



NVCA June 2025 Board Meeting Highlights

Next Meeting: September 26, 2025, held in person at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation

For the full meeting agenda, including documents and reports, visit [NVCA's website](#).

Permits Approvals under the CA Act

NVCA reports permit application processing timelines against Conservation Ontario's Best Practices timelines, which recommend conservation authorities to follow these timelines:

- Major permits processed within 90 days
- Minor permits processed within 30 days
- Notify applicants of the status of their applications within 21 days.

Between January 1, 2025, and May 31, 2025, 211 permits were issued by NVCA

On average, NVCA issued minor and major permits within 18 days of a complete application.

Major permits were issued within 90 days 98% of the time, and Minor permits were issued 100% of the time. Applicants were notified about the status of their applications within 21 days, 91% of the time.

Process improvements

In the Spring of 2024, NVCA staff began to pre-screen applications. Since then, staff have noticed a decrease in review timelines, as most applications did not require further technical information and are contenders for direct issuance.

This change in the permitting process has allowed NVCA's technical staff to focus efforts on more complex files.

Regulations Mapping Update

As part of the update to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 41/24, conservation authorities must review regulation

mapping and determine if updates to the maps are required at least once each year.

Staff have been actively updating and developing draft mapping since late 2024 by using the best available information and collection techniques.

With higher resolution data and modelling advancements, NVCA staff decreased regulated lands by more than 32,000 ha; a reduction of approximately 18% of the total regulated area within NVCA's jurisdiction.

Below is a summary of changes:

- Wetlands: 5,852 wetland boundaries were updated
- Slopes: Updated using newly acquired LiDAR elevation data.
- Flood: 2,121 hectares of floodplain mapping were updated in the Upper Mad River subwatershed and the Lower Nottawasaga River reach.
- Shoreline: Updated 42 km of shoreline hazard mapping

Through the stakeholder engagement process, NVCA received 32 comments from municipalities and property owners in the Nottawasaga Watershed.

Administrative Review of Programs and Services

As per the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2023, NVCA's programs and services are categorized under Categories 1, 2, and 3. Programs and services related to hazard management or mitigation are generally considered Categories 1 or 2.

NVCA's stewardship and restoration services programs were identified exclusively as 'Category 3' based solely on whether activities occur on NVCA or private lands.

Upon review, this categorization may not reflect the broader watershed-scale benefits of many projects, particularly those related to natural hazard mitigation, regardless of property ownership.

The Board of Directors approved NVCA staff to review these services and recommend any classification changes to better align with regulatory definitions and the multi-functional benefits of these services, particularly as they relate to flood, erosion, and hazard management.

2024 Customer Satisfaction Report

In 2013, NVCA adopted a Customer Service Charter and Strategy that sets out the authority's commitment to providing excellence in customer service. Continuous improvement is a key element of the charter.

Each year, NVCA publishes a Customer Satisfaction Report that summarizes data collected through surveys and client reviews.

[Please visit NVCA's website to view the 2024 Customer Service Satisfaction Report.](#)

Regulations

Of 523 permits issued in 2024, 30 individuals and organizations completed a client survey on the NVCA permit application process.

In general, 90% of the responses ranked NVCA's permitting process as good or excellent in 2024, signalling that respondents were more satisfied with NVCA's permitting process than in 2022 (68% satisfied) and 2023 (73% satisfied).

Stewardship

NVCA's stewardship services include the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program, the Healthy Waters grant program, and other projects to protect and enhance our watershed.

Through working with funders, landowners, volunteers and local partners, over 16,000 trees and 7.6 km of rivers and streams were restored by the stewardship services team!

Comments received from funders and landowners generally applauded the expertise and results achieved by NVCA's stewardship staff.

Lands

NVCA's conservation areas received 85 reviews on Google's business listings in 2024. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the reviews were 4-star or 5-star reviews.

The conservation areas that received the most reviews were Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area, New Lowell Conservation Area and Historic Fort Willow Conservation Area.

Education

NVCA's environmental education program provides hands-on, curriculum-aligned programs for JK to grade 12 students. In 2024, NVCA's Environmental Education program saw over 14,000 participants, from toddlers to seniors.

Both students and teachers were highly engaged and enthusiastic throughout the environmental education programming. Multiple teachers remarked on the unprecedented level of student interest in the programs. Students enjoyed exploring natural areas around their schools and comparing them to their urban environments, often discovering animal tracks and signs of wildlife.

Events/Public Programming/Facility Rentals

NVCA hosted the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival and the Festival at Fort Willow in 2024.

Approximately 2,500 visitors came to the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival to learn past and present methods of maple syrup production. They also interacted with exotic animals, took a tractor wagon ride, watched a dog agility demonstration and more!

Reenactor groups at the Festival at Fort Willow were thrilled to share the history of the local area.

Organizations that rented facilities at NVCA commented that NVCA staff provided excellent customer service and that the properties were well maintained.

Weddings

In 2024, the Tiffin Centre for Conservation hosted 25 wedding celebrations. Eleven of these couples responded to a wedding feedback survey.

Of those responding, 100% rated NVCA's customer service as excellent, and 100% said they would recommend the Tiffin Centre as a wedding venue to others.

Chloride concentrations and road salt issues in the Nottawasaga watershed

Despite years of guidance and consultation efforts from conservation authorities, private road salt usage continues to rise, driven primarily by liability concerns faced by contractors and property owners.

Data published by the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks in 2022 implicates road salting activities for winter safety as a primary contributor to elevated chloride concentrations, particularly in southern Ontario.

NVCA data shows a similar increasing trend in chloride concentrations.

Although chloride concentrations in NVCA watercourses are below the long-term concentration Canadian Water Quality Guideline of 120 mg/L, forecasting based on current trends suggests exceedances could become regular in the next decade.

NVCA's Board of Directors passed a resolution urging the Province of Ontario to adopt legislation to limit liability for certified snow and ice contractors following provincially endorsed best practices; and to create a provincial advisory committee to guide salt reduction strategies and protect Ontario's freshwater resources.

Upcoming Events

River restoration and tree planting events

The stewardship team will be hosting volunteer river restoration and tree planting events this summer. Dates and locations will be posted on NVCA's website as soon as they are available.

Date: June, July, August

Location: Throughout the Nottawasaga Watershed