

RES.#R12/17 -

REGIONAL WATERSHED ALLIANCE – WATERSHED ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Establish a working group comprised of the Regional Watershed Alliance membership to participate in the study, design, and development of an annual watershed forum in the Toronto region beginning in 2018.

Moved by: Andy Wickens
Seconded by: Chris McGlynn

WHEREAS the Terms of Reference for the Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA) outlines an opportunity for members to provide, through watershed forums, events, and on-line engagement, a forum for watershed communication by maintaining and enhancing contacts within the community;

AND WHEREAS the Terms of Reference outlines a key goal and responsibility of the RWA to mobilize and empower networks of local communities to build capacity and influence people's behavior;

THEREFORE IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the RWA, establish a Watershed Forum Working Group to collaborate with TRCA Staff on the study, design, and development a model for an annual watershed forum in the Toronto region beginning in 2018;

AND FURTHER THAT the Watershed Forum Working Group report back regularly to the RWA on progress as details on a watershed forum are established.

CARRIED

RATIONALE

With a mission to create healthy watersheds through advocacy, knowledge sharing and collective action, the RWA is positioned well to help deliver the next generation of conservation-based engagement in the Toronto region.

To successfully achieve this mission, the RWA would benefit from a mechanism that would allow them to interact with the public in a way that fosters strong relationships, allows for the communication new ideas, and creates a platform to lead by collective example.

As the guiding document for community-based engagement at TRCA, and supporting voice for the founding of the RWA, the TRCA Community Engagement Strategy outlines a recommendation to develop and organize new large-scale public events to augment existing watershed engagement activities.

In particular, the strategy recommends the initiation of an informative and interactive annual watershed forum that focuses on;

- Updates from the Regional Watershed Alliance, Indigenous Liaison Committee, Watershed / Waterfront Working Groups, and the Youth Council;
- Deliver engagement and outreach activities resulting from RWA collective priorities action plan;

- New information on global, national and local sustainability challenges faced by urban and rural areas, how the challenges were addressed or managed and the relevance of these issues within TRCA's jurisdiction;
- Sharing of ideas and opportunities by community groups;
- Opportunities to ask questions of those who share ideas or opportunities;
- Facilitated sessions to help community groups tackle challenges they would like to address;
- Recognition of community champions and community groups;
- Networking opportunities that will encourage informal conversations and relationship building.

To achieve this recommendation, TRCA Staff have begun the process of allocating resources to design and develop an annual watershed forum beginning in 2018. To ensure that the voice of the RWA is integrated into this process from the beginning, the establishment of a Watershed Forum Working Group of the RWA would be a valuable contribution to the successful delivery of the watershed forum.

Further, a watershed forum would provide an effective opportunity for the RWA to position themselves as strong voice of civic leadership, while at the same time introducing themselves and their collective impact to the conservation focused community in the Toronto region.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

Establish a Watershed Forum Working Group that consists of the Regional Watershed Alliance members at Meeting #2/17 on February 21st, 2018 that will regularly report back to the Regional Watershed Alliance as details on the watershed forum are developed.

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