



Authority Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89222331974?pwd=fJ5JSEZNMERi6vwThJjZYosz1Ere8q.1>

1. Land Acknowledgement

We begin our meeting today by respectfully acknowledging the Anishinaabeg Nation, the Haudensaunee, the Neutral, and the Petun peoples as the traditional keepers of this land. We are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

2. Adoption of agenda

Recommendation: That the agenda of the Authority Meeting, March 11, 2026, be adopted as circulated.

3. Declaration of pecuniary interest

4. Approval of minutes

That the minutes of the Authority Meeting, January 15, 2026, be adopted as circulated.

5. Staff introductions

6. New business

Governance

6.1 GM-2026-05: SVCA Workplan – Erik Downing

6.2 GM-2026-06: Program Report – Erik Downing

6.3 Quarterly Municipal Updates – Erik Downing, Ashley Richards

6.4 GM-2026-07: 2026 Committee Appointments – Erik Downing

Recommendation: THAT the SVCA Chair as voting delegate, Vice Chair, as first alternate, and General Manager or designate as second alternate, be appointed, to Conservation Ontario Council for 2026; and further THAT the SVCA Chair, Vice Chair and GM/S-T be appointed to the Source Protection Regional Management Committee.

Corporate Services

6.5 CS-2026-06: Draft Financial Statements – Ashley Richards

Forestry and Lands

6.6 LAN-2026-01: Forestry 101 – Donna Lacey

Water Resources

6.7 WR-2026-01: 2026 Frazil Ice Event – Katie Thomas

Environmental Planning and Regulations

6.8 EPR-2026-04: 2025 Environmental Regulations Permit Statistics – Matt Armstrong

7. Correspondence

8. Closed Session

Recommendation: THAT the Authority move to Closed Session, In Camera to discuss matters related to identifiable individual(s), litigation or potential litigation; and FURTHER THAT Erik Downing, Ashley Richards and Izabela Polowa remain in the meeting.

9. Other business

10. Adjournment

THAT the March 11, 2026, meeting of the Authority be adjourned.

Public Notice:

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Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority

Minutes – Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Thursday January, 15, 1:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Chair: Tom Hutchinson

Members present: Paul Allen, Larry Allison, Barbara Dobreen, Kevin Eccles, Bud Halpin, Steve McCabe Gregory McLean, Dave Myette, Mike Niesen, Sue Paterson, Moiken Penner, Jennifer Prenger, Bill Stewart, Peter Whitten

Steve McCabe left the meeting at 4:00pm

Staff present: Erik Downing, Donna Lacey, Matt Armstrong, Katie Thomas, Ashley Richards, Brandi Walter, Izabela Polowa, Curtis Weber

Guests present: Robert Uhrig, Tim Lanthier, Ed McGugan, Jack Van Dorp, Kenneth Craig, Phil Beard

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm

1. Land Acknowledgement – read by Mike Niesen

We begin our meeting today by respectfully acknowledging the Anishinaabeg Nation, the Haudenosaunee, the Neutral, and the Petun peoples as the traditional keepers of this land. We are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Motion #G26-01

Moved by Peter Whitten

Seconded by Moiken Penner

THAT the agenda for the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority meeting, January 15, 2026, be adopted.

Carried

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest relative to any item on the agenda.

4. Adoption of Minutes

4.1 Authority meeting November 20, 2025

Motion #G26-02

Moved by Peter Whitten

Seconded by Barbara Dobreen

THAT the minutes of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority meeting, November 20, 2025, be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. Introduction of guests

Kenneth Craig thanked his representatives for their support and dedication. He expressed gratitude concerning being part of the Conservation Authority and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to its important work. Robert Uhrig expressed gratitude to SVCA for the hard work done through the and conveyed greetings from the Municipality of Meaford and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors.

Ed McGugan congratulated Conservation Authority on their 75th anniversary, and conveyed greetings from the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority.

Phil Beard offered greetings from the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority.

Tim Lanthier conveyed greetings from the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and expressed appreciation to Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for its work. He noted that Grey Sauble shares the same vision and goals and looks forward to continued communication, engagement, and future collaboration.

Jack Van Dorp extended greetings from the Bruce County and thanked SVCA for all their work.

Kenneth Melanson shared greetings from Township of Southgate, and region.

6. Staff introduction

The Board of Directors were introduced to the new corporate services accounting clerk, and the new acting manager of corporate services.

7. Chair's address

The Chair acknowledged the collective efforts of member municipalities, the Board, staff, partner conservation authorities, and watershed taxpayers in supporting the work of Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. The address noted recent provincial announcements regarding conservation authority amalgamation, expressed disappointment with potential impacts to local governance, and reaffirmed pride in SVCA's 75-year legacy of partnership-driven conservation, flood protection, planning support, and land stewardship. The Chair emphasized the enduring value of local decision-making, the importance of municipal and community partnerships, and appreciation for the continued trust placed in SVCA regardless of future provincial direction.

8. GM's address

The General Manager reported that 2025 was a productive year marked by measurable progress across all departments, driven by staff adaptability, collaboration, and continued delivery of core programs and services. Highlights included advancements in planning systems and outreach, significant forestry and conservation area improvements, expanded flood forecasting and water resource infrastructure, and ongoing delivery of Category 1, 2, and 3 programs in partnership with municipalities and stakeholders. The address concluded by recognizing staff professionalism and emphasizing the importance of maintaining balance between long-term planning and responsive operational work as the organization moves forward.

9. Election of officers

9.1 Appointment of Chair Pro Tem

Motion #G26-03

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Kevin Eccles

THAT Rob Uhrig be appointed as Chair Pro Tem for the purposes of conducting the election of officers for 2026.

Carried

9.2 Appointment of Scrutineers

Motion #G26-04

Moved by Larry Allison

Seconded by Bud Halpin

THAT Tim Lanthier and Phil Beard be appointed as scrutineers for the election of officers as conducted on January 15, 2026.

Carried

9.3 Election of Chair

Motion #G26-05

Moved by Steve McCabe

Seconded by Gregory McLean

THAT the nominations for the position of Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2026 be closed.

Carried

9.4 Election of Vice Chair

Motion #G26-06

Moved by Mike Niesen

Seconded by Dave Myette

THAT the nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2026 be closed.

Carried

9.5 Election of 2nd Vice Chair

Motion #G26-07

Moved by Peter Whitten

Seconded by Gregory McLean

THAT the nominations for the position of 2nd Vice Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2026 be closed.

Carried

The election of a Member-at-Large was not required, as Past Chair Dobreen chose to remain on the Board. In accordance with governance procedure, when the previous Chair remains on the Board, the position of Past Chair is assumed automatically and an election for Member-at-Large is therefore unnecessary.

10. Committee Appointments

Motion #G26-08

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Larry Allison

THAT the following Directors be appointed as members to the SVCA committees for 2026:

Forestry Committee: Barbara Dobreen, Bud Halpin, Sue Paterson, and Moiken Penner. Property and Parks Committee: Moiken Penner, Paul Allen, Larry Allison, Kevin Eccles, and Jennifer Prenger.

Water Resources Committee: Gregory McLean, Bill Stewart, Mike Niesen, and Bud Halpin.

Agricultural Advisory Committee: Steve McCabe, Dave Myette, Mike Niesen, and Jennifer Prenger.

Carried

11. New Business

11.1 GM-2026-01: Program Report

The General Manager reported active participation in provincial and regional discussions regarding the proposed amalgamation of conservation authorities, including meetings with MECP, Conservation Ontario, neighbouring authorities, and municipal partners. Engagement also included committee meetings, training, administrative reviews, and media outreach related to flood preparedness and governance matters. Director McCabe informed the Board that he will be attending the ROMA conference on Sunday, January 18, 2026, where conservation authorities will have the opportunity to ask questions regarding the proposed amalgamation.

Director McLean reiterated the importance of collaboration among local authorities and expressed his appreciation to everyone for their support.

Director Whitten expressed gratitude to the GM/S-T, Erik Downing, for his hard work and ongoing support.

It was reported that the Corporate Services Department experienced a transition in December due to a staff departure, and Ashley Richards was appointed Acting Manager of Corporate Services. In this role, she is overseeing contracted accounting support to address reconciliation requirements, while also managing a communications contractor and working with current full-time permanent staff to ensure continuity of operations. The team have already addressed high priority deliverables, including payroll reconciliation, updates to taxable benefits, arrears, invoicing, and payment adjustments, to maintain stability and keep Corporate Services on track heading into 2026. Environmental Planning and Regulations advanced regulation mapping updates, planning agreement revisions, floodplain mapping consultation, and targeted outreach to Amish and Mennonite communities. Between October 23 and December 31, 2025, staff issued 29 permits across multiple watershed municipalities.

Forestry and Lands staff addressed unauthorized camping incidents, completed site cleanups, and continued hazard tree removal and private property forestry services. Infrastructure improvements progressed at conservation areas, including the opening of the vault privy at Stoney Island, ongoing hydro expansion work, increased winter maintenance, and responses to property information requests.

Water Resources staff issued a Watershed Conditions Statement in response to forecasted warm temperatures and rainfall and completed annual Flood Watch training for staff. Snow surveys and ice monitoring commenced for the season, including daily monitoring of frazil ice conditions in Durham to inform flood risk.

Category 2 agreements continued, with the Arran-Elderslie agreement finalized and associated works underway. Staff advanced multiple capital and safety projects, including CCTV inspections, dam safety upgrades, tree remediation studies, infrastructure inspections, and development of standardized operating procedures.

Water Quality staff continued municipal delegations related to the 20-Year Water Quality Report and completed seasonal groundwater and surface water sampling programs. Upcoming work includes winter sampling, quality assurance review of 2025 data, and updates to the annual report and online dashboard.

11.2 GM-2026-02: SVCA Workplan

The GM/S-T reported that the Water Resources team finalized Category 2 agreements in November.

The October 6, 2024, lightning strike at the Formosa office and the status of restoration work were noted by Director Eccles, who inquired why the matter had not yet been fully completed. The GM/Secretary-Treasurer advised that additional work remains outstanding, including stump removal and electrical repairs, and that the insurance claim process has not yet been finalized.

11.3 GM-2026-03: SVCA Meeting Schedule

Motion #G26-09

Moved by Peter Whitten

Seconded by Dave Myette

THAT the 2026 SVCA Authority meeting and Section 28 Hearing schedule be adopted as presented.

Carried

The Board approved the 2026 SVCA Authority Meeting and Section 28 Hearing schedules as presented. It was noted that a revised meeting date for March will be selected and brought forward for confirmation.

11.4 CS-2026-01: 2026 SVCA Budget

Motion #G26-10

Moved by Dave Myette

Seconded by Kevin Eccles

THAT the apportionment amount of \$2,829,657 for Category 1 operating expenses and capital costs be approved in accordance with Ontario Regulation 401/22, Section 27(4) of the Conservation Authorities Act;

THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority adopt the 2026 Budget in the amount of \$6,493,483 as approved in principle, November 20, 2025; and

FURTHER THAT the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer is hereby authorized to notify the member municipalities of the cost apportioning amounts owing; and

FURTHER THAT cost apportioning payments shall be due from member municipalities in two equal instalments on March 31 and June 30, 2026, and that late payments shall be subject to the Authority's standard late payment charge of 1.50% per month thereafter.

Carried

Recorded Vote, 100% attendance, all voted in favour:

Municipality	Director	Yea
Arran-Elderslie	Moiken Penner	X
Brockton	Gregory McLean	X
Chatsworth	Peter Whitten	X
Grey-Highlands	Paul Allen	X
Hanover	Sue Paterson	X
Howick	Mike Niesen	X
Huron-Kinloss	Larry Allison	X
Kincardine	Jennifer Prenger	X
Kincardine	Bill Stewart	X
Minto	Steve McCabe	X
Morris-Turnberry	Mike Niesen	X
Saugeen Shores	Bud Halpin	X
Saugeen Shores	Dave Myette	X
South Bruce	Mike Niesen	X
Southgate	Barbara Dobreen	X
Wellington North	Steve McCabe	X
West Grey	Tom Hutchinson	X
West Grey	Kevin Eccles	X

The Board received a report from the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer seeking approval of the 2026 SVCA budget, which includes a total budget of \$6,493,483 and an apportionment increase of 1.6 percent, representing the lowest increase approved in the past five years. The budget maintains all current programs and service levels through internal cost containment, reserve use, and operational efficiencies, while authorizing notification to member municipalities and establishing payment timelines for 2026.

11.5 COR-2026-02: Statutory Administrative Approvals

Motion #G26-11

Moved by Steve McCabe
 Seconded by Mike Niesen

THAT Recommendation: THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors re-affirm for 2026 the Health and Safety Policy; and

FURTHER THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors Re-Affirm for 2026 the Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy.

Carried

11.6 Appointment of Auditor

Motion #G26-12

Moved by Barbara Dobreen
 Seconded by Sue Paterson

THAT Baker Tilly SGB LLP be confirmed as the auditor to the Authority for the year 2026.

Carried

Director Eccles inquired why the Conservation Authority is not seeking a new auditor, noting that Baker Tilly has served as auditor for the Authority for multiple years.

The General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer suggested that the existing purchasing policy, or the Administrative Bylaws, could be amended to specify a defined term for external auditors.

11.7 Appointment of Solicitor

Motion #G26-13

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT Beard Winter LLP, Loucks and Loucks LLP, and Mathews, Dinsdale & Clark LLP be appointed solicitors to the Authority for the year 2026 for general operations, with the option to engage the services of other local solicitors, as necessary.

Carried

Inquiry was made about the reasons the Authority retains three solicitors and whether SVCA pays retainer fees to each. The General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer explained that each solicitor provides expertise in different areas of law required by the Authority, including employment and labour relations, real estate and land transactions, environmental and regulatory matters, planning and development, expropriation, liability, and risk management. It was further noted that legal services are provided on an as-needed basis without retainer fees, and that a combination of local and specialized counsel allows SVCA to address both regional matters and highly technical files effectively. Director Eccles suggested that the Authority consider retaining a single solicitor beginning in 2027.

11.8 EPR-2026-01: EPR Correspondence

The Board received a report from the Manager of Environmental Planning and Regulations outlining the rationale for discontinuing the practice of copying Directors on planning and regulation correspondence. The report referenced legal advice received during Section 28 Hearing training indicating that providing Directors with advance knowledge of active files could create a reasonable apprehension of bias should a matter proceed to a Hearing and noted that this practice ceased on September 19, 2025.

The report further advised that Conservation Ontario confirmed copying Directors on such correspondence is not standard practice among conservation authorities and occurs infrequently, and that of four neighbouring authorities contacted, three do not copy Directors on permits or planning comment letters. During discussion, Director Dobreen expressed concern and requested additional information, noting uncertainty about how she would respond if contacted regarding a potential violation outside regular business hours without prior knowledge of the file. The General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer advised that Directors are not expected to respond to enforcement or compliance matters, which remain operational responsibilities of staff, and noted that this approach is consistent with municipal practices where councillors are not involved in permitting or enforcement decisions.

11.9 EPR-2026-02: Bruce County MOU

Motion #G26-14

Moved by Larry Allison

Seconded by Mike Niesen

THAT Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority endorse the updated Memorandum of Understanding for Planning Review Services Between SVCA and the County of Bruce; and THAT the updated Memorandum of Understanding be circulated to Bruce County Council for review and approval.

Carried

The Board received a report from the SVCA Planning Coordinator, seeking endorsement of an updated Memorandum of Understanding between SVCA and the County of Bruce for planning review services related to natural hazards under the Planning Act. The updated MOU reflects legislative changes under the Conservation Authorities Act and O. Reg. 686/21, clarifies roles, fees, and service standards, and replaces the previous 2019 agreement. Upon endorsement, the MOU will be circulated to Bruce County Council for review and approval.

11.10 EPR-2026-03: Amendments to 2026 EPR Fee Schedule

Motion #G26-15

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Bud Halpin

THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority board of directors approve the proposed amendments to the 2026 Environmental Planning and Regulations Fee Schedule;

THAT should Conservation Authorities receive provincial direction to alter Fees, that SVCA staff implement those changes, as required.

Carried

The Board received a report from the Manager of Environmental Planning and Regulations regarding proposed amendments to the 2026 EPR Fee Schedule. The report noted that in November 2023 the Board had previously approved fee increases representing approximately 50 percent of the increases recommended through the Watsons and Associates fee review, but those approved fees were not implemented due to subsequent provincial fee freezes.

The report outlined that continued freezes in 2023, 2024, and 2025 have significantly impacted EPR revenue and delayed progress toward cost recovery. Staff recommended amending the 2026 fee schedule to partially address this gap while avoiding undue burden on applicants, with flexibility to implement any future provincial direction if required.

Director Dobreen questioned the proposed fee increases and raised concerns regarding how the increases would be communicated to the public, requesting further clarification within the Watsons and Associates fee review regarding the rationale for the recommended increases. She also expressed the view that provincial direction on the fee freeze was open ended; however, Manager Armstrong clarified by referencing the provincial direction, which confirmed that the freeze was not indefinite and expired on December 31, 2025.

Director Halpin commented that while fee increases may be unpopular, development-related costs and the use of land must be appropriately funded. Director Dobreen further inquired about the cost of additional staffing and the potential impact on the Authority's budget, and the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer advised that the staffing changes could be accommodated should the proposed fee increases be approved.

Concerns were expressed regarding the timing of implementation, and Director Dobreen subsequently brought forward a motion to implement the revised fees effective March 1, 2026.

Motion #G26-16

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Dave Myette

THAT the effective date for the implementation of the 2026 SVCA Planning and Regulations Fee Schedule be March 1, 2026, for communication to member municipalities.

Carried

11.11 LAN-2026-01: SVCSV Agreement Review

The Board received an update regarding the renewal of the lease agreement with the Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village, including revisions to address operational, safety, and site management considerations. During discussion, Director Dobreen inquired why the agreement no longer permits the subleasing of the facility, and staff explained that the organization does not pay rent for either the Children's Safety Village facility or the surrounding Sulphur Spring Conservation Area lands, and that allowing unrestricted third-party rentals would be inconsistent with SVCA's role and the intent of the lease; the revised agreement was signed in November 2025, and staff will continue to work with the organization to ensure compliance and appropriate recognition of SVCA's support.

12. Correspondence

It was noted that 56 items of correspondence were attached to the agenda. All but one related to the proposed conservation authority amalgamation and included letters from members of the public, the Honourable Lisa Thompson, neighbouring conservation authorities, and municipalities. The remaining item was correspondence from the Township of Chatsworth containing a motion in support of the 2026 SVCA budget, as noted by the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, and none of the correspondence items were pulled for discussion.

13. Closed Session

Motion #G26-17

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Bud Halpin

THAT the Authority move to Closed Session to discuss, in camera, to address matters relating to an identifiable individual(s) and THAT the GM/S-T and recording secretaries remain in the meeting.

Carried

The Board rose and reported at TIME that no motion was produced following closed session and that only matters relating to an identifiable individual were discussed.

14. Other Business

The General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer reported that Saugeen Conservation had issued a Flood Outlook statement from January 13th, 2026 to January 21st, 2026 for the Main Saugeen River and

Tributaries in the Municipality of West Grey. It was noted that frazil ice had the potential to accumulate, driven by a prolonged forecast of cold temperatures and high streamflows caused by recent rainfall and snowmelt. It was indicated that a 24-hour monitoring schedule was circulated to staff, and that further steps would be implemented if required.

15. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m. following a motion by Peter Whitten and seconded by Paul Allen.

Tom Hutchinson
Chair

Izabela Polowa
Recording Secretary

GM-2026-05: SVCA Operational Plan March 11, 2026

Legend: Text in **Red** indicates new or updated item

All Departments

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Administration	2025 Annual Report		March 2026
Mapping Working Group	In Progress	Hold	March 2026
October 6, 2024, Formosa Lightning Response	Office Restored, Insurance Finalization		March 2026
General	Landowner Recognition Program Brainstorm	Hold	March 2026

Department: Corporate Services

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Administration	Continue to develop and / or renew health and safety policies	March 2026	Waiting on Workplace Culture Assessment Plan
Human Resources	Modernize SVCA's Personnel Policy		Waiting on Workplace Culture Assessment Plan
Human Resources	Code of Conduct		Waiting on Workplace Culture Assessment Plan
Human Resources	Volatile Client Plan		March 2026
Human Resources	Emergency Communication Plan		March 2026
GIS/IT	Critical Failure Information Technology Plan		March 2026

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Administration	Public Consultation: <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act</i>		Underway
Communications	Update CMS from iCreate to Govstack	April 2026	Underway

Completed Items:

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Administration	Annual 2023 SVCA Report		Complete
Administration	Accessibility policy development		Complete
Finance	2023 Audit		Complete
Administration	Document Retention policy		Complete
Administration	Compensation policy		Complete
Administration	Revenue Generation Strategy		Complete
Human Resources	Job Descriptions for Market Compensation Review		Complete
Administration	Office Reopening – Lightning Strike	January 13, 2025	Complete
Administration	Submission of MFIPPA reporting for 2024	March 2025	Complete
Content Management System	Complete	April 2025	Officially in initial use
2023 Performance Evaluations	Complete	April 2025	April 2025
Administration	2024 Audit	May 2024	May 2025
2024 Performance Evaluations	Complete	September 2025	July 2025
Administration	Professional Development Strategy Planning		2025
Administration	Negotiate Category 2 Agreements with municipalities	November 2025	November 2025

Department: Environmental Planning and Regulations

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Section 28 of <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i>	Continue implementation of the Violations Strategy to resolve outstanding violations	Ongoing	Ongoing
Environmental Planning	Update Planning Service Agreements to reflect Bill 23 changes	Hold	2026
General	Amish and Mennonite Outreach Strategy Planning		Underway

Completed Items:

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
General	Website updates		Complete
General	Revise complete application checklist and post online		Complete
Regulatory Mapping	Update regulation limits on online mapping		Complete
General	Landowner Recognition Program Brainstorming	May 2025	May 2025
General	Completion of Environmental Planning and Regulations Policy Manual Revisions	May 2025	May 2025
General	Board of Directors Hearing Training – Section 28	July 2025	
Environmental Planning	Update Planning Service Agreements to reflect Bill 23 changes	January 2026 – Bruce County	2025
Environmental Planning	Carbon Copying Directors Correspondence	January 2026	January 2026
General	Real Estate Lawyer Training/Contact	January 2026	January 2026

Department: Water Resources

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Complete database of existing easements and identify additional easement requirements, if needed		Ongoing
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Confirmation of infrastructure ownership		Ongoing
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Apply for Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) funding		Complete, prepare for next intake/administer projects
Ontario Low Water Response	Creation of Low Water Response Committee		TOR Being Drafted March 2026
Water Quality	Completion of SVCA Water Quality Report		Presentations to be booked
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Launch “Flood Watch” program for public involvement, complete with information sessions for municipal partners		TBD
General	Working In and Around Water Policy		March 2026
General	Risk Evaluation Planning	March 2026	February 2026
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Complete an operational plan for SVCA structures		Ongoing
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Complete draft 10-year capital working plan for SVCA water and erosion control structures that were inspected in 2022, 2023		March 2026

Completed Items:

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
General	Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy		Complete

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Asset Management plan for SVCA structures		Complete
NWMO Special Project	NWMO Environmental Monitoring Baseline Program years 1 through 3 final reports		Complete
Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure	Ice management plan for SVCA watershed		Complete
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Flood watch training 2025	December 2025	December 2025/ January 2026

Department: Forestry and Lands

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Updated Target Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Lands Management	Varney Conservation Area– Investigate Land Disposition Options		Ongoing
Forestry	Forest Inventory		2027
Forestry	20 Year Management Plan		December 2026
Lands Management	Bridge Re-Construction		November 2026

Completed Items

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
Lands Management	Kincardine Cross Country Ski agreement	October 20, 2025	Complete
Lands Management	Land Acquisition and Disposition Policies		Complete
Lands Management	Ash hazard tree removal from Stoney Island properties		Complete
Lands Management	Conservation Areas Strategy for SVCA		Complete
Lands Management	Conservation Lands Inventory for SVCA		Complete
Lands Management	Durham CA Fence installation		Complete
Lands Management	Saugeen Valley Children’s Safety Village	November 2, 2025	Complete

Significant Activity	Operational Task	Completion Date	Target Completion Date
	Agreement		

Programs Report # GM-2026-06

General Manager/ Secretary-Treasurer's (GM/S-T) Report

January 3 - SVCA Sulphur Springs Wolf Moon hike participation. Over 300 attendees for a candlelight trail walk. SVCA staff volunteers.



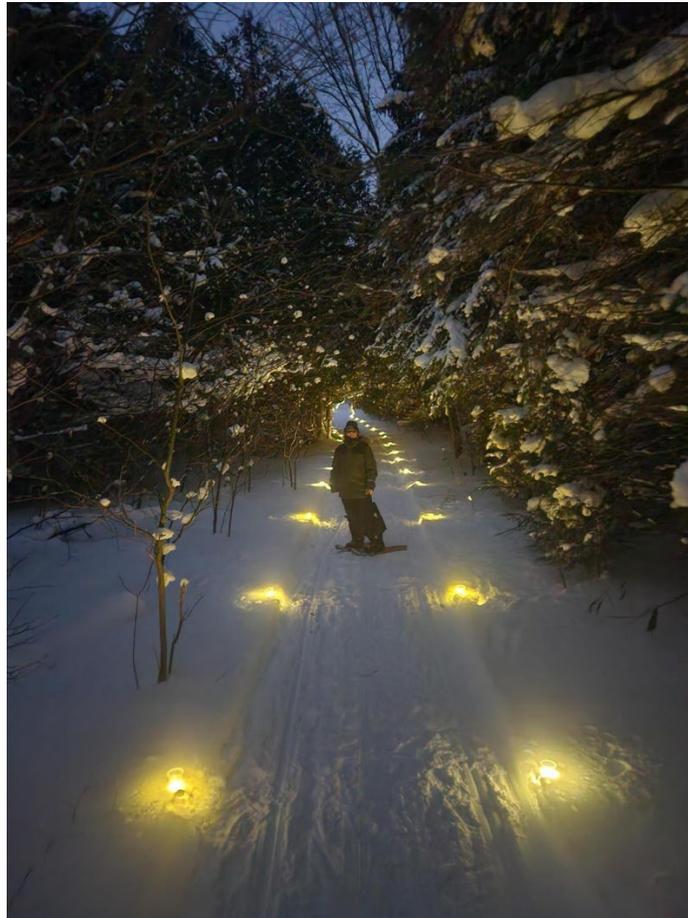
January 7 - Chatsworth Council Budget Meeting presentation. SVCA 2026 Budget.

January 16 - Bruce Power meeting regarding SVCA permitting.

Week of January 19 – Frazil Ice monitoring. Municipality of West Grey. Approximately a week of 24/7 monitoring of Durham Frazil Ice. Excavators used to combat flooding by West Grey. Detailed report later in agenda.

January 28 - 2026 GSCA AGM attended. SVCA's congratulations on a successful 2025 offered amid a transformative time for CAs.

January 31 – SVCA Sulphur Springs Snow moon hike participation. Over 600 attendees for a candlelight trail walk. SVCA staff volunteers. <-20 conditions did not stop people from driving 2+hours to attend free event.



February 5 – SVCA Executive meeting. First with new 2026 members.

February 9 – Wellington North Council Budget Meeting presentation. SVCA 2026 Budget.

February 12 – Heathy Lake Huron Steering Committee meeting.

February 13 – Southwest Ontario CAs GM meeting – London. Discussing continued advocacy, communication, reassurance, and interest in news on proposed Conservation Authority amalgamation. Nothing from provincial government since ERO closed (4000+ comments received). Chief Conservation Executive not in contact with SVCA so far. CA lands, staffing, liability, unions, discussed.

February 17 – Lake Huron CAs GM meeting. Discussing continued advocacy, communication, reassurance, and interest in news on proposed Conservation Authority amalgamation. AMO-Conservation Ontario recommendation letter (slow process, consult and collaborate on 'right sized' amalgamation prior to implementation). Dissolving of CA corporation, to create new corporation and related implications discussed.

February 20 – Lake Huron, including St. Clair GMs discussed a municipal resolution to form Lake Huron East shore Regional CA. Unanimous concern indicated as not all boundaries are watershed based, Georgian Bay excluded, Bruce Peninsula included without their input, St. Clair CA and GSCA severed in half.

February 26 – MPP Lisa Thompson phone meeting. Conservation Authority amalgamation proposal.

Corporate Services

During the first quarter of 2026, staff remained focused on payroll accuracy, reconciliation, coding alignment, and year-end financial requirements. The work has been detailed and systems focused, with steady progress made on several foundational files.

The 2024 payroll audit has now been completed. First quarter HST for 2025 has been filed. EHT was filed. Many overdue invoices were issued. Salary updates, including vacation, sick time and other carry over were applied. Updates were made for many employees across benefits providers and addressed in payroll deductions. Reconciliation of seasonal camping and other campground reports were undertaken. Per diem forms and related correspondence were circulated to Board members and their respective municipalities.

HR matters remain ongoing and continue to be addressed as required.

The Accounting Clerk updated the 2026 Timesheet to reflect revised paycodes and departmental alignment and brought the Vehicle and Equipment tracking sheets fully up to date, completing outstanding entries from July through December 2025. New paycodes were created for various departments, and all related reference documents, including the Paycode List, Vehicle and Equipment Code Helper, and Timesheet templates, were cross referenced and updated to ensure consistency across systems.

Payroll was processed along with required adjustments, reconciliations, and annual salary updates. T4 slips were prepared and issued. Budget entries for both 2025 and 2026 were completed within the financial system. The Accounting Clerk also supported management projects as needed, including completion of employee update forms, responding to government and benefits information requests.

Month end reconciliation of credit cards, EFTs, and cheque deposits was completed, along with receipting and invoicing as required. 2025 and 2026 apportionment invoices were issued to member municipalities. Financial documentation support continued, primarily through the preparation of 2025 cost reports for management review. Year end invoice accruals and reconciliations were processed, as well as year end government deduction reconciliation.

The Payables Clerk/Administrative Assistant continued to support both financial operations and corporate governance functions. Accounts Payable responsibilities included entering data into the accounting system, verifying and coding invoices to the appropriate departments, preparing cheques for signature, and maintaining and updating vendor records and the online AP database. Work is ongoing to further strengthen competency in Accounts Payable and begin cross training in Accounts Receivable.

Administrative responsibilities included managing the Employee Uniform Program and assigning required Health and Safety training and First Aid courses to new and existing employees to ensure compliance with SVCA Health and Safety policies. The Health and Safety tracking spreadsheet was updated accordingly. Front desk and reception support continued, including answering phones, greeting visitors, and managing incoming and outgoing mail.

Governance support remained steady, with assistance provided for Board of Directors meetings and the master contact list for municipalities, townships, and counties was also reviewed and updated.

In 2026, IT and GIS functions continue to be managed by one staff member, balancing infrastructure support with extensive mapping responsibilities. A firewall upgrade was completed at the Formosa office in February to strengthen network security.

On the GIS side, work remains focused on regulatory mapping and ongoing data maintenance. Hazard and regulation mapping updates are continuing in Huron-Kinloss, incorporating new floodplain data through FHIMP, with a public online consultation map to follow once complete. An additional online mapping application for Durham Creek public consultation is scheduled for April 2026. Annual MFTIP forestry mapping will be completed in June and July. Throughout the year, hazard lands and screening layers will continue to be refined, alongside ongoing maintenance of core datasets such as parcel fabric, wetlands, and forested areas. While there are several future project ideas, capacity remains the limiting factor.

Overall, the department continues to focus on strengthening internal processes, improving documentation consistency, and ensuring compliance with financial and statutory requirements while maintaining daily service levels.

Communications

Social Media

The 2025 Year in Review for SVCA social media outlines a year of consistent, high-volume communications activity across Facebook Pages, Instagram Business, X, and YouTube from January 1 to December 31, 2025.

A total of 2,478 posts were published throughout the year, generating 2,405,028 impressions. This level of output demonstrates sustained publishing frequency and an active content strategy. The impression trends show periodic spikes during the year, indicating that specific campaigns, events, or timely posts drove heightened visibility at key moments rather than gradual, uniform growth. Overall, the organization maintained strong brand presence across its networks.

The year concluded with 13,949 total followers across platforms. Follower growth appears steady and incremental rather than driven by a single viral moment. This suggests consistent audience trust and ongoing relevance within the watershed communities served. Facebook and Instagram continue to serve as primary drivers of audience scale.

Engagement metrics indicate healthy interaction levels. Posts generated 8,539 reactions and likes, 3,599 shares, and 607 comments and replies. In addition, 8,122 link clicks were recorded,

demonstrating strong capacity to drive traffic from social channels to websites, event registrations, job postings, and other organizational priorities. The average engagement rate across networks was 3.12 percent, which is solid performance for a public sector organization. The comparatively higher number of shares versus comments suggests that content is perceived as useful and informative, prompting redistribution more than conversation. Video views totaled 1,034 for the year, indicating that while video content exists, it remains an underdeveloped area with room for growth.

Top-performing posts by likes reveal clear content themes that resonate most strongly with audiences. Community event promotions performed exceptionally well, particularly the Saugeen Bluffs River Run Weekend and Candlelit Night Hike events. Seasonal and experiential outdoor programming consistently attracted high engagement. Recruitment posts also generated strong interaction, including the Forestry Technician and Field Operations Assistant roles, demonstrating community interest in employment opportunities within the organization. Seasonal and human-centered content, such as Valentine's Day messaging and reflective trail posts, further contributed to engagement. On X, enforcement and educational posts related to illegal off-road vehicle use and conservation protection drew the most attention relative to that platform's scale.

Platform performance patterns suggest that Facebook remains the dominant driver of impressions and broad reach, while Instagram contributes meaningfully to engagement and event promotion.

Overall, the 2025 performance reflects a communications program that is consistent, reliable, and well-aligned with community interests. The organization demonstrates strong visibility, measurable website traffic generation, and sustained engagement across its digital channels. The foundation is solid. Future opportunity lies in refining strategy toward higher-impact content formats, particularly video, increasing conversation-driven posts, and analyzing peak-performing moments to replicate success with greater precision.

Since 2022, the organization's social media presence has strengthened in both scale and impact. In 2022, 1,612 posts generated 67,244 impressions. By 2025, annual output increased to 2,478 posts and impressions rose to 2,405,028. Shares grew from 2,028 to 3,599. Comments more than doubled, rising from 253 to 607. Link clicks increased substantially from 2,153 to 8,122, demonstrating stronger traffic generation to external resources. Video views rose from 591 to 1,034. Overall reach, interaction volume, and audience size have all expanded significantly.

Collectively, these metrics reflect a communications program that has matured in consistency, visibility, and measurable public engagement over the past three years.

Website

In 2025, saugeenconservation.ca continued to function as a primary service delivery platform for Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. Over the calendar year, the website recorded 226,494 views from 88,969 active users, of which 87,901 were new users. A total of 716,407 events were tracked, with an overall engagement rate of 51.16 percent and an average engagement time of 53 seconds per active user. These figures reflect consistent public reliance on the website for conservation area information, camping, mapping resources, career opportunities, and general corporate information.

Traffic patterns followed expected seasonal trends. Activity increased steadily in the spring, peaked during the summer months in alignment with campground and conservation area operations, and declined entering late fall and winter. A secondary rise in activity was observed in October, likely tied to seasonal programming and fall use of conservation areas. The site is clearly functioning as an operational tool during peak seasons rather than simply as a static information page.

The audience remains primarily Canadian, with approximately 69 percent of users located in Canada. The United States accounted for a modest portion of traffic. Larger international traffic from China and Singapore shows very low engagement time and is likely attributable to automated or non-human activity rather than genuine service use. Within Canada, Toronto represented the largest single city, accounting for just over 20 percent of users, confirming that while SVCA serves a rural watershed, its digital reach extends well into major urban markets. London, Port Elgin, Kincardine, Hanover and surrounding communities also appear consistently within the top user locations.

Mobile access continues to dominate. iPhone users alone represent over 22 percent of active users, with additional iPad and Android devices contributing meaningful shares. Browser data shows that Chrome accounts for approximately 58 percent of users and Safari for roughly 24 percent, meaning the vast majority of visitors are using modern mobile and desktop browsers. The data reinforces the importance of maintaining a mobile first approach in design, navigation, and document formatting.

User acquisition data demonstrates that organic search remains the strongest driver of traffic, accounting for approximately 43 percent of new users. Direct traffic follows closely at nearly 40 percent, indicating that a significant portion of the public either bookmarks the site or navigates to it intentionally. Organic social contributes approximately 11 percent of new users, while referral traffic from partner sites and booking platforms also plays a supporting role. Manual source data confirms Google as the dominant traffic source, with Facebook, mobile Facebook referrals, and ontarioconservationareas.ca contributing measurable volumes. The website is therefore being discovered primarily through search visibility rather than paid advertising, which reflects strong organic positioning.

Page level data confirms that public interest is concentrated around core service areas. The homepage, calendar, Saugeen Bluffs, Durham Conservation Area, camping information, careers, reserve a campsite, and maps and GIS pages were among the most visited sections. The volume of activity on the careers page also reflects continued organizational staffing activity throughout the year.

Overall engagement metrics are consistent with a municipal service website where users often arrive with a specific purpose, locate the information required, and complete their task efficiently. With 67,688 engaged sessions and more than 716,000 tracked interactions, the site demonstrates steady public interaction and utility. Seasonal peaks correspond with operational demands, reinforcing the importance of website stability and clarity during high volume periods.

In summary, 2025 digital performance reflects a stable, seasonally driven and service oriented online presence. The website continues to act as a primary point of public interaction for

conservation areas, camping, hazard information, mapping resources and corporate communications. Traffic composition, geographic reach, and acquisition patterns are aligned with SVCA’s mandate and operational priorities, and the data supports continued investment in search visibility, mobile usability and clear service navigation.

Environmental Planning & Regulations (EPR)

Huron-Kinloss Regulation Mapping Updates

Updated regulation mapping is live and in effect for seven watercourses and their associated valleys and floodplains west of Lake Range Drive. Staff participated in an interview on CTV news regarding some of the changes. Staff continue to work on regulation mapping updates for the section of the Pine River upstream / east of Lake Range Drive.

Real Estate Law Office Webinar

EPR staff hosted a webinar on January 22, 2026, for real estate law offices. Staff from 15 law offices participated in the webinar, which focused on raising awareness of SVCA’s regulated areas and activities in the context of property transactions.

Review of Durham Frazil Ice Monitoring Sites

EPR staff toured the Durham frazil ice monitoring locations to increase familiarity with locations and protocols in preparation for future events when staff could be called upon for assistance.



Amish/Mennonite Outreach

Staff have completed various outreach initiatives for six Amish and Mennonite communities in the watershed to raise awareness of environmental planning and regulations. Outreach initiatives are in various stages of planning for three additional communities as of February 23, 2026.

Coastal Hazard Fact Sheets

Conservation Ontario provided each CA with branded fact sheets about coastal flooding and erosion hazards that staff will make available to watershed residents. See below.

Permits Issued Pursuant to Section 28.1 (1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*

The following 16 permits were issued between January 1, 2026, and February 24, 2026.

Permit	Municipality	Description of Works
26-001	Southgate	Construction of a dwelling, installation of sewage disposal system, and related excavation, filling, and grading.
26-002	Minto	Alteration of a watercourse consisting of the installation of fibre-optic cable (Project 327-1-SA02 IFA) by horizontal directional drill with water and within floodplain by horizontal directional drill and plow with related excavation and grading.
26-003	West Grey	To construct a 2517 square-foot eight-unit motel, with related excavation, filling and grading.
26-004	Hanover	To construct a 4,856 square foot duplex with covered porches and decks, and a retaining wall, with related excavation, filling and grading.
26-005	Wellington North	Alteration of a watercourse consisting of the installation of fibre-optic cable (Project 509-2-SA137-S66-S3A (HWY 6), Arthur) by horizontal directional drill with water and within floodplain with related excavation and grading.
26-006	Southgate	Thermoform lining of 2 existing road culverts (Culverts 373 and 920) on Grey Road 9 and Grey Road 3.
26-007	Grey Highlands	Construction of New Single Detached Residence with attached garage and septic system on a vacant lot.
26-008	Saugeen Shores	To construct a 16-foot by 32-foot on-ground pool, with surrounding deck, with related excavation, filling and grading.
26-009	Minto	Construction of a dwelling, and related excavation, filling, and grading.
26-010	West Grey	Partial demolition of an existing single-family residence, expansion of an existing sunroom and reconstruction/expansion of an existing deck and related excavation, filling and grading.

Permit	Municipality	Description of Works
26-011	Southgate	Construction of an access route from 752331 Ida Street to the adjacent property known as Southgate Meadows Phase 2 subdivision, including related filling and grading, all within the adjacent lands to a wetland.
26-012	Grey Highlands	Installation of systematic farm drainage tile with outlet to watercourse.
26-013	Arran-Elderslie	To construct a new roof overlay and overhang onto an existing dwelling.
26-014	Minto	Construction of a barn, installation of a berm, and related excavation, filling, and grading.
26-015	Grey Highlands	Laneway entrance improvements including culvert replacement, ditch re-grading, and removal of concrete rubble piles with associated excavation, fill placement, and grading.
26-016	Minto	Construction of an accessory building for straw storage and manure storage; and related excavation, filling, and grading.

Coastal Erosion Hazards Across the Great Lakes



Coastal erosion is a natural process that shapes and maintains the coastline and beaches along the Great Lakes. Extreme winds, waves, rainfall, surface runoff, and a decrease in winter ice cover accelerate erosion rates, creating hazardous areas that threaten homes, businesses, infrastructure, recreational areas, and public safety.

Coastal Conservation Authorities are local watershed experts who identify and monitor areas prone to coastal erosion across the Great Lakes region, regulating development and supporting erosion prevention measures to keep people and development away from erosion-prone areas.



Cohesive Bluffs composed of clay and silt particles, remain strong in dry conditions but become loose and unstable during heavy rain or snow and ice melt. Without vegetation on the bluff, water flows quickly, accelerating erosion.



Banks along the coast can erode quickly from strong and frequent waves. The geological composition of the bank influences the rate of erosion. Banks made up of sandy soils are more prone to erosion than those composed of solid bedrock.



Dynamic Beaches are continuously changed by wind and water erosion, threatening any built infrastructure in the area. The width of the beach changes with water levels and wave conditions. High water levels move sand, eroding dunes, whereas periods of low lake levels allow dunes to reform but expose the lakebed to wind erosion.



Gullies are formed from runoff during rainfall, snow, or ice melt. Water travels down the slope and creates rills that can develop into large gullies. Depending on the soil type, gullies can extend landward at a fairly rapid rate.

Seasonal Impacts



Winter

Consistent ice cover on the Great Lakes during the winter months shields the coast from harsh storms by reducing wave energy. In mild winters, the absence of ice leaves the coast vulnerable to damage from ice storms and increased erosion.



Ice Intrusion



Spring

Frequent heavy rain, along with melting snow and ice, sends water rushing down slopes. This runoff washes away sediment and vegetation, weakening slopes and increasing the risk of failure.



Slope Failure



Periods of Low or High Lake Levels

Periods of low water levels increase the risk of wind erosion on exposed lake beds. Periods of high water levels increase the frequency of flood events.



Lakebed Erosion

Recognizing the early signs of erosion can help protect your property and safety.

Look out for:

1. Bare slopes without vegetation
2. Bent or leaning trees
3. Tension cracks in the soil
4. Loss of sediment at the base of the bluff or bank
5. Over-steepened banks



Visit www.saugeenconservation.ca to learn more about erosion hazards in your community.

Coastal Flood Hazards Across the Great Lakes



Flooding is the leading cause of public emergencies in Ontario, and communities across the Great Lakes region are the most vulnerable to its impacts.

Coastal floods are worsened by wave uprush, overtopping, ice spray, and periods of high water levels. These hazards threaten homes, businesses, infrastructure, recreational areas, public safety, and access for first responders.

Coastal Conservation Authorities are local watershed experts who identify and monitor areas prone to flooding across the Great Lakes and regulate development in hazardous areas to reduce risks to communities.



Coastal Flooding can occur at any time of the year during extreme weather, high water levels, storm surges, heavy rainfall, and ice or snowmelt events.



Wave Uprush and Overtopping occur when intense wind-driven waves hit the coastline, pushing lake water onto low-lying areas. This hazard is intensified during periods of high water levels, leading to destructive flood events.



Ice Spray occurs during winter storms when intense wind-driven waves cover infrastructure and homes in thick ice. The ice is often mixed with beach sediments, adding weight to the coating.



High Water Levels occur when water levels rise significantly above the normal range due to heavy rainfall or snowmelt events, leading to the flooding of low-lying areas.



📍 Catfish Creek Conservation Authority

Conservation Authorities Reduce Risk to People and Property Across the Great Lakes

Ontario's 26 coastal Conservation Authorities are the first line of defence against coastal flooding and catastrophic loss. Working in partnership with local municipalities, our watershed experts conduct coastal hazard assessments to identify high-risk and problematic areas within coastal communities, ensuring decision-makers have access to the best available data to guide development away from hazardous areas.

Our proactive approach to coastal hazard management is one of the most effective and cost-efficient ways to build resilient communities, minimize damage, and reduce insured losses.

Conservation Authorities Keep Coastal Communities Informed

Each year, coastal Conservation Authorities issue flood forecasting messages and warnings to communities, informing watershed residents of the current flood status across the Great Lakes region.

Coastal Conservation Authorities and the Ministry of Natural Resources collaborate to forecast where and when flooding along the Great Lakes is likely to occur, and to issue timely flood messages that keep communities and emergency managers informed. By working together, Conservation Authorities and the Province are building resilient, flood-ready coastal communities.



📍 Lower Thames Conservation Authority

Visit www.saugeenconservation.ca to learn more about flood hazards in your community.

Forestry and Lands

Lands Report

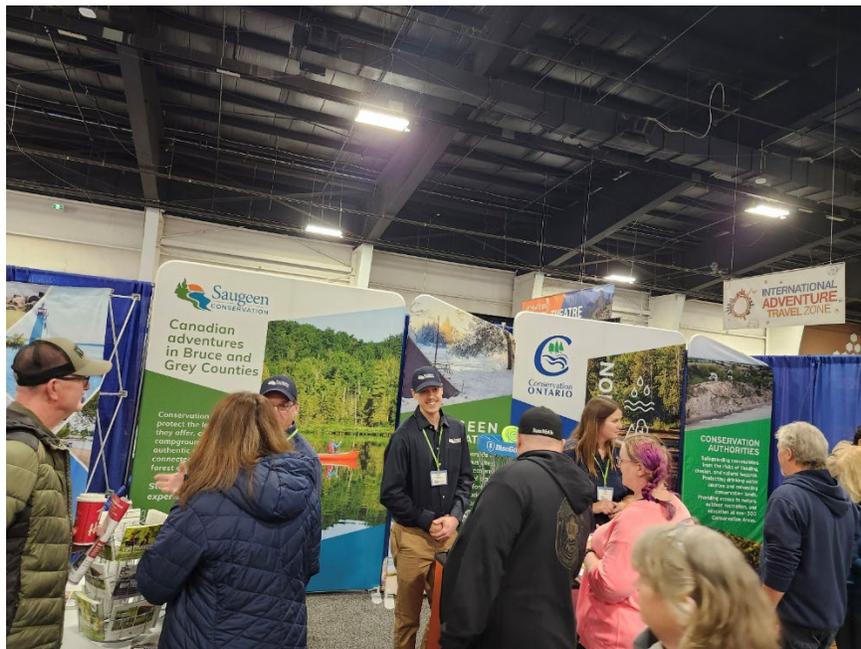
Staff completed the creation of the two new walled offices at Formosa, which will allow for the meeting room to become available for staff use, and better work area for a manager.

Two night hikes were planned and well received at Sulphur Spring CA. Staff from all departments volunteered their time for these events, they wouldn't have been a success without all of the support and work completed by volunteers.

Forestry staff have been continuing to receive requests for Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program work as well as tree purchase and planting inquiries. Forest inventory work is ongoing. It is looking like it is going to be a big tree planting year.

The Durham CA continues to offer winter camping, with increased uptake. As part of having the park open, staff have been able to enroll the park in Frazzlefest, offering free community activities on Family Day. This year over 100 people, came out for free snowshoe rentals, disc golf, guided activities, and hot chocolate or apple cider.

Staff attended the Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show to advertise our camping opportunities and the other offerings our properties have for visitors and residents alike.



Flood Forecast and Warning (FFW)

Flood Messages

On January 13th, 2026, a Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook was issued due to the potential for frazil ice formation in the Main Saugeen upstream of Durham, driven by a prolonged forecast of cold temperatures and high streamflow caused by recent rainfall and snowmelt. The message was in effect until January 20th, 2026

On January 20th, 2026, a Flood Watch Statement was issued due to the accumulation of frazil ice in the channel downstream of the Durham Lower Dam which caused water levels to gradually rise from January 19th to 20th, 2026. A partial blockage of the channel was also present between the Durham Upper Dam and Durham Middle Dam, creating rapidly changing conditions below McGowan Falls. This message was in effect until January 27th, 2026.

On February 18th, 2026, a Watershed Condition Statement – Flood Outlook was issued due to mild temperatures leading up to the 18th, a freezing rain warning advising of 5 to 10 cm of ice buildup expected on the 18th and substantial river ice cover in the watershed leading. The primary concern being the weakening of river ice and potential for ice movement and jamming during the mild weather. This statement was in effect until February 23rd, 2026.

Snow Surveys

As of the latest snow survey on February 15, 2026, all snow surveys have recorded above average snow depths and water content. While temperatures in January and February primarily remained below freezing, some short periods of above freezing temperatures, combined with rain reduced snowpack depths throughout the watershed and resulted in denser snow with minimal runoff in the latest warming period of February 18th, 2026.

Ice Monitoring

Ice monitoring continued through January and February. Throughout the watershed, ice conditions are documented to inform the potential for ice breakup and jamming. Specific to Durham, frazil ice conditions were monitored daily to document the production and deposition of frazil ice which is used to inform flood potential until the threat of frazil ice production and subsequent accumulation had passed and then changed to monitoring multiple times a week as opposed to daily.

Frazil Event

From January 15 to January 25, 2026 frazil ice started to be produced upstream of Durham after a large mid-winter melt. The Flood Event Operations Center (FEOC) was activated from January 20th through January 25th with staff monitoring conditions 24 hrs during this time. Staff worked closely with West Grey staff to communicate conditions in and around Durham. A full report is being presented by staff.

Capital Projects

WECl final reporting is being completed and WECl projects are being finalized with expected completion of March 31st. In early February the WECl committee requested additional projects that would fall under the WECl program guidelines to be submitted as there were surplus funds available. Staff were able to get 3 projects retroactively funded by WECl which provided an additional \$18,250.

The funded projects included additional funds contributed to the Durham Upper Dam – erosion control repair work, Paisley CCTV inspections, and the Tree Remediation Assessment for SVCA properties. In addition, unused funds from projects that were under budget were shifted to help support additional work under the Durham Upper Dam Phase 2. As we near the end of March Staff will be compiling projects to apply for the next round of WECl funding.

On February 1st staff reported that the Durham Lower Dam gates to the walkway had been stolen. On February 2nd Staff installed temporary fencing to keep the public off the dam. New gates were installed on February 10th and replacement signs have been ordered. In conjunction with this, concern was raised by staff about the distance between the walkway, while compacted with snow, and the top of the guard rail and the safety of staff on the walkway. The concern was investigated by management and staff were directed to remain off the walkway unless a plan was in place with management for safe work, including the removal of the hazard from the working area. A Ministry of Labour investigation was undertaken which resulted in no orders from the MOL in relation to the concern and response at the Durham Lower Dam.

Once the ground thaws, Staff will be able to install signage at Hanover Dam, Meux Creek Weir, Walkerton Dyke, Durham Upper Dam, and replacement signs at the Durham Lower Dam, and Walkerton Hydro Dam. SVCA structures have been prepped for freshet including flap gate checks at various structures and board removal at the lower dam. Staff are continuing to work on standardizing operating procedures for infrastructure maintenance and works. Staff are continuing to follow inspection requirements for the various structures across the Saugeen Valley Watershed and Category 2 agreements responsibilities are underway.

Incoming Reports from RFPs and RFQs

SVCA staff have following reports coming in from projects completed:

Paisley Dyke CCTV Inspection – Field work has been complete, and a report should be received by March

Tree Remediation Assessment RFP – Field work has been complete, and a report should be received by mid-March

DUD Class EA Phase 2 – project is underway and a draft report should be received by late March

Water Quality (WQ)

Water quality staff are continuing to conduct delegations to municipalities to share the data summarized in the 20 Year Water Quality Report. Winter surface water sampling, supported by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks, under the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network is being conducted from December to March. Quarterly well maintenance for the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network will be completed this month. Water quality staff are undertaking QA/QC of data collected in 2025 and incorporating this into the Water Quality report and the Water Quality dashboard on the SVCA website.

Report GM-2026-07

Report To: Chair and Directors, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
From: Erik Downing, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Date: March 11, 2026
Subject: SVCA Committee Appointments
Purpose: To confirm appointments to Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority's standing committees

Recommendation

THAT the SVCA Chair as voting delegate, Vice Chair, as first alternate, and General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (GM-S/T) or designate as second alternate, be appointed, to Conservation Ontario Council for 2026; and further THAT the SVCA Chair, Vice Chair and GM/S-T be appointed to the Source Protection Regional Management Committee.

Background

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA) has four standing committees that support staff and provide recommendations to the Board of Directors. Representation for the Agricultural Advisory Committee, Forestry, Property and Parks, and Water Resources Committees were appointed at the Annual Board Meeting held in January 2026. The remaining committees requiring representation are the Conservation Ontario Council and the Source Protection Regional Management Committee.

Conservation Ontario

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer represent SVCA at the four Conservation Ontario council meetings are held annually.

Source Protection Regional Management Committee

The Source Protection Regional Management Committee is made up of 3 reps from each Source Protection Authority (Saugeen, Grey Sauble, and Northern Bruce Peninsula). The Management Committee oversees the general budget, selects SPC Members and ensures the general delivery of the program, including hiring the Program Manager. The Source Protection Authority oversees the Source Protection Plan amendments and technical side of the program in an oversight capacity.

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer represent SVCA at the Source Protection Regional Management Committee and require appointment.

Financial Implications

Committee appointments represent mandatory programs and services of SVCA and are budgeted for and funded through municipal apportionment. The 2026 budget for the board of directors, both per diems and other related expenses totals \$30,000, and is inclusive of all committee functions. These committee appointments fit within the allocation for 2026.

Prepared by:

[Original Signed By]

Erik Downing, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

Approved by:

[Original Signed By]

Erik Downing, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

March 11, 2026

CS-2026-06

Draft Financial Statements

2025 Quarter 1 Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority									
March 31, 2025 Unaudited Financial Report									
Category	Revenue				Expenses				Surplus/ Deficit
Program	Approved Budget	Actual YTD	\$ Remaining	% Remaining	Approved Budget	Actual YTD	\$ Remaining	% Remaining	Actual
Administration	\$886,960	\$206,509.00	\$689,659.00	77.76%	\$886,960	\$281,195	\$651,062	73.40%	-\$74,686
Communication	\$144,200	\$36,050.00	\$108,150.00	75.00%	\$144,200	\$25,381	\$118,819	82.40%	\$10,669
GIS/IT	\$195,800	\$49,904.00	\$145,896.00	74.51%	\$195,800	\$37,945	\$157,855	80.62%	\$11,959
Environmental Planning and Regulations	\$1,193,850	\$231,858.00	\$961,992.00	80.58%	\$1,193,850	\$215,479	\$978,371	81.95%	\$16,379
Forestry and Lands	\$1,321,800	\$332,930.00	\$1,011,820.00	76.55%	\$1,328,085	\$158,954	\$1,106,440	83.31%	\$173,976
Motorpool	\$242,600	\$28,906	\$213,694	88.08%	\$242,600	\$40,847	\$22,419	9.24%	-\$11,941
Campgrounds	\$1,429,400	\$91,437	\$1,337,963	93.60%	\$1,386,150	\$122,831	\$1,263,319	91.14%	-\$31,394
Flood Warning	\$273,800	\$67,626	\$206,174	75.30%	\$273,800	\$53,144	\$220,656	80.59%	\$14,482
Water Resources Management	\$904,000	\$123,974	\$1,000,071	110.63%	\$904,000	\$107,196	\$1,016,849	80.59%	\$16,778
Total	\$6,592,410	\$1,169,194	\$5,675,419	83.56%	\$6,555,445.00	\$1,042,972.00	\$5,535,790.00	73.69%	\$126,222.00

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority									
January 31, 2026 Unaudited Financial Report									
Category	Revenue				Expenses				Surplus/ Deficit
Program	Approved Budget	Actual YTD	\$ Remaining	% Remaining	Approved Budget	Actual YTD	\$ Remaining	% Remaining	Actual
Administration	\$900,450	\$1,050	\$899,400	99.88%	\$900,450	\$74,574	\$825,876	91.72%	-\$73,524
Communication	\$153,750	\$1,500	\$152,250	99.02%	\$153,750	\$11,310	\$142,440	92.64%	-\$9,810
GIS/IT	\$203,500	\$71	\$203,429	99.97%	\$203,500	\$14,442	\$189,058	92.90%	-\$14,371
Environmental Planning and Regulations	\$1,032,750	\$30,137	\$1,002,613	97.08%	\$1,032,750	\$54,272	\$978,478	94.74%	-\$24,135
Forestry, Non-Rev Parks, & Ag Lands	\$1,265,816	\$49,040	\$1,216,776	96.13%	\$1,277,816	\$45,900	\$1,231,916	96.41%	\$3,140
Motorpool	\$220,400	\$11,184	\$209,216	94.93%	\$220,400	\$15,302	\$205,098	93.06%	-\$4,118
Campgrounds	\$1,417,611	\$17,777	\$1,399,834	98.75%	\$1,379,845	\$34,063	\$1,345,782	97.53%	-\$16,286
Flood Warning	\$273,300	\$101	\$273,199	99.96%	\$273,300	\$8,986	\$264,314	96.71%	-\$8,885
Water Resources Management	\$1,025,906	\$358,362	\$667,544	65.07%	\$1,051,672	\$70,779	\$980,893	93.27%	\$287,583
Total	\$6,493,483	\$469,222	\$6,024,261	94.53%	\$6,493,483	\$329,628	\$6,163,855	94.33%	\$139,594



Forestry and Lands Department Overview

Saugen Conservation Board of Directors

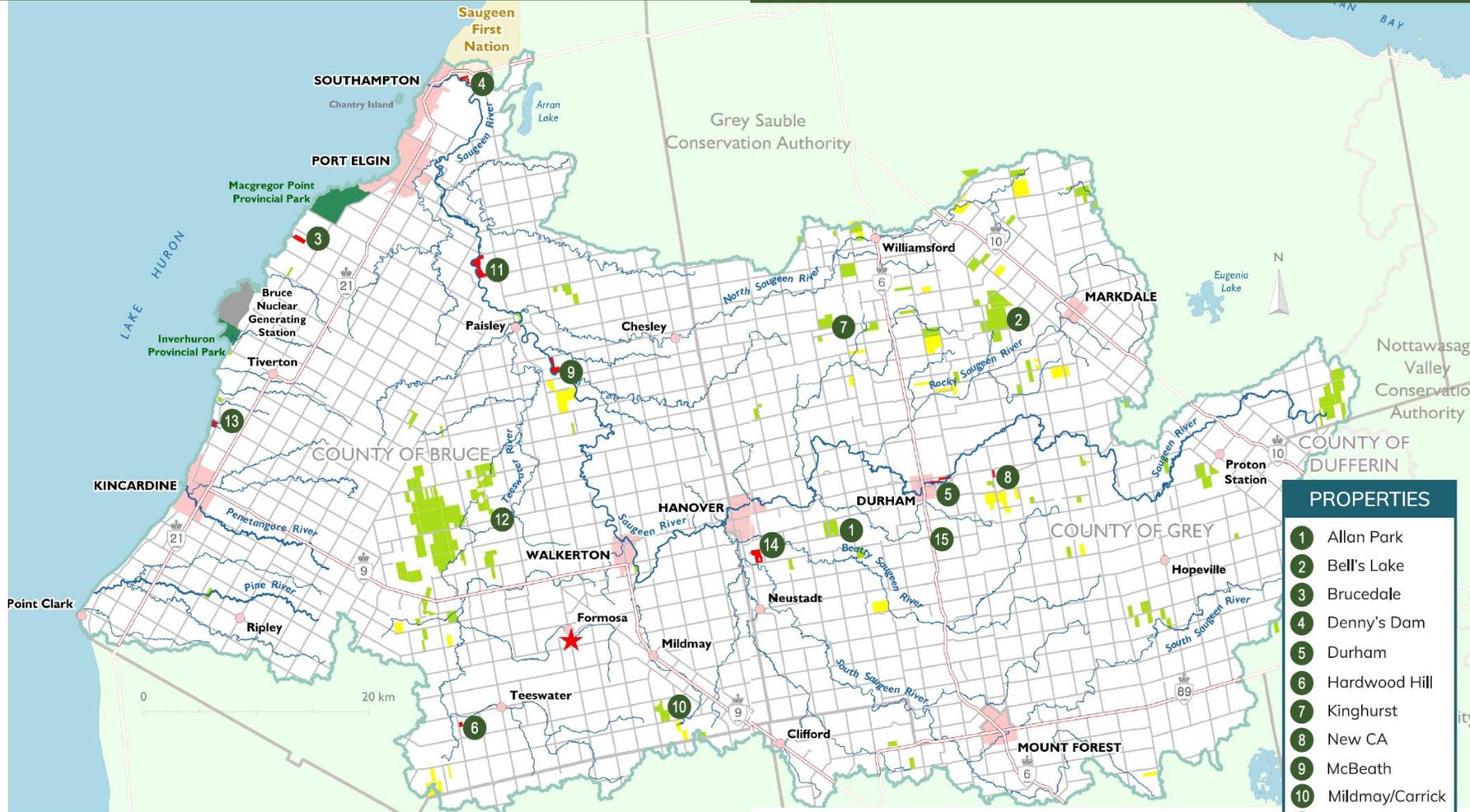
Donna Lacey

Manager of Forestry and Lands

Saugen Valley Conservation Authority

March 11, 2026





PROPERTIES	
1	Allan Park
2	Bell's Lake
3	Brucedale
4	Denny's Dam
5	Durham
6	Hardwood Hill
7	Kinghurst
8	New CA
9	McBeath
10	Mildmay/Carrick
11	Saugeen Bluffs
12	Schmidt Lake
13	Stoney Island
14	Sulphur Spring
15	Varney

LEGEND				
Properties	Transportation	Boundaries	Drainage	Settlement
Managed Forest	Highway	Watershed Boundary	River or Stream	Larger City or Town
Conservation Area	Major Road	County Boundary	Lake	Smaller City or Town
County Forest		Administration Office		SVCA Property

Head out and explore!



Forestry and lands staff



Our department is currently comprised of 10 full-time staff, 3 part-time staff, and one high school co-op student. During the warm season, 15 student positions are added to the roster.





In the beginning...



- SVCA formed 1950
- First tree planter purchased in 1952
- The first forested property purchased by SVCA was in 1952, Osprey Township



Early forest management



- In 1960, SVCA put the majority of forests into the Agreement Forest Program
- MNR managed those properties



The benefits of partnership



By 1970, through the combined efforts of SVCA and the MNR, 2,741,000 trees were planted on Authority-owned properties.



Forestry activities



- Prior to 1997, all forestry activities were performed under the conservation services program. In 1997, the first Forest Management Coordinator position was established at SVCA.
- In 1997, the forestry services of SVCA and Grey Sauble CA formed a joint program called the Grey Bruce Forestry Service to offer consistent forestry advice, services, and fees across the two watersheds. This allowed for shared advertising and greater promotion of the services.
- Also in 1997, a Forestry Committee was formed by the BOD to oversee the management of SVCA forests.
- Finally, in 1997, the SVCA initiated a forest resource inventory of all Authority-owned forested property.



Program changes



The MNR abandoned the Agreement Forest program, which meant the termination of the management agreement between the MNR and SVCA began in 1998. SVCA became solely responsible for the management of all its forests in 1998.





We keep on...

To date, SVCA has planted **over 5,917,736** seedlings and tens of thousands of landscape stock trees.



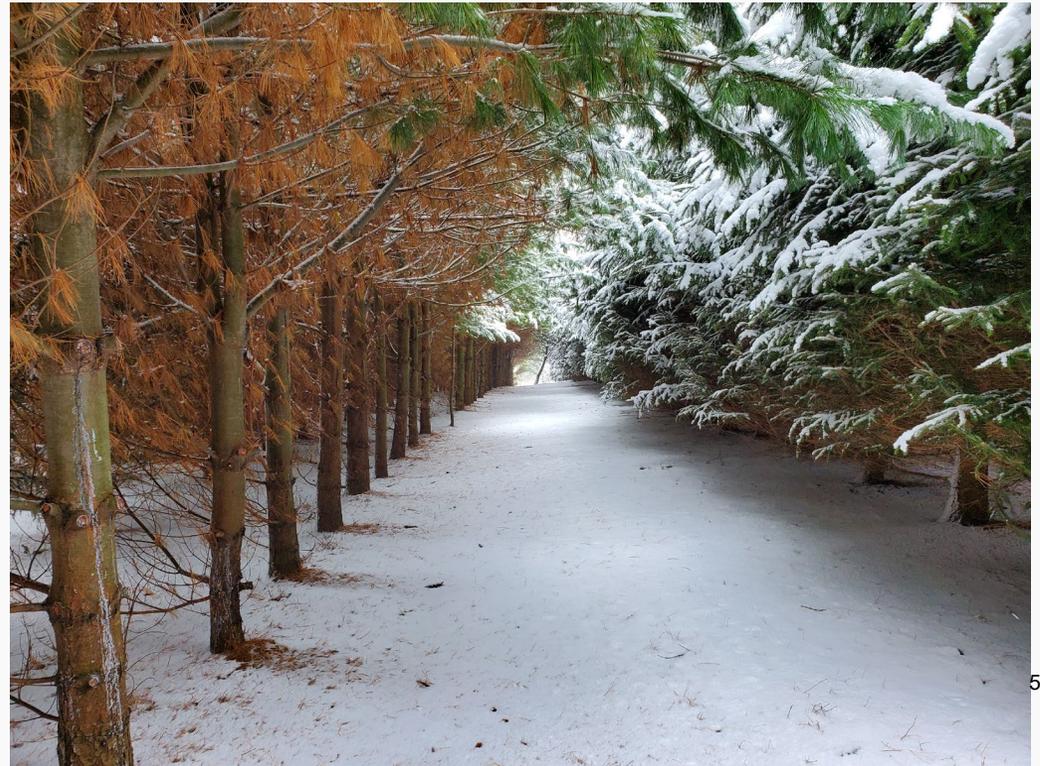
Early recreational lands



Varney Conservation Area was the first recreational property opened by SVCA, and remains under its ownership, with the first portion purchased in 1954.







SVCA properties

12 Conservation Areas:

Allan Park, Brucedale, Denny's Dam, Durham, Formosa, Lockerby, New CA, McBeath, Saugeen Bluffs, Stoney Island, Sulphur Spring, and Varney.

A conservation area is an area with amenities such as washrooms, picnic shelters, recreational trails, campgrounds, recreational activities, and scenic areas.

Within this list of conservation areas are our four campgrounds:

- Brucedale (52 campsites, 113+ acres)
- Durham (210 campsites, 93+ acres)
- McBeath (13 campsites, 134+ acres)
- Saugeen Bluffs (180 campsites, 285 acres)





SVCA grew... and grew



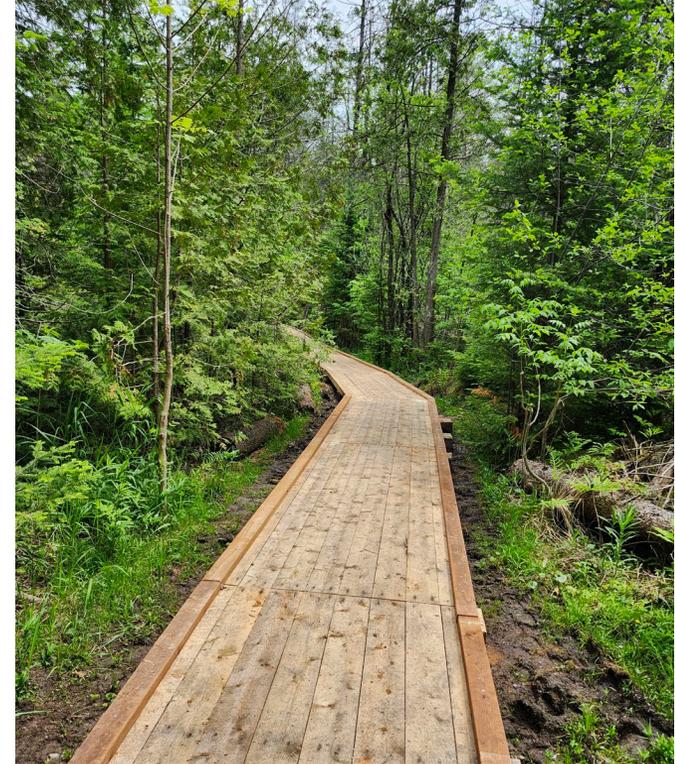
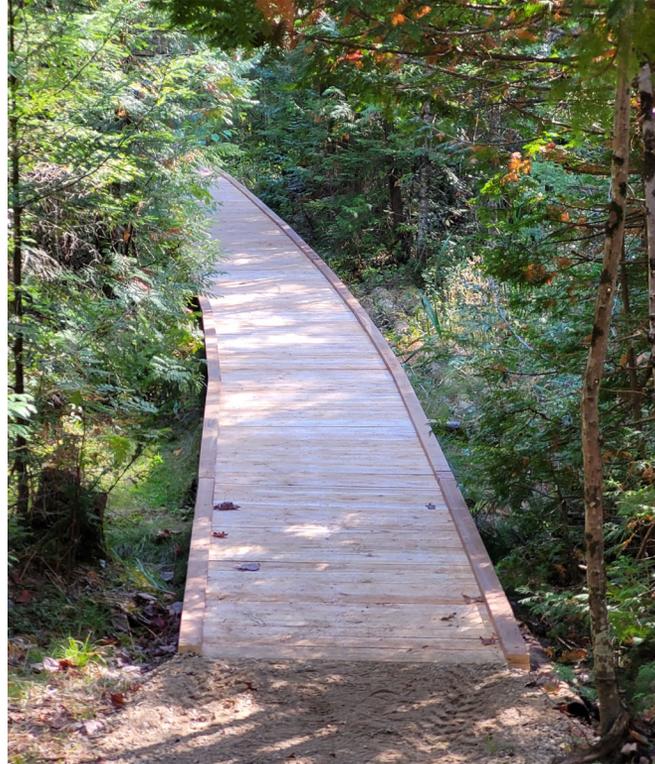
Maintenance



Kilometres of trails

The Forestry and Lands department maintains over 21,900 acres of natural spaces with over 52 kilometres of wilderness trail.

This includes the maintenance of bridges, boardwalks, and signage, as well as hazard tree removal.



Fleet



- The department is also responsible for the fleet of vehicles and equipment which includes:
- 16 trucks/ cars , 1 small dump truck
- 2 tractors, 1 backhoe
- 4 side-by-sides, 1 ATV, 1 snowmobile
- Many mowers, trimmers, chainsaws, small tools, trailers, and vessels





Thank you

Donna Lacey

Manager of Forestry and Lands

d.lacey@svca.on.ca

www.saugeenconservation.ca



WR-2026-01

Report To: Chair and Directors, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
From: Jody Duncan, Flood Forecasting and Warning Coordinator, Water Resources Department
Date: March 11, 2026
Subject: Frazil Ice Event
Purpose: To update the SVCA Board of Directors on the January 2026 frazil ice event in the Municipality of West Grey.

Background

Frazil ice forms when turbulent, open water becomes super-cooled when mixed with air, usually when air temperatures and/or wind chill values reach -12°C or colder for several consecutive days. It is made up of a collection of loose, randomly oriented ice crystals that are suspended in the water column. These particles can build up very rapidly as they are extremely sticky and easily adhere to each other, the underside of an ice sheet, or the river bottom.

As these particles move downstream, they may begin to backup where a reduced gradient slows down the flow of water, creating a dam. As more frazil ice is deposited, the accumulation will extend upstream and increase in width until the point where the frazil ice blocks water flows and causes water levels to rise upstream.

The river upstream of Durham has a relatively steep gradient with numerous reaches of turbulent fast flowing areas (rapids) that play a major role in the generation of frazil ice and, if the complimentary meteorological conditions also exist, can produce large quantities of ice. At Durham, there is an abrupt reduction in gradient and subsequent slowing of water from the Durham Lower Dam to Highway #4. This reduction in gradient promotes the accumulation of frazil ice, which can eventually block the channel and force water into developed areas adjacent to the Saugeen River.

2026 Frazil Ice Event

Pre-Event Conditions

Cold temperatures in late November and early December 2025 allowed ice cover on the Saugeen River to develop early in the season. Despite the Durham Upper Dam not being put into winter configuration, an ice sheet was still able to form on the reservoir during the freeze-up period. Daily average temperatures began to consistently remain below 0°C on November 27th, 2025. The first observations of ice bridging occurring on the reservoir were on December 7th and 8th, 2025.

However, two thaw events that occurred on December 28th, 2025 and January 8th, 2026 resulted in a complete loss of the reservoir ice sheet and of most the ice cover that had formed in the upper reaches of the Saugeen River. At this time, the walkway gates at the DUD and DLD were closed to the public.

The absence of ice cover and presence of high flows causing increased surface area and turbulence created conditions very favourable to the production of frazil ice. Following the early January thaw, stream flows remained too high for ice to begin to reform in the Durham Upper Dam reservoir or in upstream reaches.

On January 12, 2026, SVCA staff reached out to staff at the Municipality of West Grey to advise of weather trends and the potential for frazil ice, and to confirm municipal staff had heavy equipment on standby for the coming week.

Event

On January 13, 2026 a Water Safety Statement – Flood Outlook was issued for the Municipality of West Grey as weather forecasts were indicating the onset of extreme cold temperatures.

Frazil ice began coming into Durham on January 15th, 2026 where it accumulated between the Durham Middle Dam and Durham Upper Dam, causing water levels to rise just below the Durham Upper Dam. During this period, only small amounts of frazil ice made its way to the ice management channel and Moffat's hole.

By January 19th, the river had created a channel through the ice that accumulated between the Durham Upper Dam and Durham Middle Dam reservoir, allowing frazil ice to travel through Town and accumulate at Moffat's Hole. Conditions continued to worsen overnight due to dropping temperatures and an accompanying blizzard. Staff local to Durham monitored the situation closely overnight with remote support due to weather conditions and concerns around travel.

As a result of ice accumulating at Moffat's Hole, water levels started to rise slowly in the ice management channel and at the Durham Creek Outlet.. An update on conditions was sent to West Grey staff at 4 am on January 20th with the recommendation that West Grey take action with excavators to open a channel in the river along the ice management channel to alleviate the rising waters. Municipal staff confirmed that excavators would be brought in that day to start digging. SVCA also upgraded the Flood Outlook message to a Flood Watch the morning of January 20th in response to worsening conditions in the ice management channel.

SVCA's Flood Event Centre (FEOC) was activated on January 20th for 24-hour monitoring with crews of 4 (1 supervisor, 1 coordinator and 2 monitoring staff) on two 12-hour shifts. Staff monitored the situation from the 20th to 21st on a continuous basis until conditions stabilized, largely due to the now open channel from excavator work and warmer temperatures. In response, the FEOC was put on standby and staff local to Durham were scheduled to monitor

key locations morning, noon and evening. Ice checks upstream of Durham were also completed, confirming the river remained largely open.

Conditions largely remained stable through January 22nd, though began to change later in the evening, warranting more regular checks overnight into January 23rd. This was completed by local staff with remote support due to weather conditions

By the morning of January 23rd, water levels had again risen at the Durham Creek Culvert. An update was provided to Municipal staff who then brought in excavators to open the channel again along the ice management channel. In response, the FEOC was activated again for 24 hr monitoring. Water levels dropped throughout the day as excavators were able to open the channel again, frazil ice also started accumulating between the Durham Middle Dam reservoir and Durham Upper Dam, causing water levels to rise just below the Durham Upper Dam, though not to concerning levels.

The morning of January 24th saw a gradual increase in frazil ice through the night which later stabilized. The upper reaches of the river upstream of Durham started to freeze over and less frazil ice was coming into town.

Post-event

On January 25th, the FEOC was put on standby, with regular daily monitoring of key locations by local staff established instead. On January 26th with conditions stabilized, ice cover in place and the threat of frazil production and accumulation lessened, the FEOC was officially deactivated, with regular daily checks continuing.

With the stabilization of temperatures and ice cover throughout the watershed, staff shifted from daily monitoring to monitoring multiple times a week. Staff also utilize the camera network as needed to monitor conditions.

SVCA Response Summary – Key Dates

November 2025 - Camera network installed and maintained, shared with municipal staff

January 10th 2026 the Durham Upper Dam walkway was closed to the public due

January 13th, 2026 a Water Safety Statement – Flood Outlook was issued for the Municipality of West Grey

January 14th, 2025 a Watershed Condition Statement was issued by the provincial Surface Water Monitoring Centre advising of frazil ice potential.

January 15th, 2025 a staff gauge was installed at the Durham Creek Outlet to allow for more effective monitoring of water level fluctuations.

January 20th 2026 the Durham Lower Dam walkway and riverside trail on the Durham Conservation Area closed to the public

On January 20th 2026 a Flood Watch was issued for the Municipality of West Grey as frazil ice was beginning to accumulate at Moffat's Hole and in the Ice Management Channel.

January 21st, 2026 a second Watershed Condition Statement was issued by the provincial Surface Water Monitoring Centre.

January 20th to 25th the Flood Event Operations Centre was enacted for 24 hr monitoring
Ongoing communication with municipal staff

Financial Implications

Staff time is used to supervise SVCAs response and communications with partners, public and media; coordinate monitoring crews, locations and communications with municipal partners; and monitor conditions locally at key locations throughout Durham. Fleet vehicles are used by coordinators and monitoring crew who are traveling in and through Durham and are visible to the public.

Next Steps

Staff will debrief internally as well as with Municipal staff after the spring freshet.

SVCA staff are continuing to work alongside municipal staff on the Durham Upper Dam Class EA Phase 2, the primary focus of which is a Frazil Ice Mitigation plan to better inform preferred solutions.

Strategic Plan Linkages

C1.0 – Connection, Cultivating strong relationships, increased collaboration

C1.7 – Connection, Municipality, CA and CO Connection Increase

R1.10 – Climate and Environmental Resilience Planning and Action

Prepared by:

< [Original signed by:]>

Jody Duncan, Flood Forecasting and Warning Coordinator

Approved by:

< [Original signed by:]>

Erik Downing, General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

EPR-2026-04

Report To: Chair and Directors, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
From: Matt Armstrong, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Date: March 11, 2026
Subject: 2025 Permitting Statistics
Purpose: To present SVCA’s 2025 *Conservation Authority Act* S. 28.1 permitting statistics.

Background

Section 8.1 of O. Reg. 686/21 requires all Conservation Authorities (CAs) to prepare and publish an annual report on permit statistics, including timelines and the level of compliance with O. Reg. 41/24. The new regulatory requirement resulted in the creation of a standardized “Permit Timelines and Compliance Reporting Framework and Template” for use by all CAs. Table 1 lists the statistics related to permitting for January 1st to December 31st, 2025.

Table 1 Permitting Statistics for January 1st to December 31st, 2025

Total Permits Issued (Overall)	295
Total Major Permits Issued	23
Total Minor Permits Issued	272
Total Applications Subject to Minister’s Order (Minister’s Review):	0
COMPLETE APPLICATION REVIEW Total complete application reviews completed in 21 days:	289 (98%)
PERMIT TIMELINES (MAJOR) Total Major Permits Issued <u>Within</u> Decision Timeline (90 Days):	23 (100%)
PERMIT TIMELINES (MAJOR) Total Major Permits Issued <u>Outside</u> Decision Timeline (90 Days):	0
PERMIT TIMELINES (MINOR) Total Minor Permits Issued <u>Within</u> Decision Timeline (30 Days):	271 (99.6%)
PERMIT TIMELINES (MINOR) Total Minor Permits Issued <u>Outside</u> Decision Timeline (30 Days):	1
VARIANCE FROM TIMELINES Reason for Variance from Timelines (Optional):	Staff delay / Workload
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – ALL) Overall Average Permit Review Timeline:	3.51 days
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – MAJOR – 90 DAYS)	3.37 days

Average Major Permit Review Timeline:	
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – MINOR – 30 DAYS) Average Minor Permit Review Timeline:	3.61 days
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS Total requests for administrative reviews made to the Authority:	2
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS Total administrative reviews completed within 30 days of the request:	2

Analysis

There were 295 permits issued in 2025, compared to 293 in 2024.

The majority of permits issued in 2025 meet the definition of a “Minor” permit, meaning not highly complex or requiring the submission of additional technical reports.

Staff notified applicants regarding the completeness of their applications 98% of the time within the legislated 21 days.

In terms of issuing permits, staff met the 90-day (Major permits) and 30-day (Minor permits) targets 294/295 = 99.7% of the time.

On average, staff issued permits within 3.51 calendar days once all required information was confirmed to have been received, compared to an average of 3.69 calendar days for 2024.

Strategic Plan Linkages

A1.0 – Enhancing accessibility across the Authority

C1.6 – Customer Service Standards

Prepared by:

< [Original signed by:]>

Matt Armstrong, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Approved by:

< [Original signed by:]>

Erik Downing, General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

posted ERO #025-1257 proposing to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven regional conservation authorities and to establish a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, with limited consultation and without accompanying cost-benefit analysis or evidence demonstrating the need for this restructuring; and

Whereas Schedule 3 of Bill 68 enables the province to assume governance authority over regional conservation authorities, raising concerns regarding diminished municipal representation, loss of local decision-making, and centralization of watershed management; and

Whereas municipalities in Eastern Ontario have expressed concern, including the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, as well as the United Counties of Prescott Russell that restructuring may:

- increase red tape and administrative burden;
- impose significant transition costs for HR, IT, land transfers, and governance realignment;
- dilute rural voices within large regional agencies dominated by major urban centres;
- erode donor confidence and affect the stewardship of thousands of acres of locally donated lands;
- disrupt bilingual service delivery in designated municipalities governed by the French Language Services Act; and

Whereas Conservation Authorities—including SNC—already collaborate regionally through successful shared-service models, joint watershed studies, coordinated flood forecasting, agricultural stewardship partnerships, digital permitting, and harmonized technical reviews, demonstrating that modernization and efficiency can be achieved without dismantling local governance structures; and

Whereas municipalities rely on SNC's field-based expertise, rapid on-site support, landowner relationships, and local knowledge—services that risk being weakened under a large, centralized regional structure; now therefor be it resolved

That the Council of the Township of Russell urges the Government of Ontario to maintain local, municipally governed, watershed-based Conservation Authorities, including South Nation Conservation, to ensure effective natural resource and natural hazard management, transparent local services, and accountability for municipal levy dollars; and further

That the Council of the Township of Russell does not support the proposed consolidation boundaries presented in ERO #025-1257 or the creation of a new provincial Conservation Agency without evidence-based analysis, transparent consultation, and clear articulation

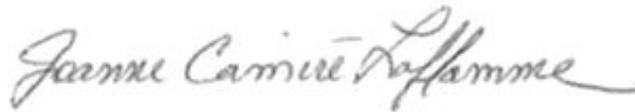
of impacts to municipal budgets, local service delivery, donor lands, and bilingual obligations; and further

That the Council of the Township of Russell encourages the province to work collaboratively with municipalities and Conservation Authorities to identify opportunities for improved consistency, modernization, and shared-service approaches within the existing watershed governance model; and

That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, local MPPs and MPs, all municipalities within the South Nation Watershed; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, Conservation Ontario and all Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

MOTION APPROVED

I, Joanne Camiré Laflamme, Clerk of the Corporation of the Township of Russell, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the resolution adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Russell on the 26th day of January 2026.



Joanne Camiré Laflamme
Clerk



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

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21 Queen St.
Ripley, Ontario
N0G2R0

Phone: (519) 395-3735

Fax: (519) 395-4107

E-mail: info@huronkinloss.com

Website: <http://www.huronkinloss.com>

February 25, 2026

Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Minister Todd McCarthy
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor, Toronto, ON, M7A 2J3

Sent via email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Re: Copy of Resolution No.2026/02/02-31

The following resolution was passed at the February 2nd, 2026 meeting of Council. Note that the map is being adjusted to refine the borders of the LHRCA to deviate from the actual watershed boundaries to follow the demarcation lines of the municipalities where only a small portion of a municipality is encompassed by the watershed boundary. Thus reducing the number of Conservation Authorities a boundary area municipality would need to be a member of.

Moved by: Ed McGugan

Seconded by: Scott Gibson

Resolution:

WHEREAS the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) proposed new boundaries for the consolidation of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into regional conservation authorities;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Huron-Kinloss submitted comments to the Environmental Registry of Ontario posting #025-1257 focused primarily on the need for consultation, maintaining watershed specific decision making, preserving the unique role of Conservation Authorities in Rural Ontario, and boundaries which are appropriately sized, and accurately reflect communities of interest with similar watershed features;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Huron-Kinloss recognizes the broader role that rural conservation authorities play in supporting tourism, outdoor recreation, agriculture and

rural quality of life, in addition to the flood control and development planning functions which are the primary focus in more urban areas;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Huron-Kinloss met with the Honourable Minister Todd McCarthy at the 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Associations (ROMA) Conference, to discuss revising proposed CA boundaries from the Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority to better reflect existing working relationships, watershed characteristics, and current programs; and ensuring rural and agricultural representation is formally included in Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency governance;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Huron-Kinloss proposed a revised boundary approach that:

- a) Builds on existing partnerships and shared programs
- b) Aligns with similar watershed and geographic features, and
- c) Preserves effective, locally responsive service delivery;

AND WHEREAS the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and the rural areas within the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority have established working relationships through such programs as the Healthy Lake Huron Initiative;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Huron-Kinloss is proposing a Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority (LHRCA) which would more accurately reflect communities of interest and natural geographic features in an appropriately sized authority, which includes the above noted conservation authorities;

AND WHEREAS the proposed LRCA would cover twelve (12) distinct areas noted on Appendix A, which could represent a voting area within the LHRCA board;

AND WHEREAS it is advisable to maintain existing conservation authority headquarters where possible as regional offices, but consolidate some administrative tasks into a centrally located head office;

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Township of Huron- Kinloss recommend that the municipalities and conservation authorities within the area proposed support a Lake

Huron Regional Conservation Authority, with a board of twelve (12) members representing twelve (12) unique areas within the proposed authority, and a centralized head office, with satellite regional offices to support local work;

AND FURTHER THAT that Staff be directed to circulate to the municipalities and conservation authorities within the proposed new region (attached as appendix a) communications regarding the possible structure and format of a new Lake Huron Region Conservation Authority;

AND FURTHER THAT Staff propose to the impacted municipalities and conservation authorities that an initial meeting be conducted to discuss the viability and details of the proposal.

Carried

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact the Township of Huron-Kinloss Clerk to arrange a meeting with council representatives.

Sincerely,



Jennifer White
Clerk

Cc: Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula acroce@northernbruce.ca , Town of South Bruce Peninsula angie.cathrae@southburcepeninsula.ca , Town of Saugeen Shores morgan.mcculloch@saugeenshores.ca , Municipality of Brockton fhamilton@brockton.ca , Municipality of Arran-Elderslie cfraser@arran-elderslie.ca , Municipality of Kincardine jlawrie@kincardine.ca , Municipality of South Bruce vkennedy@southbruce.ca , Township of Howick clerk@howick.ca , Township of North Huron info@northhuron.ca , Municipality of Morris Turnberry thallam@morristorynberry.ca , Township Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh Township clerk@acwtownship.ca , Town of Goderich

townhall@goderich.ca , Municipality Central Huron clerk@centralhuron.com ,
Municipality of Huron East clerk@huroneast.com , Municipality of Bluewater
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clerk@southhuron.ca , Municipality of North Perth lraftis@northperth.ca , Township of
West Perth info@westperth.com , Township of Perth East admin@pertheast.ca ,
Township of Wellington North township@wellington-north.com , Township of
Mapleton lwheeler@mapleton.ca , Town of Minto info@town.minto.on.ca , Town of
Hanover inquiry@hanover.ca , Municipality of West Grey info@westgray.com , Township
of Georgian Bluffs clerks@georgianbluffs.ca , Municipality of Lambton Shores
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Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority publicinfo@svca.ca
Maitland Valley Conservation Authority maitland@mvca.on.ca
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority explore@greysauble.ca
Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority info@abca.ca
St. Clair Conservation Authority planning@scrca.on.ca

Lisa Thompson, MPP Huron-Bruce lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org
Steve Pinsonneault, MPP Lampton-Kent-Middlesex steve.pinsonneault@pc.ola.org
Paul Vickers, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound paul.vickers@pc.ola.org



January 22, 2025

Various Conservation Authorities in Ontario

To Whom it May Concern,

Re: Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities in Ontario

On behalf of the Council of The Municipality of North Perth, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to your organization for the work you have undertaken in responding to the Province regarding the proposed reorganization of Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

Council recognizes and values the time, expertise and leadership demonstrated in your submissions and advocacy efforts. We are particularly grateful for your commitment to collaboration and for ensuring the municipal perspectives and local impacts were thoughtfully conveyed. Your efforts have contributed meaningfully to a broader understanding of the potential implications of the proposed changes and have reinforced the critical role Conservation Authorities play in serving the public interest.

Please accept Council's thanks for your continued dedication and professionalism. We look forward to working ongoing collaboration as we collectively work to protect Ontario's natural and built environments.

Sincerely,

Todd Kasenburg
Mayor, Municipality of North Perth