



## NVCA March 2022 Board Meeting Highlights

**Next Meeting: April 22, 2022, held virtually**

*For the full meeting agenda including documents and reports, visit [NVCA's website](#).*

### **Presentation on NVCA's Maple Syrup Program**

#### **Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival**

NVCA's Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival represents the strong partnerships that NVCA has with communities and municipalities.

It is an opportunity to engage with community members, increase the profile and understanding of NVCA and raising funds to deliver programming and reduction of municipal levy support.

The festival is jointly coordinated by NVCA and volunteers from the Rotary Club of Barrie. This year's festival will be held on April 2 – 3, 2022 at the Tiffin Conservation Area.

[Please visit NVCA's website for more information about the festival.](#)

#### **Environmental Education Program**

Thanks to maple syrup programming, March is the busiest month for NVCA's programming outside of the Simcoe County District School Board agreement.

The program covers many different sections of the Ontario curriculum, from kindergarten up to Grade 6. It is delivered to local school boards, March Break Camp, nature school, community groups including New Comers of Canada.

In the last five years, 14 out of 18 watershed municipalities have participated in NVCA's maple syrup program. Virtual programming will be offered to the last four municipalities. French programming will be offered next year.

#### **Maple Syrup Production**

Maple syrup was already in production at the Tiffin Conservation Area in the 1970s before

NVCA took over ownership of the property. The current program has been operating for over 20 years. Sap collection and syrup production is mostly volunteer led.

In 2017, NVCA's Board of Directors supported the purchase of an evaporator that processes syrup from approximately 700 taps, or over 1.5 km of line.

#### **Revenue**

Each year, the maple syrup education program captures \$25,000 annual revenue, while maple syrup sales make up for \$10,000 annually and in 2019, the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival saw \$20,000 in revenue.

### **Canada Community Revitalization Fund**

NVCA's Board of Directors approved the use of the Canada Community Revitalization Fund to replace an accessible pond platform and the construction of an accessible pond dipping platform at the Tiffin Conservation Area.

This infrastructure will ensure students of all abilities taking part in Tiffin's Environmental Education program can participate in pond studies, and will be completed by December 31, 2022.

### **Update Inventory of Programs and Services for Submission to Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks**

In February 2022, NVCA completed the Inventory of Programs and Services (IP&S), and submitted this information to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and all 18 member municipalities.

Municipal CAOs were asked to review this information with their appropriate staff and

bring the NVCA their questions and concerns. As a result, NVCA is in active discussions with two member municipalities.

As NVCA and Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority share responsibilities for several municipalities, future discussions regarding the updated Conservation Authorities Act must be consistent. Therefore, NVCA will be dividing the watershed into three collectives for some of our future meetings including:

- Eastern: Oro-Medonte, Barrie, Innisfil, Bradford West Gwillimbury, and New Tecumseth.
- Central North: Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Essa, Clearview, Collingwood and Blue Mountain.
- Western: Adjala-Tosorontio, Amaranth, Mono, Shelburne, Melancthon, Mulmur and Grey Highland.

## **Planning Services Workload and Staffing**

Since 2018, NVCA's Planning and Regulations staff has seen a 75% increase in the number of applications. The significant increase in workload has placed tremendous pressure on staff to meet provincial and municipal review timelines and has resulted in reduced efficiency in recognizing user fee revenues.

To address this issue, NVCA will add an additional planning staff person and may transition an existing administrative contract position to permanent.

The additional staff resource will assist with returning phone calls, emails, follow up on pre-consultation requests, request fees, process committee of adjustment applications and support regulations staff.

This will allow senior planning staff time to focus on high revenue files such as plan of subdivision and aggregate proposals and recognize review fees associate with those files on a more frequent basis. NVCA expects that the recognition of these fees will help support the salary of the new staff member.

## **Customer Satisfaction Report**

In 2013, NVCA adopted a Customer Service Charter and Strategy that sets out the authority's commitment to providing excellence in customer service. Continuous improvement is a key element of the charter.

### **Regulations**

In 2021, 100 individuals and organizations completed a client survey on the NVCA permit application process. The survey is sent to all those receiving NVCA permits.

Ninety (90%) of those completing the client survey rated their overall experience with NVCA's permit application process as good or excellent. In general, the responses that were ranked as good or excellent in 2021 was 90%, slightly lower than the 96% rating received in 2020.

### **Lands**

Two (2) respondents provided feedback regarding parking for two of NVCA's conservation areas.

NVCA's conservation areas received 5-star ratings on Google's business listings.

### **Education**

In 2021, 21 teachers submitted feedback surveys on NVCA's virtual environmental education programs.

Of those responding, 100% rated the programs allowed students to develop appreciation of wild spaces. Ninety-four percent (94%) ranked that there were good or excellent opportunities to interact with the natural world. Ninety-four percent (94%) of respondents ranked that the program included real-world and/or hands-on curriculum connections.

### **Stewardship**

NVCA's stewardship services include Forestry, the Healthy Waters grant program, and other projects to protect and enhance our watershed. Comments received from funders and landowners generally describe the expertise and dedication of NVCA's stewardship staff.

[Please visit NVCA's website to view the 2021 Customer Service Satisfaction Report.](#)