

Lastly, in continuing with efforts to make our programming more inclusive, Julie Read recently led a free Accessible Birding event on October 24 at Kilally Meadows ESA to celebrate [Birdability Week 2021](#). Birdability Week is a celebration



of birders with disabilities or health concerns and includes sharing resources to help the birding community be accessible, inclusive, and welcoming to everybody and every body!

This event was put on in partnership with the [London Bird team](#), in particular Coordinator Brendon Samuels, who helped London become certified as a Bird Friendly City with Nature Canada last spring.

The free event sold out and we received a lot of positive feedback, along with requests for future events. Julie was even [interviewed on CBC Radio's "Fresh Air"](#) to talk about the event. **Contact: [Julie Read](#), Acting Community Education Supervisor (Fanshawe)**

Communities for Nature Updates

Staff have had a busy fall with several [Communities for Nature](#) projects.

Trees for Bill and for Boler

Members of Boler Mountain in London joined forces with the family of the late Bill Kunz, initiator of London Hydro's Tree Power Program, to plant 200 native trees and shrubs on Saturday, October 16, at Boler Mountain.

Boler Mountain is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Bill's family members were able to gather from far and wide to celebrate Bill's life and the legacy he helped to create.

Thank you to Boler staff Marty Thode and Jessika Gunton, who welcomed all of the volunteers and continue to be strong environmental supporters. Thanks also to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and all those who made memorial donations in Bill's name, for funding this project.



Boler Mountain volunteers and members of Bill Kunz's family.

Stratford's TJ Dolan Natural Area Gets a Boost

Stratford Girl Guides, their parents, and enthusiastic Stratford Rotary members gathered on Saturday, October 23 at the TJ Dolan Natural Area to plant nearly 200 trees. This beautiful space is a gem to walk through on the trails.

Efforts to naturalize this area began in 1992, with hundreds of local students and the City of Stratford working together over many years in partnership with the UTRCA.

Ash trees were a staple for planting projects in the 1990s. Those trees have since died due to the Emerald Ash Borer, and Rotary Club and Girl Guide efforts are helping to replace the dead ash.

Thank you to Christy Bertrand, past president of Stratford Rotary, and the City of Stratford for creating this opportunity for the Girl Guides, Rotary Club, and UTRCA to work together for the benefit of our environment.

Mighty Mission in Mitchell

Local students from Mitchell District High School and Upper Thames Public School did an excellent job of planting 150 native trees and shrubs at the Husky Flats on October 27.

The site is along Whirl Creek, where efforts have continued over the past several years to naturalize and create a buffer. The UTRCA has also worked in partnership with the Municipality of West Perth to eradicate Japanese Knotweed along Whirl Creek. All of this work is helping to increase tree cover, create habitat for wildlife, protect the soil, and improve water quality.

A teacher was quick to send a message on the



same day, writing "It was great working and learning with you today! Thanks for the lesson, motivation and positivity as the students planted trees. The activity suited our learning about community involvement and support very well!"

Thank you to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for making this project possible.

St Marys Students See the Green Future

A total of 90 grade 7 and 11 students walked to Southvale Park on October 28 and completed the planting of 450 native trees and shrubs. With the support and foresight of staff from the Town of St Marys and Rotary Club members, the UTRCA joined in the initiative with the help of funding from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and St Marys Rotary.



The students transformed the open grassy field into a naturalized area that will buffer already existing woods and help to protect water quality in nearby Trout Creek. Increased tree cover, species diversity, wildlife habitat, food sources, and reduced mowing are just some of the reasons why planting trees in this park will benefit the community and the environment. A new trail will be extended along the edge of the planting. Plans are in the works to continue the planting in the spring of 2022.

In Harmony with Society and Nature

On October 29 and 30, Aisin employees in Stratford supported the planting of 501 trees and shrubs (representing 500 employees and one dedication tree) in a wooded area that is part of the off leash dog park. The woodlot has suffered the loss of hundreds of ash trees to the Emerald

Ash Borer. The new plant material will help to fill in the gaps.

Keen grade 10 Green Initiatives students from Stratford District High School planted 150 of the trees on October 29. It was a challenging project, given the amount of rain this fall and having to work around stumps and fallen logs.



Aisin produces automotive parts for Toyota plants. The UTRCA is pleased to partner with Aisin and the City of Stratford on this project in the community. Thanks to the UTRCA's Chair, Alan Dale, for coming out to support the event and plant trees. See [video](#) and [photos](#).

Contact: [Karen Pugh](#), Resource Specialist

Conservation Field Day

On a snowy November 3, the UTRCA's Conservation Services Unit held a second [Field Day at the new Thorndale Demonstration Farm](#), with assistance from Community Partnerships and Conservation Areas staff. The property is owned by the UTRCA and leased as one of our agricultural lands to a nearby landowner. The 58 acre farm was chosen to showcase a number of [agricultural best management practices \(BMPs\)](#), all working together to improve and protect soil health and water quality while increasing crop yield.

Many of the BMPs were installed last fall and winter and into this spring and summer. They include a controlled drainage system, water and sediment control basins demonstrating different intake options, woody fencerow management, a rock chute/tile outlet system, and tree seeding, planting and tending.

The farm will be managed to include regular use of cover crops and residue management/strip tillage, and will also utilize profitability mapping.

In June 2021, a field day demonstrated tile installation and the controlled drainage features. The November field day featured six information stations where visitors learned about the various BMPs demonstrated on the farm. The event was well attended and helped transfer information to the local farming community and agriculture industry, among others.



Local farmers, industry representatives, and local politicians from all levels of government attended.

The demonstration farm project has received financial support from many sources, including the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, as well as ADS Canada (formerly Ideal Drain Tile), Agri Drain Corporation, Bluewater Pipe Inc, Hickenbottom Drain Inlets/ Maaskant Brothers, McCutcheon Farm Drainage, and VanGorp Drainage. Other supporters include Land Improvement Contractors of Ontario, Middlesex Federation of Agriculture, and Middlesex Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

More about the Thorndale Demonstration Farm:

- [Thorndale Demonstration Farm \(June 2021\)](#)
- [Thorndale Demonstration Farm \(May 2021\)](#)

Contact: [Craig Merkley](#), Conservation Services Specialist



Varnishing “Stream of Dreams” Fish

After a hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions, staff have been able to go back to local schools to help them varnish their [Stream of Dreams](#) murals, keeping the fish protected from the elements and looking great!

We were fortunate to be able to involve many groups and organizations to help with this task:

- Students during Western Orientation Serves
- Youth from the Cross Cultural Learners Centre
- Signal Boost Initiative
- Dorchester Mill Pond Committee
- UTRCA staff

Contact: [Linda Smith](#), Community Partnership Specialist



The Friends of Stoney Creek, supported by the City of London’s Adopt a Park program, cleaned up a portion of the trail along the Stoney Creek.

Contact: [Linda Smith](#), Community Partnership Specialist

On the Agenda

The next UTRCA Board of Directors meeting will be held virtually on November 23, 2021. The following items are on the draft agenda:

- Correspondence: Concerns about Continued Dumping of Sewage into the Thames River
- Transition Plan
- 2022 Fees Policy and Fees Schedule Updates
- 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Dates
- John Street Weir Removal Position
- Investment Policy Revision
- Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report
- 2022 UTRCA Elections Preparations
- Draft Budget Progress Update

Please visit the “Board Agendas & Minutes” page at www.thamesriver.on.ca for agendas, reports, audio/video links and recordings, and minutes.

Contact: [Michelle Viglianti](#), Administrative Assistant



Litter Clean Ups

UTRCA staff coordinated and participated in litter clean ups to assist with cleaning various locations in London this fall.

Youth from the Cross Cultural Learners Centre helped clean up Westminster Ponds ESA.