

GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (GSCA)

Board Meeting Highlights 08/26/2020



- Business and Operations

Designated as a “tourism operator” under the regional tourism organization RTO7, the Authority received a \$1000 grant for personal protective equipment (PPE) to reimburse the Authority for costs incurred for the purchase of COVID-19 related PPE for staff on conservation properties.



- Administration By-Law Update to Permit Electronic Meetings

The CAO advised that, after a state of emergency was declared due to the pandemic, a motion was passed enabling the Board to meet electronically during a state of emergency. The Provincial state of emergency was lifted effective July 24, 2020 and an amendment to Section 4 of the GSCA Administrative By-Law is proposed to allow electronic board meetings to continue at the discretion of the Board. Board Member, Marion Koepke, suggested an addition to the motion to include the definition of “meeting” and the CAO will amend the motion accordingly and report to the Board at its next meeting.

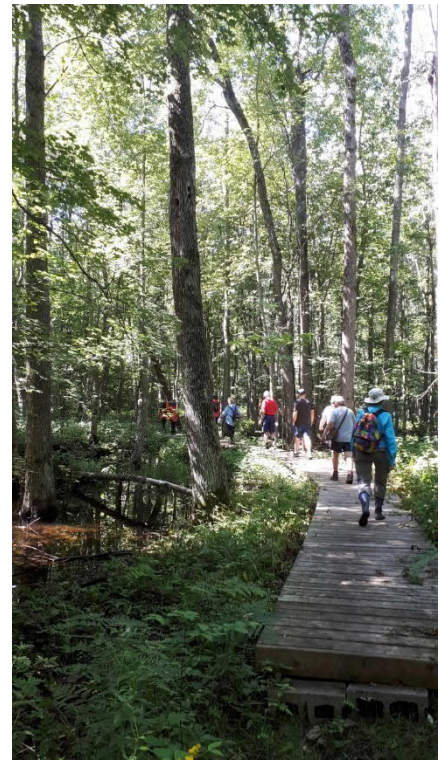
- Staffing Update

The CAO advised that, effective immediately, the position of Manager of Conservation Lands will be filled by Rebecca Ferguson, formerly the Stewardship Technician. The Chair acknowledged the excellent value Rebecca brought to the Stewardship position and congratulated her on her new position.

- Update on Operations and Visitation at GSCA Properties

Christie Beach has been unusually busy with reports of 200 or more visitors on weekend days. Due to site capacity issues, the property has been staffed and visitation has been limited to 70 users at a time, which has resulted in people waiting in line to get on the beach. Other options are being considered including revenue generation to cover the increased cost of maintenance and staffing.

- Education – Guided Hikes Information
Programs & Communications Planner, Vicki Rowsell, advised that to offset a number of scheduled activities that had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Staff reached out to partner groups including the Arboretum Alliance, the Bruce Trail Association and Friends of Hibou to collaborate on guided hikes of GSCA properties. The program is named “Back to Work? Back to School? Back to Nature!” and is aimed at reducing stress by connecting with nature and introducing and welcoming visitors to GSCA properties. The first guided hike, “Learn About Nature”, was conducted by Friends of Hibou member, Bob Knapp at the Hibou Conservation Area (*photo right*) and was so well-received, another hike is being scheduled. On September 1st, 2020, Friends of Hibou member Marie Knapp will be conducting a meditative walk at Hibou called “Forest Bathing” and depending on enrollment, will be holding a second walk to accommodate the numbers. Other walks are being scheduled for September at Jones Falls and the Inglis Falls Arboretum.



There has been tremendous interest in this idea and there are plans are to expand to other locations in the GSCA watershed. Board members were asked to inform their respective municipalities of the possibilities.



(photo from September 12th hike at the Inglis Falls Arboretum)