

Mattagami Region Conservation Authority

2017

YEAR IN REVIEW



MESSAGE

FROM THE MRCA CHAIR AND GENERAL MANAGER

At the MRCA, we continue to identify ways to improve watershed health and safety in partnership with our stakeholders, community organizations, government agencies and the City of Timmins. In 2017, funding from local stakeholders allowed us to complete many upgrades to our Mountjoy Historical Conservation Area to enhance the experience for our guests.

Through community engagement efforts, we continue to bring awareness to how we can live in harmony with nature and empower people to be watershed champions. We are pleased to share with you the accomplishments of 2017 presented in this Year in Review. Thank you to all those who contributed to our many successes over the past year, and we look forward to working with you in 2018.

Noella Rinaldo,
2017 MRCA Chair

David Vallier,
General Manager



2017 BOARD of DIRECTORS

The MRCA operates as an independent government agency governed by a municipally-appointed Board of Directors.

Mattagami Region Conservation Authority

The Mattagami Region Conservation Authority (MRCA) has a mandate to protect, conserve and restore the natural resources within its watershed area. Our watershed covers a geographic area of over 11,000 square kilometers from the Height of Land south of Gogama to a point 30 km downstream of the Sandy Falls Dam. From the time it was established in 1962, the Authority has put in place a water and land management program that includes the construction of flood control works, the development of a flood forecast and warning system and the implementation of regulations and policies to restrict the use of hazardous lands.

We are committed to protecting watershed communities from natural hazards like flooding and erosion. This program also includes water quality and quantity monitoring and the development and implementation of the Drinking Water Source Protection program. The Authority also plays a key role in providing recreational open space, trails and conservation information and education. The work done by the MRCA is defined by three key founding principles: promotion of local involvement and initiative, establishment of a strong municipal and provincial partnerships, and the use of natural watershed boundaries.

Cover photo: Gillies Lake CA

Noella Rinaldo, Chair
City Councillor—Ward 5
Walter Wawrzaszek, Vice Chair
City Councillor—Ward 2
Steven Black
Mayor, City of Timmins
Veronica Farrell
City Councillor—Ward 1
Andrew Marks
City Councillor—Ward 5

2017 MRCA Staff

David Vallier	General Manager
Crystal Percival	DWSP Project Lead / Planner
Kevin Gagnon	Field Supervisor
Jennifer Bonsall	Executive Assistant
Gerry Mongeon	General Labourer

2017 Summer Students

Cody Brazeau	Tara Jensen
Nick Buczkowski	Jayden Lavictoire
Taylor Buczkowski	Kelsey Lefebvre
Adam Chenier	Brandon Shortt
Anthony Francis	Chantale Talbot
Keegan Gauthier	

We thank the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and Canada Summer Jobs for supporting seasonal student employment at the MRCA.

MANAGING OUR WATER RESOURCES

Partnerships with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, Ontario Power Generation, Water Surveys of Canada, the City of Timmins and local stakeholders, play an important part in meeting the goals and objectives for a healthy and safe watershed.



Surface water sampling on Frederick House River

Watershed Monitoring

The MRCA flood forecast and warning system is supported by 8 streamflow stations operated by Water Surveys of Canada and Ontario Power Generation.

We continue to manage the MRCA's Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network through observation of 4 wells in our watershed along with conducting surface water sampling and data collection at 4 locations for the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network. During winter months, staff monitor the snowpack every two weeks to aid in forecasting spring flood potential.



Flooding

The Flood Forecast and Warning System updates the City of Timmins and its residents of potentially unsafe conditions due to flooding. The spring of 2017 was welcomed with warmer day time temperatures and cooler night time temperatures allowing the freshet to proceed without any flood threats to the municipality. Watershed statistics and updates were circulated to watershed stakeholders on a bi-weekly basis. Due to heavy rains received around the Victoria Day holiday weekend, the MRCA did issue a number of Flood Watch statements.

The Flood Forecast and Warning System Manual was updated and circulated to local emergency responders, and staff resources were also applied to updating the City of Timmins Emergency Plan. These updates are completed on an annual basis.

1 Upper Mattagami River Watershed Water Management Committee meeting

5 Timmins Flood Advisory Committee meetings

6 news releases regarding spring water conditions for Mattagami River, Town Creek and Porcupine Lake

Drinking Water Source Protection

2017 marked the third year of implementation for the Mattagami Region Source Protection Plan. Our first Annual Progress Report was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in May. As per Section 36 of the Clean Water Act, 2006, the Mattagami Region Source Protection Authority completed a review in consultation with the City of Timmins and the MOECC. Through this process a gap was noted in the Restricted Land Use Policy, which will be addressed in 2018. As part of the education and outreach strategy, the Mattagami Region Source Protection Authority and the City of Timmins released a 10-question survey to assess public knowledge of Drinking Water Source Protection in the City of Timmins. As we move to the maintenance phase of the Plan, the Source Protection Committee reduced its size from nine to six members.



MANAGING OUR WATER RESOURCES



Mattagami River

Watershed Regulations & Plan Input

One of our key roles in watershed management is to regulate the use of hazardous and environmentally sensitive lands. The Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation requires anyone constructing or placing fill in these areas to receive the permission of the Authority. As part of its delegated responsibility, the MRCA reviews most Planning Act applications on behalf of the City of Timmins to provide comments related to natural hazards. In 2017 the Authority processed many specific requests for information regarding plan input i.e., lawyer's inquiries, zoning and official plan inquiries, shoreline stabilization approvals, site plan control, City of Timmins Planning Department inquiries and general public request for information.

13 Consent Applications

10 Development Proposals

45 Minor Variances

Operations and Maintenance

The MRCA received funding under the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) program for maintenance, channel dredging and gabion repairs on Town Creek. This work has greatly improved the creek's flow and bank stability. Regular annual maintenance on Town Creek and Crawford Creek included the removal of sediment and debris and the repair of ice management structures.



Town Creek channel dredging

MANAGING OUR LAND RESOURCES

The MRCA provides a variety of recreational facilities including trails, beach and picnic areas, parkland and open space over 260 hectares of land, most of which has been acquired under its flood management program. These include 4 designated Conservation Areas: Gillies Lake, Hersey Lake, Mountjoy Historical (on the Mattagami River) and White Waterfront (Porcupine Lake).

Conservation Areas

Our Conservation Areas are used by school boards, outdoor clubs and community partners for a variety of events, from athletic competitions to fundraising projects. We continue to promote our properties as potential locations for compatible commercial enterprises. These currently include food concession stands, a wakeboard park and a watercraft rental business. Funds generated through our land use agreements are used to offset the municipal levy and further develop our properties.

In 2017, we completed extensive upgrades to the Mountjoy Historical Conservation Area. Light posts throughout the park were straightened, sanded and repainted. Small walking bridges along the trail were replaced with decorative arch bridges. New bridge decks were constructed in the fall for the larger bridges and they will be installed in the park in the summer of 2018. Bumper posts in both parking lots were refurbished and painted and a new park entrance sign was built and installed. Old stone garbage cans were removed and replaced with new plastic, covered

garbage containers. Rotten wood on the public washroom building was replaced and stained to improve the look of the building. A new gazebo, picnic tables and benches were installed in the park, and through a partnership with the Misiway Healthy Kids Community Challenge, exercise equipment was installed.

At the Hersey Lake Conservation Area, 20 loads of new beach sand were added to the main beach and the Hersey Lake Promenade and Promenade Lookout were cleared of brush. Directional signs on the Rainbow Loop

were moved due to the relocation of a portion of trail by Custom Concrete.

Along with routine maintenance of the Gillies Lake Conservation Area, park benches and picnic tables were refinished and the public washrooms at the MRCA building were painted.

Community Trails

The trail network started in 1979 with the construction of the Golden Springs Trail along Highway 655. It has since evolved into a community-wide non-motorized recreational

trail system focused on connecting the main population centres of Timmins and many of the key recreational and open space resources within the community.

In 2017, we removed and poured a new concrete slab for the Bridge to Bridge Trail picnic shelter and repaired the monument. The trail through the McIntyre Park and 2.5 km of the Scout Rock Trail were resurfaced.

The MRCA's summer student compliment ensured that the Authority's 55km of trails

were kept clear, pristine and safe. They completed a major trail cleanup on the ONR right of way near the City's downtown, along with trail-side cleanup and brushing throughout the entire trail system.

Trail counters were purchase late in 2017 and will be installed on the trail network in the spring of 2018. Groomed winter trails at Hersey and Gillies Lake are attracting more users each year. Stakeholder engagement continues as we update existing trail agreements.



Gillies Lake CA



Timmins Chamber of Commerce donation to Mountjoy Historical CA



Mountjoy Historical CA



Trail work completed by students



Grooming Hersey Lake Trails



Hersey Lake Trails

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The funds received from donations and grants allow the MRCA to continue to improve our recreation areas by planting trees, installing benches and picnic tables, and upgrading the many walking trails throughout our Conservation Areas.



Hiking Day at Hersey Lake

Education and Outreach

We continue to promote Authority programs and events to watershed residents through a variety of media including Facebook, websites, numerous publications and special events.

Our Winter and Fall Hiking Days were well attended by residents interested in learning more about the local ecology found in our watershed.

The Mattagami Region Conservation Authority partnered with the Timmins-Misiway Healthy Kids



Back cover photo: Hersey Lake CA

Community Challenge program to host a Fun with Water event to educate Timmins youth about the important role water plays in our everyday lives. The event was open to the general public. Participants were taught about the importance of protecting and conserving our water sources by participating in fun and interactive activities.

Information booths were set up at several local public events including the Sportsman Show and Welcome to Timmins Night.

The Wintergreen Fund for Conservation

The Wintergreen Fund for Conservation is a registered, charitable organization. Wintergreen is a group of like-minded community volunteers with an active interest in conservation and education. For the past 2 decades, the Wintergreen Fund for Conservation has been raising funds for community conservation projects, improvements to the community trail system, conservation areas, and a variety of conservation education programs.

2017 activities included:

- Porter Luxury Escape Fundraiser
- Fall and Winter Hiking Days
- Gillies Lake Gardens
- Support for the Mattagami River Sturgeon Program



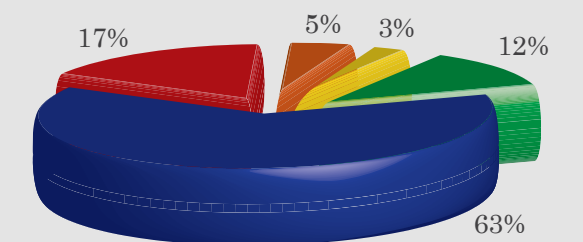
Gillies Lake Gardens

Funding

In 2017 the Conservation Authority's budget totaled \$828,772. On the revenue side, the Municipality contributed \$518,000 while the Province provided \$141,427 in regular grant funding and \$98,075 in Drinking Water Source Protection funding. An amount of \$27,340 was received in special grant funding. The remaining revenue of \$43,930 was made up of donations, self-generated income and specific federal and provincial employment program funding. The Source Water Protection activities continue to be fully funded by the Province.

Funds received support the MRCA's water and land management programs, source water protection program, and its recreation and conservation education programs. It is also important to note that the time donated by volunteers is not factored into our operation costs.

2017 REVENUE



- Municipal Levy
- Provincial Transfer Payments
- Self-generation and Other
- Special Grant Payments
- Drinking Water Protection



Mattagami Region
Conservation Authority

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