

REPORT

CENTRAL LAKE ONTARIO CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE: November 20, 2018

FILE: ACCB36

S.R.: 5608-18

TO: Chair and Members, CLOCA Board of Directors

FROM: Yvonne Storm, Education Instructor
Patricia Lowe, Director, Community Engagement

SUBJECT: **2018 Durham Children's Watershed Festival Summary**

APPROVED BY C.A.O. 

Background

Launched as part of the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority's (CLOCA) 40th anniversary theme of water quality in 1998, the goal of the Durham Children's Watershed Festival (DCWF) is to increase grade four student awareness concerning water issues and motivate them to become water stewards in their home, classroom and community. The Festival includes 39 hands-on interactive activity centres with messages relevant to everyday lives around the concepts of water conservation and protection. Through the activity centres, the students discover the importance of water, and how their actions impact the watershed in which they live.

2018 Event Summary

The 2018 Durham Children's Watershed Festival (DCWF) was held at Camp Samac from Monday, September 24 to Friday, September 28, with 4,033 grade four students and 752 teachers and adult volunteers attending.

With financial and in-kind contributions from sponsors, we continue to subsidize costs for students to make the experience affordable. The location at Camp Samac is central to participating schools and provides our visitors with a safe environment to explore natural and simulated water activities. A tributary of Oshawa Creek travels through the property, providing participants with an opportunity to view the migration and life cycle of Coho and Chinook salmon.

This is always a major highlight with children coming face to face with these extraordinary fish that swim against the current to jump through the dam. The 2018 fall migration did not disappoint. The creek was full of fish.



Since our first Festival in 1998, over 79,537 grade four students, 8,413 high school students and 9,880 teachers and parent volunteers have participated and numbers continue to increase, with new and returning schools attending from across the Region.

This year, 14 high schools participated with 375 volunteers who enthusiastically accepted the challenge of educating the grade fours 4's and demonstrated their excellent leadership skills. We received many compliments from the participating elementary teachers and parents regarding the high school volunteer students and we look forward to seeing them return in 2019.

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The student volunteers from each high school receive in-class training on their specific activity to ensure they are confident and prepared to provide the grade 4 participants with relevant information and messages around protecting and conserving water resources. Many of the high school students participated in the Festival as grade 4 students returning as activity centre leaders, inspired to share their knowledge in a fun and exciting atmosphere.

In an effort to fill some of the gaps in activity centre delivery, we were fortunate to have corporate sponsors step up with committing staff from Ontario Power Generation Darlington, Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), and Region of Durham Health, Waste and Works Departments, TD Canada Trust (new in 2018) and Stantec Consulting Limited (new in 2018). A continued partnership with Durham College resulted in 21 students volunteering in the activity centres for a full day. A significant milestone and a tribute to our longevity, is we now have a third generation of education clients, as some of the Durham College students attended the Festival when they were in grade 4.



Durham Region Works Department and the Waste Management Department both had two staff persons each facilitate two of the Festival's activities "3Ps – Pee, Poo & Paper" (new for 2018) and "Know Before You Throw".

A new sponsor was welcomed this year, the General Motors Sustainability Program (GMSP). We received a financial contribution of \$5000.00 and a contribution of staff time with 2 volunteers on each of the 5 days. These volunteers worked at the Aquatic Adventures activity in Area 2 by the Oshawa Creek, assisting with invertebrate sample identification with the students. GMSP staff attended the public event showcasing their new all electric Chevrolet Bolt, informing us that the Festival was a very

positive experience for them and look forward to participating again in 2019.

A total of 4,018 volunteer hours were logged over the 5 days of the Festival which is an amazing contribution from the community.

Festival Special Guests come on different days to provide our students with some very specialized hands-on interactions. In 2018, we hosted the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (OTCC), Great Lakes Program (Toronto Zoo), Forests Ontario, Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, EcoSpark and new for 2018, Reptilia a new business from the Town of Whitby.

Sponsorship Program

A number of local and regional corporate sponsors contribute financial and in-kind resources to the Festival, ensuring activity centres are updated, volunteers receive lunch and refreshments and bussing costs are subsidized. We held our annual VIP lunch event on Tuesday, September 25 to recognize the 2018 sponsors. The event was hosted by CLOCA Chair Mayor Don Mitchell and provided recognition plaques under the sponsorship categories of Event Sponsor (\$50,000+), Diamond (\$5,000+), Platinum (\$2,500+) and Gold (\$1,000+) Sponsors.

Additional categories include Silver (\$500+) and Bronze (up to \$499) which are recognized on the sponsor board and in a media thank you. The Region of Durham funded \$50,000 towards the 2018 festival under the category Event Sponsor. A total of 14 government, organization and businesses sponsored the 2018 Festival, contributing a total of \$94,000 in revenue, an increase in over \$10,000 from last year.

Cargill Foundation
Dufferin Aggregates (CRH Canada Group Inc.)
The Region of Durham
Charities Aid Foundation of America
GM Sustainability Program
The McLean Foundation
Safran Landing Systems Toronto

RBC Foundation
Covanta Durham York Renewable Energy
Trans Canada Pipelines Ltd.
Ontario Power Generation
Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation
Ontario Wildlife Foundation (OWF)
TDFEF

Since 2007, excluding funding from Durham Region, we have raised close to \$333,287 from sponsors and grants and \$326,664 from student participation fees to operate the Festival. Another aspect of our Festival contributing significantly to its ongoing financial success, is the value of in-kind contributions. In 2018, we estimate the in-kind contributions to the festival operations alone from volunteer time, materials and supplies was in excess of \$10,000.

Thank you again to the continued support from our Event Sponsor, the Region of Durham. Festival staff are able to spend more time making improvements to operations and delivery with less time dedicated to preparing funding proposals and researching prospective financial sponsors. Staff were able to reach out to in-kind sponsors in preparation for the teacher's workshop hosted before the Festival. The generous in-kind donations for door prizes and classroom resources to support the workshop had a value of \$1,692.00. This workshop allows the teachers to bring their fee payment, collect an assortment of printed teacher's resources and get a feel for the Festival and all it has to offer.



2018 Milestones

The Festival highlighted one new activity designed by CLOCA staff to address current issues in our watershed and give our young stewards a better understanding of how they can help Mother Nature, every day. “3Ps – Pee, Poo & Paper” and was facilitated by staff from the Durham Region Works Department.

On the evening of Tuesday Sept. 26, a free public event was hosted with approximately 30 participants attending. Attendance was affected by the evening forecast which threatened thunderstorms. CLOCA staff and 9 volunteers were able to present several activities which included the ARS Sandbox, “3Ps – Pee, Poo & Paper”, “We Use That Much”, “Royal Flush”, “3 X a Day”, “Low Salt Diet” with the assistance of a snow plow from Municipality of Durham Fleet Division. Special guests for the event included Soper Creek Wildlife Rescue, TRACKS, GM Electric Car, Highway of Heroes Living Tribute, Reptilia Zoo and Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust.



Durham Children's Watershed Festival (DCWF) Committee

The DCWF Committee, which was established as a coordinating body of representatives from each of our community sponsors, looks forward to 2019 as we enhance the experience and provide new tools for students, teachers and volunteers. CLOCA staff provide ongoing coordination, program development, fundraising, accounting and administrative duties to the Committee. Members of the Committee represent Ontario Power Generation, Kawartha Pine Ridge, Durham and Durham Catholic District School Boards, Region of Durham Health and Works Departments, Scouts Canada, Friends of Second Marsh and CLOCA.

Media Coverage

The festival had excellent media coverage this year. Snapd Whitby covered the Diamond Sponsor Media Event; the public event was reported in Snapd Oshawa and the RBC cheque presentation was covered by The Oshawa Express.

Elementary School Teacher Comments

Each year the Elementary school teachers participate in an online survey. We received 25 surveys which represents 12% percent of the participating teachers. Some of the comments were as follows:

- What did you like about the Festival? *"Everything - especially how organized it is." "The variety of presentations. Each activity had a hands-on component, and a specific learning expectation. The high school presenters were well prepared. It was a great weather day for being outside in the autumn!" "I liked how you could go at your own pace and the variety of activities. I thought most students were very knowledgeable and enjoyed presenting their station."*

Some of the feedback will guide us in making changes to the Festival in 2019. Some of the challenges we faced this year included a high school cancelling their attendance at the last minute, and subsequent closure of activities on one day and longer than normal wait times at other activities. Rain on the Tuesday resulted in lunch time crowding issues in the tents and the need for more seating. We had a range of comments on our Indigenous speaker with comparisons made to our long time associated, Chief Topleaf, who retired from the Festival in 2017.

Recommendations for 2019:

The new cost of having our Indigenous speaker in response to the retirement noted above has increased our budget and may require us to engage more than one individual to deliver this auditorium session at the Festival.

We currently have a full time CLOCA staff person assigned to 2 of the 3 areas and volunteers from our Festival Committee filling in day to day at the third activity area. In 2019, we will consider the hiring of a seasonal staff person to fill the role of activity coordinator rather than rely on the volunteers to help us maintain consistency and continuity throughout the Festival.

In an effort to work with our sponsors, we would like to offer more opportunities for their staff to volunteer to assist with bus greeting and activity hosting. This continues to be well received by teachers and students and our sponsors find it an excellent team building exercise. CLOCA staff across other departments will also be encouraged to be more involved in a CLOCA day, similar to what we do at the Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival.

The VIP event continues to be poorly attended by our sponsors. Staff will survey sponsors and develop alternative opportunities to engage them in participation throughout the week. This should reduce some of the costs associated with providing an event where we have limited attendance.

Staff would like to continue with the Public Event as there is the potential to reach a large general public audience with water conservation and protection messages. However, it is challenging to deliver during the Festival and weather is a factor. Consideration for an indoor venue or alternative event where an audience is guaranteed will be considered in 2019.



Staff will continue to improve the registration process for teachers to reduce paper work and streamline efforts for CLOCA administration staff. This will involve sending confirmation 10 days prior to Festival regarding attendance and providing payment the day they actually attend. Efforts will be made to create an online teacher's session prior to the Festival, reducing costs and staff time. The door prizes typically provided at the teachers sessions will be used to reward teachers who submit their post event surveys.

Staff will review and update the Emergency Planning and Safety Protocol policy and procedures document as the last revision was in September 2014.



RECOMMENDATION:
THAT Staff Report #5608-18 be received for information.