



FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, June 6th, 2023, 3:07 p.m. – Meeting 02/23

SNC Watershed Room



Present: Frederick Schueler, Committee Chair
 Alvin Cluff-Clyburne, Russell Fish and Game Club
 Joffre Cote, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (non-voting)
 Doug Culver, Naturalist and Recreational Angler
 Aleta Karstad, Fragile Inheritance Natural History
 Kirk Myelde, Public Citizen
 Bill Smirle, SNC Board of Directors
 Larry Smith, South Nation Archery Supply
 Doug Thompson, Public Citizen

Regrets: George Darouze, SNC Board of Directors, Past Chair, ex-officio
 Steve Densham, SNC Board of Directors, Vice Chair, ex-officio
 Pierre Leroux, SNC Board of Directors, Chair, ex-officio

Absent: Abraham Francis, Mohawks of Akwesasne
 Stéphane Dubuc, Trapper

Staff: Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
 Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
 Natalie Fleece, Stewardship Student
 Brent Harbers, Watershed Biologist
 Naomi Langlois-Anderson, Senior Fish and Wildlife Technician
 Kyley McGuinness, Stewardship Student
 Arielle Noonan, Stewardship and Outreach Assistant
 Pat Piitz, Team Lead, Property



SNC FISH AND WILDLIFE PROJECT UPDATE – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Staff presented fish and wildlife project and program updates.

Fred Schueler, Committee Chair, and Aleta Karstad arrived at 3:15 p.m.

CHAIR’S REMARKS

Fred Schueler, Committee Chair, called the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting of June 6th, 2023 to order at 3:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. FW-013/23

Moved by: Doug Thompson
Seconded by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne

RESOLVED THAT:

The Members approve the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting agenda of June 6th, 2023 as submitted.

CARRIED

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Conflict of Interest.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

A. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Bill Smirle – updated the Committee on a media event, LiDAR Products for Sustainable Forest Management, hosted at the SNC office on May 26th. Ontario Woodlot Association is leading the project, SNC is a partner. Bill also reminded the Committee that he regularly reports on SNC business to North Dundas’ Council.

B. WATERSHED MONITORING REPORT

Fred Schueler thanked members who submitted reports and encouraged others to send theirs in to SNC via email.



**APPROVAL OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
OF FEBRUARY 28th, 2023**

RESOLUTION NO. FW-014/23

Moved by: Larry Smith
Seconded by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne

RESOLVED THAT:

The Members approve the Fish and Wildlife
Committee virtual meeting minutes of
February 28th, 2023 as submitted.

CARRIED

**The Fish and Wildlife Committee recessed for a break at 4:08 p.m.
The Committee reconvened at 4:20 p.m.**

NEW BUSINESS

UPDATE: 2023 LAND SECUREMENT STRATEGY

RESOLUTION NO. CWC-015/23

Moved by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne
Seconded by: Doug Thompson

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file
the 2023 Land Securement Strategy.

CARRIED

UPDATE: 2023 TREE PLANTING AND FREE TREE DAYS

RESOLUTION NO. CWC-016/23

Moved by: Doug Thompson
Seconded by: Doug Culver

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and
file the 2023 Tree Planting and Free Tree
Days update.

CARRIED



UPDATE: EUROPEAN WATER CHESTNUT MANAGEMENT

RESOLUTION NO. FW-017/23

Moved by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne
Seconded by: Larry Smith

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife receive and file the European Water Chestnut Management update.

CARRIED

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL: OFAH SUMMER STUDENT WORK PLAN

RESOLUTION NO. FW-018/23

Moved by: Kirk Myelde
Seconded by: Doug Culver

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee approve the OFAH Summer Student Work Plan.

CARRIED

UPDATE: STATUS OF THE NATION RIVER WATERSHED REPORT CARD

RESOLUTION NO. FW-019/23

Moved by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne
Seconded by: Doug Thompson

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the State of the Nation Watershed Report Card.

CARRIED

Doug Culver left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

UPDATE: 2023 MONITORING

RESOLUTION NO. FW-020/23

Moved by: Kirk Myelde
Seconded by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the 2023 Monitoring update.

CARRIED



SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Fish and Wildlife Committee Meeting, September 5th, 2023 at 3:00 p.m., SNC Office

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. FW-021/23

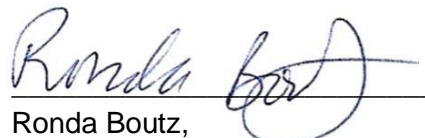
Moved by: Larry Smith

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting of June 6th, 2023 be adjourned at 5:41p.m.

CARRIED

Fred Schueler,
Committee Chair.



Ronda Boutz,
Secretary-Treasurer.

/rb



To: SNC Standing Committees
From: Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
 John Mesman, Managing Director, Property, Conservation Lands, and
 Community Outreach
Date: August 29th, 2023
Subject: Update: SNC Standing Committees

RECOMMENDATION:

The SNC Standing Committees receive and file the update on the South Nation Conservation Standing Committees.

BACKGROUND:

The Board of Directors approved a work plan to review the South Nation Conservation (SNC) Standing Committees at the August 2022 Board meeting (BD-127/22). The work plan included a review of current Standing Committees, recommendations for Committees moving forward, and drafting updates for the Committees Terms of Reference.

Staff undertook a review of the Standing Committees for the past 5 years (2018-2022); the following provides a summary of the review findings provided to the Board of Directors at their August 2023 meeting.

Staff will provide additional information on the review at each Standing Committee's September 2023 meeting.

SUMMARY OF STANDING COMMITTEES REVIEW:

Membership

As per the current Terms of Reference, Committees can have up to 15 members with additional membership at the discretion of the Board. Membership does not include the Board Executive who are ex-officio members of all Standing Committees.

The following table summarizes Committee membership between 2018-2022. These numbers include Board members that are not ex-officio.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Clean Water*	22	23	21	17	16
Communications	14	15	15	14	13
Fish and Wildlife	15	17	17	17	14
Forestry	17	19	17	17	15

* The Clean Water Committee and Eastern Ontario Water Resources Committee merged in 2015 and accounts for the higher number of members.



Attendance

A review of Committee attendance for the past five years (2018-2022) offers insight into pre, during, and post the COVID-19 pandemic conditions, noting that most of the meetings during 2020-2021 occurred through a virtual platform.

Generally, meeting attendance was around 75% for all Committees, except Forestry which was slightly lower at 63%. Individual member attendance varied, with some at 100% attendance and others as low as 20% attendance.

During this period, only one meeting (Fish and Wildlife Committee) was cancelled when quorum could not be achieved. However, there were several occurrences, with various Committees, that required repeated contact from Staff or Committee Chairs to confirm member attendance to establish quorum.

Community Engagement

A primary function of each Committee is to promote SNC programs and services to member's communities and affiliated organizations. Community engagement is a standing agenda item for all Committees; members are asked to report any engagement or partnership opportunities that they have been involved with since the previous meeting.

A review of the number of Committee members compared to the number of members that provided community engagement reports was used to determine an approximate rate of return on member community engagement.

Communications had the highest membership engagement at 25% rate of return, Forestry and Fish and Wildlife had 13% and 12% respectively, with Clean Water with the lowest rate of return at 6%. These community engagements include updates from Board members, which account for approximately 16% the engagement over the 5-year period.

Agendas and Committee Business

The Clean Water Committee agendas primarily focus on review and approval of grant applications for the Clean Water Program, Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, and Eastern Ontario Water Resources Program. The Communications Committee agendas focus on review and approval of communication products, education and outreach, and community environmental grants. Generally, agendas for these Committees do not overlap with the other Standing Committees.

The Fish and Wildlife and Forestry Committees generally receive updates on programs and projects and provide input on annual work plans. Most agenda items are 'receive and file', with a few 'requests for approval'. Agendas for these two Committees had significant overlap between 2018-2022 and fourteen reports went to both Committees in the same meeting month. Several attempts were made in the past to merge these two Committees, through joint meetings, without success.

Updates related to the Act and Committee membership were brought to all Standing Committees; this accounts for six separate reports between 2018-2022.



Joint Standing Committees Meeting

In 2014, the Board updated the Standing Committees Terms of Reference to include an annual joint meeting of all Standing Committees. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for cross discussions and networking between Committees. The meeting is typically held in March of each year.

Attendance at the annual joint meeting has been declining throughout 2018-2022. The 2021 joint meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The table below summarizes the attendance to the Joint Standing Committee meeting by Committee and Board members between 2018-2022.

	2018 (in-person)	2019 (in-person)	2020 (in-person)	2022 (virtual)	
Committee	% Attendance	% Attendance	% Attendance	% Attendance	Avg % Attendance
Board of Directors	8.3%	33.3%	25.0%	25.0%	22.9%
Clean Water	60.6%	20.2%	25.3%	20.2%	31.6%
Communications	83.3%	60.6%	60.6%	22.7%	56.8%
Fish and Wildlife	62.5%	50.0%	68.8%	12.5%	48.4%
Forestry	47.1%	35.3%	29.4%	17.6%	32.4%

Note: 2021 meeting cancelled because of the pandemic.

Annual Committee Costs

SNC provides volunteer Committee members with per diem, mileage, and a light lunch at each meeting. Annual cost for each Committee averaged \$7,300 pre pandemic (2018-2019) with the annual cost decreasing to \$3,100 during the pandemic (2020-2022) due to virtual and hybrid meetings. These costs do not include staff time.

DISCUSSION:

Recent amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* require SNC to develop prescribed plans, policies, and strategies by December 31st, 2024. Two of the strategies – the Conservation Area Strategy and Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy – require public stakeholder engagement during development and for future updates. SNC has relied on Standing Committees to provide stakeholder input on these types of documents and has continued to secure meaningful participation, interest, feedback, and implementation support on SNC strategies and plans.



While the Standing Committees serve a valuable role to SNC, the current structure and makeup of Committees does not fully align with SNC's future needs. The review's findings suggest there are opportunities for efficiencies through restructuring the Committees.

Staff recommend that the four Standing Committees be dissolved, and a new Watershed Advisory Committee be established for 2024 and beyond. One Committee with additional and diverse stakeholder membership will be more effective and will eliminate redundancies, streamline input, reduce staff time, and manage budget expectations.

Updates to the Standing Committee structure will help reduce the staffing and administrative resources required to manage over 16 committee meetings per year. Staff time is currently required to preparing meeting agendas, staff reports, meeting facilitation, committee member engagement, and meeting minutes.

Proposed Watershed Advisory Committee

The proposed Watershed Advisory Committee membership would reflect the diversity of the existing Committees, with some members appointed from identified sector/partner organizations, and others selected through a public application process. The Committee would meet four times per year, once each quarter.

A sub-committee of the Watershed Advisory Committee could be appointed to review grant applications and recommend grant approvals to the Board for the Clean Water Program, Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, and Eastern Ontario Water Resources Program. This sub-committee would meet 2-3 times per year as required for funding allocation.

The Community Environmental Grants (up to \$300 each), currently approved by the Communications Committee, can be administered and approved at the staff level. Staff would provide a summary of approved grants to the Watershed Advisory Committee at their quarterly meeting. This would streamline the process and eliminate the need for electronic voting between Committee meetings for time-sensitive requests for project and event support.

Next Steps

The Board of Directors supported the recommendation to move to one Standing Committee. Staff will bring a Watershed Advisory Committee Terms of Reference to the Board for approval at their September 2023 meeting. The updated Terms of Reference will replace the current SNC Standing Committee Terms of Reference; effective January 1st, 2024. Watershed Advisory Committee membership recruitment would be completed in Fall 2023.



SOUTH NATION
CONSERVATION
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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget: No impact to the 2023 Budget, the 2024 draft Budget will reflect the revised Standing Committees structure.

SNC Policy Adherence: Subsection 18 (2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* allows SNC to establish advisory boards as it considers appropriate. Standing Committees are governed in accordance with SNC's Administrative By-laws and the SNC Standing Committees Terms of Reference.

Programs and Services Category: General Operating: Governance

Ronda Boutz,
Secretary-Treasurer.

John Mesman,
Managing Director, Property,
Conservation Lands, and Community Outreach.