

Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Friday, May 14, 2021 Meeting

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

RE: **Q1 2021 COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY**

KEY ISSUE

Information report regarding Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) corporate media communication activities during the first quarter of 2021 (January – March).

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Q1 2021 Communications Summary report be received.

BACKGROUND

The Communications, Marketing and Events business unit, with involvement of program areas across TRCA's Divisions, carries out corporate communications programs to provide TRCA with a unified voice that aligns consistently with strategic priorities, and monitors results to identify opportunities for improvements. Working with staff from all divisions and external program and service providers, the business unit delivers communications campaigns through traditional media outlets and online social media channels. Content is typically disseminated through materials such as news releases and media advisories, direct outreach to targeted journalists, producers and editors, and responses to incoming media inquiries. Digital campaigns involve posting of visual and written content on websites and distribution via social media platforms. All media activity is supported by ongoing assessment and deployment of technology tools and processes to maximize effectiveness.

In first quarter (Q1) of 2021, the majority of the traditional media stories focused on the Province's Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) for Duffins Creek wetlands. The Provincial government's Ontario Regulation 159/21, compelling TRCA to provide permission for a future development on the ecologically sensitive wetland and property was discussed in detail in major news outlets, including Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, CBC and others.

The social media activity in Q1 also reflected the attention this issue received by TRCA followers and audiences. Specifically, in March 2021, TRCA's social media accounts saw an increase of 24% in engagement as hundreds of messages were received about the Province's MZO of Duffins Creek wetlands. Overall, in the first quarter, TRCA grew its audience by 31% with total impressions peaking at close to two million.

Both the traditional media and social media traction received in Q1 is an indication that our audiences are engaged and listening to TRCA's point of view and TRCA is putting out communications that provide insight and interest to its audiences.

While TRCA produces communications materials for multiple programs and projects managed by business units across the organization, this report provided in **Attachment 1** focuses on notable media coverage and the social media activity during the reporting period.

Item 10.2

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 6 – Tell the story of the Toronto region

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

TRCA is preparing a Communications Plan to ensure more streamlined and strategically focused media relations that will guide our approach in working with media.

TRCA is creating media relations / briefing documents and holding education sessions with staff to better prepare staff to speak to media in a consistent manner with accurate messaging.

TRCA continues to engage / target media outlets on stories that are unique to the organization and its mandate.

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Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: Notable TRCA Media Coverage & Social Media Activity: January – March 2021