

Report to Municipal Council



Meeting Date: August 14, 2024	Report Date: August 2, 2024
Reason Before Council: Other	Priority: Normal
Department: Parks & Recreation	Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting

Report Title: Update - Sawmill Bay Park Project

Recommended Resolution:

For information only. That the work planned for Sawmill Bay Park will be delayed. Pending the outcome of the Species at Risk review, work will only restart after clearance is given by MECP which realistically will not be before September and our work window will close shortly thereafter. All work is now suspended until proper permits are received even if previously authorized under the original MNRF Work Permit.

Analysis & Background:

From direction of Council, the MNRF work permit for a boat launch and beach was applied for last winter.

In April, the MNRF issued the permit for the boat launch and beach with conditions that:

- the Department of Fisheries (DFO) be consulted re: potential impact on fish habitat. DFO gave their ok for the boat launch but did not give approval for the beach as there is a high risk of erosion impacting fish habitat. Alternate material is being considered.
- The Ministry of Environment (MECP) be consulted re: beach would potentially / inadvertently create nesting grounds for turtle that would not be suitable as a beach. The required form was submitted to MECP also in April. Due to staffing changes at MECP, the request for the beach results / review was only received August 2. As a result of their review, they are now asking for additional Species at Risk (SAR) review before we can continue with the project.



After I was denied by DFO for the beach, I asked the MNRF if MECP review was still required. The answer was because the boat launch and beach permit required MECP review, that we had to follow through with MECP even if beach was no longer being built.

A consultant is recommended to be retained to review the (potential) impact on specific types of turtles, snakes and bats.

Please note that under the MNRF original permit, staff had met the requirement of SAR which dealt only with turtles.

Prior to retaining a professional I will try to meet MECP requirements for the SAR. If I am not successful in meeting the SAR review conditions, we will have to retain a qualified person to perform a review. All of this means delays and pending outcome of study there would possibly be some additional conditions or restrictions.

MECP Email August 2, 2024

Hi Denis,

*The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' (MECP) Species at Risk Branch (SARB) has reviewed the IGF for the **Boat Launch/Ramp West Arm Nipissing project** submitted by Eric Wilcox on behalf of Denis Turcot (CAO Municipality of St. Charles) to MECP SARB on April 25th to assess the potential impacts of the proposal on Species at Risk (SAR) protected under the Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA).*

To assess potential impacts to SAR (e.g., Blanding's turtle, Massasauga Rattlesnake, Eastern Hog-nosed Snake and SAR bats), MECP SARB advises that the Proponent consider retaining a qualified professional to conduct an assessment of whether SAR or SAR Habitat are found on site on their behalf. A qualified professional should map and categorize the habitat according to guidance outlined in the General Habitat Description (GHD) documents (and other reference material) and provide mapping for the project as per the GHD. For further information, please see the attached comments.

MECP SARB requires the Proponent to re-submit an updated IGF once additional information is collected and mapping is completed to enable our review of SAR and SAR habitat being impacted by the project. Once we have received the requested information, we can discuss further



development of the proposed activities on the project site and provide further guidance on whether an ESA authorization will be required.

If you require any further information, please feel free to reach out to me at sara.franchuk@ontario.ca

Regards,

Sara

Sara Franchuk

A/Management Biologist

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Ontario 

Attachments:

- Nil.

Prepared By: Denis Turcot, CAO