

November 22, 2017

Sent via email

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At Authority Meeting #8/17, of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), held on October 27, 2017, Resolution #A185/17 in regard to 2016 Lake Ontario Workshops and 2017/2018 Western Lake Ontario Basin-Lake Initiative was approved as follows:

*WHEREAS Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC), with funding support from Environment and Climate Change Canada and Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, held a workshop on September 19-20, 2016 (Developing a Western Lake Ontario Consortium(s), Promoting cooperative thinking, planning and actions for the populated/most at risk areas of Lake Ontario) to gauge interest in western Lake Ontario, discuss the merits of working together to protect this unique part of the Lake and to make the connections between actions on land and the health of western Lake Ontario;*

*AND WHEREAS Environment and Climate Change Canada has since provided additional funding to further this Basin-Lake Initiative through a number of workshops and engagement activities in 2017 and 2018;*

*THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT TRCA staff continue to work with CVC, federal, provincial and municipal staff, other local conservation authorities, the academic community, environmental non-governmental organizations, and others to integrate watershed management and Lake health to address the needs of western Lake Ontario;*

*THAT TRCA staff explore the development of a model for achieving collaborative arrangements necessary for coordination of efforts on the land that could benefit the nearshore of western Lake Ontario;*

*THAT staff from TRCA and CVC present to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Chief Administrative Officers' and General Managers' November 2017 meeting seeking endorsement and guidance on the pursuit of collaborative arrangements;*

*THAT staff from TRCA and CVC align their Basin-Lake Initiative efforts with the proposed amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017), the Greenbelt Plan (2017), the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017) and the Niagara Escarpment Plan (2017), which could ultimately benefit the 2018 Lake Ontario Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative, Source Water Protection, Toronto Remedial Action Plan, the Lake Ontario Lakewide Action and Management Plan, and efforts from the Lake Partnership Management Committee;*

*THAT findings from this effort and future Basin-Lake Initiative be integrated into the next generation of watershed plans within the Lake Ontario basin;*

*THAT staff from TRCA and CVC report back to their boards at the conclusion of the 2017/2018 workshops;*

*AND FURTHER THAT Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, provincial and federal governments, neighbouring municipalities and conservation authorities to the subject area, the Great Lakes Cities Initiative, and Conservation Ontario be so advised.*

Enclosed for your information and any action deemed necessary is the report as approved by the Authority. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Gary Bowen at 416-271-8944, [gbowen@trca.on.ca](mailto:gbowen@trca.on.ca).

Sincerely



Kathy Stranks  
Senior Manager, Corporate Secretariat  
CEO's Office

cc. Gary Bowen, Special Advisor, TRCA  
Krista Chomicki, Great Lakes Scientist, Project Manager, TRCA

/Encl.

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**RES.#A185/17 -**

**2016 LAKE ONTARIO WORKSHOP AND 2017/2018 WESTERN LAKE ONTARIO BASIN-LAKE INITIATIVE**

To inform the Authority on upcoming efforts to integrate watershed management activities with Lake Ontario Initiatives, and recommend directions to advance these efforts.

Moved by: David Barrow  
Seconded by: Ronald Chopowick

**WHEREAS** Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC), with funding support from Environment and Climate Change Canada and Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, held a workshop on September 19-20, 2016 (Developing a Western Lake Ontario Consortium(s), Promoting cooperative thinking, planning and actions for the populated/most at risk areas of Lake Ontario) to gauge interest in western Lake Ontario, discuss the merits of working together to protect this unique part of the Lake and to make the connections between actions on land and the health of western Lake Ontario;

**AND WHEREAS** Environment and Climate Change Canada has since provided additional funding to further this Basin-Lake Initiative through a number of workshops and engagement activities in 2017 and 2018;

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** TRCA staff continue to work with CVC, federal, provincial and municipal staff, other local conservation authorities, the academic community, environmental non-governmental organizations, and others to integrate watershed management and Lake health to address the needs of western Lake Ontario;

**THAT** TRCA staff explore the development of a model for achieving collaborative arrangements necessary for coordination of efforts on the land that could benefit the nearshore of western Lake Ontario;

**THAT** staff from TRCA and CVC present to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Chief Administrative Officers' and General Managers' November 2017 meeting seeking endorsement and guidance on the pursuit of collaborative arrangements;

**THAT** staff from TRCA and CVC align their Basin-Lake Initiative efforts with the proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017), the Greenbelt Plan (2017), the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017) and the Niagara Escarpment Plan (2017), which could ultimately benefit the 2018 Lake Ontario Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative, Source Water Protection, Toronto Remedial Action Plan, the Lake Ontario Lakewide Action and Management Plan, and efforts from the Lake Partnership Management Committee;

**THAT** findings from this effort and future Basin-Lake Initiative be integrated into the next generation of watershed plans within the Lake Ontario basin;

**THAT** staff from TRCA and CVC report back to their boards at the conclusion of the 2017/2018 workshops;

**AND FURTHER THAT Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, provincial and federal governments, neighbouring municipalities and conservation authorities to the subject area, the Great Lakes Cities Initiative, and Conservation Ontario be so advised.**

**CARRIED**

## **BACKGROUND**

The western basin of Lake Ontario is the receiving waters for one of the most highly populated regions in Canada. This region of the lake, from Cobourg to Niagara-on-the-Lake, has a long history of water quality and ecosystem health concerns, with pollutant and nutrient loadings from the land significantly impacting the lake. Under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), the governments of Canada and the United States have committed to restore and maintain the physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes. The GLWQA formed a Great Lakes Executive Committee which includes Watershed Management Agency representatives from both countries; Conservation Ontario (CO) has a representative at this table and regular reports are provided to CO Council.

The Lake Ontario Lakewide Action and Management Plan (LAMP) is a binational plan for restoring and protecting Lake Ontario's ecosystem. Effective collaboration among various jurisdictions and organizations is a priority of the Lakewide Annex of the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the corresponding LAMP. The Conservation Ontario representative on the Annex Committee has encouraged a stronger acknowledgement of the watershed management agency/conservation authority (CA) role in LAMPs. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) are interested in seeking better relationships with their partners for LAMP implementation, with a goal of supporting community engagement in decision making, and taking action to restore, protect and conserve Lake Ontario.

The 2016 workshop, entitled: "Developing a Western Lake Ontario Consortium(s), Promoting cooperative thinking, planning and actions for the populated/most at risk areas of Lake Ontario" had an overwhelmingly positive response with 90 participants from local and upper tier municipalities, provincial and federal governments, conservation authorities, non-government organizations, and several academics. Interest and momentum for this event was secured through peer-to-peer engagement and promotion.

This workshop served as a forum to discuss collaborative actions that can be implemented to restore, preserve and protect Lake Ontario. The goals of the workshop were to:

- Establish that western Lake Ontario needs to be a focus;
- Demonstrate how local partnerships help binational and provincial efforts to protect and treat the lakes as an entity;
- Determine the specific needs/approaches for western Lake Ontario;
- Identify past and existing cooperative arrangements within western Lake Ontario;
- Examine other approaches for partnerships/consortiums in other lakes (e.g. Healthy Lake Huron, Lake Simcoe);
- Identify steps to determine a successful and appropriate model for coordinating efforts and collaborating along western Lake Ontario;

Three breakout sessions identified a willingness to be a part of a locally led Lake Ontario initiative that has a clearly defined vision. Being part of an initiative will allow collecting of resources and a concentration of efforts on land that can benefit the land, rivers and Lake Ontario. A champion needs to be identified who can help develop an organizational structure and lead this initiative, and play a significant role in bridging the gap between land and lake health.

To further this Basin-Lake Initiative, TRCA and CVC will hold two workshops that will explore the connectivity between watersheds and Lake Ontario. Potential themes will include: documenting current research and efforts amongst organizations that might impact Lake Ontario; exploring creative ways to support management actions to focus on growth, adaptation, implementation and minimizing the effects of growth on the nearshore of the Lake; approaches for integrating science, policy and implementation; and exploring synergies between the Western Lake Ontario Basin-Lake Initiative and other binational efforts aiming to restore Lake Ontario water quality.

### **RATIONALE**

Formal reports from the first workshop were submitted to the provincial and federal governments, in accordance with their deadlines of November 15, and December 31, 2016, respectively. Two workshops are proposed to be held, in autumn 2017 and winter 2018, to further this initiative. Further reporting will be submitted to the government in March 2018.

### **FINANCIAL DETAILS**

Funding for the 2016 workshop was provided by ECCC (\$5,000) and MOECC (\$5,000). New resources (\$40,000) have been provided by ECCC to continue the evolution of this concept in 2017/2018. MOECC will also contribute to the 2017/2018 workshops (\$5,000).

### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

Staff will incorporate feedback from the Authority and from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Chief Administrative Officers' and General Managers' November meeting into comments to include in future reporting to the federal and provincial governments.

Staff will continue to pursue focused engagement from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Cobourg. The first event (fall 2017) will focus on engaging delegates from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Halton, as they were under-represented at the initial 2016 workshop. The second event (winter 2018) will bring together a subset of the Niagara-on-the-Lake to Halton participants from 2017 and a subset of the 90 original workshop participants, predominantly from Mississauga to Cobourg, to discuss next steps and explore collaborative arrangements necessary for coordination of efforts on the land and within the nearshore of western Lake Ontario.

**Report prepared by: Krista Chomicki, extension 5857**

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**Date: September 19, 2017**