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Items for the Action of the Natural Science and Education Committee

TO: Chair and Members of the Natural Science and Education Committee
Monday, March 17, 2025 Meeting

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: **ANNUAL PRESENTATIONS TO BOARDS OF TRUSTEES**
Request to provide joint presentation on the work of the Natural Science and Education Committee to participating Boards of Trustees.

KEY ISSUE

To support ongoing engagement with participating school boards, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) proposes to provide joint presentations on the work of the Natural Science and Education Committee (NSEC) to Boards of Trustees.

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS NSEC has been convened to advance shared school board and conservation authority goals specific to out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to support NSEC members in engaging School Board Trustees and Boards of Trustees in the work of the Committee;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT following each NSEC meeting, the Clerk and Manager, Policy distribute summaries of NSEC meeting minutes and discussions to participating school boards;

AND FURTHER THAT commencing in Q2 2025, joint NSEC Trustee and TRCA presentations on the work of NSEC be provided to Boards of Trustees on an annual basis.

BACKGROUND

TRCA has a long history of providing updates to Boards of Trustees of Greater Toronto Area school boards via presentations at Board meetings, informal meetings and communications. These presentations, meetings and communication have been intended to share the work of TRCA,

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including ensuring school boards have adequate information on TRCA and School Board MOUs, TRCA's Flood Forecasting and Warning Program, the work of the Natural Science and Education Committee, ongoing partnerships specific to out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment, and other aligned priorities as appropriate.

Previous presentations have led to improved overall engagement by Trustees and Board staff and helped support ongoing partnerships while raising the profile of out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment.

RATIONALE

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, TRCA staff paused presentations to Boards of Trustees. Additionally, with the establishment of the Outdoor Education Task Force and the subsequent NSEC, TRCA staff have focused on engaging Trustee members of the NSEC through committee meetings and reports. Recent feedback from NSEC members has indicated that enhanced information for participating Boards of Trustees would improve engagement overall.

With NSEC having advanced specific goals related to the development of a set of minimum standards for access to out-of-classroom learning, an advocacy agenda and other key objectives, it is appropriate to provide joint TRCA/Trustee updates to Boards of Trustees.

Relationship to TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following Pillars and Outcomes set forth in TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan:

Pillar 3 Community Prosperity:

3.1 Connect communities to nature and greenspace

Pillar 3 Community Prosperity:

3.3 Informed citizens are conservation champions

Pillar 2 Knowledge Economy:

2.3 Advocacy and adaptability in the face of policy pressures

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Activities related to presentations and sharing information with School Boards are accounted for under the Education Management Account 365-01.

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DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

TRCA staff will develop presentation materials that reflect both local school board and GTA-wide partnerships and priorities and work collaboratively with NSEC Trustees and Board staff to schedule and deliver update presentations. Additionally, TRCA Education staff will work with TRCA Clerk and Manger, Policy to circulate NSEC meeting summaries to NSEC members and to the Clerks of participating school boards.

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