

Prepared for the Board of Directors  
by Brian Horner

## Introduction

I am pleased to provide the Board of Directors with a brief update on ABCA projects, programs, new partnerships, funding opportunities and activities over the past couple of months. This report also includes information about Conservation Ontario and some of its activities on behalf of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities. If you have any questions please call me. *Note:* This is not an inclusive list – only some highlights.

## Conservation Ontario

1. Conservation Ontario is the network of 36 Conservation Authorities, local watershed management agencies that deliver services and programs that protect and manage water and other natural resources in partnership with the government, landowners and other organizations. Conservation Authorities promote an integrated watershed approach balancing human, environment and economic need. Conservation Authorities are organized on a watershed basis.
2. The 2015 Conservation Authorities Biennial Tour will take place September 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>. The tour will be co-hosted by Long Point Region and Grand River Conservation Authorities. They invite you to see how a broad range of partnerships improve, enhance and protect the natural environment in their watersheds. For more details visit [Tour2015@grandriver.ca](mailto:Tour2015@grandriver.ca).
3. The 2015 Latornell Conservation Symposium is one of Ontario's premier annual environmental events. It provides a forum for practitioners, policy makers, non-government organizations, academics and business to network and discuss challenges and opportunities in Ontario's conservation field. The event will take place November 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> at the Nottawasaga Inn and Convention Centre.

## Projects, Programs and Studies

1. Interviews were held by the Source Protection Joint Management Committee to replace one third of the members on the Source Protection Committee. The committee will see a turnover of 2 municipal members and four other members.
2. Camp Sylvan is completely booked for the entire spring season with 8 Weston group schools and 4 watershed group schools. Confirmation has been received that Weston will extend its funding for the 2015-2016 school year.
3. Staff prepared and hosted an update meeting for the Grand Bend community on the OAC monitoring program that has been in effect for the past seven years to report on current conditions.
4. Staff was successful in securing \$40,000 in funding in support of the Ausable River Recovery work for the next year from MNR's Species at Risk Stewardship Fund. The funds will be used for tree planting, wetland work, aquatic SAR monitoring and community outreach.
5. The contract for repair work on the Armstrong West Erosion Control Project in Port Franks has been awarded. Permits have been obtained and the construction is planned for mid to end of May.
6. Staff have completed most of the Middleton's Drain watershed walks. The next step will be completing individual landowners reports and working with the landowners to help them complete projects.
7. Work has been initiated on ABCA's Natural Heritage System Plan. The plan will be watershed based and will identify the criteria for locally significant features.
8. The Annual Inspections of Flood and Erosion Control projects have started.

### **Staff Training and Development**

1. Tree planters and summer staff are receiving Worker Awareness and WHMIS training as they are hired.
2. Andy Bicknell & Tracey McPherson attended the Ontario Floodplain Mapping Symposium-April 23.
3. Staff participated in a Webex workshop on a Flood Event Database that is being developed by the Greater Toronto Area Conservation Authorities Flood Forecasting and Warning Group.

### **Meetings and Special Events**

1. The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conservation Dinner was held on April 16<sup>th</sup> and a record \$61,000 was raised bringing the cumulative total to \$985,000 raised over the years. Thanks to all those that helped and participated over the years.
2. Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy received its first donation of land. It is a 10 acre forested property donated from the Estate of John Mayhew by his family. A small ceremony will be held in the summer with the family and a sign erected.
3. The date of the South Huron Trail Golf Tournament has been changed to Monday August 31. For more details contact Sharon Pavkeje at the Administration office.
4. The Morrison Dam Fishing Derby was held on Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the event is a partnership between the Conservation Foundation and the Exeter Lions Club. The fish stocking of rainbow happened the week prior and is funded by the Foundation and Lions Club.
5. Ian Jean spoke at two Trees Grand Bend Information Sessions on native trees and the history of forestry in Grand Bend.
6. Staff presented a Rain Garden Workshop in Bayfield on April 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss the use of rain barrels and rain gardens to capture urban storm water.
7. Geoff Cade attended CO section 28 Committee meeting geared to updating CO's 2008 Regulations guidelines. This is the result of the provincial training session the committee hosted in March.
8. Davin Heinbuck attended the Drainage Action Working Group (DAWG) meeting on behalf of Conservation Ontario. Priority to develop a list of agreed to maintenance and repair activities that do not require DFO review. A guidance document "Maintenance Notification Form" has been finalized and will be distributed to Municipalities and CA's