Re: Request for Additional Funding  
Crooks’ Hollow Dam Decommissioning and Restoration of Spencer Creek

The Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) has completed a Class Environmental Assessment which has identified the poor structural condition of the Crooks’ Hollow Dam and concluded that the dam should be removed. The HCA Board of Directors approved the removal of the dam and the restoration of Spencer Creek in the area in 2009 and approval from the Ministry of the Environment was received in 2010. HCA is now in the process of carrying out the detailed design and seeking site approvals from appropriate agencies with a view to moving to construction in the late summer of 2011. Timing for construction is sensitive to environmental timelines and low flows in Spencer Creek. Funding for this project has been cost shared on a 50:50 basis between the City of Hamilton and Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

As a result of analyses requested by some approval agencies and the need to update the original cost estimates (2007 dollars) to 2011 dollars, additional costs have been incurred to complete the design and carry out construction. The total additional cost has been assessed to be $446,000. Further details are provided in the attached summary.

HCA is therefore requesting that the City of Hamilton continue to fund its 50 % share of the additional costs that will be incurred to remove the structurally unstable Crooks’ Hollow Dam and restore Spencer Creek to a healthy sustainable system. The City’s share will be $223,000. Application has been made to MNR for the provincial share of the costs.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Maizga
Chief Administrative Officer
Hamilton Conservation Authority
Crooks' Hollow Dam Removal and Restoration of Spencer Creek

History of the dam

Crooks' Hollow Dam is located on Spencer Creek, near the community of Greensville. The dam is situated downstream from a series of historic dams that were built in the late 18th century to provide water power to a number of grist mills, sawmills and paper mills. The Crooks' Hollow Dam was constructed in 1916 for the purpose of supplying water to the community of Dundas, a function that ceased when a municipal water supply was established for Dundas. Between 1959 and 2001, the Dundas Valley Golf and Curling Club used the reservoir as a source of water for irrigation. The Golf course no longer uses the reservoir for irrigation and the surrounding lands are currently used for recreation including hiking, fishing and limited boating. In 2000, the ownership of the Crooks' Hollow Dam along with 9.9 hectares of land was transferred from the Town of Dundas to the HCA.

The decision to remove the Dam

Over the years, several dam condition assessments have identified concerns relating to the integrity and stability of the dam. These studies, along with a Dam Stability and Assessment Study conducted in 2005, further confirmed the need to rehabilitate, modify or remove the dam to ensure its safety during major storm events. Responding to the need for action, in 2005, HCA initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) to review the options for the dam. The review identified a number of alternatives and involved consultation with stakeholders, the neighbouring community and the public at large. The Class EA concluded that the dam should be removed as this will address safety concerns regarding the dam’s deteriorated condition, eliminate long-term operating and maintenance costs and enhance local and downstream environmental conditions with no net long-term negative impacts to the environment.

In May 2009, the Class EA was approved by the Minister of the Environment (MOE) with conditions that a Sediment Management Plan be developed to show how sediment will be managed during and after the dam removal. MOE has reviewed the Sediment Management Plan prepared by HCA and indicated in October 2010 that it is satisfactory, acknowledging that further details would be provided during detailed design. We were also recently advised by the MOE that this project would be subject to Regulation 153, which will take effect in July 2011. This regulation relates to revised sediment quality objectives and management goals.

This project also involves the creation of a new pedestrian bridge crossing to allow the connectivity of trails along both sides of Spencer Creek to continue for community use and enjoyment. Throughout the process, this has been an important consideration and the HCA is working with the community to design an appropriate link in this regard. Acknowledging and commemorating the local heritage aspects of the former dam and cultural heritage of the valley in this area form another key component to this project.

Funding for the Project

Funding for the project was provided by the City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). The total cost associated with the Class EA (received in 2005) and construction costs (received in 2008, 2009 and 2010) was estimated to be $1,100,000 in 2007. Funding was received as follows:
The City's funds were received through the special levy process.

Following initiation of detailed design in January of 2011, the HCA working with Hatch Inc., was able to contact all review agencies to determine their requirements for detailed design approval. We have determined that additional costs will be incurred that were not anticipated in the original budget as follows:

1. Generation of a Sediment Management Plan ($70,000 plus taxes)
2. Public participation process ($22,000 plus taxes)
3. Completion of a Site Specific Risk Assessment to conform to MOE's new regulatory requirements. ($60,000 plus taxes)
4. Completion of Archaeological Stages I and II Studies as required by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the City of Hamilton. ($4,000 plus taxes)
5. Completion of a Cultural Heritage Impact Study as required by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the City of Hamilton. ($10,000 plus taxes)
6. Analyses to complete stream restoration. ($25,000 plus taxes)

The above work in combination with converting the cost estimate and factoring in the increased costs of materials to 2011 dollars has created additional costs to the project in the amount of $446,000. The City's portion of this cost, which represents 50% of the total amount, would be $223,000. An application has been made for the remaining 50% of the total amount, under the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Program for the provincial portion, which is administered by the MNR.