

Item 6.1

Items for the Action of the Regional Watershed Alliance

TO: Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance Meeting #2/20, Wednesday, May 20, 2020

FROM: Laura Del Giudice, Senior Manager, Watershed Planning and Reporting

RE: **EARLY INPUT ON TRCA'S WATERSHED REPORTING WEB APPLICATION**

KEY ISSUE

TRCA is in the process of developing a web application to more easily and comprehensively communicate the environmental conditions of its watersheds and waterfront. Staff wish to seek early input from the Regional Watershed Alliance on the content and configuration of this application to inform the final application design.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS TRCA issues the Living City Report Card and Conservation Ontario version of Watershed Report Cards every 5 years to report on watershed and environmental conditions in the Toronto region to its partners and to the members of the public;

AND WHEREAS TRCA collects a variety of monitoring data every year and, in some cases, issues technical reports on the findings of these data;

AND WHEREAS TRCA has been requested to provide more frequent and less technical watershed conditions reporting by its Board of Directors and partner municipalities;

AND WHEREAS TRCA will be rolling out its next generation of watershed plans program for which reporting against successful watershed plan implementation will need to be tracked and reported on;

AND WHEREAS TRCA has been developing a watershed reporting web application to more easily convey watershed and environmental conditions on an ongoing basis;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT Regional Watershed Alliance members provide early comments on the draft content and configuration of the web application to optimize uptake with key audiences and that any comments received by the Regional Watershed Alliance be considered by staff as part of web application design.

BACKGROUND

TRCA has a long history in watershed and environmental reporting. Most recently, TRCA launched its latest version of the Living City Report Card in 2016, and the Conservation Ontario Watershed Report Cards were most recently released in March of 2018. The next iteration of the Living City Report Card is scheduled to launch in 2021 and the next round of Watershed Report Cards is scheduled for release in 2023. These report cards have proven to be a successful means of simplifying technical information to communicate key watershed conditions and findings to watershed residents, municipalities, and agencies.

In addition, at Authority Meeting #5/17, held on June 23, 2017, Resolution #RES.#A127/17 was approved as follows:

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THAT a report on the state of each one of the nine watersheds and the waterfront in the TRCA jurisdiction be presented by staff on a regular basis;

AND FURTHER THAT the scope, content and communication format of these reports, as well as potential alignment with the mandate of the proposed Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA), be developed by staff in consultation with a select group of Authority members interested in this initiative.

Further, through ongoing discussions with our municipal partners as part of TRCA's review of its Watershed Planning & Reporting program, more timely and non-technical reporting on watershed conditions is desired by TRCA's partners.

Finally, given the above and considering the Province's desire for conservation authorities to focus on its core program areas, TRCA is proposing to launch a watershed reporting application on the web as the modern approach for the next iteration of the Living City Report Card. The web application will:

- enable continuous updates to watershed and waterfront condition reporting. TRCA is proposing that information be updated as frequently as annually (or as data become available).
- enable tracking of progress against watershed plan implementation. Provincial policies now require municipalities to undertake watershed planning to inform land use and infrastructure decision-making, and this web application will facilitate reporting on progress made.
- be interactive to allow certain data to be viewed at various scales, such as at the watershed, regional municipality, or area municipality scale, thereby providing valuable information to TRCA municipal partners and to the public.
- be curated to orient users to a broad array of TRCA monitoring program data and findings and to contextual information. Content will be AODA compliant and written in plain language for broad accessibility.

RATIONALE

The draft web application is structured with the following scope that is focused on core conservation authority program areas (Table 1). *[NB: Please note that this content is still in draft form and is subject to change based on feedback yet to be received from technical staff and other partners.]*

The intent for this web application is that it will evolve over time to include more up-to-date, comprehensive information relevant to TRCA core program areas, and to build in additional capabilities as they become available.

Table 1: Draft structure of web application

Theme	Sub-theme
Landing Page	How to use the application
Land Use	Stormwater Management Low Impact Development Implementation
Climate Change	Future Average Temperatures Future Average Precipitation Future Extreme Weather
Natural Hazards	Flooding in Rivers

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	Lake Ontario Flooding Riverine Erosion Lake Ontario Shoreline Erosion
Water Resource System	Fish Communities in Streams Benthic Communities in Streams Fish Communities in Lake Ontario Groundwater Levels
Natural Heritage System	Natural Cover Urban Forest Forest Biodiversity Wetland Biodiversity Meadow Biodiversity
Water Quality	Surface Water Quality in Streams Groundwater Quality Lake Ontario Nearshore Water Quality

TRCA staff will conduct a demonstration of the web application for RWA members during the May meeting to walk through the structure, draft content, configuration, and capabilities. This is an early opportunity for RWA members to provide input into the development of the web application to ensure that relevant content is presented in a way that can be easily consumed by users. Main audience members include TRCA board members, municipal partners, and the public, but secondarily would include industry consultants, other agencies, and other more technical users.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategy set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:
Strategy 9 – Measure performance

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Funds to support the development of the watershed reporting web application are from 416-40.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

TRCA staff will take early input from RWA members and integrate this into the development of the web application. This will include input on the sub-themes displayed, the level of detail provided, and how the information is displayed. The tentative launch date for the web application is Earth Day 2021 (April 22) and will be positioned as the modernized version of the Living City Report Card.

If desired by RWA members, TRCA staff would be pleased to demonstrate a more finalized version of the web application prior to the launch date once the early input from RWA members has been incorporated.

Report prepared by: Laura Del Giudice, extension 5334

Emails: laura.delgiudice@trca.ca

For Information contact: Laura Del Giudice, extension 5334

Emails: laura.delgiudice@trca.ca

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Attachments: 0