

THE TINY COTTAGER

A GEORGIAN BAY PERSPECTIVE

Issue No. 61

Spring/Summer 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by PAUL COWLEY, Carusoe Bay

With great pride we now report that FoTTSA has succeeded in another Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) settlement protecting the Alliston Aquifer under CRH Canada Group Inc.'s Teedon Pit.

Our team led by Judith Grant, FoTTSA's past president, persisted in a three-year journey to appeal CRH's application to extend its gravel mining operation into French's Hill. We were aided by the expertise of the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA), two expert hydrologists and a planner retained by FoTTSA, and The Friends of Waverley Uplands.

While we had begun the appeal with the previous Tiny Council, FoTTSA was left to pursue it alone after Council reached its own settlement with CRH, which did almost nothing to protect the aquifer. Read more about this settlement in the article opposite. Protecting our groundwater is a beginning, not an end, and will require diligence on everyone's part to keep this precious resource safe.

Unfortunately, we appear to be heading for another period of record low water levels in Georgian Bay, Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. As you will read inside, Environment Canada predicts that by 2030 water levels could be almost one metre (3 ft.) below the record low in 2013. While these water level changes are driven in part by climate cycles beyond our control, better management of man-made controls in the system would help mitigate big swings in water levels. Organizations such as the International Joint Commission (IJC) have failed to make use of these controls and, worse, sometimes mismanaged them.

The challenge here is that balancing upstream and downstream interests effectively will require significant public pressure to make both Canadian and U.S. governments act in time. The current "normal" water levels may be lulling us into a false sense of security since it takes at least 10 years from the time governments decide to do something until change happens. Please read the article inside about the issue and what you can do.

FoTTSA recently held its spring Presidents' Roundtable, which attracted representatives from 23 associations along the 72 kilometres of Tiny's shoreline to discuss current issues. Happily, Mayor Evans attended and spoke to the group about township issues before fielding questions.

Now that we're well into spring, FoTTSA is looking forward to the Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament on June 16. FoTTSA is the founding sponsor again this year, and we invite you to golf and dine with us in support of local charities providing essential services here in Tiny.

Enjoy your summer and consider what you can do to make Tiny better!

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A gravel-laden truck leaving the Teedon Pit. Photo: Judith Grant.

FoTTSA Efforts Lead to More Conditions on Teedon Pit

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

Discussions on FoTTSA's behalf with the owner of the Teedon Pit have led to additional groundwater and land use protections approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in early 2023 for what could be the world's purest water.

The pit sits on, or adjacent to, French's Hill in the southeast corner of Tiny. The hill is believed to act as a natural filter for water percolating down into the vast underground Alliston Aquifer, which has been scientifically tested to contain what may be the world's purest water. This is the same water coursing from the artesian well at the Elmvalle Kiosk, a favourite source of drinking water for full-time and seasonal residents.

The new measures follow discussions in the first half of 2022 with the pit owner, CRH Canada Group Inc. (CRH), which led to an approval by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) requiring the company to install an impermeable liner in a re-circulation cell as part of the site's existing aggregate washing operation. This liner must be installed within a year of receiving the requisite environmental compliance approval from MECP. The approval was issued in December 2022.

The purpose of the liner, which may establish a new industry standard of conduct for such operations, is to keep silt-laden aggregate wash water from entering the groundwater system. The MECP approval includes measures for monitoring, inspecting, responding to complaints, and preventing silt discharges to surface water through a catch basin in the site's berm.

The discussions in late 2022, involving a proposed extension of the aggregate operation northward, led to changes in the official plan and zoning instruments for the site that clearly delineate the amount of land designated for extraction. In addition, the site plan for the site under provincial aggregate licensing legislation now stipulates that, among other things:

- re-fueling or fuel storage is not permitted other than for the portable crushing and screening plants.
- underground fuel storage is not permitted. If fuel is

stored in above ground tanks, CRH must 1) provide secondary containment, 2) monitor for spills and leaks, and 3) install collision protection.

- any fuel spill must be recorded in a log maintained on site. The record will include the type of fuel, the date and time of the spill, and the approximate volume spilled.
- additional monitoring wells must be installed before extraction begins. Monitoring results must be documented in an annual report submitted to the government and posted on CRH's website within 30 days.
- storing and/or processing of asphalt is not permitted on site.
- employees and contractors working on site must be provided with a spills response plan and comply with its requirements.

"FoTTSA is pleased with the measures that have been added to the legal instruments that apply to the Teedon Pit operations and expansion, which took a lot of hard work over three years," says Paul Cowley, President of FoTTSA's Board of Directors. "That said, these measures are a beginning not an end, and there is a need for ongoing oversight and vigilance on the part of the citizens of Tiny and others, including research by professors William Shotyk and Michael Powell." (For more on this, see "5-Year Groundwater Research Project Poised to Expand" on page 10.)

How the changes came about

In early 2021, FoTTSA applied to the then Environmental Review Tribunal (now OLT) for leave to appeal a 10-year Permit to Take Water (PTTW) granted to CRH by the MECP for washing of gravel extracted from the Teedon Pit. During this period, FoTTSA was represented by hydrogeologist Wilf Ruland and lawyers from the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA), a non-profit legal aid clinic. The granting of leave to appeal to FoTTSA by the tribunal eventually led to discussions taking place with the company.

— continued on page 3

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SPRING/SUMMER EVENTS

Before attending an event, please visit the event website for possible updates.

MAY

SafeGuard Your Home with Southern Georgian Bay OPP, May 25, Midland Public Library [midlandlibrary.com/event/safeguard-your-home-with-southern-georgian-bay-oppx](https://www.midlandlibrary.com/event/safeguard-your-home-with-southern-georgian-bay-oppx)

Barrie Waterfront Festival, May 26-28, Centennial Park, Barrie www.barriewaterfront.ca

Marsh by Moonlight Paddle Series, May 26, 27, Wye Marsh <https://www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-By-Moonlight-Canoe>

"Emilio's A Million Chameleons", May 27, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

Huronion Airport Commission Motorcycle Swap Meet and Flyin', May 27 www.tiny.ca/recreation-community/events/

Midland District Railroad Club's Annual Train & Hobby Show, May 27-28 www.facebook.com/midlanddistrictrailroadclub/

"The Last Waltz - A Musical Celebration of The Band", May 27, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

Hospice Huronia Memorial Walk at Wye Marsh, May 28 hospicehuronia.ca/events

JUNE

Marsh by Moonlight Paddle Series, June 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, Wye Marsh www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-By-Moonlight-Canoe

Kids Fishing Derby, June 3, Midland Harbour calendar.midland.ca

Midland Psychic & Wellness Fair, June 3, Midland www.eventbrite.ca/e/midland-psychic-wellness-fair-saturday-june-3rd-from-1000-400pm-tickets-585898928467

Spring into Summer (choir concert), June 3, Midland www.baysound.ca/events/spring-into-summer-1

The Douglas John Sing-A-Long, June 3, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

2023 Bayside Summer Soiree, June 6-August 29 (Friday nights), Penetanguishene www.penetanguishene.ca/recreation-and-culture/events

Ontario's Best Butter Tart Festival, June 10, Midland buttertartfestival.ca

"Stitching Among Friends" Quilt Show, June 10-11, Alliston Curling Club, Alliston aqcguild.edublogs.org/quilt-show-2013

"Elvis' Aloha From Hawaii Featuring Steve Michaels", June 11, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

"Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story", June 15-July 1, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene www.draytonentertainment.com

Garden Follies: A Selection of Works by the Barrie Art Club, Jun 16-Oct 22, MacLaren Art Centre, Barrie maclarencentre.com/project/garden-follies

Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament, June 16, Brooklea Golf and Country Club www.tiny.ca

Petrichor: Artists and Curator in Conversation, June 16, MacLaren Art Centre, Barrie maclarencentre.com

Petrichor (exhibition), June 16-Sept 17, MacLaren Art Centre, Barrie maclarencentre.com/project/petrichor

Travel Series: Turkey, Alexandria & Greek Islands, June 19, Wasaga Beach Public Library www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/W/WASAGA/ekp.cfm

"60 Years of Mariposa" (virtual talk), June 21, Orillia Museum of Art and History www.orilliamuseum.org/project/6-23

National Indigenous People's Day, June 21, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons www.sainte-marie-among-the-hurons.on.ca

Wasaga Beach Cruisers Fun Run, June 23-24 wasagabeachcruisers.ca/fun-run-2023

Tay Canada Day Celebration, June 23-24, Victoria Harbour taycanaday.ca

"Rhinestone Cowgirl: Celebrating Dolly Parton", June 24, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

Coldwater & Area Studio Tour, June 24-25 coldwaterstudiotour.com

JULY

Canada Day at the Museum, July 1, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum & Archives www.penetanguishene.ca/museum/planning-a-visit/events-exhibits

Mariposa Folk Festival, July 7-9, Orillia www.mariposafolk.com

Community BBQ and Council Meet & Greet, July 8. Check www.tiny.ca for details as they become available

"Fiddler on the Loose", July 12-Aug 5, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene www.draytonentertainment.com

Festival du loup, July 15, Lafontaine www.festivalduloup.on.ca

Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championship, July 15-16, Midland www.wchmasters.org

Travel Series: Germany, July 17, Wasaga Beach Public Library www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/W/WASAGA/ekp.cfm

All Things Canadian (celebration of Francophone, Anglophone and Indigenous cultures), July 29, Penetanguishene www.penetanguishene.ca/recreation-and-culture/events

AUGUST

Kempfenfest, August 4-7, Barrie waterfront kempfenfest.com

The Essa National Draft Horse Show, August 5-6, Essa Agriplex, Thornton www.facebook.com/ECNDHE

"Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat", Aug 10-Sept 3, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene www.draytonentertainment.com

Huronion Airport Aerobatics Contest, August 11-12, Huronia Airport <https://www.tiny.ca>

Georgian Bay Garden Tour, August 12 www.facebook.com/gbgardentour

Midland Ribfest, August 18-20, David Onley Park northernheatribseries.ca/2023-ribfest-schedule

Tugboat Festival, August 18-20, Midland Harbour calendar.midland.ca

Georgian Bay Cycle for Hope, August 19, North Simcoe (5 routes) gbcancersupportcentre.ca/upcoming-events

Georgian Bay Festival, August 19, 4230 Crossland Road, Tiny georgianbayfestival.com/coming-soon

Barrie Dragon Boat Festival, August 19 dragonboatbarrie.com/barrie-dragon-boat-festival/

Travel Series: Nicaragua & Costa Rica, August 21, Wasaga Beach Public Library www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/W/WASAGA/ekp.cfm

The Barrie Festival, August 24-27, Essa Agriplex, Thornton www.facebook.com/EssaAgriplex1

Fun in the Sun 4, August 25, Wasaga Beach allevents.in/wasaga_beach/fun-in-the-sun-4/200023440050139

Farm Crawl, August 26,27. Check www.tiny.ca for details as they become available.

Wasaga Triathlon and Duathlon, August 26 www.multisportcanada.com/wasagabeach

Talk & Tea: The Three Sisters Garden, August 29, Barrie Native Friendship Centre maclarencentre.com/product/talk-tea-the-three-sisters-garden

SEPTEMBER

"The Tragically Hip featuring The Almost Hip!", September 8, Midland Cultural Centre www.midlandculturalcentre.com/events

Art Slam (Quest Art School + Gallery & Midland Cultural Centre), September 15, Midland www.questart.ca

Tiny Township Town Hall Meeting, September 14. Check www.tiny.ca for details as they become available.

Stonebridge Wasaga Beach Blues Festival, September 15-17 www.wasagabeachblues.com

Terry Fox Run, September 17 www.terryfox.org

The Bay Studio Tour, Sept 30-Oct 1, Tiny Township and Penetanguishene www.thebaystudiotour.com

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TEEDON PIT CHANGES — continued from page 1

With CELA's help FoTTSA also participated in a second case before the OLT, regarding CRH's application to extend the Teedon Pit. The OLT approved the application following FoTTSA and CRH reaching agreement on conditions for the extension, noted above, that are intended to prevent contamination of groundwater caused by the expanded operation.

"This was a very intense journey requiring a lot of hard work on the part of FoTTSA, led by Judith Grant and others from The Friends of the Waverley Uplands," says Paul Cowley. "It could not have been accomplished without the skillful legal guidance of CELA lawyers, assisted by knowledgeable hydrogeological advisors retained by FoTTSA, particularly Wilf Ruland and Chris Rancourt, and land use planning expert, Mark Dorfman."

What comes next

At this point it is now up to CRH to comply with the conditions in the PTTW, the environmental compliance approval, the site plan under the aggregate licence, and official plan and zoning by-law. Environmental responsibility rests with two ministries: 1) MECP regarding the PTTW and the environmental compliance approval; and 2) the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry for the site plan.

The *Tiny Cottager* asked the MECP how conditions are enforced. "The ministry assesses compliance by conducting inspections, audits of operations, and responding to complaints," a ministry advisor told us. "Ministry staff also review documentation related to the facility's operations and its discharges into the environment. The ministry may also require companies to produce documentation or undertake studies to demonstrate compliance, such as air quality monitoring, acoustic assessments, or groundwater evaluations..."

"Where there is evidence of non-compliance and indications of imminent or confirmed impacts to human health or the environment, or a company is unwilling to comply voluntarily, the ministry may use mandatory abatement tools such as provincial officer orders that require companies to take measures to come into compliance."

"If a company does not comply with an order, the matter can be referred to the ministry's Environmental Investigations and Enforcement Branch for investigation and, if warranted, prosecution."

With regard to the Teedon Pit, the ministry's Barrie District Office would be responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines.

These steps suggest that processes for enforcement are in place, but the Auditor General of Ontario's most recent annual report casts doubt on the government's ability to meet its commitments. In a discussion of aggregate operations on the Niagara Escarpment, the report notes that the province allows new and expanded aggregate operations "despite the environmental impacts, poor inspection rates, and poor rehabilitation track record of pits and quarries, and no required justification of need." Furthermore, the report says, the ministry has only inspected 14 out of 54 of the active extraction sites in the last five years and two of these sites failed the inspection due to non-compliance with progressive rehabilitation requirements.²

The Niagara Escarpment is a World Biosphere designated by the United Nations as a place to conserve nature and promote sustainable development. If the province is unable or unwilling to enforce environmental requirements there, what does this mean for French's Hill?

"The results FoTTSA advocated for represent an excellent beginning in further protecting the world's purest water," says Cowley, "but they must be regarded as a first step, not a final step. This will require ongoing vigilance and inspection by the government as well as continued pressure from Tiny's citizens."

1. FoTTSA's advocacy for the installation of an impermeable liner at the Teedon Pit may have influenced The Sarjeant Company Ltd.'s aggregate operation on French's Hill. The latter's site plan calls for impermeable liners in two wash basins.
2. "Summaries of Value-for-Money Audits," 2022 Annual Report, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, p. 3; www.auditor.on.ca



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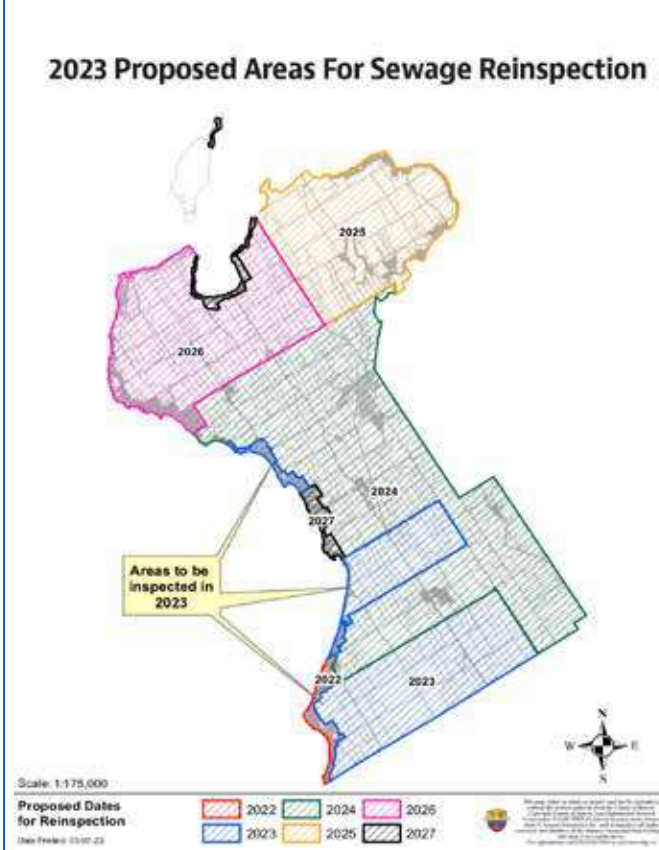
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Annual Sewage System Inspections Underway
By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach



This map indicates when your property will be inspected.
Source: Tatham Engineering

The Township of Tiny's annual sewage system re-inspection program gets underway this season. In the spotlight: the rural areas of Concessions 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7, and Bluewater, Wendake, Rowntree and Wahnekewening beaches.

If your system is scheduled for inspection, watch for a notification letter in the mail.

It takes about six years for inspectors to work their way across the township, and then another cycle of inspections begins. Managed on behalf of the Township by Tatham Engineering, the program helps protect the quality of surface and groundwater by identifying problems and ensuring they are corrected.

The two-stage program begins with a visual site inspection by Tatham Engineering field staff. The second stage requires property owners to have their septic or holding tank pumped out by a licensed sewage hauler and submit a report of the condition and size of the tank by October 31, 2023. Pumping out is not required if this was done in 2021 or 2022. However, owners must still submit a written report by October 31. Tatham Engineering will follow up with all property owners who do not submit pump-out records or have not responded to deficiency notices from the previous years' programs.

Inspectors check only those systems that are more than 10 years old. If you live in this year's designated area and your system was installed in 2013 or later, it will not be inspected.

— continued on page 11



Tiny Cottagers

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The Tiny Cottager is published each May/June and Sept./Oct. The Federation's members are associations of property owners in those parts of the Township of Tiny designated as "Shoreline" in the Township's Official Plan.

The Tiny Cottager is mailed to the permanent addresses of more than 10,600 Tiny Township property owners (including 7,200 in the shoreline areas of Tiny) and to businesses in the area. It reaches some 25,000 readers. Copyright is claimed on all original articles and on advertisement layout and design created by this publication.

The information contained in *The Tiny Cottager* has been provided by sources believed to be reliable.

FoTTSa does not endorse or evaluate advertised products, services or companies, nor any claims made by advertisements.

The Tiny Cottager acknowledges that Tiny Township is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture, and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, respect and partnership with all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

REPORT ON COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2022 - MARCH 2023

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL UNTIL OCTOBER 24, 2022

Mayor: George Cornell

Deputy Mayor: Steffen Walma

Councillors: John Bryant, Cindy Hastings, Gibb Wishart

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AS OF NOVEMBER 2022

Mayor: John Evans

Deputy Mayor: Sean Miskimins

Councillors: Dave Brunelle, Kelly Peter Helowka, Steffen Walma

SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Municipal Election — October 24, 2022
- Subscribe to CivicWeb to receive direct notification of e-genda publications
- Tiny Connect — Sign up at www.tinyconnect.ca

2023 PUBLIC BUDGET SURVEY RESULTS

These were based on 287 responses. Of interest are:

1) budget priorities: short-term rental management 42%; beach access, delineation and public spaces 41%; road improvements 38%; and connectivity, cell phone and internet (broadband) improvements 37%

2) desired long-term investments: road infrastructure, bridges and drainage 51%; trails, beaches and parks 50%; connectivity (cell phone and internet improvements) 83%; improved public beach access and delineation 41%

3) top three services that should be enhanced / stay at current levels —

A) beach maintenance 38% / 53%

B) roads and sidewalk maintenance 36% / 58%

C) by-law enforcement and services 34% / 48%

4) receiving value for tax dollars: 86% gave ratings of great, good, or fair.

NEW ZONING BY-LAW UPDATE

Boathouses are to be set 15 metres back from the 178 metre G.S.C. elevation — the Geodetic Survey of Canada's measurement of height compared to the coastal mean sea level for North America.

GROUND WATER STUDY - NATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL (NSERC) GRANT APPLICATION

Council supported submitting a Letter of Intent to NSERC from the Township of Tiny regarding the proposed Elmvale Ground Water Study Grant Application. According to this letter, the Township is to partner with the groundwater project. The Township is to contribute staff time, travel costs, and supplies, over a period of six years, valued at \$35,800. Staff anticipate a range of benefits from being a project partner including learning more about the extraordinary water in the township's southeast corner and how to extract aggregate in an environmentally responsible way.

PROPOSED FEDERAL ELECTORAL MAP CHANGES

In an August 30, 2022 letter, Adam Chambers, MP for Simcoe North, let Mayor Cornell and Council know that all parts of Oro-Medonte currently in Simcoe North are proposed to be moved to Barrie Springwater Oro-Medonte. In addition, Simcoe North would be renamed Penetanguishene-Couchiching. Chambers wrote "Please consider whether your town or city would like to make a formal submission or how you might best inform your affected residents." Council resolved not to support the name change proposal and recommended that the riding continue to be known as Simcoe North. The resolution was forwarded to the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario by the September 25, 2022 deadline.

OCTOBER 12, 2022 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Inaugural Meeting of Council: November 23, 2022, 1:00 p.m., Township of Tiny Community Centre

TIMELINE SYNOPSIS OF GRAVEL PIT OPERATIONS IN FRENCH'S HILL AREA

Staff has compiled a useful chronological list of gravel pit expansions and permits to take water. This list has been posted on the Township's website.

DEPUTATIONS TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Ola Kolodij raised several concerns regarding the Short-term Rental Licensing By-law and asked that the by-law



By Angela Kanik-Coyne

be put on hold. George Karolis, Tiny resident and short-term rental operator, raised many concerns about the Short-Term Rental Licensing By-law and asked Council to consider a stay on the Licensing By law, and if the stay is not granted, that the application deadline be extended to December 31, 2022. He also asked that the new Zoning By-law be put on hold until the new term of Council. Urged by Alex McIntosh and Kyle Campbell, Council decided to support Bill 5: Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act by writing letters of support to key MPPs and Ministers. Samantha Barnett of the Township of Tiny Fire and Emergency Services asked Council to support the Movember Campaign (which supports men's health) by recognizing Movember sponsors and partners on the Township website and social media platforms; by playing Movember commercials during Council Meeting recesses; by donating three parking passes; by waiving fees for the use of the Tiny Township Community Centre; and by supplying accounting support for the boot drive deposit. Council agreed.

AMENDMENTS TO THE SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSING REGIME

This fine-tuning resulted from staff's tracking of concerns related to the regime. (The amendments were passed at the November 2 meeting of Council.)

NOVEMBER 9, 2022 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Years of Service Presentations to members of township staff: Kim Post (20 years); Steven MacDonald (10 years); Emma Clench, Nathalier Gignac, Jaden MacDonald, Jody Moreau, Kyle McKay, Barry Reynolds, Jerrit Dusome, Nicholas Dupuis, Darin Lawson, Darron Parent, David Carriere (all 5 years)
- Inaugural Meeting of Council, Wednesday, November 23, 2022

SHORT-TERM RENTAL ACCOMMODATION BY-LAW AMENDED

This By-law set liability insurance for a rental accommodation at \$2,000,000 per occurrence for property damage and bodily injury and required maintenance of a detailed guest register.

POLICE SERVICES AGREEMENT AUTHORIZED

This three year "O.P.P. Services Agreement By-law" came into effect on November 9, 2022.

NOVEMBER 23, 2022

INAUGURAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

At this meeting (available on Tiny Township's YouTube channel), the members of the Council elect (Mayor David Evans, Deputy Mayor Sean Miskimins and Councillors Dave Brunelle, Kelly Peter Helowka and Steffen Walma) were piped in, declared elected, and formally presented. Recorded greetings were presented from MP Adam Chambers and MPP Jill Dunlop. The members of Council each spoke briefly, and Mayor Evans presented an inaugural address.

NOVEMBER 30, 2022

CANADA POST'S OPTIONS FOR WYEBRIDGE WHOSE POST OFFICE WAS BEING CLOSED

- a local accommodation for the postal outlet
- community mailboxes
- transfer to a post office in a neighbouring community

HIAWATHA TURNAROUND

When this road was built in the 1970s, it was thought that the developer of the northeast corner of the Township off Champlain Road was going to extend Hiawatha Road as part of a future subdivision. Hence, no proper truck turnaround was built. As a result, trucks have a hard time negotiating the area. Neighbours have volunteered to donate the necessary land for the construction of a turnaround on the condition that they do not have to support any of the costs. Staff recommended that the donation be accepted, and the turnaround established as part of the road network, using moneys allocated in the 2022 capital budget. Council supported this solution.

2023 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Council meetings are to occur on Wednesdays on a three-week rotation beginning January 11, 2023.

DECEMBER 14, 2022

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES, LOCAL BOARDS AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

- Accessibility Advisory Committee — 7 members
 - Heritage Advisory Committee — 7 members
 - Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee — 7 members
 - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee — 7 members
 - Senior Advisory Committee — 10 members
 - Youth Advisory Committee — apart from the Council representative, members not yet set
 - Committee of Adjustment — 5 members
 - Police Services Board — 4 members
 - Property Standards Committee/Fence Viewers — 5 members
 - Livestock Valuers — 2 members
 - Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe — mayor
 - Huronia Airport Commission — mayor plus 1 member
 - Midland Public Library Board — 1 member
 - North Simcoe Heads of Council — mayor and deputy mayor
 - Penetanguishene Public Library Board — 1 member
 - Severn Sound Environmental Association — 1 councillor
 - Springwater Public Library Board — 1 member
- Many familiar individuals are serving on these committees.

REPORT ON COUNCIL — continued on page 6

OPINION

Short-Term Accommodation Lessons for Tiny



Photo by Mauricio Mascaro on Pexels

I am Terry Kellar and for the past 10 years I have been the Chair of the short-term accommodation committee of the Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association. Here are some things every home and cottage owner in Tiny Township should know about our successes and licensing mistakes we've made in Blue Mountains.

In 2009, Blue Mountains (the "Town") chose to protect the safety and the security of all residential zones from the intrusion of short-term accommodations (STAs) by separating temporary accommodations including STAs from places where people reside. The Town accomplished this by defining a "new use," a short-term accommodation, that was distinct from a residential use and did not permit this incompatible commercial activity in any residential zones. This approach was upheld by the Ontario Municipal Board and leave to appeal the Board decision to the Divisional Court was denied. Other municipalities, including Oro-Medonte (2014) and Niagara Falls (2021), adopted a similar planning approach.

The Town successfully excluded STAs from all residential neighbourhoods. Yet, following this success, for some unknown reason, the Town permitted owners of approximately 54 STA properties that were in existence at the time the by-law amendments were passed in 2009 to continue to carry on business in residential neighbourhoods as legal non-conforming uses (LNCUs). The problem? Under the old by-law, they were never legal. Since this happened before my involvement, it's not clear to me how these properties acquired the status of a legal non-conforming use. Perhaps the Town settled with the operators to avoid further litigation, or the Town mistakenly believed the previous zoning by-law permitted these STA uses. The result? The Town had no choice but to resort to licensing to try to control these legal non-conforming uses.

Unfortunately, after 10 years of trying, licensing has been

a costly failure, but we don't know how costly. Despite numerous requests by our residents' association, the Town has failed to disclose the costs of administering STAs. However, in 2018, the Director of Oro-Medonte Development Services reported that:

"The Township (Blue Mountains) has invested significant time, money, and added new full time staff resources into their program and have indicated to date the cost of the program is estimated to exceed \$1,000,000."²

Despite the expenditures of our tax dollars, licensing conditions intended to impose a level of control have failed. The Town has not revoked one license. Conflicts continue. In reviewing OPP records provided by the Town,

the incident rate of reported disruptions is vastly disproportionate to the reporting rate generally in all other residential neighbourhoods. In the period 2017 to 2022, the frequency of calls for OPP help occurred at the average annual rate of 15 per 100 licensed STAs, while in the same period the frequency of calls for OPP help occurred at the average annual rate of 1.4 per 100 for all other dwellings.

Fines for noise or parking violations are just seen as a cost of doing business. Occupancy limits are almost impossible to enforce. Other conditions, like limits on total rental days or contract duration, require neighbours to constantly monitor activity at an STA, track visitor numbers, arrivals and departures, etc. and report to law enforcement. To protect their neighbourhoods, homeowners have been turned into monitors for absentee STA operators, some of whom make more than \$100,000 annually. Their reward? Because no one wants to live near a licensed STA in a residential neighbourhood, their homes are worth less in the marketplace.

So how can Tiny succeed with licensing? If licensing is to have a chance of success, Tiny needs to avoid the costly mistakes that Blue Mountains has made. Tiny needs to vigorously defend legal non-conforming use claims; otherwise, licensing will fail. Failure to defend LNCU claims will mean that the wealthy STA operators will line up with their very experienced lawyers and argue that the licensing provisions cannot be enforced against them. Neighbourhoods will continue to be disrupted, and tax dollars will be wasted.

Since Tiny Township has already begun implementing an STA by-law and licensing regime, Council should first pause the implementation and retain legal counsel very experienced in municipal law. Experienced legal counsel can better inform Tiny Council and state what the case law has already established: providing short-term accommodation is not a residential use. Armed with this information, Tiny

Township will be in a far better position to successfully defend legal non-conforming use claims and avoid the continuing problems faced in the Town of The Blue Mountains when trying to control LNCU STAs. Years of experience has shown that LNCU STAs are difficult if not impossible to control with a licensing regime.

Finally, after successfully defending legal non-conforming use claims, only then should Tiny Council consider amending the zoning by-law and implementing a licensing scheme using a similar approach used in Blue Mountains. Furthermore, licensing should not cost taxpayers anything. All costs of administering, policing and enforcing the licensing scheme should be paid for by the STA operators. These costs include all direct and indirect costs, including municipal liability insurance costs. Additionally, it should be mandatory for STA operators to pay for a contingency fund established to compensate homeowners who suffer a property value loss if the municipality is unable to control the conflicts caused by the very lucrative operation of hotel-like businesses in residential neighbourhoods.

Terry Kellar,
Chair of the Short Term Accommodation Committee,
Blue Mountains Ratepayers' Association
tkellar@sympatico.ca

1. Sheldon Rosen and the Lodges at Blue Mountain Corporation v. Town of The Blue Mountains [2011] PL080455 at 10.
2. Andria Leigh, Oro-Medonte Development Services Report No. DS2018-012 at 3, February 28, 2018.

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JANUARY 11, 2023**JAMIE ROBINSON OF MHBC PLANNING RE BILL 23, MORE HOMES BUILT FASTER ACT**

Robinson reviewed key changes made by Bill 23 regarding:

- inclusionary zoning
- affordable and attainable housing
- parkland
- development charges
- community benefit charges
- removal of upper tier approval powers
- third party appeals
- additional dwelling units
- subdivisions
- plan of condominium
- site plan control
- Ontario Land Tribunal
- Conservation Authorities

CANADA POST LOCATION IN WYEBRIDGE

Nine community boxes are to be installed on Marsh Lane and the corner of Highway 93.

IN PERSON COUNCIL MEETINGS

When in-person council meetings resume, Council has decided that they will be partly in-person and partly electronic.

JANUARY 18, 2023

This meeting concerned legal matters, including one regarding Pine Forest Estate.

FEBRUARY 1, 2023 AND 22, 2023**OPEN DEPUTATIONS**

On February 1, residents Germaine Muller, Dan O'Rourke, and Susan de la Plante addressed Council about various aspects of short-term rentals (STRs). On February 22, residents Jason Barham, Jennifer Hierholzer, Mario Galluzzo, Janice Murton, Marisa Esposito, Cherie Ferrari, Patricia Rossi, and Emily Jacobelli addressed various aspects of STRs.

SCHEDULED DEPUTATIONS

Representing Responsible Hosts of Tiny, on February 1, resident Glen Sloutsky requested a pause in the enforcement of By-laws #22-017 and #22-067 to allow for "a collaborative dialogue with Township residents to improve the STR licensing regime." On February 22, Janet Marks voiced her concerns regarding the draft 2023 budget and the proposed tax rate.

MORE POPULATION GROWTH IN TINY?

On February 1, Council considered correspondence from Jamie Robinson of MHBC Planning regarding a response to the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs about County of Simcoe Official Plan Amendment No. 7. That amendment considers the expansion of settlement areas in the County. Given that the Township has experienced increased building permit activity and demand for housing and employment recently, Robinson recommended that the Township say in response that "Council is supportive of settlement area expansions based on good planning and responsible growth. Township staff would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with staff from the

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to determine how best to proceed and next steps." Council supported Robinson's recommendation.

CAWAJA PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AGREEMENT

Council agreed to accept the agreement as presented on February 22, 2023. (This agreement has been in force for many years.)

COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

The Regular Meeting of Council is to start at 5 p.m., with the Committee of the Whole to follow immediately after and Planning Public Meetings to be scheduled on a separate date.

PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

One such project was the \$43,000 purchase and installation of exercise equipment at Balm Beach Parkside Park (\$30,000 was covered by the awarded funding), and the second concerned P1 bridge repair at the south end of the Rail Trail at a cost of \$166,000, \$99,031 of which was covered by the awarded funding.

COUNTY OF SIMCOE BUDGET

According to Mayor Evans, the County's budget has been finalized at an overall increase of 3.5%.

NEW BUILDING OFFICIAL APPOINTED

Jonathan Filice has been appointed as Junior Building Official to manage short-term licensing and enforcement of the Ontario Building Code.

BUDGET

Council passed the preliminary 2023 draft budget at a 10.82% municipal tax rate increase. The Wyevalle ball diamond lights are to be deferred to the 2024 budget. At the next Huronia Airport Commission meeting, Mayor Evans is to raise the issue of the importance of prior budget approval of any capital assets to be purchased. (Last year, the Airport spent \$38,391.84 without getting authorization.) CAO Lamb and Director of Public Works Tim Leitch are working with the other area municipalities that use local arenas to arrive at a reasonable way to finance the arenas in 2024.

BEACH ACCESS PATH SIGNAGE

Staff is to remove the "private property" stickers on some of the Township's beach access path signs.

COMMUNICATIONS RE STRS

Eleven residents communicated their views about points made in deputations regarding Short Term Rentals.

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

Much of this meeting took place in closed session with Jim McIntosh of Barriston Law and John Barzo, Barrister & Solicitor. It concerned a proposed acquisition of land.

MARCH 1, 2023**SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL**

This meeting concerned the education and training of the incoming Council.

MARCH 15, 2023**DEPUTATION BY RESIDENT DIANE LEBLOVIC**

This concerned a Code of Conduct complaint made by

Ms Leblovic to the Integrity Commissioner in November of 2022. Ms Leblovic was concerned that this item, regarding the former Deputy Mayor's absenteeism from meetings in 2021 and 2022, was placed on Council's agenda by Councillor Walma.

Ms Leblovic expressed concern that Walma's statement left the impression that her complaint was frivolous. She argued that she made the complaint for all the right reasons — namely that Councillor Walma had missed a total of 37 meetings in 2021 and the first 9 months of 2022 and that this frequent absenteeism showed that he was regularly absent.

COUNCIL REMUNERATION

Effective January 1, 2023 the following positions are to receive a basic salary of

- Mayor — \$42,230.82
- Deputy Mayor — \$31,673.55
- Councillor — \$27,449.75

In addition, members of Council are to receive a per diem rate of \$60 per half day and \$120 per full day for attending 17 different committee meetings. They are also to receive compensation for many other activities.

LETTERS OF CREDIT HELD BY THE TOWNSHIP FOR LE VILLAGEOIS DE LAFONTAINE WATER AND SEWAGE SYSTEMS

Louis Maheu of Le Villageois asked Council to consider reducing the Letters of Credit held by the Township for Le Villageois if the Township had to take over operation of the system(s). On the advice of staff, Council refused the request.

MANAGEMENT OF DYNAMIC BEACH HAZARDS

Public Works is to provide a report to Council at its May 17 meeting outlining costs and plans for a Dynamic Beach Management Strategy.

MARCH 27, 2023**SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING — STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

Council considered a presentation by the President of Lockhart Facilitation, Council and Senior Management Strategic Planning, and a staff report titled "Committed to Community" Township of Tiny Strategic Plan Update 2020-2025. This document is to guide Council's actions over the balance of this term of Council.

According to this document, Council's vision recognizes the importance of maintaining the special charm and rural character of the Township by "promoting moderate growth that is in keeping with the existing character of our communities." Council is "committed to transparency, accountability and responsible management." Its Strategic Goals/Themes are to

- create an engaged informed and connected community
- deliver exceptional municipal services
- build economic prosperity and opportunity
- promote environmental responsibility and stewardship
- support community health, safety and well-being

Council also identified 12 priorities

All this looks very positive and ambitious. We look forward to experiencing the result.

Provincial Changes Threaten Endangered Species

By MARGARET PROPHET



Photo: Mark Peck. Source: "Species at Risk in Ontario," www.ontario.ca/page/barn-swallow

able communities. Our naivety was abruptly stripped away when politicians spoke out against our mission: "Where would we put all the people? What about all of the highways that need to be built? It will cripple our economy!"

Since then, the rhetoric has intensified and at the same time government commitment to preserve our greenspaces and work towards sustainable communities has diminished.

Case in point: the status of endangered species in the province. The meagre protection offered by Ontario's endangered species policies, never the strongest, has been whittled away to almost nothingness. Ontario's Auditor General stated in an annual report in 2021 that the province is not just failing to protect species at risk as required by the *Endangered Species Act* but is actually enabling harm. For example:

- New policies affect six of the most commonly threatened species at risk in Ontario, all native to Simcoe County: Barn Swallow, Blanding's Turtle, Bobolink,

Butternut, Eastern Meadowlark, and Eastern Whip-poor-will. Instead of being required to protect these species and their habitat, developers are now allowed to pay into a fund. Groups like ours condemned it as a pay-to-slay legislation.

- In early 2022, a new regulation removed the Black Ash from the endangered species list for two years. This tree is globally endangered, and Ontario contains 25% of the global population. Black Ash is commonly found in wetlands and along shorelines, meaning that these places now have less protection because it's open season on Black Ash. Bad actors can and will take advantage of this. Reasoning provided within the regulation states the change was needed because protecting the Black Ash "would likely have significant social and economic implications for many parts of Ontario" — an unfounded claim.
- *The More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* removed tools available to conservation authorities (CAs) to protect endangered species habitat from development. As a CA staffer told me, "CAs are out of the protecting endangered species game. Now it's entirely in the hands of the province." (For more on this, see "How Bill 23 Compromises Existing Protections," on page 8.)

Rumours are that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks will continue to decimate the *Endangered Species Act* by concentrating more power in the minister to decide the status and fate of species.

Further, recent housing policy proposals encourage more sprawl on farmland and greenspaces rather than building affordable, accessible communities in places where roads, servicing and jobs already exist. The war on our green spaces and the endangered species they house is clear and present.

That means fewer protections for those of us who have the privilege of living close to nature and reaping the benefits of clean air and water. Our ecosystem is a delicate network, and every member of our ecosystem plays a role in keeping it healthy and prosperous. We must do our part as well.

We have encountered the deregulation agenda before. Remember Walkerton? Without responsible policy that puts public health first, we are all at risk. The science community, our municipalities, and our conservation authorities are all concerned about where we are headed as well and what price we will pay as regulations are weakened to the point of harming people and the planet.

We have a unique opportunity here to turn this into a watershed moment during which we decide what is important to us as a society. If we really want to leave a healthy world for our kids and grandkids, then we must demand it. We have a chance to make clear to our elected representatives that our collective health and shared environment is paramount and shouldn't be so easily sacrificed at the whim of ideology.

Groups like FoTTSA and the Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition are critical to ensure that people's voices are heard and concentrated around a shared vision. I urge you to get involved and use your voice to stand up for something bigger than yourself. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, "Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." Margaret Prophet is Executive Director of the Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition.

"Minister's Order for temporary suspension of protection upon the listing of Black Ash under the *Endangered Species Act*," Environmental Registry of Ontario; ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-4278.

Endangered Species — continued on page 8

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How Bill 23 Compromises Existing Protections



Photo: Mark Peck. Source: "Species at Risk in Ontario."

www.ontario.ca/page/barn-swallow

Ontario Nature, formerly the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, recently published a backgrounder on ways in which Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, weakens environmental protections. Despite widespread public opposition, the act came into force on November 28, 2022. Here is a sampling from the backgrounder:

- Bill 23 removes requirements for public meetings on certain planning matters. It also removes the right to appeal planning decisions.
- Bill 23 gives the minister the power to override municipal planning decisions (e.g., amend municipal official plans) and impose development.
- Conservation Authority (CA) permits (e.g., regarding water-taking, interference with rivers, creeks, streams, watercourses, wetlands, flood or erosion control) are no longer required for development projects approved under the *Planning Act*. This undermines the power of

CAs to regulate or prohibit development that negatively impacts wetlands, rivers or streams.

- CAs are no longer able to consider pollution or the conservation of lands when issuing or refusing to issue permits.
 - CAs are prevented from entering into agreements with municipalities regarding the review of planning proposals or applications, prohibiting CAs from providing municipalities with expert advice and information on environmental and natural heritage matters.
 - CAs are required to identify conservation authority owned or controlled lands that could support housing development.
 - Watershed planning, the hallmark of Ontario's CAs, is severely diminished, to be replaced with piecemeal planning by over 400 individual municipalities.
- Read the entire backgrounder here:
ontarionature.org/bill-23-what-you-need-to-know-blog/.

Zoom Zoom — Boomers on the Move

By IRENE WILSON, Wendake Beach



Cottonbro Studio on Pexels.com

The boomer generation has inspired trends and innovations as they have moved through their decades. Fitness is a consistent focus for this age group and others as we all try to slow the aging process through activity and lifestyle changes. For instance, transitioning from high intensity aerobic workouts to gen-

tle options, such as yoga, aquatic classes and outdoor activities, including walking and biking. Traditional bicycles have been re-invented as electric bicycles, with enough models and variations to suit almost anyone's needs.

E-bikes are pedal bicycles with a small motor and battery, and may range in price from \$1,500 to \$5,000. They are a great way to get around your neighbourhood, run errands, exercise, explore longer distances, or just get some fresh

air. A boost from the motor can flatten a hill, allow you to cycle further, or get you home safely when fatigued.

Purchasing considerations

There are many variables to consider when contemplating a purchase, starting with whether you can still ride a traditional bike safely.

As the saying goes, "Once you learn to ride a bicycle, you never forget." But are you physically able to ride a bike? Do you have any mobility, balance or other physical limitations that may put you at risk of serious injury? Some people may have difficulty swinging their leg to mount the bicycle or may not be able to touch the ground while seated. Batteries are heavy and add weight to the average e-bike, which can range from 20-25 kg (44-55 lbs.). This can create challenges if you need to lift or transport it.

Just like regular bicycles, e-bikes come in a variety of styles: high performance speed racers, mountain, touring, foldable commuter, and three-wheeled trike versions. Step-through models, without the traditional bar, provide easier mounting and dismounting.

Know the rules

The provincial government has rules governing the use of e-bikes: you must be 16 or older, wear an approved helmet, keep the bike in good working order, and follow the rules of the road as they apply to cyclists. E-bikes and bicycles are not allowed on sidewalks. If the pedals are removed or the

e-bike is capable of exceeding 32 km per hour, it is considered a motor vehicle and must be licenced.

Take time to investigate the areas where you plan to cycle for parking availability and restrictions. Some communities, such as Tiny Township, prohibit the use of e-bikes on trails because they are considered a motorized vehicle. Other communities will allow e-bikes on trails if they are used in pedal-only mode.

Fire departments recommend against storing your power-assisted e-bike or scooter inside your home due to a severe and toxic fire hazard associated with the lithium-ion batteries that provide the power. Carefully read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer, and use only recommended cords and chargers.

E-bike safety

Safe use of an e-bike includes road awareness of the vehicles and pedestrians around you and making sure that you are visible to everyone. A bell and front and rear lights, preferably flashing ones that draw attention to you, are useful accessories. Be conscious that drivers may not expect a bicycle to be travelling at 20 km per hour. The added weight and speed will take longer distances to stop, so practise braking and turning before venturing out into traffic.

Research will help you decide if an e-bike is right for you. If it is, enjoy your new ride safely and in comfort.

Drama Unfolds in Bird's Search for Des Res in Simcoe County

By KATE HARRIES



Photo: Willem Span. Kirtland's Warbler spotted at the Packard Tract.

There's an endangered songbird looking for specific conditions in a specific location. If you're a landowner in Tiny Township, you might have just what the Kirtland's Warbler needs.

HERE'S THE CHECKLIST:

- Great Lakes Basin
- sandy soil
- young pine-oak forest,

10 to 20 years old; minimum 35 hectares

- dense growth with frequent clearings
- understory of native shrubs
- groundcover of native broad-leaved plants and grasses.

We all have the first item and probably the second. Some of us may have the third, but a native shrub understory and groundcover?

Even if your property doesn't have all these features, adding native plants common to young pine-oak woodlands could restore it to the liking of the Kirtland's Warbler, which winters in the Bahamas and breeds only within the Great Lakes basin — in Michigan, Wisconsin and Ontario. Nowhere else in the world!

The Kirtland's Warbler has come back from the brink thanks to serious conservation work in Michigan, which has helped rebuild a global population of just 300-500 birds in 1973 to 5,500 now.

No such efforts have taken place in Ontario until recently. Although many areas were suitable and could be again, European settlement eliminated the young pine-oak habitat that is created by fire, a regular and necessary occurrence for healthy North American forests. The natural landscape gave way to agriculture, commercial forestry, urbanization, fire suppression, and invasive plants.

But the bird remembered.

A moving testimony to the tenacity with which a species will cling to its appointed space on the planet is a map showing the flight paths of six male Kirtland's Warblers, part of a

group that had been tagged in the Bahamas in the winter of 2016-17. Upon returning to North America, these six head-



ed to Ontario rather than Michigan, and criss-crossed the province in search of suitable territory.

"When I first saw this my jaw dropped," said ecologist Peter Burke of GEI Consultants in a presentation earlier this year to the Midland-Penetanguishene Field Naturalists.

It was obvious to Burke that the birds were looking for something. "You could see birds going as far east as Kingston, and some of them are going back west and coming back east and then going south and then going north."

The males were searching for forest of a certain age. These warblers nest on the ground, sheltered by boughs that sweep down to soil level. As the trees age, they drop their lower branches and the space is no longer suitable.

Enter fire-based services, which involve selectively logging, seeding, replanting and occasionally burning the jack pines to simulate their natural growing conditions. "These creatures are hardwired for looking across the Great Lakes basin for fire-based services," he explained. "It's a thousands-year-old ecological process for the region. Southern Ontario does have pine-oak communities. The birds just must know this."

Thanks to Burke and other committed ecologists and foresters, a milestone was achieved last year when several male Kirtland's Warblers were heard singing in the Packard Tract. This was Simcoe County stepping up to the

plate for a Canadian first — the creation of breeding habitat for the Kirtland's Warbler.

This project took off several years ago when the county forestry department bought into Burke's vision and County Council authorized the go-ahead for restoring two tracts starting in 2016.

One is the Museum Tract, west of Midhurst. This tract had been severely degraded by years of use by the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The Packard Tract, halfway between Angus and Barrie, was in better shape when it was purchased in 2011, with an existing red and white pine plantation.

Both sites underwent removal of the non-native Scots pine and other invasive species, and a controlled burn, then planting and seeding of 90 species of plants known to be associated with the young pine-oak woodlands of Simcoe County.

The prediction generally was that the earliest date for the birds to arrive was 2023.

Burke picked up the story for the naturalists: "You can imagine our surprise when on June 9, 2022, last year, we were called to the site." The birds had been heard calling from the Packard Tract.

"We got there right at first light ... to our surprise we could hear not just one but more than one Kirtland's Warbler singing ... It was quite something."

Now the wait is on. Will the males return to Packard in 2023? Will their call lure females in? Will there be nesting? Will there be hatching and fledging? When will the first males decide the nearby Museum Tract is ready? There's much excitement in the birding world as the drama unfolds.

Here's a link to the Midland Penetanguishene Field Naturalists YouTube channel. Peter Burke's presentation starts at 10:38: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zljodst3SOY.

If you're interested in finding out whether your property has potential for Kirtland Warbler's habitat creation, visit this Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/420871338395677/. Nature Conservancy of Canada and Simcoe County Forestry are part of the Kirtland's Warbler Ontario Working Group and could provide advice.

Kate Harries is a naturalist who owns the *Return of the Native* plant nursery, near Elmvalle. A longer version of this article appears at www.returnofthenative.ca.

Tiny... Not So Tiny Anymore

By DAVID EVANS.



Township of Tiny Mayor David Evans

As I reflect on the past five months since our Council assumed office, I am still very happy that I decided to run for the office of Mayor. I'm certainly busier with more events and meetings than I ever anticipated, and the eventful summer season hasn't even started yet. It does take some getting used to being "the mayor" in the public eye. You never know when someone will ask you a question or want your help. I don't know all the answers but every so often I'm able to help and that good feeling makes my day.

Another challenge is quickly learning how municipal government operates and what levers to pull to get things done. My career has been exclusively private sector and profit focused. Now, instead of shareholders I have constituents, and success is often measured by thanks and appreciation rather than share price. Thankfully, my experience has taught me that before you can direct your organization to greater success you need to listen and understand where you are and how you got there.

The Township of Tiny is undergoing an intense change. For many years we escaped the glare of our urban neighbours. Our unique communities maintained a character and charm that stayed in our hearts and minds throughout the generations. When I was canvassing during the campaign, I encountered a common refrain: "Keep Tiny like it is." People feel the township is changing but they want it to stay the way it was when they first fell in love with it. I think we all know some change is inevitable, but how do we make sure change is positive and Tiny remains intact for future generations?

Short-term rentals (STRs) and their associated issues illustrate how our community is changing. Family-friendly rentals have been in Tiny ever since people started building cottages. Many of these renters stayed and built cottages and created generational family legacies. But recently a small minority of short-term rental owners chose to operate full-time investment properties with no concern for neighbours and the community.

The recent tragic fire at a clandestine Airbnb in Old Montreal, where seven people needlessly lost their lives, illustrates the high price if we do nothing to regulate the use of accommodations for tourism purposes. The father of one of the victims has filed a \$22 million class-action lawsuit against the owner of the building, which was being operated as an illegal short-term rental and Airbnb. No one wants to see a repeat of this tragedy. We need to eliminate illegal STR listings in Tiny. Our new bylaw contains the tools needed to protect Tiny and ensure the health and security of our visitors are ensured. We should take pride that Tiny Township is at the forefront of creating new STR legislation. Our STR by-law template is now being used by many other Ontario municipalities. As we move forward with the implementation we will continue to monitor and amend the by-law, as needed, to protect our community.

In December 2022, two weeks after our inauguration, we began work on the 2023 budget. This proved to be a speedy initiation into Tiny's finances. Cost inflation in many areas resulted in a 7.2% increase in base operating costs for the same services year over year ... an \$870,000+ year-over-year headwind. Keep in mind that 72% of our

budget is dedicated to public protection and transportation services, including roadworks. Both services are very susceptible to fuel and insurance cost inflation. The result is a municipal blended rate increase of 5.96%. Certainly, higher than anticipated but necessary given cost inflation and our commitment to responsible fiscal management. Comparative budget increases were lower in some municipalities that have lower inflationary pressures. But others, such as Wasaga Beach (5.94%) and Essa (6.39%), face challenges like ours.

This Council is committed to creating a sound fiscal roadmap. We are committed to investing in an asset management plan (AMP) to guide future infrastructure investment. Initial analysis shows the total current replacement cost of all our assets is \$319.6 million based on historical information; 77% of our infrastructure portfolio is in fair or better condition while 23% is in poor or worse condition. Tiny's AMP recommends a yearly investment of \$11.9 million to keep pace with the needed investment. For 2023, even with a 10.87% increase in the municipal tax rate, Tiny's investment into long-term assets totals \$9.96 million. Still \$2 million short of the recommended investment. Our total infrastructure deficit is estimated at \$41.6 million.

Our condition is common to municipalities across Ontario. We know we have an infrastructure deficit from years past. We have identified a target investment goal through the AMP that we would like to achieve moving forward. Using debt and planning for long-term replacement through multi-year budgeting, we believe this is a strategic and responsible approach to asset management and ensures we continually meet the level of service requirements for years to come.

With a total budget of \$14 million, how will we afford large-scale projects costing tens of millions? Past fiscal policy avoided infrastructure financing in the belief that this would protect future generations from debt. In a part-time seasonal community with limited infrastructure requirements, this may have been an option but now we are left with a service gap that needs immediate attention. The reality is that building large-scale projects is impossible if we rely solely on tax-based financing. Think of saving years in advance for a DIY reno; either you put the project off until you've saved enough plus inflation, or you do the reno now, enjoy it, and make the same payments to pay down today's current debt. Utilizing proven affordable long-term public-sector financing will allow Tiny to modernize and renew our infrastructure and thereby create a more efficient, healthier, and prosperous community.

Twenty years ago, our population was approximately 30% permanent and 70% seasonal. In the last five years, the percentage of the permanent population has doubled. Urban out-migration has changed Tiny from a summer-time vacation to a year-round community. The increase in permanent residents has added to the workload on all divisions of the municipal operation. Demand for building permits and by-law enforcement is up over 100%. Our main office facility is over capacity and needs immediate attention. Three of our departments work in portables and other departments are scattered across the township. Staff workload is near capacity and some service levels are starting to drop. Organizational work structures need to be implemented to meet and exceed community expectations. Modernizing work practices, building flexible work structures, and increasing workload capacity are some of our objectives over the next three years. We have a great staff, and it is incumbent on management to give them the tools they need to do their jobs well.

Do you know that Tiny has over 19,000+ registered voters? This is very close to all the registered voters in Midland and Penetanguishene combined. Of the 16 municipalities that make up Simcoe County, Tiny is comparable in size to the towns of Collingwood and Wasaga Beach. To date, our seasonal family character remains intact. But protecting Tiny's unique character will take a concerted effort and I look to residents for critical input on our journey.

Thank you for caring about Tiny and making Tiny a better place to live. Together we can make positive changes and ensure our community thrives now and in the future.

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5-Year Groundwater Research Project Poised to Expand

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach



Photo: Michael Powell

Professor William Shotyk collecting a sample of soil pore water from a lysimeter atop French's Hill in fall 2022.

Later this year or in spring 2024 researchers from the Universities of Ottawa, Guelph and Alberta expect to submit a funding application for a project that will help them determine the origin of Tiny's pristine groundwater, which geological, hydrogeological, and geochemical processes help purify it, the volume of groundwater, flow rates and direction of movement, and how they are connected.

The proposed 5-year project actually began last year with a test installation of passive lysimeters, which collect subsurface water, in the southeast corner of Tiny Township. The devices were installed in two "nests," with three sets of two lysimeters per nest, each sampling water at two depths. One nest is located on a natural terrace on French's Hill. These terraces are recharge areas that filter precipitation that becomes groundwater flowing from artesian wells. The other nest is on the top of French's Hill and will help determine conclusively whether it too is a recharge area.

French's Hill is also the location of two aggregate mining operations, one of which was the subject of two Ontario Land Tribunal cases. Both cases were settled after the company agreed to a number of conditions intended to protect what scientists believe to be the world's purest groundwater (see "FoTTSA Efforts Lead to More Conditions on Teedon Pit").

This spring the researchers will add another three nests of metal-free suction lysimeters, which will draw water into the devices more effectively. Soil pore water* will be sampled three times this year, in July, August, and September. Researchers will take six water samples per sampling event for analysis.

The researchers also plan to take core samples at each nest site to study the mineralogy, microbiology, soil physics, electrical conductivity, pH levels and other factors that affect the evolution of water as it flows through soils and sediments.

Proceeding with the research is contingent on \$5 million in funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), which finances research that contributes to scientific and technical breakthroughs benefitting Canadian society.

The experts involved in this project are among the most successful in Canada in obtaining NSERC funding, says project director Michael Powell. "They are preeminent in their field, not just in Canada but in the world, and they aim to fill a knowledge gap that NSERC is particularly interested in because of the potential impact on resource protection and use.

"This is groundbreaking work that no one else is doing. Our objective is to produce good science that can then impact society and change policy about how natural resources are thought of. All water is important, but not all water is created equal."

Research results could have global benefits

Understanding how the land purifies water as it flows through will help governments in Canada and elsewhere improve their ability to manage water resources.

"We know some of the groundwater comes from 20 to 30 kilometres to the east, travelling through glacial sediments," explains Powell. "Some of it bubbles up through the ground from bedrock that's hundreds of millions of years old. Some was trapped in there during glaciation, and some comes from precipitation in the form of rain or snow."

Along the way, this water is moving from aquifers — an underground layer of water-bearing, permeable rock, rock fractures, or unconsolidated materials such as gravel, sand, or silt — to aquitards — compacted layers of clay, silt or rock that hinder water flow.



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June is Parks, Recreation, and Seniors Month	Month of June
Senior Symposium	Thursday, June 1, 2023
Pollinator Week Busk til Dusk (Balm Beach)	June 19 to 25, 2023 June (Thursday evenings)
Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament	Friday, June 16, 2023
Community BBQ	Saturday, July 8, 2023
Movies in the Park	Bi-weekly Months of July & August
Festival du loup	Saturday, July 15, 2023
Farm Crawl	August 26 to August 27 2023

www.tiny.ca/events

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“In a one-metre stack it could alternate between aquifers and aquitards. There could be 20 or 30 of them, or one that’s a metre deep, and others alternating every 10 centimetres. At each aquifer/aquitard boundary the microbiology changes, so you go from reducing to oxidizing conditions or oxidizing to reducing conditions. This is extremely important for determining metal speciation in the water, and therefore whether minerals are precipitating — taking stuff out of the water — or dissolving and releasing elements into the water... and then what kind of mineralogy it goes through, the microbial processes, the changes in hydrogeologic settings... All of these things come together, and you have to integrate them all to figure out what is producing this water.”

The concentrations at which trace elements in the water samples will be measured are a thousand to a million times less than those measured by government organizations, including regulating bodies like the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

The Teedon Pit connection

Since researchers have already been taking water samples in the vicinity of CRH Canada Group Inc.’s Teedon Pit aggregate mine, they may be able to track any changes to groundwater quality resulting from the pit’s permit to take water, which will be used to wash gravel. The permit will allow CRH Canada Group Inc. to draw 1.6 million litres of well water per day, plus 5.2 million litres per day from a washing pond, for up to 210 days a year.

Provincial guidelines for permits to take water require applicants to prove they will do no harm to water users and the existing environment. Powell believes that what’s going on right now in French’s Hill may do both.

“To be clear,” says Powell, “we’re not against aggregate taking. We just want to protect this natural system.”

“The consulting firms that the MECP (Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks) used to evaluate CRH Canada Group Inc.’s application said there wouldn’t be any harm, but they’ve also said there is no water in French’s Hill. This is incorrect. I’ve seen water standing in a well at the very top of French’s Hill. I’ve seen water seeping out of the main slopes into the terraced areas. Where do they think this water is coming from? They’ve never walked those slopes. They’ve never walked those terraces. They’ve never looked into the wells of the farms all over French’s Hill. This groundwater supplies all the water for two major marshes — Tiny Marsh and Wye Marsh — and the Wye River. All three are delicate ecosystems.”

“As for the second criterion, do no harm to the existing environment, how do you strip away 14 or 15 acres of trees and shrubs and soil, which is the first level of protection against the migration of pollutants, and say you’re not going to impact the environment?”

“But these are not part of the ministry’s criteria when looking at granting a permit to take water. We need a bigger or better approach. I would like to see the MECP implement a multi-tiered policy structure that requires more thought, right down to the point of having a consortium of hydrogeologists and geochemists who look at applications and decide whether they have taken the environmental impact into consideration.”

** Soil pore water is water trapped in the pores (voids) of the soil which typically requires vacuum pressure for removal.*



Photo: Michael Powell

Tommy Noernberg, University of Alberta, at the top of French’s Hill in summer 2022. Noernberg is inspecting the soil and sediment horizon — a layer parallel to the surface whose physical, chemical and biological characteristics differ from other layers.

Annual Sewage System Inspections *continued from page 3*

What inspectors look for

Tatham Engineering’s field staff keep their eyes out for the following items:

- type of system(s) on the property (dimensions, number of runs, etc.) and units served
- type of tank(s), size, condition, location, and pump chamber(s)
- visible signs of sewage effluent and/or odour
- evidence of erosion on any part of the system
- surface water directed toward or around the system
- sewage system component setbacks and separations
- excessive plant growth in the leaching bed area
- trees, structures or driving in leaching bed or tank area
- lots with a high groundwater table.

What Tatham Engineering found in the 2022 inspections

Last year 1,279 inspections took place in the Woodland and

Deanlea Beach areas, and deficiencies were found on 112 lots. Here are 10 top deficiencies identified last year:

- root intrusions into the leaching bed area
- sewage effluent on the surface
- indications of vehicles parking or driving on the septic tank or leaching bed
- fire pits dug into the surface of the leaching beds
- an outdoor sink or shower with a drain discharging onto the ground
- locked gates so the property could not be accessed for inspection
- septic tanks requiring replacement
- cracked septic tank lids
- septic tank lids that needed raising to the ground’s surface
- septic tanks with potential deficiencies, which must be exposed for inspection.

Visit the township website to learn more about the sewage system re-inspection program:

www.tiny.ca/Pages/Septic-Re-Inspection.aspx.

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Summer Fun for Water Lovers



With Tiny Township's 70 kilometres of shoreline, everyone can have fun on the water this summer. There are plenty of options: taking a cruise, diving, renting a paddleboard or jet ski, or just having a waterfront meal. We've assembled a sampling of opportunities and dining spots below. For a full list of service offerings, check the corresponding websites.

Thinking beyond Tiny? We've including listings for Midland, Penetanguishene and Wasaga.

Cruises and tours

Company	Cruises/Tours	Charters	Diving	Contact
Diverse Boat Rentals & Tours	watersports, sunset and fall colours cruises	private tours		639 Concession Rd. 16 East, Tiny, ON L9M 0E9 • 705-549-0683 www.diverse rentals.ca
Eagle Adventures	Nottawasaga River paddle downstream from Edenvale			608069 12th Side Rd., The Blue Mountains, ON N0H 2P0 • eaglemaxadventures.com/kayak-canoe
Free Spirit Tours	Nottawasaga River paddle from Wasaga Beach Park to Jack's Lake and back			P.O. Box 376, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z7 • 705-606-0867 freespiritours.ca/paddling
Georgian Spirit Cruises	wedding, sightseeing, dining, and craft beer and wine cruises			175 King St., Midland, ON L4R 3L8 • 705-400-7318 georgianspiritcruises.com
Neptune's Locker Inc.	boat tours		training courses • gear • charters •	1390 Champlain Rd., Tiny, ON L9M 0C1 • 705-937-2172 www.neptuneslocker.ca
Picture Perfect Marine Rentals		crewed motor and sailing yachts		381 Mosley St., Wasaga Beach, ON L9Z 2J8 • 416-919-7112 https://pictureperfectrentals.ca
Wye Marsh Kayak Ecotours	guided tour at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre			16160 Hwy. 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 4K6 • 705-526-7809 www.wyemarsh.com/canoe-kayak-ecotours

Marinas

Company	Watercraft Sales, Service and Supplies	Contact
Bayport Yachting Centre	slips • storage • service and repairs • sales • parts and accessories • swimming pool • laundry	156 Marina Park Ave., Midland, ON L4R 4P4 • 705-527-7678 bayportyc.com
Beacon Bay Marina	slips • storage • sales • brokerage • service and repairs • sales • parts and accessories • wifi	1-37 Champlain Rd., Penetanguishene, ON L9M 1S1 • 705-549-2075 beaconbaymarina.com
Foundry Cove Marina	slips • storage • laundry • wifi	222 Fox St., Penetanguishene, ON L9M 1E7 • 705-549-2641 www.foundrycovemarina.com
Hindson Marina Inc.	slips • storage • service and repairs • sales • parts and accessories • floatel • swimming pool • wifi	79 Champlain Rd., Penetanguishene, ON L9M 2G2 • 705-549-2991 www.hindsonmarina.com
Kriss Marine Services	boat winterizing • summer commissioning • repairs • parts and supplies	579 Champlain Rd., Tiny, ON L9M 0C2 • 705-794-4393 krissmarineservices.ca
Minty's Marine Service	on-site, mobile and 24-hour emergency repairs	555 Champlain Rd., Tiny ON L9M 0C2 • 705-549-5490 mintysmarineservice.com
Tiny Cove Marina	slips • repairs • accessories • indoor and outdoor storage • launching ramp • variety store	15 Sunrise Crt., Tiny, ON L9M 0H2 • 705-529-2327 tinycovemarina.ca
Wye Heritage Marine Resort	slips • storage • service and repairs • sales • brokerage • parts and accessories • restaurant • wifi	3282 Ogdens Beach Rd., Midland, ON L4R 4K6 • 705-526-0155 wyeheritage.ca

Watercraft rentals

Company	Rentals	Contact
Diverse Boat Rentals & Tours	fishing boats • bowriders • pontoon boats • bowriders • jet skis • fishing boats • paddleboards • kayaks • canoes • floating mats • wakeboards • waterskis • kneeboards	639 Concession Rd. 16 East, Tiny, ON L9M 0E9 • 705-549-0683 www.diverse rentals.ca
Free Spirit Tours	paddleboards • kayaks • canoes • wakeboards • waterskis • kneeboards • tubes • water trampolines	P.O. Box 376, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z7 • 705-606-0867 freespiritours.ca/paddling
Picture Perfect Marine Rentals	powerboats • pontoon boats • jet skis	381 Mosley St., Wasaga Beach, ON L9Z 2J8 • 416-919-7112 https://pictureperfectrentals.ca
Playbuoy Watersports	paddleboards, windsurfers and more	72 Main St., Wasaga Beach, ON L9Z 2K9 • 705-408-2699 www.playbuoywatersports.com

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Check the websites for offerings and hours at these popular sites.

Balm Beach Bar & Smokehouse, 1 Tiny Beaches Rd. N., Balm Beach, ON L0L 2J0; balmbeachbarandsmokehouse.com

Georgian Grill, 7 Tiny Beaches Rd. North, Balm Beach, ON L0L 2J0; georgiangrill.com

Maple Canadian Pubs, 3282 Odgens Beach Rd., Midland, ON L4R 4K3 and 375 South Bay Rd., Township of Georgian Bay, ON L0K 1S0; maplecanadianpub.ca

Queen's Quay British Pub & Restaurant, 67 Juneau Rd., Victoria Harbour, ON L0K 2A0; thequeensquay.ca

Surf Bar and Grill, 369 Balm Beach Rd. W, Tiny, ON L0L 2J0; virawo.com/surf-bar-and-grill-589657-ca

The Boathouse Eatery, 177 King St., Midland, ON L4R 3L8; theboathouseeatery.com

World Famous Dock Lunch, 4 Main St., Penetanguishene, ON L9M 1T1; www.facebook.com/docklunch1957



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Seen Any Wild Pigs Lately?
 By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach



Wild pigs sighted in Simcoe County. Source: www.inaturalist.org/projects/ontario-wild-pig-reporting

Despite their big snouts and stumpy little legs on barrel-shaped bodies, we all love pigs, right? We must be attracted by their super intelligence. But that's a problem when pigs escape. They're wily, destructive and ravage the landscape.

Texas, for example, has a growing population of 2.6 million wild pigs estimated to cause US\$400 million in damage annually. The state has given up on eradication and instead is just trying to control them. Because wild pigs breed prolifically, Texas must cull 1.7 million pigs annually to keep the current population from growing. As of 2020, Texas was able to cull less than half this number.¹

Wild pigs are not only a problem in Texas. They've been spotted in 34 other states and are believed to number six million across the U.S. Most are escaped domestic pigs and their descendants.²

Ontario's experience with wild pigs may seem miniscule in comparison: from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, nine sightings were reported on average each month.

iNaturalist³ reports that two of these sightings took place in North Simcoe. Two adult and four young wild pigs were spotted in May 2018 east of Moonstone and two adults were sighted in April 2020 at Baseline Rd. and Mertz Corner Rd.

Why be concerned? Wild pigs compete with native wildlife for food, destroy crops through rooting and trampling, prey on native plants and animals, and attack people and pets. Wild pigs may also carry and transmit up to 80 diseases, viruses and parasites that could contaminate water sources and be picked up by native wildlife, livestock and people.

In response to the threat of invasive wild pigs, Ontario has devised a strategy based on four principles: prevention, early detection, effective response, and management. The goal is to prevent the establishment of a self-sustaining breeding population.

According to the strategy, success will depend on "strong inter-governmental collaboration, particularly between the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), as well as support from other jurisdictions, partners, academia, stakeholders, and the public."

How you can help

1. Learn more about the issue by downloading *Ontario's Strategy to Address the Threat of Invasive Wild Pigs*; www.ontario.ca/page/invasive-wild-pigs-ontario.

2. Report sightings. Ontario created a wild pig reporting process in 2018. If you see what may be a wild pig, email wildpigs@ontario.ca, call 1-833-933-2355, or visit www.inaturalist.org/projects/ontario-wild-pig-reporting.

3. Don't try to hunt wild pigs. You could make the problem worse by driving them into new areas and teaching them to avoid people.

Notes

1. Dan Greene, "Swine Country: How Feral Pigs Took Over the U.S.," *Sports Illustrated*, January 30, 2020; <http://www.si.com/sports-illustrated/2020/01/30/feral-pigs-problem-texas-helicopters>.

2. Jason Bittel, "Hogs are running wild in the U.S.—and spreading disease," *National Geographic*, February 1, 2023; www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/wild-hogs-swine-pigs-feral-us-disease-crops.

3. A joint initiative of the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society, iNaturalist functions as a global community of people who record observations of other organisms and share them so that we can learn more about the natural world; www.inaturalist.org.

Hospital's Hopes for an MRI Could Speed Up Essential Testing

By JENNIFER RUSSELL



bleed or for a variety of chronic illnesses and undiagnosed conditions.”

How North Simcoe residents would benefit

Having an MRI scanner would mean providing essential care sooner and closer to home. Last year alone 4,000 patients from GBGH's service area had to travel for MRIs to Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie or Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Orillia.

Residents in those communities also face long waits, so a scanner at GBGH would help reduce wait times for the entire region. It would also enable GBGH to attract more specialists and physicians who require MRI scans for patients in their practices.

Lisa Davies, a nurse in GBGH's emergency department, has witnessed delays firsthand. “Sometimes we'll have a patient come in with a non-critical head injury or a suspected brain bleed, and when we send them for the CT scan the report will come back saying we need further imaging from an MRI. Waitlists for an outpatient MRI are many months long. By bringing an MRI to GBGH we will vastly reduce wait times in our region and be a direct benefit to patients both in-hospital and within our community.”

The big challenge

With ministry approval for operational funds, GBGH is now tasked with raising the necessary \$4 million in capital costs. The facility has already raised \$300,000 but must still raise \$3.7 million. We invite you to join us and invest in MRI technology at GBGH.

Donations toward the MRI can be made online. GBGH also welcomes monthly giving, business partnerships, memorial giving, tribute gifts, and more. Find out more about all the ways to give at gbghf.ca/giving/ways-to-give.

Jennifer Russell is GBGH's Senior Development & Communications Officer.

If you're in North Simcoe and your doctor refers you for a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan, you could wait up to 117 days, almost two months longer than the provincial average of 68 days. However, delays like this could shrink. Georgian Bay General Hospital (GBGH) has received approval from the Ministry of Health for operational funding of an MRI scanner. This approval is conditional on GBGH raising \$4 million in capital funding costs, which would go towards purchasing the equipment and renovations to accommodate it.

How MRI scanners improve health care

This sophisticated diagnostic equipment uses a magnetic field and computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of the organs and tissues in our bodies. It's a non-invasive way to examine patients' organs, tissues and skeletal system, helping doctors provide a fast, accurate diagnosis.

“An MRI can be ordered for many reasons,” explains Dr. Nick Loughheed, GBGH's Chief of Radiology. “For a high-risk cancer patient screening. If a patient comes in with a brain or spinal cord injury. If a patient has experienced a brain

Citizen Science Informs Volunteer Work at Tiny Marsh

By Kate Harries



Photo by Willem Span

What species of salamander do we have at Tiny Marsh? Thanks to the shop students at Elmvalle District High School who manufactured salamander boards for us, an ongoing monitoring project is kicking off.

Each board is numbered to facilitate careful record keeping. We'll put them in place this summer and return in the fall and again next spring, and on through the years, to see what is sheltering underneath.

This is one of several projects that volunteers have taken on. Another potential project involves collecting data from local birders on the success or otherwise of the nesting

of at-risk Black Terns. We're still trying to figure out the best way of doing this. Tiny Marsh has a significant population of these elegant birds that migrate south as far as Peru every winter.

All eight of Ontario's turtle species have been designated at risk. The Snapping Turtle and the Midland Painted Turtle are the ones in evidence at Tiny Marsh. Every June, volunteers go out to find females laying eggs, wait for them to depart, and place cages (we have new ones made by EDHS students, thanks again guys!) over the nest site to foil predators.

Otherwise, raccoon and mink dig out the nests to eat the eggs, leaving only broken shells to mark the spot. Volunteers make a careful count of the nests, both the ones with predated eggs, and also those where an exit hole is a mark of success.

Up to 50 hatchlings can emerge from a protected nest. Volunteers on hand in August and September may see tiny turtles the size of loonies making their way to the water.

If you see this happening, do not throw the hatchling into the water. It's not helpful, they need to take their time.

— continued on page 16

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FOUNDATION REQUESTS \$1.5M FUNDING

Re: Fluctuating Water Levels

By MARY MUTER



Environment Canada forecasts that in 2030 water levels for Georgian Bay and Lakes Huron and Michigan could be 0.9 metres (3 ft.) below the record low in 2013, and 2.6 metres (8.5 ft.) lower than in 2020, when this photo was taken. Source for water levels: Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority; www.abca.ca/post/?ID=1095. Photo: Tara Marshall

The Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation (GBGLF) has applied for \$1.5 million in funding from Minister François-Phillippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, to conclusively determine the impact of ongoing changes in the St. Clair River that are increasing the outflow and lowering Great Lakes water levels. The funds would also be used to assess best measures for alleviating extreme highs and lows in the water levels.

GBGLF continues to assess how our government agencies manage water levels for this huge body of water — Lakes Michigan and Huron, and Georgian Bay. It has no controls on the inflow and outflow of water, and levels fluctuate by 2.5 metres (6.5 ft.) — more than any of the other Great Lakes.

This higher fluctuation results primarily from decisions made by the International Lake Superior Board of Control, which was established by the International Joint Commission (IJC). Among its responsibilities, the board determines outflow from Lake Superior and continues to make decisions that benefit Lake Superior by keeping its range to 1.25 me-

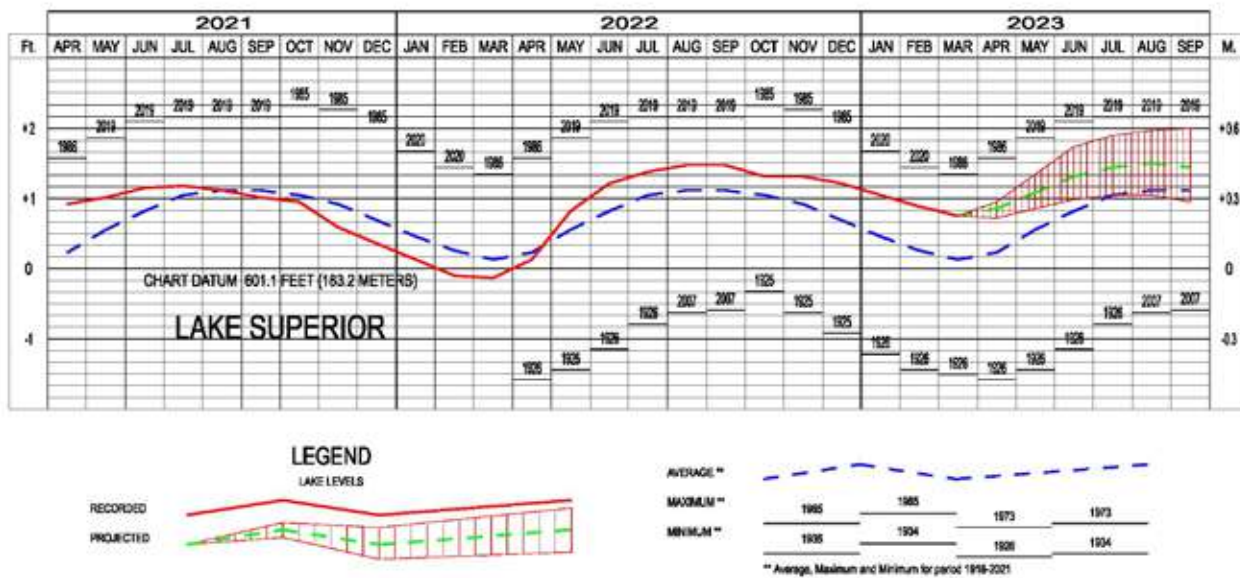
tres (4 ft.), regardless of the downstream consequences.

In 2003, our hydraulic engineer Bill Bialkowski identified that the St. Clair riverbed, which links Lake Huron and Lake Erie, was eroding, thereby increasing the outflow and lowering our water levels. More recently, Bill obtained the formulae that determines the discharges from Lake Superior through the St. Mary's River to Georgian Bay and Lakes Michigan and Huron (GB/MH). When Bill compared the actual amount to what should have been discharged, he found that during extreme high levels the IJC's Board of Control discharged more water, which then exacerbated GB/MH's already high levels, and when our levels were low the board held back water to benefit Lake Superior. So, in the past 10 years we have set a new record low and a new record high level on GB/MH. This has not happened on any of the other Great Lakes.

The following two charts depict water levels on Lakes Huron and Michigan, and Lake Superior. When viewed to-

[Water Levels](#) continued on page 18

LAKE SUPERIOR WATER LEVELS - APRIL 2023



Tiny Marsh continued from page 15

This year, 50 bluebird nest boxes were put in place at various locations at Tiny Marsh. To ensure the project's success, volunteers will be needed to

- monitor these boxes once a week to ensure that all is well
- discourage non-native house sparrows from taking over the space
- record occupancy, egg numbers, hatching and fledging dates.

Critical to the continued sustainability of Tiny Marsh is the elimination of invasive species and the restoration of native species that will support pollinators and other insects, bird populations and on up the food chain. We have volunteers working on pulling garlic mustard this month, and replacement planting to ensure native species hold the ground and prevent the invasives from recolonizing.

We are going into the third year of a three-year invasive phragmites control program, funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Tiny Township. Again, volunteers are an important component of this project, which is aimed at restoring native habitat in the wetland.

If you are interested in helping with any aspect of our citizen science efforts, email info@mtmconservation.org. We will get back to you!

Kate Harries is President of the M-T-M Conservation Association.

Save \$\$\$ with FoTTSA's Discount Card



Photo by Gustavo Fring on Pexels

Show your FoTTSA discount card to save! Almost 20 local retailers and service providers participate in the program with exclusive offers available only to holders of FoTTSA's local retail discount card.

The card is available at no cost to members of shoreline associations that belong to FoTTSA, as well as any Tiny resident who makes a donation of \$20 or more.

It's a win for everyone. You save, and local businesses have an opportunity to increase sales and build customer loyalty. Businesses sign up because the program offers them a competitive advantage through greater visibility.

Each participating business is listed on the Tiny Cottager website. Here's a sampling:

- Aimsweep
- Christine Marshall Wildlife Galley
- Lowes — NEW this year
- Peggy Worthen, Broker, Re/Max Georgian Bay Realty Ltd.
- Penetanguishene Centennial Museum & Archives
- RONA, including all stores in Canada
- Templeton Windows
- Wasaga Adventure Park Home of Wasaga Paintball.

Check the Tiny Cottager website for discount program details, including a list of all participating retailers: www.tinycottager.org/retailers-discounts.

Discount cards are distributed to shoreline association members by each association. If you're not an association member and wish to receive a discount card by making a donation, see "FoTTSA Needs Your Support!" on page 11. Shop local, show the card, and let business owners know we appreciate their involvement.

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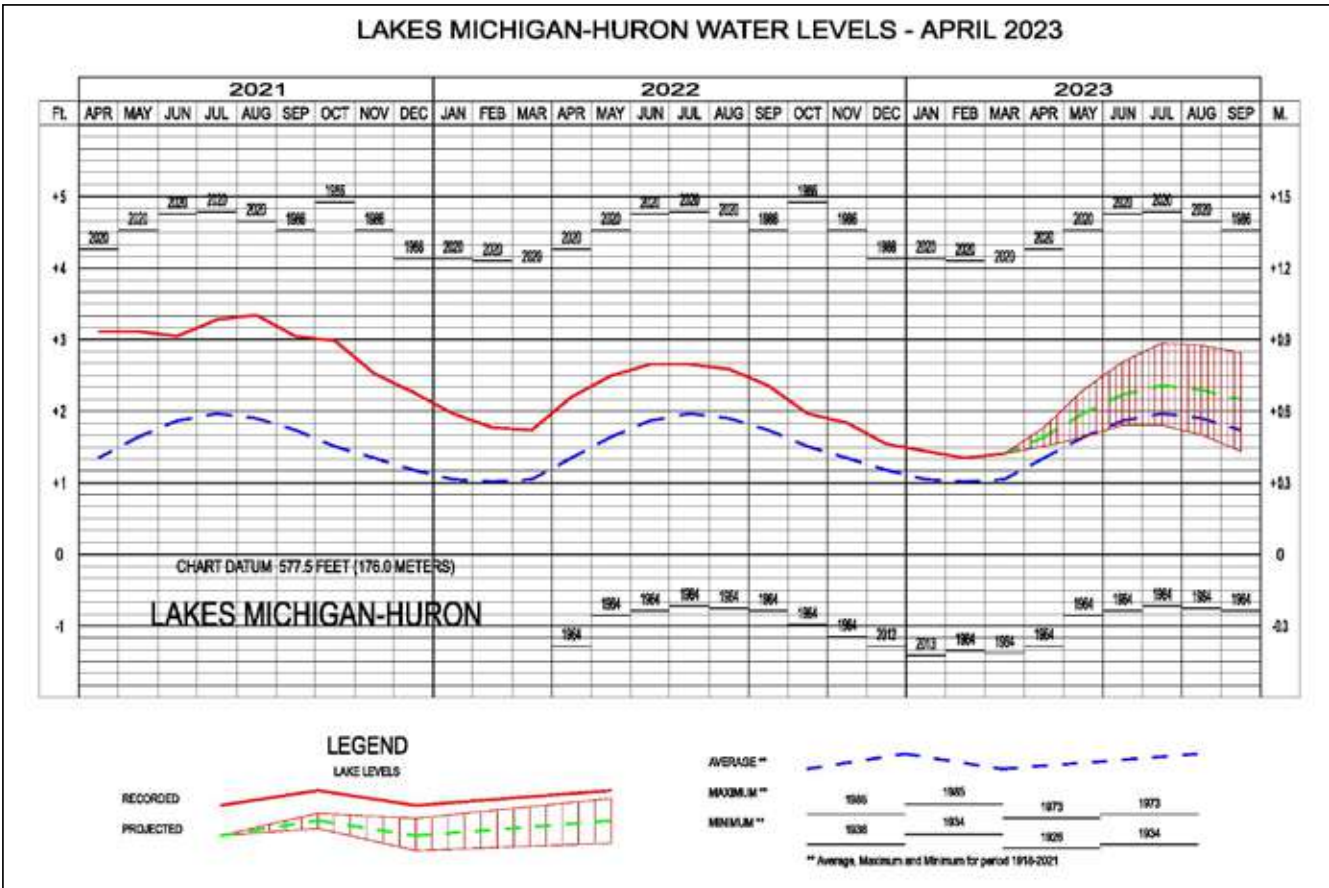
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gether you can clearly see how Lake Superior's range of water levels is much less than the levels for Lakes Michigan and Huron, and Georgian Bay. While Georgian Bay is not named, we know from research conducted by McMaster University's Professor Pat Chow-Fraser that of all the lakes Georgian Bay is by far the most sensitive to extreme water levels.

Even worse, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) released findings last year from an extensive project to assess climate change impacts on Great Lakes water levels. The findings forecast that by 2030 (i.e. seven years from now) our water levels will be almost one metre (3 ft.) lower than the 2013 record low. And their advice? Shoreline property owners should just "adapt."

It appears that no one understands what the ecological

and economic impact will be at these extreme low water levels. Municipal docks all around Georgian Bay will be high and dry. The boat channels in many locations will be impassable. Wetlands will dry up.

Professor Pat Chow-Fraser, a leading researcher on the conservation and restoration of aquatic ecosystems along the Great Lakes shoreline, found a 24% loss during the recent low level years but, at one metre (3+ ft.) lower the consequences will be even greater — loss of habitat for fish, turtles and marsh birds, and a faster decline of species at risk. Recreational fishing will also be impacted. The Georgian Bay mayors calculated the loss during low water levels was in the billions of dollars. What would it be at a metre lower?

This is just egregious of both ECCC and the IJC. There are

solutions that could alleviate our extremes. For example, our hydraulic control engineer Bill Bialkowski has designed flexible wings that could be placed in the St. Clair River to hold back water when needed. Bill designed these wings over 10 years ago, but the IJC and ECCC have not even come close to considering what could be done without interfering with shipping or fish movement and without exacerbating the hazards of high water.

So now our organization has asked our federal government for \$1.5 million to retain coastal engineering firm W.F. Baird & Associates to collect bathymetric (depth) measurements of the St. Clair River and determine the best design option for holding back water during low flow periods. The other lakes have major control structures to regulate their water levels.

Facing this ECCC climate change prediction, now is the time to act. Let your federal MP know that you support providing funding for Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation to assess and come up with best water level control options for the middle Great Lakes.

To learn more about water level issues, visit our website: www.georgianbaygreatlakesfoundation.com

Mary Muter is Chair of the Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation.

Support 14 Local Charities by Signing Up for Mayor's Golf Tournament



The 2023 Tiny Township Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament takes place on Friday, June 16 at Brooklea Golf & Country Club. Signing up for a round of golf promises fun, fresh air and financial support for local charities providing essential services to those in need. Not a golfer? Join everyone for dinner, where you can network and socialize with other guests. Book now. Space is limited.

New this year: the silent auction and raffle are now virtual and feature an assortment of gift certificates, artworks, food and beverage, décor, and entertainment items. New items are added each week up to the event day.

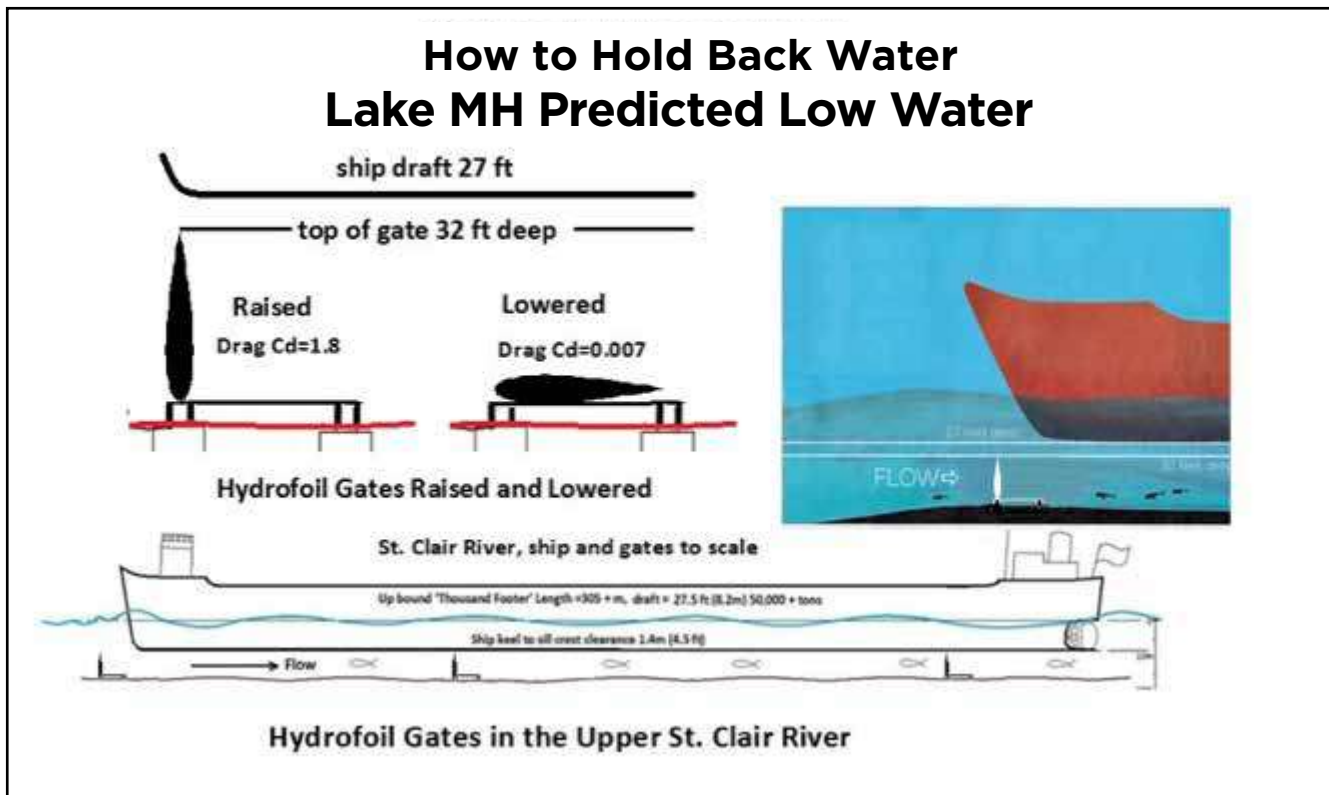
Since 2015, the golf tournament has raised over \$365,000 for more than 35 local charitable organizations, providing services that improve our community's health and wellness. All funds are raised through participating golfers and sponsorship.

This year's fundraising goal of \$50,000 will directly benefit these 14 organizations:

- Angels with Backpacks
- BCG North Simcoe
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Simcoe
- CLH Foundation
- Gateway Centre for Learning
- Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre
- Georgian Bay Food Network
- Get Up Off The Ground
- Hospice Huronia
- Le Club de l'âge d'Or de Lafontaine
- Quest Art School + Gallery
- Scientists in School
- Sistema Huronia Music Academy
- We Are The Villagers.

Sponsorships are an integral part of the fundraising activities and a valuable opportunity to raise brand awareness among active and committed members of the Tiny community. For example, FoTTSA is honoured to be the Tiny Township Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament's Founding Sponsor. "We're committed to improving the quality of life in Tiny Township," says FoTTSA president Paul Cowley. "Supporting the tournament benefits everyone, and we encourage you to join us in helping the event achieve its fundraising goal."

Various levels of sponsorship are still available. For information on sponsorship opportunities or to participate in the event, visit www.tiny.ca/ or email Jaelen Josiah, Recreation Services Coordinator, jjosiah@tiny.ca.



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