



**Severn Sound Environmental Association
Joint Municipal Service Board
2022 Second Quarterly Meeting (Q2) – July 26th, 2022**

STAFF REPORT

No: 29-22-SSEA
Date: July 26th, 2022
To: Chair and Members of the SSEA Board of Directors
From: Julie Cayley, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – 2nd Quarter 2022

APPLICABLE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

Goal 1: Sound Science

Goal 2: Supportive Partnerships

Goal 3: An Engaged & Informed Community

Goal 4: An Exceptional Organization

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED THAT: the SSEA Board of Directors Receives the Executive Director's Report for information.

The following are some of the key highlighted activities from the SSEA ED in the second Quarter of 2022.

Budget/Financial/Fundraising

- Working with Provincial staff to identify Canada Ontario Agreement partnership funding opportunities
- In Q2 we spent approximately 100 hrs on fundraising. This equates to \$6,000 to \$10,000 (internal vs external rate) of staff time

Outreach/ Networking/Partners

As the ED one of my key roles is to build and maintain partner and external relationships as part of regular environmental scan of issues and opportunities.

- Government Relations
 - Met with MP Chambers and all federally funded seasonal staff and interns expressing our gratitude of funding and need for it to continue (Canada Summer Jobs, Eco Canada and BioTalent)
 - Draft congratulations and letters of introduction to new MPPs and Ministers
- Elmvale Groundwater Project - Met with Dr. Mike Powell and Dr. Bill Shotyk to discuss their NSERC (Natural Sciences And Engineering Research Council (Nserc), Alliance Grant) research grant and their interest in having SSEA as a partner in the project and to provide a letter of support/intent for the grant application. A short summary of SSEA staff preliminary thoughts are below:
 - \$6.8 million (4.4 NSERC, 2.4 fundraised) 5-year project "Understanding the quality of the groundwaters of Huronia; an integrated scientific approach with policy and societal impacts.
 - Potential Value to SSEA members

- Science - Enhanced, modern data and understanding of groundwater In Severn Sound and for SSEA partners to use for policy and decision making
- Possibility of enhanced monitoring equipment (ie. Barologger)
- Expand our network of groundwater/hydrology experts
- Support member municipalities who may also be partnering (central point of expertise and contact)
- SSEA contribution
 - Strong network in Severn Sound municipal community as well as Ontario science-based water quality and Source Water community
 - Existing local long-term science and data – groundwater as well as streams, climate (PGMN, PWQMN)
 - Input to project design to ensure locally valuable, data-based outcomes
- SSEA requests/concerns
 - Request inclusion of drinking water monitoring ie. Bacteria, nitrate and sodium
 - Inclusion of Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
 - Concerned about bias, that conclusion has been pre-determined. SSEA would want assurance that potential pathways of impact from all sources will be considered not just aggregate and not just PTTW at one site.
 - SSEA staff time is limited and we may not have the capacity to be engaged
 - Need to ensure any involvement from SSEA is true to core values and strategic plan. SSEA would not participate in the advocacy campaigns.
- Suggested Path forward
 - SSEA staff continue to explore the opportunity to be involved in an in-kind capacity and collaborate with SSEA partners to share interest and potential involvement (ie. Municipalities, NVCA, Georgian College etc.). Official sign on to the project, particularly as it may impact the SSEA budget, would be brought to the Board.
- Attended CCA/PAg (ED is a PAg=Professional Agrologist) training for the new *Ontario On-Farm Climate Action Fund* which will be receiving applications during a short window in August 2022 (Aug 4 -17, 2022) for funding for several BMPs that SSEA has supported local farmers with in the past. Understanding this program allows SSEA to add value to our agriculture community.
- Continued to participate as a Director on the Huronia Community Foundation (HCF) Board and on the CELA Healthy Great Lakes Advisory Committee
- Reached out to sustainable Ag prof and new program at Trent University to explore opportunities to partner.
- Supporting Mayor Cornell (Tiny) as an SSEA municipal member of the Board of the Great Lake St Lawrence Cities Initiative
- Coordinating meeting to “meet and greet” with
 - Ontario Clean Water Agency staff now leading Tay water and wastewater system.
 - Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks staff (Barrie Office)
- Maintain external relationships as part of regular environmental scan of issues and opportunities

SSEA Board/Organization/Operations

- SSEA Board meetings
 - 2022 1st Q Board meeting and one (1) SSEA Board Executive meeting (2023 Budget)
 - One (1) SSEA Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting
- Keeping up to date on COVID protocols including office open vs closed, HR and H&S (webinars etc.). As infection numbers in Ontario are reporting to be on the rise, the SSEA office remains

closed to the public and staff continue to access the office on a limited occupancy basis and as needed.

- Coordinating request of SSEA Staff Experts from Board and Municipal members
- We continue to get requests from municipal staff for flood plain mapping or status of flood plain mapping in Severn Sound. Neither SSEA nor our member municipalities have flood plain mapping (save for those who are in a conversation authority jurisdiction and then the mapping exists for the part of the municipality in the CA watershed.). SSEA Staff regularly look for and reach out to potential funders to see if there is an opportunity to initiate this type of project in the Severn Sound watershed.
 - Cost could be up to \$500,000 or more to map high risk areas of the Severn Sound watershed based on information we have gleaned from other areas (CA's and Muskoka) (based on: range from \$5K/km of flood plain in Low Risk areas to \$8K/km in High Risk areas. The information used to estimate this cost was completed for updating or replacing existing flood plain mapping. New flood plain mapping, which is where our area falls, would more than likely increase the costs). We maintain that SSEA is well positioned to work with partner municipalities and funders to support a detailed flood risk analysis.

HR/Staffing

- Working with ML Consulting on SSEA Compensation and pay equity review
 - Staff project orientation lead by Marianne Love Friday April 29th.
 - All job descriptions reviewed and updated, pay equity and grid comparison is proceeding and is taking longer than expected due to amount of work required to find historic records and bring information up to current needs.
 - Commitment in SSEA Strat Plan Goal 4 An Exceptional Organization, key deliverable under Priority Action "Be An Employer of Choice"
- Christie Lee Hazzard from CLH & Co. Inc was hired to complete SSS 2022 deliverables
- Lead ongoing Team SSEA staff meetings
- Reviewing final draft of updated SSEA staff policy manual
- Staff changes – we continue to experience challenges recruiting for and filling positions (challenges include current employment market, low pay rate and short-term contracts)
 - Hired Cameron Epp in 1-year internship position at as the Watershed Resilience Coordinator to complete obligations under Pollinator, Depave and SSS projects.
 - Unable to recruit and fill 2 of the Seasonal CSJ positions (Climate and Communication)
- Staff exit interviews consistently indicate enjoyed the job and the Team, learned and acquired valuable skills and experience and left for higher pay and longer contract and/or permanent or returning to school.

Prepared and Submitted by:
Original signed by

Julie Cayley, Executive Director