



October 13, 2022

NOTICE

Public Comment Opportunity ***Proposed 2023 Fee Policy and Schedules***

Background

The Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority (SSMRCA) charges fees to assist with the cost of delivering programs and services that are not adequately covered or may be ineligible for provincial grant funding, and that assist in the reduction of the general levy. The fees are an estimation of staff time, travel, and materials costs to provide a service. It is essential for the SSMRCA to charge a fee reflective of the full costs associated with the service provided.

On January 1, 2023, the *Conservation Authorities Act* will be amended by repealing 21 (1) (m.1) which related to the power of Conservation Authorities to charge fees for services approved by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry and enacting section 21.2 (1)-(12) “Fees for Programs and Services”. Subsection (1) enables the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to determine the classes of programs and services in respect of which a Conservation Authority may charge a fee and (2) requires the minister to publish a List in a policy document. The Minister published the list through the Policy: Minister’s list of classes of programs and services in respect of which conservation authorities may charge a fee (“Minister’s List) on April 11, 2022. Conservation Authorities may only charge a fee for a program or service that it provides if it is included in this List.

Section 21.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* sets out that every Conservation Authority shall prepare and adopt both a written **fee policy** and **fee schedules** with respect to the fees that it charges for the programs and services it provides. Upon enactment of the new Section 21.2, on January 1, 2023, all Conservation Authorities will be required to have a fee policy and fee schedules approved by their Board.

The Fee Policy as discussed, must include the following:

- The Conservation Authority’s Fee Schedule;
- The frequency within which the fee policy will be reviewed by the Authority;
- The process for carrying out a review of the Policy, including rules for giving notice of the review and of any changes as a result of the review; and,
- The circumstances in which a person may request that the Authority reconsider a fee that was charged to the person and the procedures applicable to the reconsideration.



PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICY

- Revised to reflect the new provincial regulatory requirements.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO FEE SCHEDULES:

Schedule 1 – Regulation and Permitting Fees

- Some of the regulation fees were increased by 3% while other fees remained unchanged.
- Larger fee increases as indicated in the schedule were reviewed with the intent of covering staff time and expenses.

Schedule 2 – General Service Fees

- Staff charge out rates have generally increased to cover the costs of increases in salary and benefits and associated expenses.
- Conservation Lands charges are for services such as building or property rentals and are considered nonmandatory.
- Fee increases are considerate of staff time expended for the services

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS:

Comments must be submitted in writing to the attention of Corrina Barrett at cbarrett@ssmrca.ca or by mail no later than **Monday November 14th, 2022** to:

Attention: Corrina Barrett, General Manager
Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority
1100 Fifth Line East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6J8