

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority

Low Water Response Manual

September 2024

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
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Legislation

Conservation Authorities Act, Ontario Regulation 686/21, Mandatory Programs and Services, Consolidation Period: From October 1, 2021 to the e-Laws currency date.

Drought or low water response

3. (1) An authority shall provide programs and services to support its functions and responsibilities to facilitate drought and low water forecasting and warning as set out in subsection (2).

(2) The authority's functions and responsibilities with respect to drought and low water forecasting and warning mentioned in subsection (1) are the following:

1. Maintaining information on surface water hydrology and the areas within the authority's area of jurisdiction that are vulnerable to drought or low water events.
2. Maintaining a stream flow monitoring network that, at a minimum, includes stream flow gauges available as part of the provincial-federal hydrometric network and, where the authority considers it advisable, includes additional local stream flow gauges.
3. Monitoring of weather and climate information, snow surveys and water levels and flows utilizing local, provincial and federal data sources.
4. Analysis of local surface water hydrologic conditions related to risk of drought and low water events.
5. Gathering information to determine when low water levels exist within the authority's area of jurisdiction and initiating and maintaining the appropriate response to confirmed low water levels in accordance with the document entitled Ontario Low Water Response, dated March 2010, and available on request from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.
6. Communications to inform persons or bodies that the authority considers advisable of the potential or actual impact of drought and low water events in a timely manner.
7. Provision of ongoing information and advice to persons and bodies mentioned in paragraph 6 to support,
 - i. emergency and drought or low water activities during a drought or low water event, and
 - ii. documentation of drought and low water events.

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) Low Water Response Manual Core Foundation

This CCCA Low Water Response Manual, Low Water Response Team and CCCA staff will conform to the *Ontario Low Water Response Manual* (OLWRM), July 2009 Draft relating to all low water practices and procedures.

The procedures and processes outlined in this manual are from past Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, Low Water Response Team (LWRT) experiences and are recommended to be used for future low water applications where and when necessary.

If any contradictions arise between this CCCA Low Water Response Manual and the *Ontario Low Water Response Manual*, the *Ontario Low Water Response Manual* will

supersede the CCCA manual, unless there are CCCA Board Approved adjustments to this CCCA manual.

Please refer to the *Ontario Low Water Response Manual* for all low water procedures.

Introduction

Catfish Creek and its tributaries drain an area of approximately 490 square kilometers in the Counties of Elgin and Oxford. Catfish Creek is mainly a rural watershed with close ties to the agriculture community and water conservation. The Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) continues to promote water conservation initiatives through school and landowner education programs that persuade watershed constituents to protect and preserve our valued water resources for social and economic well-being of the community.

Ontario Low Water Response is intended to ensure provincial preparedness, to assist in coordination and to support local response in the event of a drought. This plan is based on the OLWRM, existing legislation and regulations and builds on established relationships between the province and local government bodies.

Where they exist, local Conservation Authorities will take the lead in establishing a Water Resource Team (WRT). It is recommended that Conservation Authorities, or MNR

districts in areas without Conservation Authorities, co-chair the Water Response Team with a local water user.

Drought is a complex term that has various definitions depending on individual perspectives. In the Ontario Low Water Response Manual, drought is defined as weather and low water conditions characterized by one or more of the following:

- a) below normal precipitation for an extended period of time (3 months or more), potentially combined with high rates of evaporation, can lower lake levels, streamflow's and/or baseflows and reduce soil moisture and/or groundwater storage,
- b) streamflow is at the minimum required to sustain aquatic life while meeting only high priority demands for water; significant decrease in water level of local wells to the point where they become dry; surface water in storage allocated to maintain minimum streamflow, and
- c) socioeconomic effects occurring on individual properties and extending to larger areas of a watershed or beyond.

As larger areas are affected and as low water and precipitation conditions worsen, the effects usually become more severe. Three Levels of Low Water Conditions the Level 1 condition is the first indication of a potential water supply problem. Level 2 indicates a potentially serious problem. Level 3 indicates the failure of the water supply to meet the demand, resulting in progressively more severe and widespread socioeconomic effects.

Conservation Authorities are encouraged to develop local minimum in-stream flow thresholds as indicators of aquatic ecosystem health (adequate water quality, healthy fisheries and biological communities). Such a threshold could then become the Level 3 indicator for that watershed. Ontario Low Water Response, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources et.al. March 2010.

Water Resource Team (WRT)

Background

Initially established in August 2001 to evaluate low water and drought related conditions in the Catfish Creek Conservation Authorities administrative area, the Water Resource Team (WRT) participation has broadened to include representation from municipalities, provincial government agencies, agriculture, industry and recreational groups in the watershed. Representation on the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team is strictly voluntary in nature consisting of representatives from the following agencies/groups:

- Municipality of Central Elgin
- Town of Aylmer
- Township of Malahide
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of the Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- Elgin Federation of Agriculture
- Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
- Pleasant Valley Golf and Country Club

- Pleasant Valley Trout Farm Yarmouth Sand & Gravel
- County of Elgin
- Elgin Soil and Crop Association
- Vegetable Growers Association
- Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee

A Chairperson and Recording Secretary are elected annually from the membership of the Water Response Team at the first meeting of each year. (Provincial representatives are excluded from this selection process).

Water Resource Team Membership Roles and Responsibilities

- Attending meetings;
- Communicating back to their respective sectors;
- Sharing relevant data;
- Implementing drought management tools (e.g. municipal by - laws, coordinated irrigation, signage, public awareness communications);
- Confirming or determining if the watershed is in a Level 2 condition based on the monitoring network data; and
- Making recommendations of a Level 3 condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee based on watershed conditions.

Water Resource Team Communications

Meetings are called by the Water Response Team Chairperson and are held whenever the precipitation and stream flow data indicate the need to consider upgrading from one Level to another.

The Conservation Authority confirms and if required declares a Level 1 condition. This decision is communicated to the other members of the Water Response Team for information purposes only.

Declaring a Level 2 condition is the responsibility of the WRT based on precipitation, stream flow data and recommendations of the Chairperson. The WRT is also responsible for making recommendations of a Level 3 condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee based on the aforementioned watershed conditions and data.

Decision to downgrade from a Level 2 or Level 1 condition can be enacted by the WRT Chairperson and the Conservation Authority without calling a special meeting of the WRT. This decision is communicated to the other members of the Water Response Team for information purposes only.

Minutes of the WRT meetings are documented by the Recording Secretary appointed by the membership. The Recording Secretary forwards a copy of the Minutes to members of the WRT within 10 working days following a meeting.

The Water Response Team Chairperson and or Recording Secretary are responsible for disseminating all information and communications to the media. Individual members are responsible for communicating back to their individual groups.

Water Resource Team Low Water Evaluation Practice

At any meeting of the Water Response Team, a Quorum shall consist of one-third of those voting members present at a meeting.

There is no distinction in decision-making power or responsibility among members of the WRT with the exception of provincial representatives, (the focus of provincial representatives is to advise rather than participate in the judgment making process). Each representative will have equal opportunity for input, sharing information and accountability.

Level 3 Ontario Low Water Level Declaration

The following is intended as a guide for use by the Water Response Team in conjunction with Ontario Low Water Response (OLWR) Manual to help clarify the procedures and requirements for recommending the declaration of LEVEL 3 Low Water condition. It is intended as a guide only and is not a prescription for getting to Level 3. Please refer to the Ontario Low Water Response Manual, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources et.al, March 2010 for more detailed direction and guidance.

OLWR (July 2003) outlines the process for confirming different low water conditions of a watershed and recommended actions. Since low water conditions develop over time, proactive long-term water management practices, such as water conservation and efficient water use, are recommended and can be effective in averting and reducing the severity of low water conditions. Significant social, environmental and economic impacts should be considered prior to recommending a Level 3 Condition in order to take appropriate action (conservation, restriction and regulation).

The Conservation Authority and/or the Ministry of Natural Resources District will determine and confirm a Level 1 condition. A Level 1 declaration will not require the formal approval of the Water Response Team and can be declared by the Chairperson. This decision will be communicated to the other members of the Water Response Team for information purposes only.

Based on the monitoring network data and upon the recommendation of the CCCA, declaring a Level 2 low water condition will remain the responsibility of the Water Response Team.

Supported by the monitoring network data and upon the recommendation of the CCCA

the Water Response Team is responsible for making a recommendation of a Level 3 condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee based on watershed conditions, which must include information as outlined in Section 3.3 of the Ontario Low Water Response Manual.

The decision to downgrade from a Level 1 or Level 2 condition can be enacted by the WRT Chairperson and the Conservation Authority without calling a special meeting of the Water Response Team.

Actions Taken During a Confirmed Level 1 Condition

The watershed must have been at a confirmed Level 1 condition and the appropriate actions must have been taken, i.e. a WRT formed and WRT meetings held to:

- Characterise the watershed including available water sources and sensitivities
- Provide appropriate communications to watershed water users and residents regarding water conditions
- Identify local water supply needs and concerns
- Start to implement water conservation and preservation strategies (target 10 per cent reduction in water use)
- Evaluate effectiveness of local actions
- Provide advice to local decision-makers
- Document actions taken

Actions Taken During a Confirmed Level 2 Condition

The watershed must have been at a confirmed Level 2 condition and the WRT must have taken appropriate action, i.e.

- Continue to hold WRT meetings
- Start to prepare documentation for OWDC Low Water Committee for declaration of Level 3
- Ensure and confirm appropriate membership on WRT
- Increase communications efforts
- Increase overall conservation measures by an additional 10 per cent
- Recommend to municipalities local restriction measures where available (e.g. lawn watering by-laws)
- Provide advice to local and provincial decision-makers
- Use existing provincial legislation where appropriate

A Level 3 is only considered when Level 1 and 2 measures have proven ineffective and watershed conditions continue to worsen. The WRT is required to prepare formal documentation for OWDC Low Water Committee for the declaration of Level 3. Declaring Level 3 is a prerequisite for taking appropriate action but is not connected in any way to obtaining drought compensation.

A Level 3 condition cannot be declared for the purpose of obtaining compensation for economic losses or hardships. (The declaration of any level of low water condition does not imply compensation for economic losses.) The OLWR July 2003 plan and this document do not address "emergency" response measures as defined by the *Emergency Plans Act*. Actions must be taken at Level 1 and Level 2 prior to recommending a Level 3 Condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Low Water Committee.

Requirements for Recommending Level 3

Steps in Recommending a Declaration of a Level 3 Condition

“A Level 3 declaration represents the most severe level condition and corresponding response designed to mitigate the impending impacts of an escalated drought condition. These may include water use restrictions affecting a range of small and large water users. Consequently, prior to any declaration decision the OWDC Low Water Committee is obligated to ensure that.” (Statements here in italics and below are from OLWR July 2003 manual)

Step 1 – Provide documentation of water use conservation and reduction efforts

1. *“The WRT has clearly implemented and documented the conservation and reduction efforts taken through the Level 1 and 2 strategies and can demonstrate that the majority of the water users have participated in these efforts (including bylaw restrictions by municipalities on non essential uses).”*

Provide a detailed description of steps taken at Level 1 and 2 to reduce demand on water, e.g.

- Identify sectors represented on WRT, and which sectors participated in water use reductions
- Identify sectors not represented or that did not participate in water use reductions and why (e.g. hydropower producers did not need to modify power production because it did not have an impact on minimum flow requirements and they were able to stay within rule curves)
- Identify the sectors that cut back and the Water Management measures taken (e.g. municipal service supplies cut back water use by x per cent, golf course operators rotated water use on a three day cycle, quarry operators stopped dust control procedures, irrigators in this area cut back water use by x per cent)
- Describe by-laws that were enforced/enacted to address demand (e.g. lawn water bans and car washing restrictions, stoppage of street cleaning)
- Describe any legislation used to curtail water use and how it was used (e.g. activities under Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act (LRIA) to stop interruption of water flow, Ontario Water Resources Act (OWRA) inspections for adherence to permits to take water, Department of Fisheries and Oceans charges for damaging fish habitat)

Step 2 - Provide analysis on the Social, Economic and Environmental Impact of Low Water Conditions

2. *“Any significant social, environmental and economic impacts arising from current low water conditions have been documented and adequately described.”*

Social Impacts:

Low water conditions may have an impact on different groups of water users depending on the circumstances. The WRT should identify the group and characterise the impact as it relates to the low water condition. (e.g. how are municipal supply and self-supply users on groundwater being affected; how are recreational users and irrigators on surface water being affected). Other effects of low water conditions on communities should also be characterised.

Economic Impacts:

Economic impacts on water users, due to low water conditions, should also be characterised with estimates of lost yields or production loss of crops/reduced production

or business including per cent of loss. For example lost agricultural yields, hydropower production, tourism clients, small business production or clients, reductions in aggregate production and other incidental losses should be noted. Other effects of low water conditions on various sectors should also be characterised.

Environmental Impacts:

Negative impacts on the ecosystem, due to low water conditions, should be described including the severity, (e.g. reduction to or loss of cold-water fisheries, loss of habitat, changing wildlife behaviour, water quality changes.)

Step 3 - Provide recommendations on priority allocations for water use.

3. *“Recommendations have been provided on priorities for water use restrictions and other reduction activities within the watershed.”*
- Recommendation for allocating water use reductions will consider the following basic principles and priority water uses:
- Impacts move through water-use priorities from non-essential to important towards preserving essential water uses, (as described in OLWR Page 12, 13)
- Maintain domestic, livestock and municipal water supplies
- Avoid long-term loss of fish and wildlife populations (i.e. catastrophic ecosystem collapse)
- Avoid actions that risk the security of future supplies
- Minimize loss of crop yield and yield quality
- Minimize disruption to commerce/economic loss
- Share the impact of water shortage among users

For example, compliance activities are to be escalated, specific sectors are recommended to reduce takings by X per cent, surface water takers are to reduce takings by X per cent, groundwater takers are to reduce takings by X per cent. Describe the level of support the WRT gives to each recommendation

Step 4 - Provide analysis of the social, economic and environmental impacts of recommended water use restrictions.

4. *“Any significant social, environmental and economic impacts which may arise from the recommended water use restrictions have been documented and adequately described.”*

Describe anticipated social, economic and environmental impacts resulting from recommendations in Step 3. Describe these in the same manner as was done in Step 2.

Social Impacts:

Describe any social impacts from anticipated losses due to recommendations. For example lost tourism, lost business from temporarily closing including numbers of layoffs and lost production. Increased local issues, tensions, number of requests for compensation and potential litigation should also be described.

Economic Impacts:

Identify the financial implications as a result of the recommendations for the various sectors. Examples are agriculture, tourism, hydropower, aggregates, municipal contingencies and various industries and businesses.

Environmental Impacts:

Document WRT assessment of how much the environmental situation will improve as a result of the proposed water use reduction and/or allocation recommendations.

Actions need to be taken during a confirmed Level 3 condition.**Monitoring a Level 3 Condition**

The WRT will continue to take actions, monitor the extent of compliance of residences in a watershed with Level 3 measures and the effectiveness of these measures and advise the OWDC Low Water Committee on additional actions that can be taken.

Status Update

The WRT will continue to monitor watershed conditions and advise the OWDC Low Water Committee including advising them of when a watershed should come out of a Level 3 condition.

APPENDIX A

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority Low Water Response Team Members August 30, 2006

Previous 2006 Team Members are listed below. This list will have to be updated prior to the commencement for all low water seasons. The list has been left as is in order for the staff responsible for the OLWR Program will have an indication of agencies to contact for team representation.

Rob Johnson, Assistant Director Physical Services, *Municipality Of Central Elgin*.

Rebecca Shortt, Water Quantity, Engineer, *Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs* (OMAFRA).

Robert J Cresswell, Owner, *Pleasant Valley Golf & Country Club*.

David Richards, Biologist, *Ministry of Natural Resources* (MNR), Aylmer District.

Glen Howe, Owner, *G&M Howe*.

Alison Munro, Surface Water Specialist, *Ministry of the Environment* (MOE).

Mike Taylor, Water Manager, *Malahide Township*.

Don Weir, Drainage Superintendent, *Malahide Township*.

Mark Wales, Farmer, *Elgin Federation of Agriculture*.

Clayton Waters, Engineer, *County Of Elgin*.

Rod Tapp, Director of Operations, *Town of Aylmer*.

Wray Ramsey, Drain Superintendent, *Township Of S.W. Oxford*.

Bob Bishop, Owner Operator, *Yarmouth Sand and Gravel Pleasant, Valley Trout Farm*.

Rob DeRyk, President, *Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee*

APPENDIX B

Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team Low Water Condition Conservation and Reduction Effort Communications Procedure Documentation

This document outlines the communications Procedures for the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team (CCLWRT), Low Water Condition Conservation and Reduction Efforts.

The outlined procedure is a CCLWRT communication guideline with Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA), applicable government offices their representatives, constituents, stakeholders and media. This guideline was initially implemented out of necessity, and motivated by the direction/motions and action items of the CCLWRT during the 2007 low water conditions. At this time, the Catfish Creek watershed exceeded the numeric thresholds for Level 1, 2 and 3.

1. CCLWRT Communication, with Catfish Creek Conservation Authority Prior to Team Meetings.

Prior to scheduling a CCLWRT meeting the team Chairperson communicates with Catfish Creek Conservation Authority General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, to review the low water indicators and make a recommendation regarding the need for a team meeting. This communiqué allows for the initial consultation process with the Authority agreeing forming a joint understanding of the conditions.

The Chairperson notifies the team members outlining the need for a meeting, sets a date and compiles the required low water data, maps and Agenda for dissemination and review by the team prior to the meeting.

2. General CCLWRT meeting Communication.

The CCLWRT meeting communications and protocol have been developed from meeting Action Items outlined by the Team (please see the attached sample Agenda) and are administered by an elected Chairperson and Recording Secretary.

APPENDIX C

Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team Terms of Reference Revised August 2006

Introduction:

Catfish Creek and its tributaries drain an area of approximately 490 square kilometres in the Counties of Elgin and Oxford. Much of the land base in the watershed is used for agricultural purposes and susceptible to low water conditions.

The Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team was established in August 2001, to deal with low water and drought related conditions in the Catfish Creek and Silver Creek watersheds.

The Catfish Creek Conservation Authority will provide lunch for the Low Water Response Team Members on meeting dates.

Team Mandate:

The mandate of the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team is to coordinate low water related activities, which balance efficient use, protection of existing water resources, and equity among users.

This mandate will be achieved by identifying the local water supply needs and concerns, assessing the severity of the watershed conditions, disseminating pertinent information, and promoting water conservation measures.

Specific roles and responsibilities for the members of the Water Response Team include:

- Attending meetings;
- Communicating back to their respective sectors;
- Sharing relevant data;
- Implementing drought management tools (e.g. municipal by - laws, coordinated irrigation, signage, public awareness communications);
- Confirming or determining if the watershed is in a Level 2 condition based on the monitoring network data; and
- Making recommendations of a Level 3 condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee based on watershed conditions.

Team Composition (16):

Water Response Teams will include provincial, municipal and Conservation Authority staff as well as representatives for local interests and users.

Based on the aforementioned information, the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team will consist of the following membership:

- Township of South - West Oxford
- Municipality of Central Elgin
- Town of Aylmer
- Township of Malahide
- Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Marketing Board

- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of the Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
- Elgin Federation of Agriculture
- Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
- Pleasant Valley Golf and Country Club
- Pleasant Valley Trout Farm/Yarmouth Sand & Gravel
- County of Elgin
- Elgin Soil and Crop Association
- Local Fruit & Vegetable Growers
- Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will be included on the mailing list. They will become involved should a Level 3 be confirmed.

Election of Officers:

A Chairperson and Recording Secretary will be elected from the membership of the Water Response Team at the first meeting of each year. (Provincial representatives are excluded from this selection process).

Calling of Meetings:

Meetings will be at the call of the Water Response Team Chairperson and will be held whenever the precipitation and streamflow data indicates the need to consider moving from one Level of Response to another.

Quorum:

At any meeting of the Water Response Team, a Quorum shall consist of one-third of those voting members present at a meeting.

There is no distinction in decision-making power or responsibility among members of the Water Response Team with the exception of provincial representatives, (the focus of provincial representatives is on advice rather than participating in the decision making process). Each representative should have equal opportunity for input, sharing information and accountability. It is therefore imperative that the membership of the Water Response Team accurately reflect the balance among the sectors within the watershed.

Meeting Records:

The proceedings of all meetings of the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team will be recorded by a Recording Secretary duly elected by the membership.

The Recording Secretary shall forward a copy of the Minutes to each member of the Water Response Team within 10 working days following any meeting.

Level Declaration:

The Conservation Authority and/or the Ministry of Natural Resources District will determine and confirm a Level 1 condition. A Level 1 declaration will not require the formal approval of the Water Response Team and can be declared by the Chairperson. This decision will be communicated to the other members of the Water Response Team for information purposes only.

Declaring a Level 2 condition will remain the sole responsibility of the Water Response Team based on the monitoring network data.

The Water Response Team is responsible for making recommendations of a Level 3 condition to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee based on watershed conditions which must include information as outlined in Section 3.3 of the Ontario Low Water Response document.

The decision to downgrade from a Level 2 or Level 1 condition can be enacted by the WRT Chairperson and the Conservation Authority without calling a special meeting of the Water Response Team.

Team Remuneration:

All non-government members of the Water Response Team will be eligible for a per diem and travel allowance (mileage) for attendance at meetings. The rates for per diems and mileage are based on the prevailing rates of the Conservation Authority.

Per diem and mileage reimbursement will be paid annually in December. An attendance sheet will be circulated at each meeting and eligible members MUST sign in and record their mileage to ensure payment is received.

If no Quorum is present, the per diem rate shall be paid to those eligible members in attendance.

Team Communications:

The Water Response Team Chairperson and/or Recording Secretary shall be responsible for disseminating all information and communications to the media. Individual members will be responsible for communicating back to their respective sectors.

APPENDIX D

Catfish Creek Watershed Irrigation Advisory Committee(s) Terms of Reference

“Coordinating Crop Irrigation Water Use Across the Catfish Creek watershed”

INTERPRETATION - The areas to be covered shall be limited to those within the watershed of Catfish Creek.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

This committee shall be known as the Catfish Creek watershed (hereinafter called the watershed) Irrigation Advisory Committee (IAC).

ARTICLE 2 – OBJECTIVE

1. To co-ordinate farmers' local irrigation-related issues or concerns and opinions for the promotion of any agricultural irrigation water use activity within the Catfish Creek watershed which appear to improve the welfare of the agricultural industry and those persons who take water for agricultural crops.
2. To attempt to mediate "farmer to farmer" disputes regarding irrigation water use.
3. To promote Best Management Practices to the agricultural irrigation water users from the watershed.
4. To promote cooperation amongst irrigation water users on water taking for irrigation.
5. The committee may appoint a representative to other organizations to represent the IAC and farmers when dealing with irrigation water issues, where invited to do so.

ARTICLE 3 – TERMS OF OFFICE

1. The IAC will consist of representatives of various commodities, e.g. vegetable, tobacco, ginseng, herbs, and fruit.
2. The chair will be elected by the committee members, and in the case of where more than one nominee is presented, by use of secret ballot.
3. The IAC will appoint a Secretary-Treasurer, or a Secretary and a Treasurer. The terms of office will be reviewed annually, but no length of involvement limit is required.

ARTICLE 4 – BY-LAWS

1. Any personal information pertaining to any crop irrigation water user will be kept "in house" and held confidential by all.
2. The IAC's area of interest for mediation will consist of the conservation authority's administrative boundary.
3. The IAC has no legal authority to enforce PTTW permits, regulations or anything to do with provincial legislation.

CHAIR'S ROLE

1. A Chair will be elected every two years.
2. The Chair must have been a member of the IAC for a minimum of 1 year, except for inaugural chair.
3. The Chair will approve all media releases, unless appointed to another committee member, subject to the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team approval.
4. The Chair (or designate) will represent the IAC on the watershed Low Water Response Team, where the IAC is invited to participate by the conservation authority.

SECRETARY/TREASURER

The secretary/treasurer will perform all the duties usually pertaining to such office and such additional duties as the IAC members prescribe and direct. The secretary-treasurer shall attend and keep accurate records of all proceedings for all meetings and special events.

MEETINGS

1. The Chairman will call a meeting with the members as he/she feels it is necessary, or when requested by a majority of members.
2. There may be a yearly information meeting of the IAC members and partner organizations.
3. Special meetings may be called by the IAC for which notice of five full days shall be given.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Irrigation Advisory Committee will conduct meetings for the betterment of crop irrigation water users. The committee can use resources from various ministries and agencies such as:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Conservation Authorities
Ministry of Environment
Ministry of Natural Resources
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Federations of Agriculture

In addition, any others that the IAC deems appropriate.

The IAC shall work in partnership with the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority to provide technical assistance.

ARTICLE 5 – COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

1. The IAC will consist of representatives of various commodities, which are irrigation water users within the watershed, further to which committee members will be allocated proportionately to commodity representation.
2. The IAC will annually review representation to reflect existing and new commodity interests as needed.
3. The IAC will consist of volunteers who are from the agricultural community, representing agricultural commodities and members will be elected by the existing Irrigation Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE 6 – FINANCES

1. The IAC members will be paid a per-diem and mileage in accordance with COWSEP steering committee approval as needed.
2. Progress reports, budget expenditure details, and a request for reimbursement for eligible expenses submission will be sent to the Norfolk Federation of Agriculture (NFA) Treasurer in accordance with “reporting procedures” provided by the COWSEP steering committee.
3. All individual expense claims must be signed by the Claimant and the Chairman and Treasurer (or Secretary-Treasurer), with date indicated.
4. The IAC Chair, Committee and the IAC Treasurer will review the annual budget projections by December 30, each year, and as required by the COWSEP steering committee.

ARTICLE 7 – CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

All meetings of the Irrigation Advisory Committee shall be conducted according to the Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

ARTICLE 8 – QUORUM

The Quorum for meetings of Committee members shall be 50% + 1 member, including the Chair.

ARTICLE 9 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Irrigation Advisory Committee shall close on the 31st day of December in each year.

ARTICLE 10 – EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION

The expulsion of a member or of an officer may be implemented with sufficient cause, after investigation, by approved by a 75% majority vote of IAC members present at a meeting called to consider the question. A temporary suspension may be pronounced in lieu of expulsion in the same matter.

ARTICLE 11 – AMENDMENTS

The provisions of the Terms of Reference may be amended at the Annual Business Meeting by a two-thirds vote of the IAC members present, which will be held within 60 days from the year-end, **subject to COWSEP steering committee approval.**

PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS OR MOTIONS

All resolutions or motions sent to a meeting of the IAC will be voted on. If a motion consists of a proposed amendment to "Terms of Reference", it must be moved and voted on by the IAC, **and shall be subject to COWSEP steering committee approval,** before being implemented at the Annual Business Meeting.

APPENDIX E



Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team Meeting

Date

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority

SAMPLE AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Adoption of Agenda

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
4. Adoption of Minutes:
 - a) Meeting # (last meeting)
5. Business out of Minutes
6. Current Low Water Conditions
 - a) Provincial Low Water Conditions
 - b) Confirmed Level Maps
 - c) Review of Applicable Catfish Creek Stage/Discharge Data
 - d) Review of Applicable Precipitation Data.
7. Chairpersons, Level 1, 2 Recommendation or Level 3 numeric threshold exceedance advisory to the OWDC, Low Water Committee
8. Provincial Update (MNR, MOE)
9. Low Water Round Table Discussion
10. Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team Level 1, 2 Confirmation or Level 3 numeric threshold exceedance advisory.
11. Communications
 - a) Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, Government Offices, Municipalities, constituents, stakeholders and media
12. Action Items
13. Other Business
14. Adjournment

Suggested Discussions for Agenda Items

Review of Current Low Water Conditions (Agenda Item 6):

- Provincial Low Water Levels Condition Report.
- Confirmed Level Maps, Surface Water Monitoring Centre.
- Moving Average Daily Discharge Indicator Graphs.
- Biweekly Precipitation Indicator.
- Confirmed Notice of Potential Low Water Conditions in the Catfish Creek watershed, Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

Based on the information presented above (Agenda Item 6), Chairperson recommendations (Agenda Item 7), Provincial Updates (Agenda Item 8) and Round Table Discussions (Agenda Item 9), the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team, if applicable, will confirm a Level 1, 2 and advise OWDC of Level 3 low water conditions.

3. Low Water Level 1 and 2 Confirmation Communication

General communications following a low water declaration are as follows: low water level confirmations are forwarded to the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Aylmer District, MNR Peterborough, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority and partner Municipalities.

News releases confirming declared low water level condition are circulated through the media, newspaper, television and radio. If required Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee stakeholder representatives visit water users to inform/remind them of a declared low water level and voluntary cutbacks coupled with reminders of good water usage practices.

a) CCLWRT Meeting, Motions and Action Items:

- Confirm low water conditions level with MNR in Peterborough, MNR Aylmer District, Ministry of Environment (MOE) London District Office and member Municipalities.
- Circulate news release confirming low water level advisory.
 - *Aylmer Express*
 - *St Thomas Times Journal*
 - *London Free Press*
 - Rogers TV network.
 - CJBK Radio
 - A-Channel News London
 - *The Lake Erie Beacon*

a) Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation, Communication.

- Contact watershed special interest groups i.e. Mennonite Central Community and Amish community to request support and communicate low water condition information to the respective communities.
- Request member municipalities to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use.
- Provide better education and information to the public as to the meaning and direction of Low Water Level Condition Advisories.
 - Meeting of Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee.
 - Media coverage through the Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee.
- Level 2, request MOE send letters to Water Taking Permit holders requesting for a 20% *Voluntary Reduction in Water*.
- Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee Chairperson Updates regarding Action Items arising from meetings or public discourse regarding irrigation concerns.
- Level 3 low water condition, Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team correspond with the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee confirming that the Catfish Creek watershed has met or exceeded the precipitation and average discharge thresholds for Level 3.

4. Level 3 - Conservation, Restriction and Regulation Response Framework Communications

The aforementioned communications were implemented in draft form during 2007 low water conditions. At this time, Catfish Creek watershed exceeded the numeric threshold for a Level 3. Communications submitted to the Ontario Water Directors Committee (OWDC) under the direction/motions and action items of the CCLWRT, was not to recommend a Level 3, but to "advise" the OWDC, that Catfish Creek watershed had exceeded the numeric threshold for a Level 3.

CCLWRT addressed the Level 1 and 2 requirements outlined in the *Ontario Low Water Response Manual*. Documentation outlining conservation and communication tasks undertaken to help reduce water use by CCCA Municipalities, constituents, special

interest groups and Authority conservation efforts were outlined and submitted to the OWDC.

Understanding that “A Level 3 declaration represents the most severe level condition...” the CCLWRT is obligated to ensure that a decision to “recommend” a Level 3 to the OWDC Low Water Committee is made having up to date essential information.

In 2007 and at present the CCLWRT and CCCA do not have the tools or the personnel to adequately assess and/or document social, environmental and economic impacts of low water conditions within the affected area (watershed). In order to make an informed calculated decision to provide recommendations regarding water use prioritization within the watershed, the CCLWRT in conjunction with CCCA asked the OWDC Low Water Committee to assist with resources for data compilations and computation, in order to knowledgeably assess “the impending impacts of an escalated drought condition” at present and in the future. Consequently the CCLWRT did not recommend a Level 3 condition, but instead sought assistance to help meet the Ontario Low Water Response Program Level 3 information requirements.

It would be a very good idea for the CCCA to assess water usage per industry users and crops in advance and have this information ready to apply to a Level 3 when required.

Water use restrictions may be recommended once CCLWRT and CCCA better understand the social, environmental and economic impacts within our watershed. Prioritizing water use by stakeholder groups or commodities is better evaluated when restriction effects on target goods and user groups are better understood. This very important component of the Level 3 recommendation process needs to be described by qualified persons. There is also a need for partner government agencies to disclose to the Conservation Authority information relative to the decision making process.

APPENDIX F

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority Irrigation Advisory Committee January 10, 2007

Association	Contact	Title	Phone#	Cell#	Fax#	Email	Address
OFA	Hank Wortelboer	Farmer	519-773-3626		519-773-5175		9292 Hacienda Rd, RR1 Aylmer, ON N5H 2R1
OFA	Andre Lankhuijzen	Farmer	519-765-4364	519-631-1217	519-773-2752		52396 Vienna Ln, RR1 Port Burwell, ON, N0J 1T0
OFA	Rob deRyk	Farmer	519-773-8844	519-808-0364			50501 Talbot Ln Aylmer, ON, N5H 2R1
OFA	Alvin Lindsay	Farmer	519-773-9672		519-773-9050		RR2 Aylmer, ON, N5H 2R2

OFA	Bill Classens	Farmer	519-773-5842			vclaessens@execulink.com	RR6 Aylmer ON, N5H 2R5
OFA	Mark Wales	Farmer	519-773-7352	519-773-6706		walesfarm@hotmail.com	3585 Imperial Rd RR2 Aylmer, On N5H 2R2
EFA	Donna Lunn		519-644-0316	519-644-0316		lunnfarms@amtelecom.net	
CCCA	Peter Dragunas	Water Management Technician	519-773-9037		519-765-1489	water@catfishcreek.ca	8079 Springwater Rd, RR5 Aylmer, ON, N5H 2R4

APPENDIX G



CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY WATERSHED CONDITION STATEMENT LEVEL 1 LOW WATER CONDITION

For Immediate Release

Level 1, Low Water Condition, Watershed Condition Statement

Issued on June 12, 2023 at **8:00 A.M.**

Issued by: Peter Dragunas, Water Management Technician
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
(519) 773-9037

Low Water Status



Low Water Level 1

Consistent with the Ontario Low Water Response criteria, the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) is issuing a Level 1 Low Water Condition for the CCCA Administrative Area. The Ontario Low Water Response indicators identify that the CCCA precipitation indicators coupled with the channel flow indicators are below the required Provincial seasonal average thresholds for a Level 1.

A **10% voluntary reduction** in water use is being advised to ensure that there remains an adequate water supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic life. Reducing

residential non-essential water use and utilization of Best Management Practices, Irrigation Management is recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

In compliance with applicable provincial government agencies and low water legislation, the CCCA will continue to monitor creek water levels and precipitation within the CCCA administrative area, and will provide updates when available.

As a reminder, if landowners take water (>50,000L) from either surface water or groundwater sources (sand points, wells, pumping directly from the streams or ponds) to irrigate; they are required to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Environment. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further regulation of surface and groundwater takings may be considered.



CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY WATERSHED CONDITION STATEMENT LEVEL 2 LOW WATER CONDITION

For Immediate Release

Level 2, Low Water Condition, Watershed Condition Statement

Issued on June 12, 2023 at **8:00 A.M.**

Issued by: Peter Dragunas, Water Management Technician
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
(519) 773-9037



Consistent with the Ontario Low Water Response criteria, the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) is issuing a Level 2 Low Water Condition for the CCCA Administrative Area. The Ontario Low Water Response indicators identify that the CCCA precipitation indicators coupled with the channel flow indicators are below the required Provincial seasonal average thresholds for a Level 2.

A 20% voluntary reduction in water use is being advised to ensure that there remains an adequate water supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic life. Reducing residential non-essential water use and utilization of Best Management Practices, Irrigation Management is recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

In compliance with applicable provincial government agencies and low water legislation, the CCCA will continue to monitor creek water levels and precipitation within the CCCA administrative area, and will provide updates when available.

As a reminder, if landowners take water (>50,000L) from either surface water or

groundwater sources (sand points, wells, pumping directly from the streams or ponds) to irrigate; they are required to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Environment. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further regulation of surface and groundwater takings may be considered.



CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY WATERSHED CONDITION STATEMENT LEVEL 3 LOW WATER CONDITION

For Immediate Release

Level 3, Low Water Condition, Watershed Condition Statement

Issued on June 12, 2023 at **8:00 A.M.**

Issued by: Peter Dragunas, Water Management Technician

Catfish Creek Conservation Authority

(519) 773-9037



Consistent with the Ontario Low Water Response criteria, the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) is issuing a Level 3 Low Water Condition for the CCCA Administrative Area. The Ontario Low Water Response indicators identify that the CCCA precipitation indicators coupled with the channel flow indicators are below the required Provincial seasonal average thresholds for a Level 3.

A 20% voluntary reduction in water use is being advised to ensure that there remains an adequate water supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic life. Reducing residential non-essential water use and utilization of Best Management Practices, Irrigation Management is recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

In compliance with applicable provincial government agencies and low water legislation, the CCCA will continue to monitor creek water levels and precipitation within the CCCA administrative area, and will provide updates when available.

As a reminder, if landowners take water (>50,000L) from either surface water or groundwater sources (sand points, wells, pumping directly from the streams or ponds) to irrigate; they are required to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Environment. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further regulation of surface and groundwater takings may be considered.

APPENDIX H

Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team SAMPLE Level 3 Low Water Condition Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation

The information provided in this Low Water Condition Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation is being submitted under the direction/motions and action items of the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team (CCLWRT). This information is not a recommendation for a Level III Low Water Advisory but to “advise” the OWDC, Low Water Committee that the Catfish Creek watershed has exceeded the numeric thresholds for a Level III.

As outlined in the letter of August 10, 2007, to the OWDC, Low Water Committee, the CCLWRT requires more information to make an informed decision regarding a Level III recommendation. “Understanding that “A Level III declaration represents the most severe level condition...”, and “based on the recommendations of the local WRT and advice of the provincial field representatives present at the August 8th Low Water Response Team Meeting, the CCLWRT is obligated to ensure that a decision to “recommend” a Level III to the OWDC Low Water Committee is made having updated essential information”. At present the information to make an informed decision regarding the various effects of a Level III on the watershed are unavailable.

The Ontario Water Directors Committee (OWDC) Low Water Committee is responsible for making declarations of a Level III condition based on the recommendations of the local WRT and advice of the provincial field representatives. As per the letter of August 10, 2007, the CCLWRT is not recommending a Level III but instead is seeking assistance “To help us meet the Ontario Low Water Response Program Level III information requirements. The CCLWRT in conjunction with the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority is asking the OWDC Low Water Committee to assist with resources for data compilations in order to assess “the impending impacts of an escalated drought condition” at present and in the future”.

At the August 8th Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team Meeting, the CCLWRT addressed the fundamental requirements outlined in the Ontario Low Water Response Manual Section 3.3 Response Framework, Level III Conservation, Restriction and Regulation. The documentation outlining the tasks undertaken to help reduce water use through various Municipal and Authority conservation efforts are outlined in the attached document.

Conservation and Reduction Efforts

Section 3.3 Response Framework

Level III - Conservation, Restriction, Regulation

1. The WRT has clearly implemented and documented the conservation and reduction efforts taken through the Level I and II strategies and can demonstrate that the majority of the water users have participated in these efforts (including bylaw restrictions by municipalities on non-essential uses).
 - √ Efforts undertaken by the CCLWRT are outlined below.
 - It has been identified several times through various committees (COWSEP, WRT, DWSP) that the MOE has the database of water users and that the MOE are the keepers of this database for privacy reasons (FIPA) and at present the MOE is not distributing the information. An action item from the last WRT meeting was to acquire a list of Water Permit Holders. The request from the Chairperson of the Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee was rejected and FIPA was cited as the basis.
 - Due to the aforementioned circumstances, the WRT is unable to contact the water users and therefore is unable to demonstrate that the majority of the water users have participated in these efforts.

Conservation and Reduction Efforts

July 5, 2007

(from Minutes of meeting)

√ Indicates completed Action Items.

b) Current Low Water Conditions:

The Chairperson referred to the latest Confirmed Level Map produced by the Surface Water Monitoring Centre which indicated that the Long Point Region Conservation Authority is the only watershed that has officially declared Level I low water conditions to date.

He then reviewed the precipitation and discharge graphs for the Catfish Creek watershed which both indicated Level II low water conditions.

The Water Response Team expressed concern that the low water information being generated by the Ministry of Natural Resources is only available on a monthly basis. Low water conditions in a smaller watershed like Catfish Creek can change quite quickly and requires more timely data in order to make better informed decisions.

c) Level I Confirmation:

After considering all the available low water indicator data, the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team decided to declare a Level I condition for the watershed.

This declaration encourages voluntary water conservation with a target reduction of water use of 10 percent.

d) Motions and Action Items:

- ✓ Circulated news release confirming Level I low water conditions.
- ✓ Confirm Level I low water conditions with the Ministry of Natural Resources in Peterborough.
- ✓ Contact the Long Point Region Conservation Authority to obtain data base information for plotting the Moving Seven and 30-Day Averages.
- ✓ Send out low water information by e-mail to team members prior to the meetings;
- ✓ Using the Moving Seven-Day Average to track the low water trends in Catfish Creek more accurately.

e) Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation, Level I

- ✓ Media Coverage
 - Water alert issued, *St Thomas Times Journal*, July 6, 2007.
 - Level 1 water advisory issued for Catfish Creek, *Aylmer Express*, July 11, 2007.
 - Region facing low-water alert, *London Free Press*, July 9, 2007.
 - The region has seen only occasional rainfall in some areas, causing farmers to worry, *London Free Press*, July 13, 2007.
 - Low Water Condition, *Aylmer Express*, July 18/ 2007.
 - Rogers TV network, low water condition interview.

July 26, 2007

(from Minutes of meeting)

✓ Indicates completed Action Items.

1. Current Low Water Conditions:

The Chairperson made reference to the following list of low water indicator resource materials included with the Agenda.

- Provincial Low Water Levels Condition Report;
- Confirmed Level Maps produced by the Surface Water Monitoring Centre;
- Moving Average Daily Discharge Indicator Graphs generated from data collected at the Sparta streamflow gauge;
- Biweekly Precipitation Indicator Graphs for the months of June and July; and
- Confirmed Notice of Potential Level II Low Water Conditions in the Catfish Creek watershed received from the Ministry of Natural Resources

2. Level I Confirmation:

After considering all the available low water indicator information, the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team decided to declare a Level II condition for the watershed.

A Level II declaration encourages voluntary water conservation with a target reduction of water use of 20 percent.

3. Motions and Action Items:

- √ Circulate the Level II Low Water Conditions Bulletin to the media as amended;
- √ Confirm Level II low water conditions with the Ministry of Natural Resources in Peterborough;
- √ Marcel Anseeuw to contact the Mennonite Central Community to request their support to communicate the information on low water conditions to the Mennonite community;
- √ Request the member municipalities to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use;
 - Municipality of Central Elgin, Low Water Advisories, *St. Thomas Times Journal*, August 4, 2007.
 - Malahide implements watering restrictions as creek and stream levels drop drastically, *Aylmer Express*, August 8, 2007.
- √ Provide better education and information to the public as to the meaning and direction of Low Water Level Condition Advisories;
 - Notice of Meeting, Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee, *Aylmer Express*, August 1, 2007.
 - Attention water users in the Catfish Creek watershed, Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee, *Aylmer Express*, August 8, 2007.
- √ Compile requirements for recommending a Level III declaration from the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee
 - Please see Completed Action Items or Motions, Requirements for Recommending Level III.
- √ Rob deRyk to request a PTTW mailing list from MOE;
 - Rejected by MOE, please refer to Ryan Smith e-mail July 26, 07.
- × Investigate water use permit mapping by volume and source
 - Not complete at this time, need more information regarding the intent of the mapping, many combinations and permutations to investigate for report.

4. Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation, Level II

- √ Media Coverage
 - Water levels force alerts, *London Free Press*, July 27, 2007.
 - Rain desperately needed in East Elgin fields and creeks, *Aylmer Express*, July 18, 2007.
 - Catfish level prompts plea, *St. Thomas Journal*, July 27, 2007.
 - Level 2 Advisory – Low Water Condition, *Aylmer Express*, July 25, 2007.
 - CJBK Radio low water condition interview, aired 4 pm August 31, 2007.
 - A-Channel News London, low water condition interview, aired 6 pm news August 31, 2007
 - Water conservation urged, *Aylmer Express*, August 1, 2007.
 - Notice of Meeting, Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee, *Aylmer Express*, August 1, 2007.
 - Water use limits, not rain, forecast, *London Free Press*, July 31, 2007.
 - Low Water Advisories, *The Lake Erie Beacon*, August 3, 2007.
 - Storm too brief to rescue farm fields, *London Free Press*, August 3, 2007.
 - Municipality of Central Elgin, Low Water Advisories, *St. Thomas Times Journal*, August 4, 2007.

August 8, 2007

(from Minutes of meeting)

√ Indicates completed Action Items.

1. Current Low Water Conditions:

The Chairperson referred the Water Response Team to the Provincial Low Water Levels Conditions Report, Confirmed Level Maps, and Precipitation and Discharge Indicator Graphs attached to the Agenda.

2. Level III Numeric Confirmation:

The precipitation and average discharge numbers both clearly indicated that the Catfish Creek watershed is currently below the Level III thresholds.

Based strictly on the numeric information presented, the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team confirmed Level III low water conditions.

3. Level III Recommendations:

The Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team participated in a lengthy discussion regarding the potential impacts of forwarding a recommendation onto the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee to declare a Level III condition for the Catfish Creek watershed without first having all the necessary documentation to address the following list of requirements outlined in the Ontario Low Water Response Manual.

1. The Water Response Team has clearly implemented and documented the conservation and reduction efforts taken through the Level I and II strategies and can demonstrate that the majority of the water users have participated in these efforts (including bylaw restrictions by the municipalities on non-essential uses).
2. Any significant social, environmental and economic impacts arising from current low water conditions have been documented and adequately described.
3. Recommendations have been provided on properties for water use restrictions and other reduction activities within the watershed.

It was determined by the Water Response Team that there had not been enough background information compiled to make a solid recommendation to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee to declare a Level III condition at this time.

The Water Response Team decided to address this dilemma through the following actions.

4. Motions and Action Items:

- √ That, the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team send a letter to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee confirming that the Catfish Creek watershed has met the precipitation and average discharge thresholds for Level III; and further,

That, the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee be requested to provide the necessary financial and human resources needed by the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team to fulfill the list of

requirements that will support the recommendation of a Level III as outlined in the Ontario Low Water Response Manual.

- ✓ That, the London District Ministry of the Environment be requested to provide the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority with a copy of the database that identifies both active and expired Water Taking Permits and Permit Holders in the Catfish Creek watershed; and further,

That, the Ministry of the Environment be asked to provide the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team with information on the conservation measures that have been implemented by the Permit To Take Water Holders to achieve the target 10 and 20 percent voluntary reduction in water use during the Level I and Level II conditions.

- ✓ Send a letter to the Ontario Water Directors' Committee Low Water Committee re: Motion #WRT14/2007; and
- ✓ Forward a request to the London District Ministry of the Environment re: Motion# WRT15/2007
- × Catfish Creek Conservation Authority technical staff to assess the flows in Bradley Creek in response to the request from the Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee;

5. Conservation and Reduction Effort Documentation, Level II

- ✓ Media Coverage
 - Malahide implements watering restrictions as creek and stream levels drop drastically, *Aylmer Express*, August 8, 2007.
 - Attention water users in the Catfish Creek watershed, Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee, *Aylmer Express*, August 8, 2007.
 - Municipal water conservation, *Aylmer Express*, August 8, 2007.
 - Level 3 looms in Catfish watershed, *St. Thomas Times Journal*, August 11, 2007.

Additional Conservation and Reduction Efforts

- Requested the member municipalities to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use through letters to council.
- MOE sent letters to Water Taking Permit holders requesting for a 20% *Voluntary Reduction in Water Taking* (July 27, 2007).
- Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee Update:
Rob deRyk, Chairperson of the Catfish Creek Irrigation Advisory Committee updated the Water Response Team on their meeting held on August 1, 2007.

Rob noted that there had been two newspaper ads placed in the *Aylmer Express* recently regarding the current Level II water conditions and the use of Best Management Practices during irrigation to help lessen the impact on local water resources.

The Water Response Team was informed that two members of the IAC had recently met with one landowner to discuss the restriction of water flow caused by excessive irrigation on his farm. Catfish Creek Conservation Authority technical staff will be asked to check the subject site to determine whether a sustainable flow has been reinstated.

- **Aggregate Resources**
To my knowledge none of my active pits within this watershed are large scale water users (i.e. washing etc).
I do have a few operations which are permitted to excavate below the water table. Again, to my knowledge none of these sites are permitted to dewater/drain or divert any water offsite. Predominately, the only use of water in the operations within the Catfish watershed would be for dust suppression.
This activity would require a fairly minor amount of water taking (if any if the water is brought from off-site) and is required to prevent any dust from emanating from the operation.
One option to minimize the use of water would be to apply another MOE approved chemical dust suppressant.
Any further questions or clarifications please let me know,

Emmilia Kuisma H.BSc.
Aggregate Resources Inspector

- The County of Oxford has decided to restrict the use of outdoor watering to one day / week which will help us meet the 20% reduction goal of the Level 2 requests that have been issued recently. Attached is a copy of our media release and the notice being sent to approximately 32,000 properties. Feel free to post this on your website. If you have any questions let me know.

Todd Gregg, CET
Water-Wastewater Operations Coordinator

Section 3.3 Response Framework

Level III - Conservation, Restriction, Regulation

2. Any significant social, environmental and economic impacts arising from current low water conditions have been documented and adequately described.
 - The CCLWRT does not have the tools and are unable to assess impacts the present low water conditions are having socially, environmentally and economically in order to adequately document them. As discussed at the WRT meeting this is a very important component of the recommendation and needs to be described by qualified professional person, the CA nor the WRT has the expertise to adequately describe this.
 - There has been no documentation of the social, environmental or economic impacts arising from current low water conditions nor can they be adequately described without an analysis outlining the effects of drought on agriculture in the watershed and all the related impacts.
3. Recommendations have been provided on priorities for water use restrictions and other reduction activities within the watershed. Following a Level III declaration, the OWDC Low Water Committee is obligated to ensure that:
 - Water use restrictions may be recommended once we better understand the social, environmental and economic impacts within our watershed. Prioritizing water use; which group requires priority, what commodity groups needs the volume, is better evaluated when the effects are understood regarding water needs per commodity.
4. Any significant social, environmental and economic impacts arising from the recommended water use restrictions have been documented and adequately described.

- The social, environmental and economic impacts arising from the recommended water use restrictions will be better understood once the aforementioned are completed.

If you have any questions concerning the *Conservation and Reduction Efforts* outlined or the request for additional resources, please do not hesitate to contact Peter Dragunas, Chairperson, Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team, as soon as possible.

Peter Dragunas, Chairperson
Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
8079 Springwater Road
RR #5 Aylmer, ON
N5H 2R4
Phone: (519) 773-9037, Ext. 19
Fax: (519) 765-1489
Email: water@catfishcreek.ca

APPENDIX I

Landowner, Municipal and Applicable Government Organisation Correspondance



CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

8079 Springwater Road, RR# 5, Aylmer, Ontario N5H 2R4

PHONE: (519) 773-9037 • FAX: 519-765-1489

e-mail: admin@catfishcreek.ca • www.catfishcreek.ca

May 28, 2012

Dear Landowner:

RE: Water Taking During Low Water Periods

The Catfish Creek **Water Response Team** (WRT) is advising direct stream sourced Permit To Take Water permit holders that low water conditions in the watershed have changed from Level 1 to Level 2 and this may affect your permitted water taking volume and rate. Your permit already requires you to adjust your actual taking volumes and rates downward from the otherwise maximum permitted levels specified in your permit so that stream flow, for example, is not reduced to a rate that would interfere with downstream uses of the water or with the natural functions of the stream. I am writing this letter as a component of the Low Water Response Program and as a request from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment now to encourage you to use water conservation measures to reduce demand on water sources at this time.

Water is essential for the economic sustainability of Ontario and local communities. The Ministry of the Environment regulates water taking to ensure fair sharing and protect the natural environment. Your permitted water taking cannot occur at the expense of other reasonable uses. By complying with your permit, you fulfill your stewardship duty to conserve the water that belongs to everyone.

Even though your current volume and rates of water taking should not be causing interference, I am asking you to implement water conservation measures now to avoid potential problems during this Level 2 period. I am hoping you can reduce your taking by a total of 20 per cent, namely another 10 ten per cent reduction that you are asked to make when the WRT declared Level 1 low water condition earlier. Working together, we can avoid unnecessary impacts on downstream users during periods of low-water levels.

I encourage you to contact your local WRT at Catfish Creek Conservation Authority to confirm with them the additional water conservation action you will take. The WRT needs your information to help assess the situation, and it is very important for you to communicate with them now.

If this dry spell continues, the WRT may need to ask the Ontario Water Directors' Low Water Committee to use their regulatory authority to stop water taking so that essential water supplies for ecosystem functions, drinking water or firefighting are not at risk. If you believe your water taking may be impacting any other water supplies, please contact me directly so we can discuss options which may be available to help you get through this period. Please do not risk taking water if it could result in someone lodging a complaint against you during this dry spell.

I am including below for your information some websites that contain information about water management during times of low water conditions.

http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/Publication/MNR_E002322P.html

http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_164583.html

<http://www.conservationontario.ca/>

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/pttw.htm>

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/publications/3784e.pdf>

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/cons/3781-e.pdf>

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/programs/3109e.pdf>

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Peter Dragunas
Water Management Technician
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
Tel: 519-773-9037
Fax: 519-765-1489

Please feel free to contact me for advice about getting through this low water period without causing problems for others in your community or putting essential water supplies at risk.

*Mission Statement: "To communicate and deliver resource management services and programs
In order to achieve social and ecological harmony for the watershed*

August 10, 2007



Ministry of Natural Resources

615 John St. N.
Aylmer, ON
N5H 2S8

Attention: Dave Richards, Acting Planning and Information Management Supervisor

Dear Sir:

The Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team (CCLWRT) would like to take this opportunity to advise the Ontario Water Directors Committee (OWDC), Low Water Committee that Level III numeric thresholds have been exceeded for the Catfish Creek watershed. The Ontario Low Water Response indicators identify that Catfish Creek precipitation and flows are below the required provincial seasonal thresholds, for the period ending August 7th.

Understanding that "A Level III declaration represents the most severe level condition...", and "based on the recommendations of the local WRT and advice of the provincial field representatives, the CCLWRT is obligated to ensure that a decision to "recommend" a Level III to the OWDC Low Water Committee is made having updated essential information".

At the July 26th meeting of the CCLWRT, Dave Richards (MNR) provided the CCLWRT with the enclosed background information to recommend a Level III. Please recognize that either the CCLWRT or the Conservation Authority have the financial or human resources available to extrapolate or compile the data needed to make an informed decision regarding a Level III recommendation.

To help us meet the Ontario Low Water Response Program Level III information requirements the CCLWRT in conjunction with the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority is asking the OWDC Low Water Committee to assist with resources for data compilations in order to assess "the impending impacts of an escalated drought condition" at present and in the future.

If you have any questions or require additional information concerning our request please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned as soon as possible.

Sincerely
Peter Dragunas, Chairperson
Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team

Enc. 6

July 30, 2007

Lloyd J. Perrin,
Director of Physical Services
Municipality of Central Elgin
450 Sunset Dr.
St. Thomas, ON
N5R 5V1

Dear Lloyd:

Consistent with the Ontario Low Water Response criteria, and in conjunction with the CCCA Water Response Team (WRT), the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, has issued a Level 2 Low Water Advisory Condition for the Catfish Creek watershed.

We are eagerly requesting all water users and residents of the Catfish Creek watershed to limit non-essential water use such as private swimming pools, lawn watering, public and private fountains and vehicle washing, to ensure there remains an adequate supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic ecosystems.

We are asking our Authority Member Municipalities, to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use. Limiting non-essential water use through municipally directed water conservation programs is highly recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

Coupled with precipitation and flow observations, the CCCA along with partner government agencies are escalating the monitoring of water use, and will provide updates when available or required. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further regulation of surface and groundwater takings will be considered.

Your co-operation is greatly appreciated and I would like to thank you in advance for your attention on this matter.

Peter Dragunas
Water Management Technician

July 26, 2007

Randall Millard
Clerk / C.A.O.
Corporation of the Township of Malahide
87 John St. S.
Aylmer, ON
N5H 2C3

Dear Randall:

Consistent with the Ontario Low Water Response criteria, and in conjunction with the CCCA Water Response Team (WRT), the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, is issuing a Level 2 Low Water Advisory Condition for the Catfish Creek watershed.

We are eagerly requesting all water users and residents of the Catfish Creek watershed to limit non-essential water use such as private swimming pools, lawn watering, public and private fountains and vehicle washing, to ensure there remains an adequate supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic ecosystems.

We are asking our Authority Member Municipalities, to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use. Limiting non-essential water use through municipally directed water conservation programs is highly recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

Coupled with precipitation and flow observations, the CCCA along with partner government agencies are escalating the monitoring of water use, and will provide updates when available or required. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further

regulation of surface and groundwater takings will be considered.

Your co-operation is greatly appreciated and I would like to thank you in advance for your attention on this matter.

Peter Dragunas
Water Management Technician

August 1, 2007

Mayor and Council
Town of Aylmer
46 Talbot Street, West
Aylmer, Ontario
N5H 1J7

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council:

Please be advised that the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team (CCLWRT) has issued a Level II Low Water Advisory Condition for the Catfish Creek watershed in compliance with the Ontario Low Water Response Program.

We are eagerly requesting all water users and residents of the Catfish Creek watershed to limit non-essential water use such as filling private swimming pools, lawn watering, public and private fountains and vehicle washing, to ensure there remains an adequate supply for essential use and to sustain aquatic ecosystems.

We are asking our Member Municipalities, to heighten the restriction of residential non-essential water use at this time. Limiting non-essential water use through municipal directed water conservation initiatives is highly recommended to help lessen the impact on water resources.

Coupled with precipitation and flow observations, the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) along with partner government agencies are escalating the monitoring of water use, and will provide updates when available or required. If conditions continue to deteriorate, further regulation of surface and groundwater takings will be considered.

Your co-operation regarding this matter is greatly appreciated.

Peter Dragunas
Water Management Technician

APPENDIX J

News Release

August 22, 2002
For Immediate Release

Contact: Peter Dragunas, Water Management Technician,
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
cccawater@execulink.com

Below average rainfall, combined with above normal temperatures have continued in August. This is resulting in further stress on the streams in the Catfish Creek watershed, and is affecting water quality in the larger creeks. As the weather trends have continued, water levels have approached record lows.

The Water Response Team (WRT) for the Catfish Creek Watershed held a meeting on August 21, to review the state of the water conditions. From the information given, the WRT has assigned a Level 2 Drought condition to the Catfish Creek Watershed. As such, an additional 10% voluntary reduction in water use (totalling a 20% reduction) is being advised to ensure that there is adequate supply for essential uses.

Also, the public is reminded that if they take water from either a surface water or a groundwater source (sandpoints, wells, pumping directly from the streams), they may be required to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Environment. If conditions continue to deteriorate, the Province may consider further regulation of surface and groundwater takings.

The Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA) is continuing to monitor water levels and precipitation, and will provide updates as required. CCCA has established a "Water Response Team" in conjunction with the Province, member municipalities, and local

agricultural and industrial group representatives to improve drought response in the watershed.

For more information on the Level 2 low water advisory, the Low Water Response Plan, and streamflow conditions across the Catfish Creek Watershed, contact Ryan Smith, Water Management Technician, at the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority.