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Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Ottawa



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EDWARDSBURGH
CARINGAL



North
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Champlain

Date: Friday, June 8th, 2018

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Findlay Creek Sales Centre

Address: 118 Helen Rapp Way, Findlay Creek Community
Gloucester, ON K1T 0N4

000001



Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

June 8, 2018 at 10:00 am

1. Approval of Agenda *Page 2*
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous meeting
- a. Minutes – October 13th, 2017 *Pages 3-7*
3. Leitrim Wetland Project Update – Powerpoint – Staff
4. New Business
- a. 2018 LWAC Workplan Update – Mathieu Leblanc *Pages 8-17*
- b. Leitrim Wetland Management Plan Update – Michelle Cavanagh *Page 18*
- c. 2017 Golder Associates Annual Monitoring Summary – Katherine Watson *Page 19*
- d. 2018 SNC Field Work Update – Katherine Watson *Page 20*
- e. Leitrim Wetland Restoration Project – Michelle Cavanagh *Pages 21-22*
- f. NCC Update – Alexander Stone (email) *Page 23*
- g. Community Association Update – (verbal)
- h. Tartan Homes Update – Melissa Cote (verbal)
- i. City of Ottawa Update – Wendy Tse (verbal)
5. Roundtable Discussion
6. Supplemental Agenda (if any)
7. Date and time of next meetings: October 12th, 2018
8. Adjournment

Mathieu Leblanc

Team Lead, Planning

/ML



Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee (LWAC) Meeting

Friday, October 13th, 2017 – Meeting No. 02/17

Findlay Creek Sales Centre
118 Helen Rapp Way, Gloucester

Present: Melissa Cote, Tartan Land Consultants
Wendy Tse, City of Ottawa
Laura Dingle Robertson, Findlay Creek Community Member
Alexander Stone, National Capital Commission

Staff Present: Bill Smirle, SNC Board Member/LWAC Chair
Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
Mathieu Leblanc, Team Lead, Approvals
Katherine Watson, Water Resources Specialist

Regrets: Bruce Nicol, Tartan Homes
Michael Qaqish, Councillor Ward 22, City of Ottawa
Doug Thompson, SNC Past Chair

Absent: Pierre Dufresne, Tartan Land Consultants

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Bill Smirle, Committee Chair opened the Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee meeting of October 13th, 2017 at 10:05 am. The Chair requested an introduction of Members and their role.

APPROVAL OF LEITRIM WETLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-012/17

Moved by: Laura Dingle Robertson
Seconded by: Melissa Cote

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee approves the agenda of October 13, 2017 as submitted.

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF LEITRIM WETLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 2nd, 2017

RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-013/17

Moved by: Wendy Tse



Seconded by: Mathieu Leblanc

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee meeting minutes of June 2nd, 2017 be approved as presented.

CARRIED

LEITRIM WETLAND PROJECT UPDATE PRESENTATION

SNC staff, Mathieu Leblanc, Michelle Cavanagh and Katherine Watson, provided an update on current, completed, and ongoing projects:

- Findlay Creek Village Family Fun Day: Jubilee Park, August.
- Boardwalk Statistics: As of end of September, 5,615 visitors have walked the boardwalk in 2017.
- Patagonia Grant Project: Councillor Michael Qaqish joined staff for the buckthorn removal and native tree planting near the fen area. Physical and mechanical methods were used to remove the shrub, and a new technique using a black bag which involves wrapping it on the end of the stump which will be monitored yearly. This project was highlighted during a site visit by the Ontario Invasive Plant Council during their Annual General Meeting on October 10th, 2017.
- Findlay Creek Boardwalk Interpretive Walk: Sunday October 22, 2017. This event has been posted on the Community's Facebook page and has been advertised.
- A significant increase in Jubilee Park Community use was noted, and will increase SNC's involvement and visibility.

NEW BUSINESS

2017 SNC FIELD WORK UPDATE

- The following objectives were listed: understanding the direction and magnitude of water quality trends; evaluating land use change impacts on ecosystem health; providing feedback on effectiveness of implemented measures as they relate to protecting stream health; and to diagnose impairment factors and restoration work.
- Objectives work plan: in-stream temperature levels and benthic invertebrate communities will be monitored as indicators of water quality. SNC deployed sensors at Blais Road, Bank Street, and upstream of the water control structure within the Findlay Creek Extension. Benthic sampling will occur at these locations in November. Results will be presented to the Committee in 2018.



- 2016 Monitoring Results for Findlay Creek: The 3 sites showed signs of impacts as results suggested impaired conditions. The severe drought conditions of 2016, which impacted the ability of the stream to support healthy benthic invertebrate communities, was discussed as a possible explanation. It is anticipated that the benthic community will re-establish itself within a year or two. Opportunities to enhance the stream to improve water quality conditions.

RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-014/17

Moved by: Katherine Watson

Seconded by: Michelle Cavanagh

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the 2017 SNC Field Work Update.

CARRIED

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Laura Dingle Robertson:

- Confirmed Community interest for an update on the buckthorn removal, and agreed to update the FCCA.
- School recently opened, and is already surpassing the expected enrollment numbers. Will be promoting and discussing projects and events regarding Leitrim.
- The school expressed interest in getting involved with SNC for projects, workshops, events, etc. SNC will follow up with the Principal and Board Chair.

RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-015/17

Moved by: Laura Dingle Robertson

Seconded by: Mathieu Leblanc

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the Community Association update.

CARRIED

TARTAN HOMES UPDATE

Members of the Committee viewed the development map and construction update. Currently 700 homes are being finished to the South, and construction in Barrett Lands is expected to start June/July 2018 which will contain a French Public School. This development will also include the extension of Diamond Jubilee Park, the north-south swale, and Kelly Farm Drive.



RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-016/17

Moved by: Melissa Cote
Seconded by: Wendy Tse

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
receive and file the Tartan Homes update.

CARRIED

CITY OF OTTAWA UPDATE

Applications and Approvals

- Southern subdivision approved, and Phase 1 expected to be registered shortly
- East: Claridge Homes and Urbandale Construction have applications for subdivisions. The OPA for Claridge has been approved, but Urbandale has not.
- Leitrim Road environmental assessment (EA): road realignment project is underway, and expected to be completed in 2018. The EA for the Earl Armstrong Road re-alignment is scheduled to start approximately 1 year after the Leitrim EA is completed.
- The airport master plan is also being updated.

RESOLUTION NO. LWAC-017/17

Moved by: Wendy Tse
Seconded by: Laura Dingle Robertson

RESOLVED THAT:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
receive and file the City of Ottawa update.

CARRIED

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- Discussions with developers should be taking place in November.
- Draft Management Plan will be provided to Members for comments.
- Potential grant applications will be circulated to Committee Members.
- SNC requested to continue school training workshop, two local schools will be approached for 2018.
- 2018 funding being researched to assist with buckthorn removal and fen rehabilitation.
- Community members are requesting a boardwalk project update. The concern of development within the provincially significant wetland was discussed, and the



added concern of the buckthorn issue. The possibility of adding more trees and shrubs along the swale as a future restoration project was discussed, and restrictions for planting along the swale will be researched.

- The parking lot on Leitrim Road has a soil decontamination in process. NCC is working with the City of Ottawa to reduce invasive species - currently looking at wildlife corridors, bat monitoring, and pollinator meadows.

The Chairman expressed the importance of Committee Members contacting other agencies to request support and participation at Committee meetings.

NEXT MEETING DATES: 10 am – 118 Helen Rapp Way

- June 8th, 2018
- October 12th, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Bill Smirle,
SNC Board Member.

Mathieu Leblanc,
Team Lead, Approvals



To: Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
From: Mathieu Leblanc, Team Lead - Approvals
Date: May 30, 2018
Subject: 2018 Work Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the update on the 2018 Leitrim Wetland Work Plan.

Further that the Committee approve the 2018 Work Plan.

DISCUSSION:

The 2018 Leitrim Wetland Work Plan presents key activities that will be completed in 2018 in the Findlay Creek Community, as identified by the LWAC Terms of Reference, including:

- Education and stewardship activities;
- Management Plan focusing on preservation of Leitrim Wetland; and
- Community outreach and fundraising.

Updates to the Plan:

The Work Plan has been updated with budget numbers and activities for 2018.

Activities completed in 2018:

As part of the planned stewardship activities for 2018, a Shrub Give away was completed on April 28th, 2018. Approximately 75 potted shrubs were given away to Findlay Creek Village residents with numerous visitors to the booth.

Further, monitoring activities in support of stewardship projects have commenced.

Focus for 2018:

Wetland restoration will be the focus for 2018.

Mathieu Leblanc,
Team Lead, Approvals.

Attachments: 2018 Leitrim Wetland Work Plan

2018 Leitrim Wetland Work Plan

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Introduction

This work plan identifies key activities that will be completed in 2018 in support of Findlay Creek, Leitrim Wetland, and the surrounding community. This document summarizes the purpose, expected schedules and budget related to the four items listed below.

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee has identified the first three items as key activities related to the preservation of Leitrim Wetland (LWAC Terms of Reference). There is also an annual administration cost that SNC earns for administering programs and managing the Findlay Creek Stewardship Fund.

✓ Education and Stewardship of Leitrim Wetland
✓ Management Plan that focuses on preservation of Leitrim Wetland
✓ Community Outreach and Fundraising
✓ Administration

1. Education and Stewardship of Leitrim Wetland

The following programs and services have been identified to achieve education and stewardship goals for the Findlay Creek Community.

✓ Stewardship Activities
✓ Findlay Creek Boardwalk
✓ Findlay Creek Conservation Area & other SNC owned lands
✓ Education Centre and Program

Stewardship Activities

Purpose: Findlay Creek Community has much interest in stewardship and educational opportunities in the Leitrim Wetland. These events are important educational opportunities to explain the many positive benefits that the Leitrim Wetland has on the surrounding environment.

Milestone/Timeline: At least two stewardship activities will be completed in 2018:

- Organization of a shrub giveaway event in April to coincide with the Findlay Creek Community Associations annual Findlay Creek Clean-up Event.
- Interpretive nature walk and stream monitoring showcase along the Leitrim Boardwalk in September.

2018 Budget: \$2,500

Findlay Creek Boardwalk

Purpose: The Findlay Creek Boardwalk is a universally accessible "outdoor classroom" that offers many positive benefits for both physical and mental health.

Milestone/Timeline: Staff conduct regular maintenance checks to ensure the boardwalk is in good repair.

2018 Budget: \$3,500 (\$2,500 Staff resources; \$1,000 Maintenance)

Findlay Creek Conservation Area and Other SNC Owned Lands

Purpose: SNC accepted a land donation in 1985 (Kellum Block – 100 acres); other land donations may be accepted at a future date (Findlay Creek Conservation Area – 0.85 acre; and Leitrim Wetland parcels – 27.79 acres & 91.36 acres). The Findlay Creek Conservation Area is linked to the Findlay Creek Boardwalk and offers visitors a place to sit and enjoy the outdoors.

Milestone/Timeline: Regular maintenance of the Findlay Creek Conservation Area is required to ensure the safety and cleanliness of the site.

2018 Budget: \$ 1,500 (\$500 Staff resources; \$ 1,000 Maintenance)

Education Centre and Program

Purpose: There is an opportunity for the Builders of the Findlay Creek Community to donate their Sales Pavilion to SNC upon completion of the development. SNC would then convert the Sales Pavilion into an Education Centre, and develop an education program to serve the surrounding community.

Milestone/Timeline: A decision on whether or not to proceed with this project is delayed until housing construction is completed. There may be a potential opportunity to partner with the Vimy Public Elementary School for an education centre.

2018 Budget: \$ 0

2. Management Plan

The Leitrim Wetland Management Plan was written in 2005 and updated in 2011/2012. This Plan will be updated again in 2018. The following components are included in the Management Plan and require staff time and resources. Education and stewardship activities are discussed in the Management Plan, but have been explored in the Education and Stewardship of Leitrim Wetland section.

✓ Management Plan Review
✓ Long-term Monitoring Program
✓ Wetland Rehabilitation
✓ Water Control Structure

Management Plan Review

Purpose: This plan must be relevant and should be revisited/updated regularly. It presents an action plan to protect the integrity of Leitrim Wetland and Findlay Creek by outlining a number of recommendations related to the preservation of these systems.

Milestone/Timeline: An update to this document will be finalized in 2018.

2018 Budget: \$ 1,000

Long-term Monitoring Program

Purpose: Collecting long-term, standardized data is essential to assess ecological objectives outlined in the Leitrim Wetland Management Plan, as well as other policies, plans, strategies, agreements and legislation that govern, or influence the management of the Leitrim Wetland. As part of the development process (permitting requirements: PTTW 0531-87SPQB, PTTW 8338-8BJLRL), the Builders hired an environmental consulting firm (Golder Associates) to undertake annual groundwater monitoring activities, and annual vegetation monitoring activities. In addition to these initiatives, Golder Associates performs in-stream water quality monitoring (total suspended solids, temperature, dissolved oxygen) when required. South Nation Conservation supplements the in-stream water quality monitoring with annual benthic invertebrate monitoring and temperature/dissolved oxygen monitoring.

Milestone/Timeline: Golder Associates will conduct groundwater and vegetation monitoring activities in 2018. South Nation Conservation will continue with annual in-stream surface water monitoring work (i.e., benthic invertebrate/temperature) in late summer/early fall. Site Locations are based on culvert crossings of Findlay Creek. Annual monitoring occurs downstream of Albion Road in the Findlay Creek Extension, upstream of Bank Street, and downstream of Blais Road. Annual monitoring results will be presented to the LWAC Committee.

2018 Budget: \$ 2,000

Wetland Rehabilitation

Purpose: The Leitrim Wetland was historically degraded due to agricultural/municipal ditching, partial deforestation activities, and colonization of invasive species. Numerous rehabilitation projects may be considered desirable in an effort to improve the integrity of the Leitrim Wetland, these include:

- Eradication of Glossy Buckthorn and Improvements to Water Levels
- Maintenance of Important Ecological Subunits and
- Creation of protected zones designated for significant flora

These initiatives are outlined in more detail within the Leitrim Wetland Management Plan.

Milestone/Timeline: Wetland rehabilitation initiatives initiated in 2014 will continue to be implemented throughout 2018. Focus will be placed on the removal of Glossy Buckthorn and enhancement of fen habitat. Funding (\$20, 000) through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Habitat Stewardship Fund was awarded to SNC in May 2018 for projects that will be completed by fall 2018.

2018 Budget: \$ 3,000

Water Control Structure

Purpose: The Leitrim water control structure and wetland berm is currently owned by Tartan Land Corporation. It is a Wetland Outlet Control Structure designed to control water within the wetland by discharging water to Findlay Creek as needed. Adjusting the level of the water control structure has been discussed in the Management Plan as a potential means for wetland rehabilitation (i.e., eradication of buckthorn, rehabilitation of fen habitat).

Milestone/Timeline: A discussion of future ownership is ongoing.

2018 Budget: \$ 0

3. Community Outreach and Fundraising

✓ Findlay Creek Community Events
✓ Fundraising

Findlay Creek Community Events

Purpose: Various events are organized by Tartan/Tamarack Homes, as well as the Findlay Creek Community Association. It is important for South Nation Conservation to have a presence at these events to communicate upcoming educational and stewardship activities related to Leitrim Wetland (as well as other South Nation Conservation Programs and initiatives).

Milestone/Timeline: The Findlay Creek Community Shrub Giveaway/Findlay Creek Clean Up, Findlay Creek Community Fun Day, and Findlay Creek Community Association Annual General Meeting were attended by SNC in 2017. SNC will attend at least 2 events in 2018.

2018 Budget: \$ 1,000

Fundraising

Purpose: Fundraising is an important means to leverage the Findlay Creek Stewardship funds, and to attain funding necessary to carry out important work related to the:

- Expansion of Education Programs;
- Improvement of Leitrim Boardwalk (e.g. wetland signage);
- Rehabilitation of Leitrim Wetland (e.g. restoration of fen area).

Milestone/Timeline: SNC is regularly seeking out suitable grant opportunities for work completed in Leitrim Wetland; SNC secured funds from the City of Ottawa Water Environment Strategy to complete restoration work in 2018. SNC will continue to take the lead on this initiative; however letters of support (and input into proposed projects) may be required for future applications.

2018 Budget: \$ 500

4. Administration

Purpose: In the Letter of Intent between the Builders and South Nation Conservation, it was agreed that an annual \$1,500 Administration fee would be charged to the Findlay Creek Stewardship Fund account for finance fees and for administering programs as agreed by the Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee and South Nation Conservation Board of Directors.

Milestone/Timeline: Administration of LWAC activities, and other activities related to this work plan is completed throughout the year.

2018 Budget: \$ 1,500

2018 Leitrim Wetland Work Plan Summary

Item	2018 Activities
<i>Education and Stewardship of Leitrim Wetland</i>	
Stewardship Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of at least two (2) projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Findlay Creek Community Shrub Giveaway ○ Interpretive nature walk/stream demonstration along Leitrim Boardwalk for target audiences
Findlay Creek Boardwalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular maintenance checks to ensure the boardwalk is in good repair
Findlay Creek Conservation Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular maintenance checks
Education Centre and Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review in future
<i>Management Plan</i>	
Management Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize update in 2018
Long-term Monitoring Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature monitoring in summer • 3 biomonitoring sites monitored and assessed
Wetland Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued Buckthorn removal in remnant fen area • MNRF Habitat Stewardship Fund Project
Water Control Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing discussions
<i>Community Outreach and Fundraising</i>	
Findlay Creek Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Findlay Creek Community events
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore suitable future partnerships/grant opportunities
<i>Administration</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of LWAC • Administration of Leitrim Wetland Work Plan activities

2018 Budget Summary

Activity	Cost
Stewardship Activities	\$2,500
Leitrim Boardwalk	\$3,500
Findlay Creek Conservation Area & Other SNC Lands	\$1,500
Management Plan Review	\$1,000
Long-term Monitoring Program	\$2,000
Wetland Rehabilitation (Includes a \$20,000 grant from MNRF Habitat Stewardship Fund)	\$3,000
Findlay Creek Community Events	\$1,000
Fundraising	\$500
Administration	\$1,500
TOTAL	\$16,500



To: Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
From: Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
Date: May 31, 2018
Subject: Leitrim Wetland Management Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

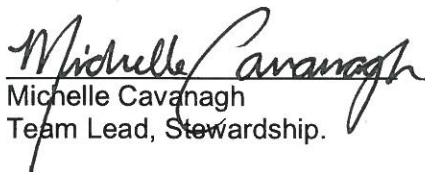
The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the Leitrim Wetland Management Plan Update Report.

DISCUSSION:

The goal of the Leitrim Wetland Management Plan is to provide an action plan to help protect ecosystem integrity within Leitrim Wetland and Findlay Creek, and to guide the direction of future management initiatives based on the experiences of the previous five years. The first Management Plan was completed in 2005, and provided necessary background information and 23 recommendations. The plan was reviewed and updated in 2012, and again in 2018 to ensure recommendations are up to date and relevant.

Copies of the updated 2018 Leitrim Wetland Management Plan will be distributed at the meeting. Staff are looking for input from LWAC members, with a focus on recommendations for future activities. Comments and recommendations should be submitted to SNC by August 17th, 2018. Staff will finalize the Management Plan and have it available prior to the October 12th LWAC meeting.

Moving forward, staff would like to consider updating the Management Plan on a 10-year basis.


Michelle Cavanagh
Team Lead, Stewardship.



To: Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
From: Katherine Watson, Water Resources Specialist
Date: May 31, 2018
Subject: 2017 Golder Associates Annual Monitoring Summary

RECOMMENDATION:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the 2017 Golder Associates Annual Monitoring Summary report.

DISCUSSION:

Water diversion is required as part of the construction process. Monitoring activities are conducted annually by Golder Associates in support of a permit to take water (PTTW) within Findlay Creek. This report presents a summary of findings from the 2017 monitoring program. Overall, no impacts were identified due to PTTW activities in 2017.

Surface Water Monitoring Program

No mitigation measures were required in 2017 as a result of water diversion. Temperature and total suspended solids were sampled throughout 2017 in the outlet channel from the stormwater management pond, as well as in Findlay Creek downstream from the stormwater pond outlet. No impacts were identified.

Groundwater Monitoring Program

Groundwater levels were measured at several locations along the northern fringe of Leitrim wetland near the Findlay Creek Extension (FCE), along the eastern fringe of Leitrim wetland, as well as within the wetland fen area. Groundwater declines were observed at several of these monitoring stations throughout the year (usually lasting for a couple weeks at a time). It was concluded that the groundwater declines were caused by a lack of recharge during the winter months, and due to low precipitation or low infiltration during spring/summer months. Groundwater levels responded rapidly to precipitation events.

Vegetation Monitoring Program

Photomonitoring and inventories of regionally rare vegetation were completed in 2017. Overall, small changes were identified at photomonitoring plots between 2009 to 2017. Most observed changes are the result of normal variation within a dynamic system; except for the increasing presence of Glossy Buckthorn, which continues to spread and become dominant throughout the area. Most regionally rare species identified in historical inventories were present in 2017.

Katherine Watson

Katherine Watson,
Water Resources Specialist.



To: Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
From: Kat Watson, Water Resources Specialist
Date: May 30, 2018
Subject: 2018 SNC Field Work Update

RECOMMENDATION:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the 2018 Field Work Update.

DISCUSSION:

Collecting long-term, standardized data is essential for assessing ecological objectives outlined in the Leitrim Wetland Management Plan. Monitoring objectives are:

1. To determine the spatial and temporal patterns in water quality and, where trends exist, to specify their direction and magnitude.
2. To evaluate impacts of land use change on stream health in Findlay Creek.
3. To provide feedback to the stakeholders on the effectiveness of implemented works (SWM Plan, setbacks, etc.) as they relate to preserving and improving stream health.
4. In the event of significantly impaired stream health, to diagnose impairment factors and guide restoration work.

To meet monitoring objectives, water quality is evaluated using the following response indicators: instream temperature regime, benthic invertebrate communities.

In 2018, SNC staff will deploy temperature sensors at 3 Findlay Creek locations: Blais Road, Bank Street, and upstream of the water control structure within the Findlay Creek Extension. Benthic invertebrate sampling will be conducted at these same locations in October. The Blais Road sample location is also part of the North Castor Catchment Study; fisheries sampling, and baseflow sampling will also be completed at this site in 2018.

A report detailing 2017 monitoring results (using the same sample regime explained for 2018) will be provided and findings will be discussed at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Included in the 2017 Leitrim Wetland Workplan, and 2018 Leitrim Wetland Workplan.

Katherine Watson

Katherine Watson,
Water Resources Specialist.



To: Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee
From: Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
Date: May 31, 2018
Subject: Leitrim Restoration Project Update

RECOMMENDATION:

The Leitrim Wetland Advisory Committee receive and file the Leitrim Restoration Project update report.

DISCUSSION:

The Leitrim Wetland is classified as a Provincially Significant Wetland and a life science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest, and is one of only a handful of remaining wetlands within the City of Ottawa boundary. The wetland has been impacted by agricultural activities, land clearing, urban development and invasive species. A management plan for the Leitrim Wetland was created in 2004 and details specific actions that are required to restore and manage the wetland.

SNC recently secured funding from the Land Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Program through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to continue restoration efforts in the Leitrim Wetland. The main goals of the project are to restore wetland water levels which have been negatively impacted by agricultural and municipal drains running through the wetland, and continue to remove invasive species from the rare fen habitat within the wetland.

The main projects activities include:

- Re-instating 4-5 of the failed earthen plugs in the drain running through the wetland.
- Restoring the hydrological connection of the fen to the rest of the wetland.
- Removing all invasive buckthorn by hand within the fen.
- Removing buckthorn from within a 25 metre radius of the fen by cutting and treating with herbicide.
- Replanting native vegetation in the control area to further limit new buckthorn growth.
- Plant native trees and shrubs along 200 metres of the North-South Swale to improve riparian habitat and connectivity.
- Attend 3 Findlay Creek community events and host 1 garbage clean-up along Findlay Creek.

Staff have already completed extensive surveys within the fen and along the drain in order to prioritize locations for the earthen plugs and to restore the hydrological connection of the fen. This survey data will also help determine whether there will be any impacts from the project upstream or downstream.

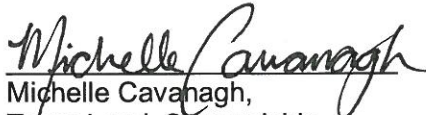


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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget: This project was not included in the SNC 2018 Budget; however, matching funds were included under Science and Research, Projects, Findlay Creek Wetland Restoration, p. 44-45, and Science and Research, Resource Management, Monitoring and Restoration, p.18-19.

SNC Policy Adherence: All purchases and project activities will adhere to SNC's Purchasing and Health and Safety Policies.


Michelle Cavanagh,
Team Lead, Stewardship

Mathieu Leblanc

From: Stone, Alexander <Alexander.Stone@ncc-ccn.ca>
Sent: May 31, 2018 10:42 AM
To: Mathieu Leblanc
Cc: Tremblay, Camille
Subject: RE: LWAC

Hi Matthieu,

The NCC – Greenbelt team is leading a strong road ecology program throughout the National Capital Region. We have spent many days surveying roadsides, especially where PSWs intersect major roads. Anderson Rd., which goes through Mer Bleue has especially had a number of findings including a high of 11 Painted Turtles found dead on the side of the road. This species is seeing significant population declines, resulting in a recommended listing by COSEWIC of *Special Concern*. Other areas of interest include Lester and Leitrim wetlands along Leitrim Road. Other found species include American bittern, beaver, long-tailed weasel, frogs and snakes.

In conjunction with the road ecology roadside surveys, we are initiating environmental DNA methodologies to survey for Blanding's turtle and snapping turtle in conjunction with the University of Ottawa (Dr. Blouin-Demers lab: Vincent Fyson ((M.Sc. candidate) is the primary investigator) and the Université du Québec en Outaouais (Dr. Yann Surget-Groba). 300 samples from 30 wetlands will be analyzed by Dr. Yann Surget-Groba's lab for these two species. Essentially, we will be taking 300 1L Samples, processing them at the University of Ottawa biology department, freezing the extracted DNA for analysis by UQO. We are also spending 60 days surveying for these two species using more traditional survey techniques. We hope to have more success searching for Blanding's turtle using multiple survey techniques. This sampling is occurring throughout the Greenbelt including Mer Bleue, Stony Swamp, and also Lester and Leitrim. All surveys are conducted under correct permitting from ECCC, MNRF and animal care committee (uOttawa).

We have been leading a Mer Bleue Japanese Knotweed restoration project with CPAWS as our partner. We have removed a significant patch of JK and used the opportunity to teach ecological principles to 45 Grade 5/6 students at local public schools while having fun in the sun.

Other projects include a western chorus frog monitoring partnership with ECCC in Stony Swamp, least bittern surveys, glossy and common buckthorn restoration along Black Rapids Creek with RVCA, and bat monitoring surveys.

The NCC has been involved with ash hazard tree removal over the past few years. As part of restoring the natural environment, we have put up 10 bat boxes across the City of Ottawa, including some near Carlsbad Springs. We are expanding this project and are planning on adding 15 more across the city. Bats have undergone significant decline and this a proactive measure to help establish colonies and also use the opportunity to reach out to the public and explain why bats are so important to the ecosystem. We will be monitoring the success of the bat boxes throughout the summer. They make quite the statement as they are placed on 21 foot poles, typically in open areas near wetlands.

Regards,

Alex