

December 13, 2024

To SVCA Watershed Municipalities, Councils, and CAOs,

I am writing to you as the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA) regarding an important development concerning conservation authority fees for the year 2025.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) issued a directive December 12, 2024, regarding conservation authority fees across the province. This directive, under the authority of subsection 21.3 (1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, extends the Minister's Direction that conservation authorities shall not alter fees related to planning, development, and permitting for the upcoming calendar year. This extended direction, effective from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, effectively maintains the SVCA's development fees in place since 2022.

Fortunately, the SVCA Budget for 2025, approved (November 21, 2024) by the SVCA Board of Directors in principle for municipal circulation, had anticipated this directive and is therefore unaffected. While anticipated for 2025, provincial directives that restrict SVCA's ability to generate revenue, along with the continued decrease in direct funding from the province to conservation authorities, pose substantial challenges and have serious implications for our operational and financial stability.

I appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. SVCA remains committed to working collaboratively with all watershed municipalities to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of our shared natural resources.

Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions or require further clarification regarding this issue.

Sincerely,



Erik Downing
General Manager/ Secretary-Treasurer
Saugeen Conservation

ED/

Cc: SVCA Directors, via email
SVCA Watershed Municipality CAOs/Clerks, via email
SVCA Watershed County CAOs/Clerks, via email