



NORTH BAY - MATTAWA  
**CONSERVATION  
AUTHORITY**

1972-2022 | 50 Years of Conservation



# Annual Report 2022

*Photo "Feel the flow! Eau Claire Gorge Conservation Area"*

*Photo Credit: David Ellingwood*

## Message from Dave Britton, Board Chair

In 2022, the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of watershed management. The year's events were an opportunity to look at our beginnings, where we are now, and where we are headed with the changing times including an updated Conservation Authorities Act, climate change, and a post-pandemic future.

Our 10 member municipalities rely on NBMCA's science-based expertise and policies to inform decision making surrounding sustainable, well-planned development and the health of our valuable water resources while protecting people and property from natural hazards. Through municipal proclamations, our municipalities honoured NBMCA's 50<sup>th</sup> by acknowledging the expertise, advice, and leadership of NBMCA through the critical services it provides.

Through 2022, I had the opportunity to lead a collaborative, strong governance structure that guided NBMCA through challenging times. We ended 2022 with changes at our Board of Directors table, following the municipal elections. I give thanks to departing Board members for their contribution to the success of NBMCA. We're looking forward to the next term with a healthy mix of seasoned, returning members and new faces keen to fulfill their role under the Conservation Authorities Act.

NBMCA thanked our long-time CAO Brian Tayler who retired in June 2022, leaving a solid foundation for important watershed-based programs. We welcomed Chitra Gowda as the new CAO to help NBMCA navigate legislative and regulatory changes to the operation of conservation authorities in Ontario and move the operations into a new, post pandemic future, while managing a changing climate.

Staff are recognized for their immense efforts to deliver and support our programs throughout Nipissing and Parry Sound districts in NBMCA's jurisdiction. Their strong dedication and hard work in all program areas are applauded, especially through the pandemic and with significantly increased demands.

NBMCA couldn't do the important work of protecting our watershed without collaborating and partnering with community groups, municipalities, agencies, government, environmental stewardship groups, Indigenous organizations, donors, property owners, and dedicated individuals some of whom we had the pleasure of honouring as "Watershed Heroes" during our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities.

Together, our Board, staff, and community partners continue to foster the health of the watersheds and communities within NBMCA's jurisdiction for our future generations.



**Dave Britton, Chair**  
North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority

## Message from Chitra Gowda, CAO

The NBMCA works proactively with member municipalities and all levels of government, residents, community groups, the development industry, and many others. Our programs and services support safe development along with watershed management and economic growth by taking a coordinated, collaborative and balanced approach. The NBMCA is built on values of action, collaboration, innovation, transparency and integrity.

I joined the NBMCA mid-year as we emerged from the global pandemic, an unprecedented time. Now, more than ever, it has become clear that our conservation areas are critical for the health and wellbeing of our communities. Staff showed resiliency during difficult times and provided excellent customer service through significant increases in planning, Section 28 and septic system permit applications. Staff continued floodplain mapping and erosion control projects and resumed watershed monitoring activities. Staff changes were made to support increased activities in planning and permitting programs. The Mattawa River Canoe Race was successfully held after a hiatus of two years due to the pandemic. Our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities highlighted the importance of watershed management across the North Bay-Mattawa region. We continued our partnership with the Laurentian Ski Hill and Snowboarding Club.

I am grateful for the leadership and direction provided by the Board of Directors as I came on board; and for the dedication of staff, through changing times and circumstances including climate change. I enjoyed the start of getting to know key stakeholders across the watershed, in an effort to better understand the local environments, needs and priorities.

In 2022, the Conservation Authorities Act regulations saw further changes through four new regulations to enhance transparency, to set up a process for 2024 and beyond to estimate levy amounts, budget and apportionment methods, and to change the role of conservation authorities in plan input and review and Section 28 permitting. Staff have begun working on implementing these changes. The following sections highlight the work and accomplishments of NBMCA staff in 2022.



**Chitra Gowda**  
**Chief Administrative Officer, Secretary Treasurer**  
North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority

### **OUR MISSION**

The North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority provides leadership through coordination of watershed planning, implementation of resource management programs and promotion of conservation awareness in cooperation with others.

### **OUR VISION**

Providing effective leadership in the management of our watersheds where partners and communities are actively engaged in balancing human needs with the needs of the natural environment.

### **OUR VALUES**

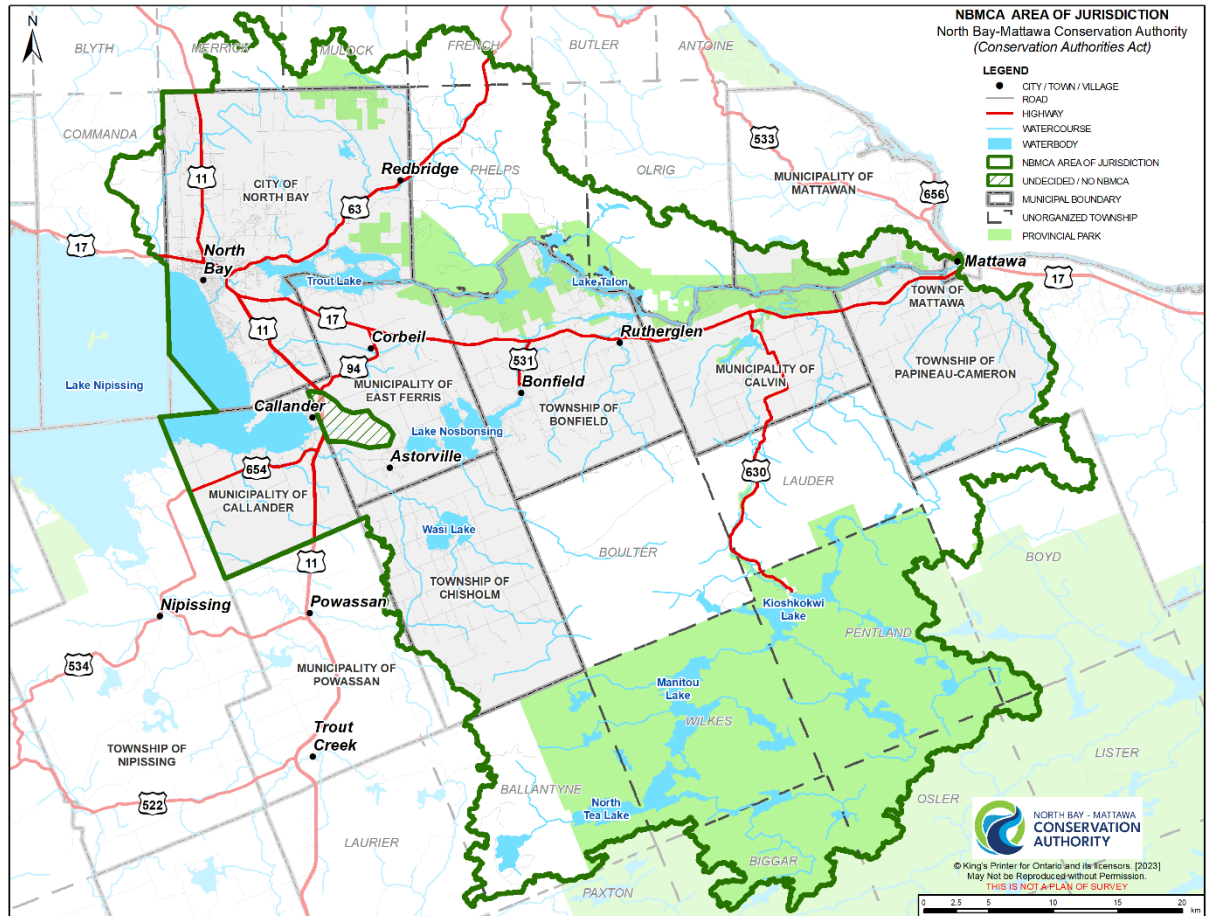
- **Action:** Establish priorities and undertake initiatives based on desired results, ensuring that actions or decisions are undertaken individually and collectively in an accountable and timely manner.
- **Collaboration:** Work together with our partners and communities to strengthen our approach and create synergy for improving watershed management.
- **Innovation:** Be a leader in science-based integrated watershed management that accommodates taking new approaches to our business.
- **Transparency:** Communicate and share information and ideas using appropriate language and outreach techniques to bring about clear understanding.
- **Integrity:** Ensure that actions or decisions do not compromise our fundamental values or principles.





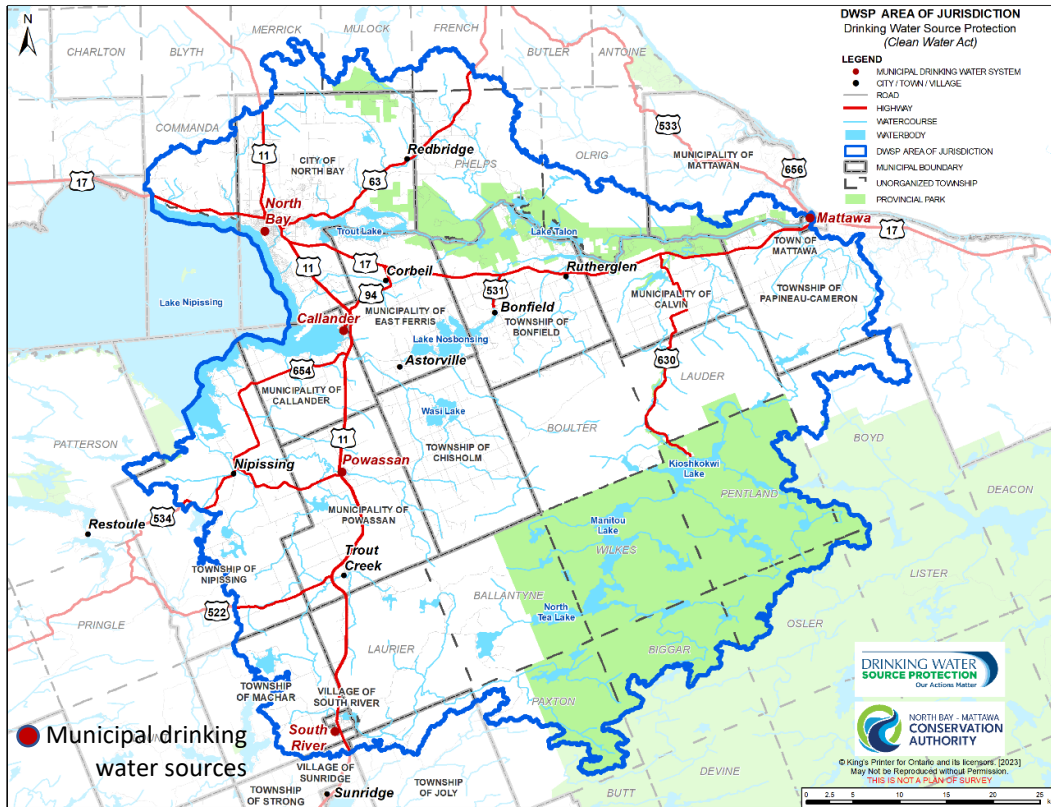
The NBMCA has responsibilities under three legislation:

- Conservation Authorities Act – see jurisdiction in Map 1
- Clean Water Act (2006) – see jurisdiction in Map 2
- Ontario Building Code Part 8 – see jurisdiction in Map 3.

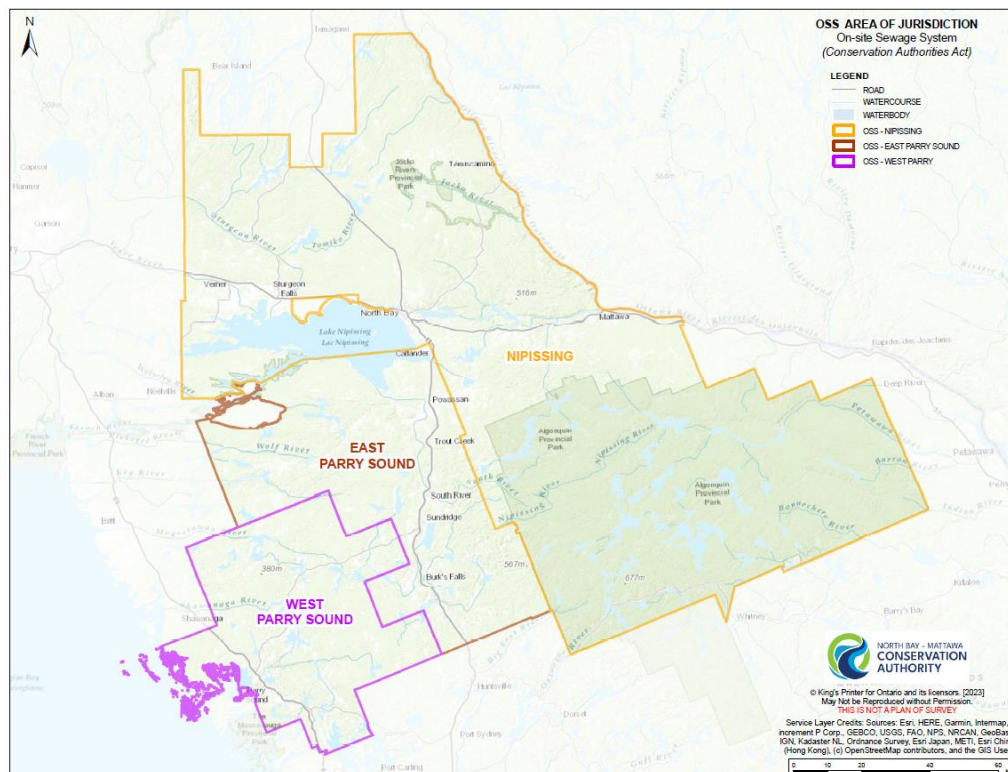


Map 1: NBMCA Jurisdiction under the Conservation Authorities Act

Map 2: NBMCA Jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act, 2006



Map 3: NBMCA Jurisdiction under the Ontario Building Code Part 8 (On-site Sewage Systems)



## Corporate Services

Corporate Services supports the whole conservation authority, enabling it to perform its functions and deliver programs in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Corporate Services is comprised of these key elements:

- Administration of staff and operations, including managing changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and related changes
- Governance (Board of Directors, related committees) support
- Strategic Planning
- Finance and Budgeting
- Human Resources
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Information Technology (IT).

Through 2022, the Corporate Services team managed a budget of approximately \$4.65 million, with a staff complement of around 20 staff plus 3 summer students. The team supported a governance Board of 12 members representing 10 municipalities, as well as its Executive Committee. The Source Protection Authority Board's functions were also supported by staff.

The Corporate Services team continued to manage NBMCA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through policies, program and budget modifications, remote working, virtual meetings, etc. The team supported sound budgeting and audit processes; and managed human resources needs including successional planning and reassessing staffing complement to meet increased business demands. A pay equity and market wage rate analysis were conducted and implemented. The strategic planning process began with an initial discussion among staff in fall 2022.

The Conservation Authorities Act changes made in 2021 were implemented in 2022 as required by the province, including developing the first draft of an inventory of all our programs and services. As well, NBMCA's CAO provided advice to the Province as a member of the Minister's Conservation Authorities Working Group. More changes were made to the Conservation Authorities Act and through Bill 23. Staff analyzed the proposals and communicated the key points to the Board and municipalities in a timely manner.

GIS staff provide online mapping for both internal use and for the public's convenience. GIS services assist in planning and development, septic systems program applications, lands management, drinking water source protection, floodplain mapping projects, and preparation of the 2023 watershed report cards.

All of NBMCA's information and data were migrated to a new server to provide better storage, security and accessibility for staff and clients. In house IT services provided include software licencing, equipment purchases, troubleshooting, and more.

General information about NBMCA can be viewed here <https://www.nbmca.ca/about-us/>

## Planning & Development

NBMCA Planning & Development <http://www.nbmca.ca/planning-permits/>

NBMCA Planning and Development Services helps protect people and property from flooding and erosion while protecting the health and integrity of our watercourses, wetlands, shorelines and valley lands. In addition to protecting our watershed, NBMCA works with homeowners, developers and municipalities to accommodate our human, economic and social needs through environmentally responsible development.

2022 saw an unprecedented level of permit applications in the on-site sewage system and development permitting programs that repeated the record-breaking demand for services during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Additional staff were hired, and processes were streamlined with the support of new technology and software to ensure our service commitment and timelines continue to be met. Staff also completed 110 mandatory maintenance inspections of septic systems within 120 metres of a watercourse identified in the Source Protection Plan as having a potential impact on a municipal drinking water system.

### 2022 Permit Activity - Member Municipalities

Municipality	Plan Review Comments	DIA Permits Issued	Sewage System Permits Issued
Bonfield	14 ↓	9 ↑	31 ↑
Callander	23 ↓	14 ↑	12 ↓
Calvin	8 ↑	0 ↓	9 ↑
Chisholm	21 ↓	6 ↑	20 ↑
East Ferris	31 ↓	20 ↑	74 ↑
Mattawa	0 ↓	2 ↓	0
Mattawan	2 ↑	1 ↑	6 ↑
North Bay	58 ↓	64 ↑	29 ↑
Papineau-Cameron	19 ↑	4	11 ↓
Powassan	0	0	16 ↓

↓ Decrease from 2021

↑ Increase from 2021



**Municipal Plan Review Comments**

# of Comments 2022	166	-35.41%
# of Comments 2021	257	
Average # of Comments /yr (1996-2022)	149	
Highest # of Comments/yr (1996-2022)	257 (2021)	

**OSS Planning Comments**

# of Comments 2022	80	-2.44%
# of Comments 2021	82	
Average # of Comments /yr (1998-2022)	49	
Highest # of Comments/yr (1998-2022)	87(2005)	

**Section 28 Development Permits**

# of Permits 2022	120	-8.40%
# of Permits 2021	131	
Average # of Permits/yr (1998-2022)	100	
Highest # of Permits/yr (1998-2022)	142 (2004)	

**NBMCA Sewage System Permits**

# of Permits 2022	910	-18.68%
# Permits 2021	1119	
Average # of Permits/yr (1996-2022)	760	
Highest # of Permits/yr (1996-2022)	1119 (2021)	



## Integrated Watershed Management

NBMCA Watershed Management - <http://www.nbmca.ca/watershed-management/>

NBMCA undertakes an Integrated Watershed Management approach that requires us to manage human activities and natural resources on a watershed basis, taking into consideration the connected interests and needs of the environment, economy and society.



**Floodplain mapping** helps protect people and property from flooding, guides sustainable development and provides a tool for mitigating the impacts of climate change. Several floodplain mapping projects are underway for Chippewa Creek, Parks Creek, Jessups Creek (in North Bay), La Vase River (in East Ferris and Callander), and Kaibuskong River (in Bonfield). Mapping changes are based on new technologies which more accurately portray the topography, land and water features. Funding sources included federal government, provincial government, and municipalities.



**Drinking Water Source Protection** helps protect municipal drinking water sources. A 5-year review of the Assessment Report (scientific information) and Source Protection Plan (policies) was undertaken by staff and the Source Protection Committee under Section 36 of the Clean Water Act, 2006. The drinking water protection zones were reviewed and updated with current data and mapping. This included a review of Callander Bay phosphorus levels. A detailed review of the protective policies helps ensure that risks are managed. This program is currently funded by the province of Ontario.



**Erosion control project** on Chippewa Creek at Oak St. in North Bay significantly improved the channel and regraded the slopes, removed an unused railway bridge and replaced a pedestrian bridge (opening in spring 2023). **Flood control** structure repair was carried out at the Parks Creek in North Bay, where the backflood control structure helps protect around 500 homes. Funding for the projects came from the City of North Bay and the province of Ontario.



**Watershed-wide monitoring and analysis** of surface and ground water quality (21 streams, 23 sites on 8 lakes, 6 wells) helped inform the development of the 2023 Watershed Report Card. The NBMCA samples water as part of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network. The NBMCA is also part of the Ontario Lake Partner Program.

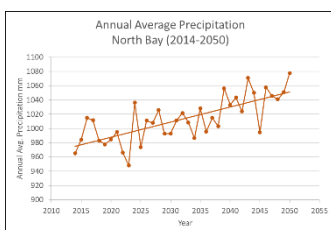


**Flood Forecasting and Warning** continued to take place year-round. Flood management is a shared responsibility in Ontario. Conservation Authorities, including NBMCA, are on the front lines of the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning program. NBMCA issued six flood messages in 2022 to municipal emergency management officials, the media and the public through our website and social media. Municipalities then take action to warn local residents. In 2022, four Watershed Conditions Statements – Flood Watch and two Watershed Conditions Statements - Water Safety were issued. There were no **Low Water Statements** issued.



**Snow Surveys** continued as part of NBMCA’s flood forecasting program. Snow depth and snow water content are measured in the Kaibuskong River, Chippewa Creek, and La Vase River watersheds to help forecast the potential impact of snow melt during the spring freshet. The snow survey data is shared with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Surface Water Monitoring Network.

**Trout Lake Management Plan** is being undertaken by the City of North Bay, Municipality of East Ferris and the NBMCA in consultation with local stakeholders, to prepare a new Watershed Study and Management Plan to protect and preserve Trout Lake, Four Mile Lake and associated inflowing streams. The study is being undertaken to review lake water quality data to understand the health of the lake, determine the effectiveness of the existing management framework and to identify improvements to the framework to ensure that the lake remains healthy, for current and future generations.



**Climate change data** continues to be collected and analyzed and it tells us that precipitation in NBMCA’s watershed is going to continue to increase in the coming decades. Changes in the snow pack quantity and water content, as well as precipitation and water levels, are monitored to alert staff to any risk of flooding all year round. Plans for a new **Climate Monitoring Station** to be installed at the Corbeil Conservation Area in the Municipality of East Ferris in 2023 were confirmed. The CAO

joined the Climate Risk Institute’s National Stewardship Committee which is a body of experts and leaders in climate change resilience, adaptation, infrastructure, professional development, and credentialling.



## Conservation Areas, Lands and Stewardship

NBMCA Conservation Areas & Lands - <http://www.nbmca.ca/conservation-areas/>



As people continued to recover from the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the value of NBMCA's 15 Conservation Areas and Trails proved itself again this past year. People came to hike, bike, meditate, snowshoe, photograph, swim, boat and fish with friends and families in these areas. 2022 saw the unveiling of a **new kiosk sign** at the Corbeil Conservation Area, honouring the Corbeil Parents' Association who championed the formation of the Conservation Area more than 40 years ago.



**Information signs**, developed in partnership with the Trout Lake Conservation Association, the City of North Bay, and the Municipality of East Ferris, were installed at four public boat launches promoting sustainable recreational use and stewardship of Trout Lake. **Benches** were installed at Laurier Woods and Eva Wardlaw Conservation Areas thanks to donations made to the NBMCA bench donation program. Donations from Lisa's Doghouse helped supply bags for the **pet waste stations** available to dog walkers at Laurentian Escarpment, Laurier Woods, and Eva Wardlaw Conservation Areas as well as on the Chippewa Creek EcoPath.



**The Parks Creek Backflood Control Structure** on Lakeshore Drive in North Bay protects around 500 properties from flooding when high water occurs on Lake Nipissing. Fortunately, it was not put into operation in 2022; however, a need for improvements to the pumps within the structure was identified. Pump 2 was rebuilt, in addition to fence repairs, gate installation for security. Ice was removed from Parks Creek before the spring freshet to make room for flow and runoff.



Essential **repairs to the tower deck** at NBMCA's Administrative building at 15 Janey Ave began mid-September. After a pause for the winter, the project will be resumed and completed in 2023. The challenge of homelessness is being addressed by communities across the country. **Homeless encampments** set up in NBMCA conservation areas are being addressed in an empathetic manner, maintaining public safety through a protocol developed in partnership with local social services agencies and the City of North Bay.

**Maintenance and improvement projects for trails and conservation areas** included a trail realignment in the Shields McLaren Conservation Area, culvert replacement on the Kate Pace Way in partnership with the City of North Bay, and preliminary work on boardwalk replacements in Laurier Woods Conservation Area in partnership with Friends of Laurier Woods.

As a stewardship initiative, NBMCA partnered with Trees 4 Nipissing and the City of North Bay to plant 300 trees on the former Merrick Landfill site.



## Communications & Outreach

NBMCA Communications & Outreach - <http://www.nbmca.ca/community-outreach-events/>

Since our establishment in 1972, NBMCA has learned that protecting and conserving our watershed relies on collaboration and cooperation with individuals, organizations, and communities. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities showcased the watershed and celebrated the individuals who share in the stewardship of our natural environment.



The Board launched the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations with the unveiling of a **new logo** which recognizes the flow of water through watersheds regardless of municipal boundaries and the coming together of municipalities and stakeholders to support watershed management throughout NBMCA's jurisdiction. It supports NBMCA's efforts to educate, inform and engage stakeholders through recognition of communication and messaging.



Unique photographs which captured views of the wonders of our watershed were submitted by local photographers in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **Watershed Wonders Photo Contest**. Nineteen individuals, organizations, businesses and educators were recognized as **Watershed Heroes** for their contributions to the preservation, protection or improvement of the environment in our watershed. Local residents recognized significant people in their life and supported NBMCA's outreach programs through donations to the **Boardwalk of Champions**.

**Academic bursaries** were granted to environmental studies students Nipissing University, Canadore College and the Environmental High Skills Major students at area high schools to honour the future of environmental stewardship in our community.



Gorge Conservation Area with guest hike guide Laura Kielpinski leading an introduction to Forest Bathing.

The **Mattawa River Canoe Race** returned after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19 with 92 marathon paddlers, following in the footsteps of Voyageurs, paddling 64 km in kayaks, canoes and stand-up paddleboards from North Bay to Mattawa through the spectacular beauty of the Trout Lake, Mattawa River subwatersheds. The day before the race, NBMCA hosted its annual guided hike at historic Eau Claire



Canada through FedNor as well as the financial support of Creative Industries, North Bay-Parry Sound

In the spirit of Reconciliation, NBMCA partnered with the North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre and the City of North Bay in the creation of **Miskwaadesi** (Painted Turtle), a granite petroform with four cedar poles marking the four directions and a flag pole for the display of Indigenous flags throughout the year. Miskwaadesi honours Indigenous traditions and our shared respect for water.

Miskwaadesi was made possible with funding from Government of

District Health Unit, Tourism North Bay, City of North Bay and Larocque Elder Architects which designed the project. Local businesses donated materials and services including Canor Construction, Algonquin Granite, OPC Construction, (list of contractors who donated materials – Canadore College (Welding & Fitting), Canor Construction, G & P Welding, Norgalv Ltd., North Bay Powder Coating, and OCP Construction. Once additional funding is secured, the creation of granite amphitheatre seating will see the completion of the Miskwaadesi as a space for learning, celebration, ceremony and gathering for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples along the Chippewa Creek EcoPath in 2023.



NBMCA staff from a variety of program areas returned to NBMCA's tradition of community outreach and education with presentations to the Northern Policy Institute, North Bay Realtors, Powassan "GAP" Program, East Ferris Trade Show, Story Hike with Community Oriented Outdoor Literacy, Callander Cranberry Festival, La Fete Saint-Jean, North Bay Science Festival, Canadore Sustainability Summit, LaPorte's Sunday Community Day, Nipissing University, École secondaire publique Odyssee, Heritage Gardeners and Clean Green Beautiful North Bay.

NBMCA shares information with community stakeholders through our **website, social media, and media releases**. In 2022, 16 media releases were issued. On social media, Facebook – 95 Posts / Reach up 126% over previous 6 months, Instagram - 69 Posts / Reach up 191% over previous 6 months and Twitter – 66 Tweets / 7,437 Impressions / 613 Followers



North Bay Office  
15 Janey Avenue  
North Bay, ON P1C 1N1  
(705) 474-5420  
[www.nbmca.ca](http://www.nbmca.ca)

Parry Sound Office  
69 Bowes Street  
Parry Sound, ON P2A 2L5  
(705) 746-7566  
[www.nbmca.ca](http://www.nbmca.ca)



@theNBMCA



nbmcainfo



@theNBMCA



NBMCA