



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday, March 26, 2026

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Administration Centre  
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

2:30 p.m.

### AGENDA

1. Chair's Welcome and Call to Order
2. Land Acknowledgement Statement
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
5. Disclosure of intention to record this meeting by video and/or audio device
6. Approval of Minutes from February 19, 2026
7. Business Out of the Minutes
  
8. **Presentation – Audited 2025 Financial Statement** – Paul Seebach, *Seebach & Company*
  
9. **Program Reports**
  - Report 1: (a) Development Review (O Reg 41/24) – Jaden Schoelier  
(b) Violations/Appeals Update – Andrew Bicknell
  - Report 2: Updated Communications Strategy – Tim Cumming
  - Report 3: Flood Emergency Planning Meeting – Dan King/Christie Brown
  
10. **Presentation – Flood Forecasting: Daily Planning Cycle, Documenting Decisions** – Dan King
  
11. **General Manager's Report** – Davin Heinbuck
12. **Committee Reports**
  - Friends of the South Huron Trail – Tim Cumming
13. **Correspondence**
14. New Business
15. Committee of the Whole
16. Adjournment

*Partner Appreciation Evening – Ironwood Golf Clubhouse*

#### Upcoming Meetings and Events

April 9 – 16, 2026

April 16, 2026

Conservation Auction - Online

Board of Directors Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, February 19, 2026  
Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom  
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

### DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Joey Groot, Jaden Hodgins, Dave Jewitt, Dave Marsh, Wayne Shipley, Marissa Vaughan

### DIRECTORS ABSENT

Steve Herold

### STAFF PRESENT

Michael Bax, Andrew Bicknell, Tina Crown, Derek Dolmage, Millie Ghorbankhani, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Mari Veliz.

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

#### **MOTION #BD 01/26**

**Moved Joey Groot  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the February 19, 2026, Board of Directors Meeting be approved as amended.”**

**Carried.**

### DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting or from the previous meeting.

### DISCLOSURE OF INTENTION TO RECORD

None.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES**MOTION #BD 02/26****Moved by Dave Jewitt  
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on December 18, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”**

**Carried.**BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES**1. Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities – Responses and Communication**

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, presented the Board of Directors with an update regarding Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority’s (ABCA) actions taken since learning of the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities in October 2025. In addition, he also provided a list of local responses and submissions to the ERO #025-1257, including a list of those from our Member Municipalities, as well as other local organizations. In general, local municipalities and organizations have shown strong support for the current conservation authority model in Ontario. Davin also referenced the letter from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Conservation Ontario to the Province, noting their recommendations to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) that can be used as a reference for ongoing and future engagement.

ELECTIONS

Chair Ray Chartrand asked for a motion to appoint a chairperson for the elections.

**MOTION 03/26****Moved by Ray Chartrand  
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

**“RESOLVED, THAT Davin Heinbuck be appointed as chairperson for the election proceedings.”**

**Carried.**

Davin Heinbuck outlined the procedures prior to conducting the elections.

Appointment of Scrutineers**MOTION #BD 04/26****Moved by Ray Chartrand  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT Nathan Schoelier and Abbie Gutteridge be appointed as scrutineers.”**

**Carried.**

The positions of Chair and Vice Chair were declared vacant.

Election of Chair

Nominations were called for the position of Chair for 2026. Adrian Cornelissen nominated Ray Chartrand.

Davin Heinbuck called for nominations two more times.

**MOTION #BD 05/26**

**Moved by Dave Jewitt  
Seconded by Joey Groot**

**“RESOLVED, THAT nominations for the position of Chair of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority be closed.”**

**Carried.**

Ray Chartrand accepted his nomination with thanks, and Davin Heinbuck declared Mr. Chartrand, the representative for the Municipality of Huron East, as the Chair of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority for 2026.

Election of Vice Chair

Nominations were called for the position of Vice Chair for 2026. Marissa Vaughan nominated Adrian Cornelissen.

Mr. Heinbuck called for nominations a second time. Adrian Cornelissen nominated David Marsh. Ray Chartrand nominated Jaden Hodgins.

Mr. Heinbuck called for nominations a third and final time.

**MOTION #BD 06/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority be closed.”**

**Carried.**

Mr. Heinbuck asked the nominees to speak to their nominations. Adrian Cornelissen declined his nomination as he does not plan to run for council in the fall, and thanked the Board for their support over the past year. Jaden Hodgins also declined his nomination for similar reasons. Dave Marsh accepted his nomination, and thanked the directors for their confidence.

Mr. Heinbuck declared Mr. Marsh, representative for the Municipality of Lambton Shores and the Township of Warwick, as Vice Chair for the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority for 2026.

Ray Chartrand again thanked the directors for their support and assumed the Chair.

#### APPOINTMENTS

Davin Heinbuck reminded the directors that the auditor, financial institution and investment firm were appointed for a five-year period, and will not need to be reappointed this year. However, the solicitors used by the Authority need to be appointed. Davin recommended appointing the same four solicitors that were appointed in 2025.

#### **MOTION #BD 07/26**

**Moved by Marissa Vaughan  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the firms of Little, Masson & Reid, Exeter; Raymond & McLean, Exeter; Grant Inglis of Scott Petrie, LLP of London; and Fraser M. Kelly, London be appointed as the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority solicitors for 2026.”**

**Carried.**

#### PROGRAM REPORTS

##### 1. (a) Development Review

Jaden Schoelier, Water & Planning Technician, presented the Development Review report pursuant to Ontario Regulation 41/24 *Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*. Through the application process, proposed developments within regulated areas are protected from flooding and erosion hazards. Staff granted permission for 7 *Applications for Permission* and 12 *Minor Works Applications*.

##### (b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell, Water and Planning Manager, provided a brief update on two ongoing violations. He noted that staff are still awaiting the decision by the Ontario Land Tribunal regarding a permit for a deck/storage structure in Lambton Shores, for which the ABCA did not grant permission.

In addition, he noted that staff were contacted by the landowner where a violation occurred in 2025 in Port Franks along the Ausable River. Staff have met with the landowner several times and are hopeful that voluntary restoration can be expected. This particular violation also included works done on ABCA property, so accountability will be important when it comes to the restoration work.

#### **MOTION #BD 08/26**

**Moved by Jaden Hodgins  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors affirm the approval of applications as presented in Program Report # 1 – a) Development Review and receive the verbal Violations and Appeals update as presented.”**

**Carried.**

**2. 2025 Permit Review Timelines**

Andrew Bicknell presented an annual report, which summarizes the ABCA’s Ontario Regulation 41/24 – Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits. This report is a requirement of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The report confirms that staff of the ABCA continue to excel at bettering expected permit review timelines, noting that 97% of the permits were issued well before the time limit. It was observed that the preconsultation process is often key to reasonable turnaround times for permitting.

**MOTION #BD 09/26**

**Moved by David Marsh  
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the report 2025 Permit Review Timelines for information as presented.”**

**Carried.**

**3. ABCA Revised Fee Schedule – Planning and Permitting Fees**

Andrew Bicknell reminded the Board of Directors that, beginning January 1, 2023, conservation authorities received correspondence from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry advising that the fees for planning and permitting related activities could not be raised for the period of one year. Subsequent directions extended this fee freeze through to the end of December 2025. During the 2026 budget preparation, it was expected that this freeze would continue into 2026. However, to date, no correspondence has been received regarding the Planning and Regulations fees for 2026. As such, the majority of conservation authorities have or plan to update their Fee Schedule with an increase in these fees following a user-pay model. Staff have suggested revisions to the Fee Schedule that amount to an average increase of approximately 4%, which is still below the COLA over the three years since the last increase. Staff noted that these increases are in keeping with many of the surrounding conservation authorities.

**MOTION #BD 10/26**

**Moved by Wayne Shipley  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the revised 2026 Fee Schedule, which includes updates to the ABCA Planning and Permitting fees, and**

**“FURTHER, THAT the revised 2026 Fee Schedule changes be implemented immediately, and**

**“FURTHER, THAT the revised 2026 Fee Schedule be posted on the ABCA website, as approved.”**

**Carried.**

**4. Unaudited Profit and Loss Statements**

Tina Crown, Financial Services Coordinator, presented the unaudited statements of profit and loss from January 2025 through December 2025. The audited financial statements are expected to be ready in March.

**MOTION #11/26**

**Moved by Dave Marsh  
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the unaudited profit and loss financial statement for 2025 be received as presented.”**

**Carried.**

**5. Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA) 2025 Summary**

Michael Bax, RGCA Superintendent, presented an overview of the 2025 season at RGCA. In addition to Michael, there are two other staff who help at RGCA, one from May through October, and a second student for July and August. RGCA once again saw high attendance numbers in 2025, with a total of just under 45,000 visitors during the period in which it is staffed. There are more visitors during the off-season, but the numbers are not as easy to track.

In 2024, e-transfers were added as a way to pay for entry into RGCA, and in 2025 this method was used 484 times. Staff also continued to sell both individual and family passes in 2025. While these numbers were not as high as 2024, it should be noted that there were more pavilion rentals in 2025 as compared to the previous year.

In addition to gate attendance, staff can also track visitors to the Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre via the Museum guestbook. In 2025, there were 2,563 entries from 52 countries, as well as 11 provinces/territories and 21 US States represented. RGCA and the Museum continue to provide an excellent venue for educational programming. In 2025, along with ABCA education staff, RCGA hosted just under 30 programs.

In 2026, RGCA will continue to provide a valuable experience to conservation area visitors. Staff will seek to increase the number of passes sold in 2026, as well as continue to enhance off-season and “shoulder season” opportunities. Staff will also continue to work with the Arkona Lions Club and Lambton County to improve the Museum and Visitor’s Centre.

**MOTION #BD 12/26**

**Moved by Wayne Shipley  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the report 2025 RGCA 2025 Summary for information as presented.”**

**Carried.**

6. Rock Glen Conservation Area Master Plan (2026 – 2036)

Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship, Conservation Lands and Education Manager, provided the Board of Directors with an updated draft of the Rock Glen Conservation Area Master Plan. He reminded Directors that staff used past master plans, institutional knowledge, as well as public feedback to finalize this draft. Upon approval, it will be posted on the ABCA website.

**MOTION #BD 13/26**

**Moved by Jaden Hodgins  
Seconded by Joey Groot**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the Rock Glen Conservation Area Master Plan (2026 – 2036).”**

**Carried.**

7. Draft Ausable River Cut Conservation Area Master Plan Update

Nathan Schoelier provided a draft Master Plan for the Ausable River Cut Conservation Area (ARCA), which was last updated in 2004. He reminded Directors that this update was included in the 2026 budget. He noted, that as with other master plan updates, staff plan to reintroduce institutional knowledge to the ARCA Master Plan, which will allow decisions to be made that consider historic information, alongside new tools and resources. The next step with the ARCA Master Plan update is to make the plan available for public and stakeholder feedback. Staff have identified several organizations and groups to have meaningful engagement, and will utilize various methods to receive feedback. Once engagement has been completed, staff will bring back a final draft of the plan for Board approval.

**MOTION #14/26**

**Moved by Dave Jewitt  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the draft Master Plan update for the Ausable River Cut Conservation Area to be made available for public and stakeholder feedback.”**

**Carried.**

8. Vehicle Tender

Nathan Schoelier presented the Board of Directors with the results of a vehicle tender. The new vehicle will replace the 2017 Chevrolet Colorado, which supports the programs and services of all departments of the ABCA. The purchase will be funded through the motor pool. The closing date for the tender was Monday, February 16, 2026. Davin Heinbuck, Nathan Schoelier and Derek Dolmage met the following day to open and review the tender. There were two submissions, and both included a trade-in value for the 2017 Chevrolet Colorado. The 2026 budget included \$70,000 in revenue to support the acquisition of this vehicle, with the remaining funds used to replace other equipment needed for fieldwork. The bid received from Huron Motor Products (HMP) for the purchase of a 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 4WD Crew Cab is the lowest priced bid. It meets the requirements outlined in the tender and is within the 2026 budget at a purchase price of \$47,333 plus HST. Should the ABCA accept the offer from HMP to purchase the 2017 Chevrolet Colorado, the purchase price of the new truck, including non-refundable taxes, would be \$35,954.86.

**MOTION #BD 15/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot  
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorizes staff to divest the 2017 Chevrolet Colorado to Huron Motor Products for \$12,000 with an acceptable variance of up to 10% less than the stated price.”**

**Carried.**

**9. Huronview Innovative Drainage Demonstration**

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager, reminded the Board of Directors of the Huronview Demonstration site, which was established in 2019 with various trials for subsurface drainage, surface drainage, as well as tile spacing comparisons. In 2025, the ABCA secured funding to support a further sub-irrigation innovation at this site. The design committee comprised of drainage contractors, staff from B.M. Ross and Associates Ltd., the Huron County Soil and Crop Improvement Association, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), and the University of Guelph, is finalizing the design for this project. As this is a highly innovative project, requiring a special solar pump. While multiple quotations were received, this is a highly specialized piece of equipment. Therefore, the design committee would like to procure the best pump based on the need of the project.

**MOTION #BD 16/26**

**Moved by Marissa Vaughan  
Seconded by David Marsh**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorize staff to work with the Huronview Design Committee to ensure that the best value solar pump be procured for the Huronview sub-irrigation project.”**

**Carried.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS**MOTION #BD 17/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot  
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Striking Committee meeting held on January 15, 2026 and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”**

**Carried.**

Along with the Striking Committee Report, Abbie Gutteridge, Corporate Services Coordinator, noted that in reviewing the Terms of Reference for each of the committees in 2025, it was noted that there were no formal Terms of Reference for the Striking Committee, as it began as an ad hoc committee until the 1980s, when it began meeting annually. As such, staff drafted Terms of Reference for the Striking Committee to inform the committee going forward.

**MOTION #BD 18/26**

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the Striking Committee Terms of Reference as presented.”**

**Carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Davin Heinbuck noted that the only correspondence received were further letters to the Province or ERO responses from municipalities, organizations and conservation authorities.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**MOTION #BD 19/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot  
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors go into Committee of the Whole at 11:49 a.m. to discuss property matters, with Davin Heinbuck, Abbie Gutteridge, and Nathan Schoelier remaining in attendance.”**

**Carried.**

**MOTION #BD 20/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot**

**Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors rise and report at 12:09 p.m.”**

**Carried.**

**MOTION #BD 21/26**

**Moved by Dave Jewitt**

**Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorize staff to proceed with the grant application, as discussed.”**

**Carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Rock Glen Conservation Area – Repairs**

Nathan Schoelier prepared a brief report regarding some needed repairs at Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA). The recommendations regarding this issue were not known prior to preparing the Board of Directors Agenda Package, and therefore, it is being presented under New Business. While completing snow course measurements at RGCA on January 8, 2026, ABCA staff noticed some erosion on the downstream side of the watercourse crossing near the entrance of RGCA. Staff engaged a local engineering firm, B.M. Ross and Associates Ltd., who visited the site with staff on January 29. It was recommended by Ryan Munn, Senior Engineer for B.M. Ross, that ABCA hire an experienced contractor to fill the eroded void and install a vertical concrete wall to help prevent further undercutting. He advised that VanDenBerk Construction would be available to do the required work in the spring to help alleviate any disruptions to RGCA’s peak season. Mr. Munn provided an estimate of \$13,000, plus tax, for the project, which includes site drawings prepared by B.M. Ross, as well as the cost of the repairs by the contractor. This damage occurred after the preparation of the 2026 Budget, and therefore, no funds were budgeted for this work. However, staff have identified the repairs as both critical and time sensitive, and suggest that the project be funded through gate entry revenue from 2026. Any shortfall can be offset by reserves at year-end, if needed.

**MOTION #BD 22/26**

**Moved by David Marsh**

**Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Board of Directors authorizes staff to retain the services of B.M. Ross & Associates Ltd. To facilitate the repair of the watercourse crossing at Rock Glen Conservation Area, and**

**“FURTHER, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve a project budget of \$14,300, plus HST, inclusive of a 10% contingency, and**

**“FURTHER, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the use of reserves to offset any losses incurred at year-end, as a result of this project.”**

**Carried.**

2. Davin Heinbuck reminded that Board of Directors that staff intend to reach out to Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington, to speak with him regarding the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities. In consultation with staff from Maitland Valley Conservation Authority and Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, it was suggested that an invitation from West Perth, North Perth and the City of Stratford may be well received. Staff are now waiting to hear regarding a meeting.
3. Davin Heinbuck reported that he attended ROMA in January and was at the Minister’s Forum, often referred to as the “Bear Pit”. This year there were two forums held on subsequent days. He noted that this time the topics were set, and that once a topic had been broached it could not be raised again. The first question was redirected to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, who brought up consolidation, meaning there were no further questions regarding conservation authorities.
4. Davin Heinbuck reminded Directors about the Flood Emergency Workshop, being held at the Exeter Legion on February 26, 2026.
5. Joey Groot asked staff if any decisions need to be made, specifically regarding ABCA assets, in light of the proposed consolidation. It was noted that there have been conversations among conservation authorities regarding this topic, but until more is known, ABCA will continue to operate as usual. It is expected that some decisions may be announced by the Province in the next few weeks.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Jaden Hodgins at 12:26 p.m.

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Ray Chartrand  
Chair

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Abigail Gutteridge  
Secretary

*Copies of program reports are available upon request.  
Contact Abigail Gutteridge, Corporate Services Coordinator*

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2025**

DRAFT

**SEEBACH & COMPANY**  
*Chartered Professional Accountants*

## MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Adelaide Metcalfe

The accompanying consolidated financial statements of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (the "Authority") are the responsibility of the Authority's management and have been prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, established by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada, as described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

Blewater

The preparation of financial statements necessarily involves the use of estimates based on management's judgment, particularly when transactions affecting the current accounting period cannot be finalized with certainty until future periods.

Central Huron

Huron East

The Authority's management maintains a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded from loss, transactions are properly authorized and recorded, and reliable information is available on a timely basis for preparation of the financial statements. These statements are monitored and evaluated by the Authority's management. The Board of Directors meets with management and the external auditor to review the financial statements and discuss and significant financial reporting or internal control matters prior to their approval.

Lambton Shores

Lucan Biddulph

The financial statements have been audited by Seebach & Company, independent external auditors appointed by the Authority. The accompanying Independent Auditor's Report outlines their responsibilities, the scope of their examination and their opinion on the Authority's financial statements.

Middlesex Centre

North Middlesex

AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Perth South



South Huron

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Davin Heinbuck  
General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

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Brian Horner, CPA, CA  
Financial Services Manager

Warwick

March 26, 2026

West Perth

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

### *Opinion*

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority ("the Authority"), which are comprised of the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2025 and the statements of operations, changes in net financial assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at December 31, 2025, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards (PSAB).

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with PSAB, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Authority or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (continued)

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Seebach & Company*

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

Clinton, Ontario  
March 26, 2026

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

As at December 31	2025	2024
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Cash	1,563,824	1,997,421
Marketable securities (note 2)	7,748,131	7,766,026
Accounts receivable	305,054	109,611
Due from related party (note 8)	16,269	1,479
	<b>9,633,278</b>	<b>9,874,537</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	154,119	170,371
Deferred revenue (note 4)	1,328,622	1,268,133
	<b>1,482,741</b>	<b>1,438,504</b>
<b>NET FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>	<b>8,150,537</b>	<b>8,436,033</b>
<b>NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Tangible capital assets, net (note 3)	6,241,884	5,691,913
Prepayments	24,743	29,051
	<b>6,266,627</b>	<b>5,720,964</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS (note 6)</b>	<b>\$ 14,417,164</b>	<b>\$ 14,156,997</b>

On behalf of the Board:

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The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

<b>For the year ended December 31</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2025 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Deferred revenue - prior year (note 4)	1,088,885	<b>1,268,133</b>	1,198,470
Operating levy	1,477,221	<b>1,477,223</b>	1,440,623
Grants and contributions	1,352,597	<b>1,905,493</b>	1,975,245
User fees	974,680	<b>961,275</b>	822,212
Special levy	93,961	<b>93,959</b>	91,052
Investment income	79,000	<b>515,677</b>	407,377
Rental	60,587	<b>67,890</b>	63,122
Capital levy	20,045	<b>20,045</b>	-
Donations	1,000	<b>16,874</b>	2,588
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	-	<b>147,020</b>	353,809
Deferred revenue - current year (note 4)	(505,790)	<b>(1,328,622)</b>	(1,268,133)
	<u>4,642,186</u>	<u><b>5,144,967</b></u>	<u>5,086,365</u>
<b>Expenditures (Schedule 1)</b>			
Environmental monitoring	1,839,980	<b>1,834,412</b>	1,610,282
Corporate services	1,147,077	<b>1,135,869</b>	1,019,018
Floodplain management	423,568	<b>335,366</b>	286,588
Drinking water source protection	377,050	<b>300,428</b>	322,152
Stewardship	510,676	<b>554,852</b>	557,641
Recreation	312,404	<b>320,404</b>	272,729
Education	143,061	<b>179,413</b>	125,555
Property management	170,031	<b>150,681</b>	155,232
Vehicles and equipment	129,895	<b>73,375</b>	79,645
	<u>5,053,742</u>	<u><b>4,884,800</b></u>	<u>4,428,842</u>
<b>Annual surplus (deficit)</b>	(411,556)	<b>260,167</b>	657,523
<b>Accumulated surplus, beginning of year</b>	14,156,997	<b>14,156,997</b>	13,499,474
<b>Accumulated surplus, end of year (note 6)</b>	<u><u>\$ 13,745,441</u></u>	<u><u><b>\$ 14,417,164</b></u></u>	<u><u>\$ 14,156,997</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS**

<b>For the year ended December 31</b>	<b>2025 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>
Annual surplus (deficit)	<b>260,167</b>	657,523
Amortization of tangible capital assets	<b>163,757</b>	166,514
Net acquisition of tangible capital assets	<b>(713,728)</b>	(212,131)
Decrease (increase) in inventory and prepaid expenses	<b>4,308</b>	(53)
<b>Increase (decrease) in net financial assets</b>	<b>(285,496)</b>	611,853
<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>8,436,033</b>	7,824,180
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b><u>\$ 8,150,537</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 8,436,033</u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement

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**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

For the year ended December 31	2025	2024
<b>Operating activities</b>		
Annual surplus (deficit)	260,167	657,523
Amortization expense not requiring cash outlay	163,757	166,514
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(147,020)	(353,809)
Decrease (increase) in accounts receivable	(195,443)	475,920
Decrease (increase) in due to/from related parties	(14,790)	4,055
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable	(16,252)	(12,122)
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	60,489	69,663
Decrease (increase) in inventory and prepaid expenses	4,308	(53)
Cash provided by (used for) operating activities	<u>115,216</u>	<u>1,007,691</u>
<b>Capital activities</b>		
Net disposals (purchases) of tangible capital assets	<u>(713,728)</u>	<u>(212,131)</u>
Cash provided by (used for) capital activities	<u>(713,728)</u>	<u>(212,131)</u>
<b>Investing activities</b>		
Disposal (purchase) of marketable securities	<u>164,915</u>	<u>(229,040)</u>
Cash provided by (used for) investing activities	<u>164,915</u>	<u>(229,040)</u>
<b>Increase (decrease) in cash position</b>	<b>(433,597)</b>	<b>566,520</b>
<b>Cash (overdraft) beginning of year</b>	<b><u>1,997,421</u></b>	<b><u>1,430,901</u></b>
<b>Cash (overdraft) end of year</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 1,563,824</u></u></b>	<b><u><u>\$ 1,997,421</u></u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement

# AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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**For the year ended December 31, 2025**

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The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (“the Authority”) was created through an Order-in-Council that was approved by the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Ontario, dated July 30, 1946, under the authority of the Conservation Authorities Act 1946. The Act sets out that the objects of the Conservation Authority are to establish and undertake, in its area of jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources.

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, as a non profit organization, is exempt from income taxes under the Income Tax Act of Canada.

### 1. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared by the management of the Authority in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for organizations operating in the local government sector as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.

Significant aspects of accounting policies adopted by the Authority are as follows:

a) Accrual basis of accounting

Revenues and expenses are reported on the accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis of accounting recognizes revenues as they are earned and measurable, and recognizes expenditures as they are incurred and measurable as a result of receipt of goods or services and the creation of a legal obligation to pay.

b) Investments

The marketable securities (consisting of equities, bonds, mutual funds and cash) are recorded at their current market value. Realized and unrealized gains and losses, arising on the recognition of market value, are recorded in the year that they occur.

c) Inventory

Inventory representing items purchased for resale, is expensed to the respective program during the year.

d) Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost. The cost of a contributed asset is considered to be equal to its fair market value at the date of contribution.

The cost of a tangible capital asset is charged directly to the project or program. For items recorded as a capital purchase, an internal charge rate is calculated which is designed to recover all operating costs plus replacement costs. Projects or programs are then assessed by the internal rate which is applied based on usage records for the item involved. On an annual basis, the net revenue and expenses that are reported determine the appropriation to or from the internally restricted surpluses (Note 8).

In addition, the cost of any equipment that was leased from the private sector was allocated to current projects or programs.

**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

d) Tangible capital assets (continued)

Amortization is provided over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The rates used are as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Amortization Period</b>
Land	not applicable
Land improvements	50 - 75 years
Buildings	50 - 75 years
Linear assets	50 years
Equipment & machinery	10 - 60 years
Furniture	10 - 40 years
Vehicles	8 - 10 years
Information technology	5 - 8 years

e) Contributed capital assets

Contributed capital assets are recognized as assets and revenue at fair value at the time they are received.

f) Deferred revenue

Revenue restricted by legislation, regulation or agreement and not available for Authority purposes is reported as deferred revenue on the statement of financial position. The revenue is reported on the statement of financial activities in the year in which it is used for the specified purpose.

g) Revenue recognition

Government funding including transfers, municipal capital and operating levies, grants, contract services and management fees are recognized in the financial statements when the payments are authorized and all eligibility criteria have been met, except when there is a stipulation that gives rise to an obligation that meets the definition of a liability. In that case, the funding is recorded as deferred revenue and recognized as revenue as the stipulations are met.

Authority generated revenues including property rental income, contract services, admissions and parking, permits, environmental assessments, programs, events, program and event sponsorships, product sales and membership fees are recognized as revenue in the period in which the related services are performed. Amounts collected for which the related services have not been performed are recorded as deferred revenue and recognized as revenue when the related services are performed. Unrestricted donations are recorded as revenue in the period they are received or receivable, when a reasonable estimate can be made of the amount involved. Externally restricted donations are deferred and recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are recognized. Donated tangible capital assets are recorded at fair market value, when fair market value can be reasonably estimated.

h) Pensions

The Authority is an employer member of the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS), which is a multi-employer, defined benefit pension plan. The Authority has adopted defined contribution plan accounting principles for this plan because insufficient information is available to apply defined benefit plan accounting principles. The Authority records as pension expense the current service cost, amortization of past service costs and interest costs related to the future employer contributions to the plan for past employee service. The Authority's contributions due during the period to its multi-employer defined benefit plan are expensed as incurred.

**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

i) Government transfers

Government transfers are recognized in the financial statements as revenues in the period in which events giving rise to the transfer occur, providing the transfers are authorized, any eligibility criteria have been met, and reasonable estimates can be made.

j) Accumulated surplus

Appropriations are made from operations to accumulated surplus for future expenditures and contingencies for such amounts as are deemed appropriate, upon approval of the Board of Directors.

k) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the period, and the accompanying notes. Due to the inherent uncertainty in making estimates, actual results could differ from those estimates.

**2. Marketable securities**

The marketable securities, stated at fair value, consist of the following:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Cash and equivalents	228,870	321,149
Certificates of Deposit	1,801,455	2,308,202
Fixed Income Mutual Funds	2,083,257	1,545,265
Equity Mutual Funds	<u>3,634,549</u>	<u>3,591,410</u>
	<u>\$ 7,748,131</u>	<u>\$ 7,766,026</u>

The marketable securities have a cost of \$6,699,732 (2024 : \$6,864,648) at year end.

**3. Tangible capital assets**

For additional information, see the Schedule of Tangible Capital Assets information on the tangible capital assets of the Authority by major class, as well as for accumulated amortization of the assets controlled.

**4. Deferred revenue**

Grants and other amounts that are received in advance of directly related expenses are deferred and recognized as revenue when the expenses are incurred. The amounts deferred in the current and prior year are as follows:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Project grants	996,680	897,745
Part IV Enforcement	30,516	60,012
Operating levy	62,536	88,134
Drinking Water Source Protection	99,418	34,720
User fees	<u>139,472</u>	<u>187,522</u>
	<u>\$ 1,328,622</u>	<u>\$ 1,268,133</u>

**5. Pension plan**

The Authority makes contributions to a multi-employer pension plan on behalf of members of its staff. The plan is a defined benefit plan which specifies the amount of the retirement benefit to be received by the employees based on the length of service and rates of pay. The amount contributed for 2025 was \$46,476 (2024 : \$0) for current services and is included as an expenditure on the consolidated statement of financial activities.

**5. Pension plan (continued)**

The contributions to the Ontario Municipal Employers Retirement System ("OMERS"), a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan, are expensed when contributions are due. Any pension surpluses or deficits are a joint responsibility of Ontario municipal organizations and their employees. As a result, the Authority does not recognize any share of the OMERS pension surplus or deficit.

**6. Accumulated surplus**

The accumulated surplus has been segregated into the following respective categories and are all internally restricted by either management or the Board of Directors.

The respective funds and the utilization of the said funds are described as follows:

- Property Management - Forest management, conservation area maintenance and capital improvements.
- Flood and Erosion Control Major Maintenance - To offset the costs of the dam erosions and control structure repairs.
- Vehicles and Equipment - Purchase of the fleet's vehicles, a tractor and other work machinery as well as computers, scientific equipment and monitoring stations.
- Barrier Free Trails - Capital purchases, or improvements to create barrier free trails on conservation lands or lands where a partnership exists.
- Outdoor Education - Staff's time and capital items that support education programs.
- Administration IT - Information technology improvements to the Morrison Dam office and buildings.
- Stewardship Endowment - Securement of property, implementation and maintenance of stewardship practices. Additional funds were transferred in 2014, the majority of which related to the capital gain realized on the sale of properties during the year.
- Administration Building - Capital improvements to the Morrison Dam office and buildings.
- Operating Reserve - Internally restricted surpluses, relating to specific departments, to be used for future expenditures.

For additional information, see the Schedule of Continuity of Accumulated Surplus.

**7. Lessor commitment**

The Authority has a lease contract with Great Canadian Hideaway Inc. for approximately 230 acres of land at the Parkhill Campground. The lease term expires in 2038. Basic rental revenue over the subsequent years is follows:

	<b>2025</b>
2026	\$ 20,080
2027	20,480
2028	20,890
2029	21,308
2030	21,734
Thereafter (2031 - 2038)	<u>190,273</u>
	<b><u>\$ 294,765</u></b>

In addition to the rental revenue noted above, the Authority includes in its rental revenue the appropriate annual costs for taxes and insurance.

In addition, to the campground rent noted above, the Authority collects a percentage rent on an annual basis. The percentage rent is 5% of gross revenue in excess of \$250,000. In the current year \$12,635 (2024 : \$13,669) was received for percentage rent.

**8. Related entity**

Letters Patent incorporating the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation under the Canada Corporations Act were granted on June 1, 1974. The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation is a registered charity under the Income Tax Act. The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority exercises significant influence over the Foundation as it approves the appointment or reappointment of members to the Foundation. The Foundation aids the Conservation Authority in the cultivation and advancement of conservation in the Province of Ontario by providing funding for conservation projects that would otherwise not be undertaken by the Conservation Authority.

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation's financial information has not been consolidated in the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority's financial statements. The financial position of the Foundation is as follows:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Financial Position		
Total assets	\$ 9,511,855	\$ 8,922,338
Total liabilities	<u>1,462,438</u>	<u>1,420,786</u>
Total net assets	<u>\$ 8,049,417</u>	<u>\$ 7,501,552</u>
Results of Operations		
Total revenues	\$ 822,727	\$ 1,190,983
Total expenses	<u>274,862</u>	<u>303,673</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	<u>\$ 547,865</u>	<u>\$ 887,310</u>

The total liabilities include an amount payable to Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority in the amount of \$16,269 (2024 : \$1,479) for items purchased by the Authority, as well as contributions for education and barrier-free trails and facilities.

During the year, the Foundation received a donation of lands in the amount of \$0 (2024 : \$760,000) that were recorded as a direct increase in Net Assets.

The total expenses include contributions of \$133,505 (2024 : \$78,302) to the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority.

## 9. Financial instrument risk management

### Credit risk

The Authority is exposed to credit risk through its cash, trade and other receivables, and short-term investments. There is the possibility of non-collection of its trade and other receivables. The majority of the Authority's receivables are from users and government entities. For trade and other receivables, the Authority measures impairment based on how long the amounts have been outstanding. For amounts outstanding considered doubtful or uncollectible, an impairment allowance is setup.

### Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Authority will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The Authority has a planning and a budgeting process in place to help determine the funds required to support the Authority's normal operating requirements on an ongoing basis. The Authority ensures that there are sufficient funds to meet its short-term requirements, taking into account its anticipated cash flows from operations and its holdings of cash and cash equivalents. To achieve this aim, it seeks to maintain an available line of credit balance as approved by the Board, at a minimum, expected requirements.

### Market risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices, such as foreign exchange rates or interest rates will affect the Authority's income or the value of its holdings of financial instruments. The objective of market risk management is to control market risk exposures within acceptable parameters while optimizing return on investments.

### Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Authority is exposed to interest rate risk arising from the possibility that changes in interest rates will affect the variable rate of temporary borrowings and long-term liabilities and the value of fixed rate long-term liabilities.

There has been no significant changes from the previous year in the exposure to risk or policies, procedures and methods used to measure risks.

## 10. Budget amounts

Under Canadian public sector accounting standards, budget amounts are to be reported on the statement of operations for comparative purposes. The 2025 budget amounts for the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority approved by the Board are unaudited and have been restated to conform to the basis of presentation of the revenues and expenditures on the consolidated statement of activities.

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
**Schedule of Continuity of Accumulated Surplus**  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2025

	Balance, beginning of year	Appropriations From Operations	Appropriations To Operations	Balance, end of year
<b>Internally restricted surplus</b>				
Property Management	419,542	39,380	(18,000)	<b>440,922</b>
Flood and Erosion Control				
Major Maintenance	901,330	98,661	(87,463)	<b>912,528</b>
Vehicles and Equipment	156,912	48,472	-	<b>205,384</b>
Barrier-Free Trails, Facilities	144,513	11,663	(8,750)	<b>147,426</b>
Outdoor Education	201,964	7,157	-	<b>209,121</b>
Administration IT	106,341	13,420	(18,995)	<b>100,766</b>
Stewardship Endowment	6,007,797	445,678	(650,732)	<b>5,802,743</b>
Administration Building	241,512	16,731	(137,501)	<b>120,742</b>
Operating Reserve	152,258	-	(5,250)	<b>147,008</b>
	<u>8,332,169</u>	<u>681,162</u>	<u>(926,691)</u>	<u><b>8,086,640</b></u>
Tangible capital assets	5,691,913	713,726	(163,755)	<b>6,241,884</b>
Working capital	132,915	-	(44,275)	<b>88,640</b>
	<u>\$ 14,156,997</u>	<u>1,394,888</u>	<u>(1,134,721)</u>	<u><b>\$ 14,417,164</b></u>

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**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
**Schedule of Tangible Capital Assets**  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2025

	Land	Land Improvements	Buildings	Motor Vehicles	Computer Equipment	Equipment	Furniture and Fixtures	Flood and Erosion Control Structures & Trails	<b>TOTAL Net Book Value 2025</b>	TOTAL Net Book Value 2024
<b>Cost</b>										
Balance, beginning of year	2,970,443	324,189	2,059,288	236,024	431,725	279,890	104,976	6,642,527	<b>13,049,062</b>	12,850,680
Add: Additions during the year	508,485		151,641		10,099	35,424	10,663		<b>716,312</b>	214,000
Less: Disposals during the year						(7,958)			<b>(7,958)</b>	(15,618)
Balance, end of year	<u>3,478,928</u>	<u>324,189</u>	<u>2,210,929</u>	<u>236,024</u>	<u>441,824</u>	<u>307,356</u>	<u>115,639</u>	<u>6,642,527</u>	<b><u>13,757,416</u></b>	<u>13,049,062</u>
<b>Accumulated Amortization</b>										
Balance, beginning of year		264,089	1,128,666	182,291	394,467	202,417	98,964	5,086,255	<b>7,357,149</b>	7,204,384
Add: Amortization during the year		5,310	35,693	19,081	11,764	16,399	2,178	73,332	<b>163,757</b>	166,514
Less: Accumulated amortization on disposals						(5,374)			<b>(5,374)</b>	(13,749)
Balance, end of year	<u>-</u>	<u>269,399</u>	<u>1,164,359</u>	<u>201,372</u>	<u>406,231</u>	<u>213,442</u>	<u>101,142</u>	<u>5,159,587</u>	<b><u>7,515,532</u></b>	<u>7,357,149</u>
<b>Net Book Value of Tangible Capital Assets</b>	<u>3,478,928</u>	<u>54,790</u>	<u>1,046,570</u>	<u>34,652</u>	<u>35,593</u>	<u>93,914</u>	<u>14,497</u>	<u>1,482,940</u>	<b><u>\$ 6,241,884</u></b>	<u>\$ 5,691,913</u>

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
EXPENDITURES BY TYPE**

Schedule 1

<b>For the year ended December 31</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2025 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>
Wages and benefits	3,010,561	<b>3,111,187</b>	2,851,480
Technical fees	354,362	<b>325,278</b>	314,110
Amortization of tangible capital assets	160,620	<b>163,757</b>	166,514
Program supplies	260,755	<b>316,872</b>	304,675
Partnership commitments	432,681	<b>554,199</b>	392,402
Repairs and maintenance	148,240	<b>66,585</b>	63,348
Memberships, dues, and fees	63,509	<b>66,868</b>	59,448
Property taxes	55,000	<b>51,897</b>	51,891
Insurance	89,297	<b>75,453</b>	87,119
Office	146,815	<b>16,328</b>	22,608
Utilities	43,145	<b>40,547</b>	38,407
Board of Directors	26,477	<b>38,914</b>	21,100
Travel	19,700	<b>23,500</b>	20,714
Training	23,685	<b>18,379</b>	17,621
Advertising and promotion	8,283	<b>6,356</b>	10,092
Rental	12,320	<b>8,421</b>	6,798
Interest and bank charges	7,166	<b>259</b>	515
Transfer to reserve	76,624	-	-
Capital asset additions	114,502	-	-
	<u>5,053,742</u>	<u><b>4,884,800</b></u>	<u>4,428,842</u>

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**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2025**

DRAFT

**SEEBACH & COMPANY**  
***Chartered Professional Accountants***

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of Drinking Water Source Protection Program

### *Opinion*

We have audited the accompanying statement of revenue and expenditures (the "statement") for the Drinking Water Source Protection Program (the "Program") for the year then ended December 31, 2025. The statement of revenue and expenditures has been prepared by management of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority.

In our opinion, the financial information in the statement of revenues and expenditures of the Drinking Water Source Protection Program for the year ended December 31, 2025, is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards (PSAB).

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Program in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Basis of Accounting and Restrictions on Use*

The statement is prepared for the purpose of providing information to the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority. As a result, the statement may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority or the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with PSAB, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Authority or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (continued)

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Seebach & Company*

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

Clinton, Ontario  
March 27, 2026

**AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES**

<b>For the year ended December 31</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2025 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Provincial grant	302,425	<b>302,425</b>	306,284
Deferred revenue - prior year	35,108	<b>34,721</b>	-
Interest income	1,000	<b>3,998</b>	2,183
Deferred revenue - current year	(28,983)	<b>(99,418)</b>	(34,721)
	<u>309,550</u>	<u><b>241,726</b></u>	<u>273,746</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Wages and benefits	231,700	<b>176,220</b>	205,837
Technical fees	28,200	<b>28,240</b>	25,849
Board of Directors	13,940	<b>5,879</b>	7,642
Office	21,020	<b>19,343</b>	19,284
Rental	7,140	<b>7,522</b>	7,227
Utilities	1,600	<b>1,440</b>	1,380
Travel	3,000	<b>1,560</b>	2,296
Vehicles and field equipment	500	<b>855</b>	174
Advertising and promotion	800	-	835
Memberships, dues and fees	-	<b>531</b>	759
Program supplies	300	<b>41</b>	2,329
Uniforms	350	-	88
Training	1,000	<b>95</b>	46
	<u>309,550</u>	<u><b>241,726</b></u>	<u>273,746</u>
<b>Excess of Revenues over Expenditures</b>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>-</b></u>	<u>-</u>

DRAFT

# ABCA Program Report

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** March 26, 2026  
**From:** Andrew Bicknell, Manager of Water and Planning  
**Subject:** Applications for Permission  
Ontario Regulation 41/24 – Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits  
**Report Type:** ACTION REQUIRED

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## Recommendation:

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors affirm the approval of the permits issued by ABCA staff as outlined in the *Applications for Permission* Program Report.

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The following *Applications for Permission* have been issued by staff since the last Board of Directors Meeting.

\*A Coastal Assessment was provided as part of the application

\*\*Work commenced without a permit

## Major Permits

- (1) PERMIT #2026-04  
NAME: JBL Inc. / Harvest Homes London  
ADDRESS: 91 West Park Drive, Parkhill  
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (West Williams)  
PERMISSION TO: Construct storm drainage outlet  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: January 29, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 6, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 6  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (2) PERMIT #2026-03  
NAME: Mark & Teresa Rombough  
ADDRESS: 7434 Bond Road, Port Franks  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Bosanquet)  
PERMISSION TO: Redevelop lot  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: January 19, 2026

PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 6, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 12  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(3) PERMIT #2025-69  
NAME: Municipality of North Middlesex  
ADDRESS: Lot 5 to 7, CON 7 ECR  
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (East Williams)  
PERMISSION TO: Municipal drainage work in accordance with S.78 of Drainage Act  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: January 23, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 17, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 16  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(4) PERMIT #2025-71  
NAME: Municipality of North Middlesex  
ADDRESS: Lot 7 to 11, CON 21  
MUNICIPALITY: North Middlesex (West Williams)  
PERMISSION TO: Municipal drainage works in accordance with S.4 & S.78 of Drainage Act  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: December 11, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 17, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 41  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(5) PERMIT #2025-57  
NAME: John Erb  
ADDRESS: 5 Tuyll Street, Bayfield  
MUNICIPALITY: Bluewater (Stanley)  
PERMISSION TO: Repair shore protection  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: October 27, 2025  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 17, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 20  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

## Minor Permits

- (1) PERMIT #MW2019-01-F  
NAME: David Tilford  
ADDRESS: 21 Kingsmere Drive, Grand Bend  
MUNICIPALITY: South Huron (Stephen)  
PERMISSION TO: Straighten watercourse outlet  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: January 30, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 3, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (2) PERMIT #MW2026-05  
NAME: Jason McCann  
ADDRESS: 136 Ontario Street South, Grand Bend  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Bosanquet)  
PERMISSION TO: Rehabilitation of slope area following remove of existing residence  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: February 4, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 6, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 2  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (3) PERMIT # MW2026-07  
NAME: Roger Good  
ADDRESS: 19 Shady Lane, Grand Bend  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Bosanquet)  
PERMISSION TO: Replace docks and deck  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: February 4, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 10, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 4  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier
- (4) PERMIT #MW2026-11  
NAME: David & Susan Elliot  
ADDRESS: 7740 Patrick Street, Port Franks  
MUNICIPALITY: Lambton Shores (Bosanquet)  
PERMISSION TO: Replace porch

COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: February 19, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 26, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 5  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

(5) PERMIT #MW2026-08  
NAME: Jordan Quick  
ADDRESS: 34077 Saintsbury Line, Lucan  
MUNICIPALITY: Lucan Biddulph (Biddulph)  
PERMISSION TO: Construct inground pool  
COMPLETED APPLICATION RECEIVED ON DATE: February 10, 2026  
PERMISSION GRANTED BY STAFF DATE: February 26, 2026  
NUMBER OF BUSINESS DAYS TO REVIEW: 11  
STAFF NAME: Jaden Schoelier

# *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** March 26, 2026  
**From:** Tim Cumming, Communications Coordinator  
**Subject:** Communication Strategy Update  
**Report Type:** INFORMATION

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Board of Directors approves the proposed *Communications Strategy (2026-2031)*.

## **Background:**

The following proposed *Communications Strategy (2026-2031)* is presented for consideration to replace the previous *Communications Plan (2015-2025)* which the ABCA Board of Directors approved in 2015. The new proposed strategy was prepared thanks to the help and input of the Communications Strategy Update Committee made up of the following staff: Nathan Schoelier; Hope Brock; Rosalind Chang; Daniel King; and Tim Cumming. It was also reviewed by the management team (February 2026).

The existing communications plan has guided the use of local and digital media to engage the public, to build closer relationships with community partners, and to facilitate successful delivery of Ausable Bayfield Conservation's programs and services.

The existing plan (2015) has enabled successful programs and services that have resulted in on-the-ground watershed improvements and deepened relationships with stakeholders. A lot has changed since the last document, however. It is prudent to strategically and regularly review and renew our communications approaches.

The communications committee, in 2024-2026, looked at ways to build upon the foundation of success of the current communications program while also looking for ways to further enhance our public outreach and engagement. The committee used adaptive management to evaluate what is working well, where gaps exist, and what can be added or improved.

The communications committee suggested the document be a strategy rather than a plan as it was felt a strategy was a broader, long-term approach over several years with an overarching focus and an 'umbrella' framework for other communications planning documents – as compared to a plan with a more specific and shorter-term focus.

This new *Communications Strategy* provides four guiding principles for communication, goals for each of these principles, and performance measures to evaluate successful implementation. It also provides recommendations.



Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA)

# Communications Strategy

2026-2031

**Status:** Proposed

**Version date:** March 26, 2026

## Mission and Vision

Ausable Bayfield Conservation's mission and vision, as determined by representatives of the watershed community, is as follows:

### Mission

Protect, improve, conserve, and restore the watershed in partnership with the community.

### Vision

Healthy watersheds where our needs and the needs of the natural environment are in balance.

This proposed *Communications Strategy* is designed to help achieve the mission and vision the community has set out for us.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Cover and Mission and Vision

Background and Purpose

Guiding Principles

Engaged Communities

Timely Messaging

Communication Supporting Action

Dynamic Communications

Principal Recommendations

Other Communications Documents

## Background and Purpose

The community works with Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority to:

- Protect and enhance watershed resources;
- Safeguard life and property from hazards such as flooding and erosion, and;
- Promote resilient landscapes.

Achieving these goals relies on effective communication to engage landowners and residents, community groups, and all levels of government and partners.

To strengthen these relationships, ABCA has developed a new *Communications Strategy*. This strategy is to capture interest and encourage dialogue and to guide public engagement, with clear goals and defined performance measures. It emphasizes the use of a diverse suite of communication and engagement tools—both traditional and digital—implemented in a fiscally responsible and adaptive manner toward achieving goals most successfully.

Key principles of the strategy include:

- Promoting two-way communication—listening as well as sharing.
- Promoting increased community interest in key ABCA messaging.
- Defining measurable outcomes and evaluating progress through adaptive management.
- Using both personal contact (e.g., property visits, workshops, and meetings) and media engagement (traditional and digital) to reach varied and increased audiences.

The strategy recognizes that while direct, personal interaction is one of the most effective engagement tools, other channels such as traditional media (print and broadcast), and digital media (websites, social media, e-newsletters, and online publications) are vital for broad and timely outreach.

This document serves as an overarching approach under which more specific, audience-focused plans can be developed. This document provides guiding principles and performance measures to evaluate success over time.

Communication tools and audiences continue to evolve so targets will be reviewed annually between management and communications staff to ensure ongoing effectiveness. ABCA, through regular evaluation and adaptation, aims to strengthen its messaging on priority projects, expand its audience, improve community engagement and enhance collective stewardship of watershed resources and the effectiveness of other key ABCA programs.

## **Guiding Principle: Engaged Communities**

**Goal:** Learn about the needs of the community, from the community.

### **Priorities:**

- Amplify community voices – strive to share information products of partner organizations when that messaging aligns with our mission and vision.
- Create more opportunities for the public to provide feedback.
- Actively listen to our stakeholders even beyond required consultation opportunities.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Number of:
  - Voluntary feedback opportunities offered to stakeholders and the community.
  - Engagements of stakeholders and community groups.
  - Positive media appearances of ABCA in watershed publications.
  - Education programs provided to community members of diverse age groups.
  - Social media follows, and post/video interactions, reach, impressions, and views.
  - Newsletter subscriptions and issued; reach; and industry benchmarks surpassed.
  - Communications products incorporating educational messaging.
  - Web views and unique website visitors compared with previous years.
- Rank among conservation authorities for social media performance on a per capita basis.
- New, high-quality photos and videos (e.g., longer videos and shorts/reels) produced.

## **Guiding Principle: Timely Messaging**

**Goal:** Provide information in a timely manner through effective, accessible methods.

### **Priorities:**

- Apply the foundations of ‘right audience, right time, right format’ for outreach.
- Deliver time-sensitive messaging effectively and in an expedited way.
- Deliver information proactively and educate staff on proactive communications.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Timeliness of advisories, messages and notices.
- Number of:
  - Timely communications products to help to realize mission and vision while meeting media needs (news style; plain language; high-quality photo/video; etc.).
  - People engaged, as a percentage of watershed population, with an emphasis on local audiences tracked as practicable.
  - Updates to public through news releases and web and social media posts.

## **Guiding Principle: Communication Supporting Action**

**Goal:** Provide audience-specific resources and knowledge-sharing opportunities to encourage community action.

### **Priorities:**

- Encourage community learning through knowledge transfer.
- Recognize importance of conservation education through communications lenses.
- Realize outcomes that support varied tools to meet needs of identified stakeholders.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Knowledge-sharing opportunities and workshops and events.
- Donations to Conservation Foundation.
- On-the-ground projects completed.
- Inquiries received and expressed interest to pre-consult with conservation authority staff on regulatory matters.
- Ranges of products designed to reach different audiences:
  - Products with format and messages tailored to general public and also products for individual audiences based on their individual communications needs.
  - Photos and videos and short video reels; printed and online materials; signs and banners; etc., shared via print, broadcast, online and social media.

## **Guiding Principle: Dynamic Communications**

**Goal:** Evaluate, adapt and develop communication tools that are demonstrated to be effective; regularly update our approaches; and invest in new tools and staff development.

### **Priorities:**

- Convene a communications team as needed to provide input into communications approaches.
- Invest in training opportunities to build strong communication and engagement skills.
- Review and update communications documents and resources, as practical, to ensure relevancy and effectiveness as tools and techniques advance.
- Evaluate, adapt and refine existing tools, develop new, improved communications tools.
- Learn from different audiences how they can be reached in the best way.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Percentage increases in social media followings on different platforms.
- Number of:
  - Staff participating in communications training.
  - Communication tools updated.
  - New tools adopted to maintain an effective presence.
  - Social media posts reshared by the community.
  - Visits to Annual Report web page and feedback received about report.

## Principal Recommendations

These are principal recommendations of the proposed *Communications Strategy (2026-2031)*:

- **Annually:**
  - Maintain a social media calendar to strategically use social media and digital outreach as tools in public outreach.
  - Review social media platforms to see if new platforms or techniques are required.
  - Maintain, review and update an internal Artificial Intelligence (AI) guidance document based on current best practices.
  - Engage and communicate with stakeholders and the public through other updated conservation authority documents such as *Flood Emergency Plan*.
- **By 2027:**
  - Create a Communications and Public Engagement Work Plan.
  - Invest in communications training for staff and directors in skills such as effective interviews; bridging statements; news releases; social media; community-based social marketing; etc.
  - Complete:
    - Fundraising Plan (ABCF).
    - Audience research (e.g., survey of public).
- **By 2030:**
  - Convene a communications working group, of staff, to provide input into proposed updates to the *Communications Strategy* to guide the long-term expectations for the communications and public engagement program.
- **By 2031:**
  - Review and update communications guiding documents as per Communications and Public Engagement Work Plan.
- **By 2031:**
  - Provide communications input and support and a communications lens to any future strategic planning documents (e.g., *Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy; Conservation Strategy; Strategic Plan; etc.*)

## Other Communications Documents

Ausable Bayfield Conservation’s organizational motto (slogan or tagline), created by the community, is ‘*Creating Awareness, Taking Action.*’ Creating awareness is one pillar of ABCA’s communications program. Awareness alone, however, is not enough to motivate positive action and environmental behavioural change. It is important to consider a suite of engagement approaches (e.g., inter-personal communication; community-based social marketing; education; etc.) to effect positive changes. The over-arching, guiding communications document is our proposed *Communications Strategy* (formerly *Communications Plan*). More detailed documents – including audience lists and specific plans to reach these audiences – are included in Table 1. These documents should be updated, as needed, to reflect the dynamic nature of communications. These documents, in addition to the Strategy, are located on the ABCA file server (ABCA Reports folder).

<b>Table 1: Table of Communications Documents</b>	
<b>Social Media:</b>	<b>Media Relations:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Media Policy</li> <li>▪ Social Media Strategy</li> <li>▪ Social Media Guide</li> <li>▪ Engagement Analytics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Media Lists</li> <li>▪ Media Scan/Media Monitoring/Binder</li> <li>▪ News Release Template</li> <li>▪ News Release Checklist</li> </ul>
<b>Audiences:</b>	<b>Crisis and Risk Communication:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Audience and Partner Lists</li> <li>▪ Audience Research</li> <li>▪ Audience-Specific Communications Strategies and Plans</li> <li>▪ Stakeholder Management</li> <li>▪ Situation Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bridging Statements</li> <li>▪ Issues Response Decision-Making Tool (Replacing the existing Crisis Communications Plan).</li> <li>▪ Risk Communication Best Practices</li> </ul>
<b>Community-Based Social Marketing:</b>	<b>Tools and Methodologies:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) Suite of Tools (e.g., Barrier and Benefit Research; Prompts; Commitments; Piloting and Pre-Testing; Literature Review; Social Diffusion; etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications Tool Box</li> <li>▪ Business card – What to do when media calls</li> <li>▪ Messages</li> </ul>
<b>Forms and Disclaimers:</b>	<b>Training:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Photo, image, name release permissions</li> <li>▪ Notice of Collection</li> <li>▪ Disclaimer for Print Products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications Training Program for Board and Staff</li> </ul>
<b>Other:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessibility Resources</li> <li>▪ Artificial Intelligence (AI) Best Practices</li> <li>▪ Branding</li> <li>▪ Education and Outreach Strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fundraising Plan</li> <li>▪ Marketing Strategies</li> <li>▪ Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Flood Emergency Plan</li> </ul>

# *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** March 26, 2026  
**From:** Dan King, Christie Brown, Davin Heinbuck  
**Subject:** Flood Emergency Planning Meeting

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## **BACKGROUND**

The 2026 annual Flood Emergency Planning meeting was held in person on February 26, 2026. ABCA Member Municipalities and other stakeholders in emergency flood response were invited to attend and participate in the meeting. The 24 attendees included reps from 7 watershed municipalities as well as staff and/or CEMC from Huron County, Lambton County and Middlesex County, and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

ABCA staff members presented or led discussions on the following agenda items:

- Welcome and Opening Remarks by Ray Chartrand – ABCA Chair
- Roles and Responsibilities in Flood Emergencies - Davin Heinbuck, ABCA
- Feature Presentation – When the Rain Doesn't Read the Forecast – Trudy Kidd, Warning Preparedness Meteorologist, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Daily Planning Cycle – ABCA Flood Duty Officer, Daniel King, Water Resources Engineer
- Watershed Conditions Update and Flood Outlook – Christie Brown
- Discussion and Closing remarks

## **Discussion Highlights:**

Attendees acknowledged the importance of holding this event each year and for many, they use this as a reminder to revisit their emergency plans. Additionally, the ability to make in-person connections amongst the partners is fundamental to emergency preparedness.

The meeting notes and attendees are attached for your information.

Flood Emergency Planning Meeting  
February 24, 2025, 1:00 pm, Legion Hall, Exeter  
Meeting Notes

## AGENDA

### 1) Opening Remarks, Ray Chartrand, Chair ABCA Board of Directors - 1:15 pm

ABCA Chair Ray Chartrand welcomed everyone to the meeting with a land acknowledgement. He had the attendees make introductions and briefly discussed the purpose of the meeting. Chair Chartrand emphasized the importance of inter-agency communication during flooding events. He solicited feedback at the end of today's session and introduced the three speakers for the event.

### 2) Roles and Responsibilities and ABCA Flood Emergency Plan, Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, ABCA

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, provided a summary of the history of the watershed including key areas that have been identified as susceptible to flooding. He expanded on the hierarchy of floodplain management, from planning to regulations to emergency response. In that he acknowledged that much of the built environment preceded the regulations, so we are left with the responsibility to message and warn about flooding. Davin then outlined the key players (the province (MNR), the municipalities, Conservation Authorities) and their respective roles in the comprehensive flood forecasting and warning program. He presented the contents of the 2026 Flood Emergency Plan and specified the roles and responsibilities of each partner (Province, Municipality, CA) in a flood emergency. He also emphasized that ABCA maintains a rotating schedule for a Flood Duty Officer who can be reached on a 24-hr emergency line.

In addition to the contents of the Flood Emergency Plan, he provided photographic examples from both recent and past flooding events throughout the watershed. He explained that the three most common types of flood events that we see are heavy rains, rain and snowmelt, and ice jams. With lake levels being near or exceeding record highs in previous years, there were examples of lake and coastal flooding. These examples ranged from events in 2006 to 2024.

### 3) FEATURE PRESENTATION – When the Rain Doesn't Read the Forecast

Trudy Kidd, Warning Preparedness Meteorologist, Environment and Climate Change Canada

Trudy Kidd, a Warning Preparedness Meteorologist at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), was the feature speaker of this year's meeting. She presented ECCC's new colour-coded weather alert system, launched in November 2025 to replace the previous system, and highlighted improvements for delivering tailored messages to specific communities.

Flood Emergency Planning Meeting  
February 24, 2025, 1:00 pm, Legion Hall, Exeter  
Meeting Notes

Trudy also outlined how ECCC evaluates and improves its weather forecasting tools, while highlighting several key challenges: pinpointing where the heaviest precipitation will occur, which can lead to widely varying storm impacts between nearby communities; decreasing forecast reliability over longer timeframes; and seasonal forecasting, which is improving but still in its early stages. Using examples of previous storms in Ontario, she illustrated why rainfall often differs from forecasts, noting that it remains one of the most difficult elements to predict. She also highlighted ongoing work at ECCC to improve weather detection, training, messaging, cooperation and coordination.

She summarised recent weather conditions, noting a colder and snowier winter than usual, with overall precipitation near normal.

On the topic of climate change and extreme weather, she explained that it is not possible to determine whether any single storm is caused by climate change. However, rising average temperatures can increase the likelihood and intensity of certain types of extreme weather events.

#### 4) Daily Planning Cycle - ABCA Flood Duty Office, Daniel King, Water Resources Engineer

Daniel King spoke about an updated new flood forecasting model that will be integrated into the program shortly. He spoke about the daily planning cycle and the rotation of three flood duty officers. Flood duty officers monitor the functioning of stations, streamflow trends, and three-day forecasts along with other roles. Their work is outlined by the Flood Emergency Plan and the Flood Operations Manual.

The flood duty officers review rainfall forecasts from multiple weather services and run an event-based model including forecast data as well as locally gathered data (such as current streamflow, snow water equivalent and snowpack density through a snow survey). The Flood Duty Officers also prepares the flood messages for municipal emergency managers and other partners, providing results from the model and observed watershed conditions.

#### 5) ABCA Watershed Conditions, Christie Brown, Water Resources Technologist

Christie Brown, ABCA Water Resources Technologist, provided an overview of the current watershed conditions with respect to:

- **Ground Conditions:** The soil is wet but unfrozen, allowing for some water absorption.
- **River Ice:** Ice had formed on major rivers over the cold winter; however, recent warming has weakened the ice, with some open water observed. Photographs were provided to illustrate current conditions.
- **Snowpack:** A recent snow survey recorded an average snowpack of 15 cm, with a snow-

Flood Emergency Planning Meeting  
February 24, 2025, 1:00 pm, Legion Hall, Exeter  
Meeting Notes

water equivalent (SWE) of approximately 50 mm. Some loss of snow has occurred due to recent warm temperatures. NOAA remote sensing imagery highlighted these changes, particularly in Lambton Shores where very little snow remains.

- **Weather Forecast:** Temperatures are mostly cold, with a warm-up expected around March 4, likely bringing some rainfall. ABCA will continue to monitor this system as forecast confidence improves closer to the date.
- **Lake Huron Water Level:** Currently below the long-term mean, with normal seasonal fluctuations expected.
- **Flood Outlook:** Overall risk of lake flooding is low. Ice jam and riverine flooding risks are currently low but increase to moderate in early March due to warming temperatures and forecasted rainfall.

### Closing Remarks, Ray Chartrand

Chair Chartrand thanked each of the presenters for their contributions, and with Davin, emphasized that the ABCA appreciates attendees feedback on content for future meetings.

**The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm.**

### Attendees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
David Kester	Bluewater
Mayor Paul Klopp	Bluewater
David Wagner	Huron County
Ray Chartrand	Huron East
Shawn Bromley	Huron East
Tanner Glanville	Huron East
Grace Mayhew	Huron East
Chris Boyes	Huron Perth Public Health
Christina Taylor	Huron Perth Public Health
Jay VanKlinken	Lambton County
David Larkin	Lambton Public Health
Nick Verhoeven	Lambton Shores
Julie Overholt	Lucan Biddulph
John Elston	Middlesex County
Brandon McLeod	North Middlesex
Scott Jones	North Middlesex
Mayor George Finch	South Huron

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Jeremy Becker	South Huron
Taylor Hodgins	South Huron
Alyssa Keller	South Huron
Jeff Wolfe	South Huron
Rebekah Msuya-Collison	South Huron
Jess Penz	Upper Thames River Conservation
Nic Larson	West Perth
Christie Brown	ABCA
Tim Cumming	ABCA
Davin Heinbuck	ABCA
Daniel King	ABCA
Stacey Palen	ABCA
Jaden Schoelier	ABCA
Mari Veliz	ABCA
Carter Peeters	ABCA Co-op

## *ABCA Program Report*

**To:** Board of Directors  
**Date:** March 26, 2026  
**From:** Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer  
**Subject:** General Managers Report  
**Report Type:** INFORMATION

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### **Recommendation:**

**THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the General Managers Report for information as presented.**

### **Introduction**

I am pleased to provide the Board of Directors with a brief update on ABCA projects, programs, partnership updates, funding opportunities and activities over the winter. Information about Conservation Ontario (CO) and some of its activities on behalf of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities will also be included when new information is available. If you have any questions, feel free to discuss with me. This is not an inclusive list, only some highlights.

### **Conservation Ontario**

The next scheduled CO council meeting is the AGM. It has been pushed back to April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, based on the ERO decision and the anticipated legislation changes within the Conservation Authorities Act.

As provided in an email to the ABCA Board of Directors on March 11<sup>th</sup>, the province announced plans to proceed with the consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs into 9 Regional CAs. The implementation of Regional CAs is targeted for early 2027. As proposed, ABCA would become part of the Lake Huron Region CA. Based on consultations, guiding principles provided by the province will focus on; retaining local expertise and influence, maintaining watershed-based boundaries, reduced administrative duplication, and the continuity of services. While not the desired outcome, ABCA will continue to work constructively with the Province, CAs, CO, and our municipal partners.

Based on the information provided by the province, it is too early to anticipate the exact impact these changes may have on governance, staffing, and resourcing. However, the Minister has once again stated these changes will not impact staff. It has been announced that the province plans to require the creation of Watershed Councils (1 or more) within each region to ensure that local input, knowledge, and service delivery remain. This piece on governance is essential and will be central to our discussions going forward. ABCA remains focused on maintaining our service excellence, commitment to our community and partners, and providing effective communications as we move forward.

## **ABCA Meetings and Special Events**

1. The 36th Annual Conservation Auction will be held online from April 9 – 16, 2026. The ABCF 50-50 Raffle will take place on April 16 at 4:00 p.m.
2. Donna Clarkson and Aaron Clarke attended a meeting with Perth County on February 3rd regarding groundwater recharge areas.
3. Donna and Ellen Westelaken have attended meetings for the North Wellington Groundwater Modelling Project, which includes new drinking water wells in Harriston and Palmerton.
4. Davin attended ROMA (Rural Ontario Municipal Assoc.) in Toronto, joining Conservation Ontario. Our local municipalities were also well represented.
5. Davin attended the LICO Convention (Land Improvement Contractors of Ontario) in London, and presented on DART (Drainage Act. And S. 28 Regulations Team) “Past, Present and Future”. DART is currently expanding from drain maintenance to include construction, and being update with regards to regulation changes (O. Reg. 41/24).
6. Andrew Bicknell has been participating in a provincial working group which has been established to review and consider Chapter 7 of the Great Lakes and St Lawrence River System and Large Inland Lakes technical guidelines documentation.
7. ABCA hosted its annual Flood Emergency Planning Meeting on February 26th. Daniel King, Christie Brown, and Davin, all presented. Keynote speaker was Trudy Kidd from Environment Canada (per March 2026 Board report).
8. Christie attended the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning Committee virtual meeting on Feb 12th. Christie is the new Alternate Representative for the CA Southwest Region.
9. Angela VanNiekerk attended a Carolinian Canada webinar meeting on January 15th about The Big Picture Map, re-mapping Natural Cores and Connections in Canada’s Carolinian Life Zone.
10. Angela organized a World Wetlands Day “Get Rooted, Grow Native Plants” Workshop for Feb 5, 2026 at Bakers Nursery for 14 participants.
11. In partnership with Huron Soil and Crop Improvement Association (HSCIA), Hope Brock and Mari Veliz hosted the annual Cover Crop Workshop on February 20th with approximately 70 people attending. Participants heard about the cover crop trial, nitrogen credits, autonomous ag robots, cover crop innovations, and funding. ABCA’s Brooklyn Rau and Michael Gibbs presented.
12. Mari and HSCIA Farm Manager, Rick Kootstra presented on best practices for tile drainage at the Northern Ontario Farm Innovation Alliance meeting, in Sudbury on February 6<sup>th</sup>.
13. Nathan Schoelier spoke about phragmites, and invasive species management, to the Goderich Horticultural Society. This helped to expand awareness of invasive species management, and the Huron County Phragmites Management Area, which ABCA leads.
14. Municipality of Bluewater staff and the Bayfield River Valley Trails Association met with Ian Jean to look at forest conditions and tree planting opportunities at the Bluewater Stanley complex.
15. Ian attended a Conservation Ontario hosted meeting on the Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) on Feb 24th. RALP is a federal-provincial program targeted to increase environmental resiliency on farms. ABCA has a funding allocation to support on-farm berms and erosion control measures, tree planting and wetland restoration through March 2027.

16. In January, Brooklyn and Nathan attended the Mid-western Farm Show Booth in Clinton, hosting the Huron Clean Water Project booth with MVCA staff.
17. Nathan presented a delegation about the Huron Clean Water Project on February 4th to Huron County Council. It was well received, with several Councillors speaking in support of the program.
18. Nathan presented a joint delegation to Perth County on February 12<sup>th</sup> with MVCA and UTRCA regarding the County's Forest Conservation By-Law, and the role that forests play in watershed management. It was one of seven delegations at the Special Council Meeting.
19. Nathan presented to local seniors dining programs, speaking to over 100 people throughout Exeter, Clinton and Seaforth, sharing opportunities and services that ABCA provides to the community.
20. We are advancing our partnership with Hillside School (Kettle & Stony Point First Nations) and have hosted a number of programs with SCRCA, including a primary-grade turtle workshop on March 4th, making turtle nest protectors with Junior/Intermediate grades on March 10th, and snowshoeing at Pinery.
21. Envirothon competition for high school students will once again be held at Morrison Dam Conservation Area April 1st and April 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **ABCA Projects, Programs and Studies**

1. Ellen has been providing support to municipalities regarding Planning Applications for properties within Wellhead Protection Areas, Highly Vulnerable Aquifers and Intake Protection Zones.
2. Millie Ghorbankhani has attended pre-consultation meetings with municipalities of Bluewater, Lambton Shores, and South Huron on municipal planning applications
3. Jaden Schoelier has been working with landowners and developers on permit applications, Plan of Subdivision review, and Engineer reports completed under the Drainage Act.
4. Andrew and Daniel are preparing a 2026-27 WECl funding application to support flooding and erosion control maintenance projects (Dam Safety Review, Cameron-Gillies Diversion etc.)
5. Rosalind Chang is working with the University of Windsor and University of Minnesota on the Port Franks wetland research as part of the Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands Monitoring program.
6. Anastasiya Kubrak, Rosalind, Mari and Daniel have started a background document for enhancing the Ausable River Estuary and continue to work with GEI to move the project forward.
7. Angela has been working on the Conservation Wetland Partner Program agreement with MECP for \$219,615 for 2026 wetlands and trees.
8. ABCA was awarded a contract from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to audit unratified municipal drain classification data collected in 2025 by eight Conservation Authorities. Drain classification is meant to streamline drain maintenance. Kari and Christie have been working on verifying and summarizing all fisheries and flow data for the audit report.
9. Kari Jean and Angela are completing reporting for our Canada Nature Fund (CNF) and HSP agreements with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. This includes summarizing deliverables and financials. This funding supports stewardship, education and monitoring projects across ABCA.

10. Hope and Mari completed budgets for MECP Healthy Lake Huron funding for 2025-2027. This funding will support continued education and outreach, best management practices and monitoring in the Main Bayfield and Bayfield North watersheds, as well as coordination of activities by numerous community partners across the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay landscape.
11. Ben Riggin has been working on the report for long-term fish assessment in ABCA's reservoirs.
12. Brooklyn and Rosalind have created a self-guided Stewardship Tour surrounding the annual Tundra Swan migration. This tour showcases stewardship projects, highlights community partners, and conservation lands. [StoryMapJS: Return of the Swans - Land Stewardship Tour](#)
13. Ian is working with Lakeshore Eco Network and Lambton Shores on their 'Tree People Project'. The goal of the initiative is to plant a tree for each resident of Lambton Shores over the next three years. Trees for the program will be funded by the Vibrancy Fund and other sources. This spring planting will take place at Rock Glen, Warner Wildlife Preserve and other municipal sites.
14. Parkhill CA conifer stands were assessed for thinning this summer. These stands, originally planted at 8 x 8 ft spacing, are thinned to encourage growing space and tree regeneration.
15. Derek Dolmage, Jeff VanNiekerk and Reese Thompson are in the planning stages of replacing the pole line at RGCA and replacing the fuel tanks at MDCA.
16. Spring Water Awareness Programs (SWAP) are ongoing with SWAP delivered at St. Pat's Dublin (3), Huron Centennial (2), Wilberforce (4), Clinton Public (2), and St. Josephs School in Clinton (2).
17. Julie Stellingwerff has been delivering Phase 2 of the Climate Change programs – Grand Bend Public, Huron Centennial, Precious Blood and more schools through March.
18. Confirmed Oaks and Acorn programs for May (Tuesdays) at MDCA with Exeter Library and Huron EarlyON. Pending program at Warner Preserve this spring with Lambton EarlyON.
19. Cassie Greidanus has been preparing on grant applications and reports including NextEra, Cordelio Power, and Sunset Community Foundation.

### **ABCA Training**

1. Ellen, Donna and Tim Cumming attended the Canadian Private Well Water Workshop.
2. All staff completed WHMIS Training.
3. Daniel, Aaron, Christie and Michael have been working with the new HEC-HMS Flood Model.

### **Other Items**

1. Tim shared statistics that ABCA reached one million social media impressions in 2025.
2. Ben created a short video for World Wetland Day. <https://youtube.com/shorts/SvQk9dvEtWE>
3. Summer Day Camp has been extended to 7 weeks, plus a Junior Leaders week. Day camps sold out quickly and include 2-3 Big Brothers and Big Sisters of South Huron registrations per week.



# DRAFT MINUTES

## Friends of the South Huron Trail Annual Meeting

**Monday, January 26, 2026 – Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA)  
Administration Centre Boardroom at Morrison Dam Conservation Area (MDCA)  
and also by Zoom video conference**

### PRESENT

**Members in person:** Dave Frayne; George Finch; Norm Eckel;  
Sharon O’Toole; Jim O’Toole; Carol Rideout; Lorne Rideout

**Members by video:** Linda Wilhelm; Terry Wilhelm; Suzie McComb

**Staff:** Nathan Schoelier; Tim Cumming

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Chair Dave Frayne called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

### DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The draft agenda, as previously distributed by email, was adopted.

**MOTION #1/26** Moved by Lorne Rideout; Seconded by Carol Rideout  
“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda of the JANUARY 26, 2026 meeting be adopted.” Carried.

### ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

**MOTION #2/26** Moved by George Finch; Seconded by Norm Eckel  
“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the NOVEMBER 4, 2024 meeting and the motions therein be adopted.” Carried.

### BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

### ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR 2026-2027

Chair Dave Frayne vacated the Chair’s seat. Staff member Tim Cumming assumed the role of

meeting Chair to facilitate election of a new Chair for 2026-2027. Tim called for nominations. George Finch nominated Dave Frayne. This was seconded by Jim O'Toole. Tim called three times for further nominations and there were none. Election of Dave as Chair approved by all.

**MOTION #3/26      Moved by George Finch; Seconded by Jim O'Toole**

**“RESOLVED, THAT Dave Frayne be elected Chair of the Friends of the South Huron Trail for the 2026-2027 year.”**

**Carried.**

The newly elected Chair then returned to the head of the table to Chair the rest of the meeting.

### **DELEGATION**

#### **PROPOSED SOUTH HURON TRAIL RUN – TOM PROUT**

Tom Prout presented on the proposal to revive the South Huron Trail Run in 2026. Net proceeds from the proposed eight-kilometre run, through Race Roster series, could provide funds in support of the trail. Some years ago, the trail run was held by Ausable Bayfield Conservation and later by Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron. About 25 volunteers would be needed, for about half a day, the day of the run. About five members of the trail committee said they might be interested in volunteering if the date works. Lorne Rideout said he would be interested in joining the organizing committee. Run organizers would like formal support from Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority so the event would be covered under the conservation authority's liability insurance. A date for the run has not been determined but discussion underlined that any date should not conflict with other major events such as Exeter Rodeo or other runs (e.g., Terry Fox Run).

**MOTION #4/26      Moved by Lorne Rideout; Seconded by Jim O'Toole**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Friends of the South Huron Trail support the proposal for the South Huron Trail Run to take place on the South Huron Trail.” Carried.**

#### **GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT FOR COMMITTEE**

Tim Cumming, Communications Coordinator, spoke to the previously circulated revised Governance Document. The original Governance Document, approved in 2007, had served the committee well but had become a little out of date. The revisions were to reflect that the committee now tends to meet twice a year, instead of once a year, and the committee now tends to meet on Mondays, not on Fridays. Also, the section related to 'Trail Wardens' was removed as there are no active trail wardens named and the trail warden program has fallen out of use.

**MOTION #5/26      Moved by Norm Eckel; Seconded by George Finch**

**“RESOLVED, THAT the Friends of the South Huron Trail Governance**

**Document be approved as amended.”  
Carried.**

### **REPORTS – 2025 PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **SOUTH HURON TRAIL MOBILE – NORM ECKEL**

Norm Eckel presented the report on behalf of South Huron Trail Mobile volunteer drivers Norm Eckel and Jim Hayter. Norm said the purchase of a new, six-seat trail mobile has been very positive as five passengers can now ride on the motorized cart. The purchase was possible thanks to generous donors including Bob Down. It was a busy year for the Trail Mobile and nice weather in October meant the season was extended later than usual. Norm shared that the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation had received the 2025 Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access, for the South Huron Trail Mobile, from the County of Huron. Norm, Jim and Nathan were able to attend the ceremony to receive the award.

There was discussion about a possible ceremony to honour the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2006-2026) of the South Huron Trail Mobile.

It was felt that the donors who made the current trail mobile possible, as well as the donors who made previous trail mobiles possible (e.g., the Strang family; Municipality of South Huron; Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation; etc.) should be acknowledged.

#### **TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND COMPLETED PROJECTS – NATHAN SCHOELIER**

Nathan Schoelier, ABCA Manager of Stewardship, Lands and Education, provided the Trail Maintenance and Completed Projects report. He said one of the major projects, at Morrison Dam Conservation Area (MDCA) Section of the South Huron Trail, was heightening railings and adding mesh at the first bridge crossing along the Ausable River. Also, a section of wooden dock was removed to be replaced.

In 2026, a Master Plan is to be prepared for Morrison Dam Conservation Area. The plan will look at current and future needs.

#### **TRAIL USE AND ACTIVITIES – NATHAN SCHOELIER**

Nathan provided the Trail Use and Activities Report. He shared some data, courtesy of the County of Huron, pulled from the Propulso geofencing data of mobile phone users, showing that there were more than 91,000 visits to the trail in 2024. It was agreed that this demonstrated the positive impact to the community, in terms of nature enjoyment and recreation by residents and visitors, and positive economic impact as well.

#### **TRAIL PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY – TIM CUMMING**

Prior to the meeting, Tim circulated, by email, a detailed publicity, promotions and

communications report. He presented an abbreviated version of the report at the meeting. He said two trail-related news releases were issued in 2025: 1) The purchase of a new trail mobile; and 2) the County of Huron accessibility award recognizing the South Huron Trail Mobile.

Social media included a news release post, about the Trail Mobile donation by Bob Down and other donors, and was ABCA's top-performing post with almost 100 likes; almost 900 engagements; and more than 15,000 views on Facebook alone.

Tim thanked the volunteers who took part in photos celebrating the 20th anniversary of the trail and 50th anniversary of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation. These photos were shared on social media, in recognition of volunteers, and in the ABCA *Annual Report*. Volunteers in the *Annual Report* photo at the Woodland Reflection Shelter included: Norm Eckel; George Godbolt; Jim Hayter; George Finch; Lorne Rideout; Carol Rideout; Suzie McComb; Sharon O'Toole; Jim O'Toole; Charles Miner; George Irvin; Janet Clarke; Bob Radtke; and Dave Frayne.

A new video, as part of the 20th anniversary (2004-2024) of MacNaughton-Morrison Section of the South Huron Trail, was shared in December 2024 and has had almost 3,000 views and 200 engagements on Facebook alone. Tim thanked everyone who took part in the video including: George Finch; Suzie McComb; Dave Frayne; George Godbolt; and the late Susan Riddell.

There was discussion about hopefully finding a way to commemorate Susan Riddell's wonderful contributions to the community, including her leadership in the campaign that raised funds to make a kayak launch possible. Ideas included a commemorative bench or a birdwatching observation deck. There will be more thought on this.

#### FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES – TIM AND NATHAN

GivingTuesday was December 2, 2025. Thanks to the support of ABCA staff in the Casual Fridays Dress Down Day Fund and generous community donors, and through a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters South Huron, more than \$4,000 has been raised to sponsor 18 local young people to attend summer nature day camp.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Conservation Auction – Online for 2026 supports the South Huron Trail and other community conservation projects. The online auction begins on April 9, 2026 and ends at 8 p.m. on April 16, 2026. Public support is needed through donation of auction items; bids in the online auction; and purchase of 50-50 Raffle Draw tickets.

#### SPRING CLEANUP DAY – NATHAN SCHOELIER

A Spring Cleanup Day is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026.

#### 80<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF AUSABLE BAYFIELD CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1946-2026) of Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority will be celebrated this year. The former Ausable River Conservation Authority was formed on July 30, 1946. This year's celebration will not be as big as the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was in 2021, but there may be some activities and posts on social media.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Friends of South Huron Trail is to take place on Monday, November 2, 2026 at 1:30 p.m..

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

**MOTION #6/26      Moved by George Finch.**  
**“RESOLVED, THAT the meeting be adjourned.”**  
**Carried.**

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Dave Frayne, Chair

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Tim Cumming, Recording Secretary