



## Committee Report

**To:** Councillor Milt McIver, Chair and  
Members of the Transportation & Environmental Services  
Committee

**From:** Amanda Froese  
Director of Transportation & Environmental Services

**Date:** September 15, 2022

**Re:** Natural Infrastructure Fund Application

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### Staff Recommendation:

That staff be authorized to apply for the Natural Infrastructure Fund-Small Projects Stream provided by Infrastructure Canada for the Silver Creek Culvert project with a funding split of 80%/20%.

### Background:

The Natural Infrastructure Fund is a program through Infrastructure Canada coming out of the 2021 budget. The objectives of the fund are *to increase the use and uptake of natural and hybrid infrastructure and to build community awareness on the value of natural and hybrid infrastructure and the delivery of multiple outcomes*. The projects will be assessed based on:

1. Climate change resilience
2. Increased access to nature
3. Improved environmental quality
4. Enhanced biodiversity and habitat
5. Climate change mitigation

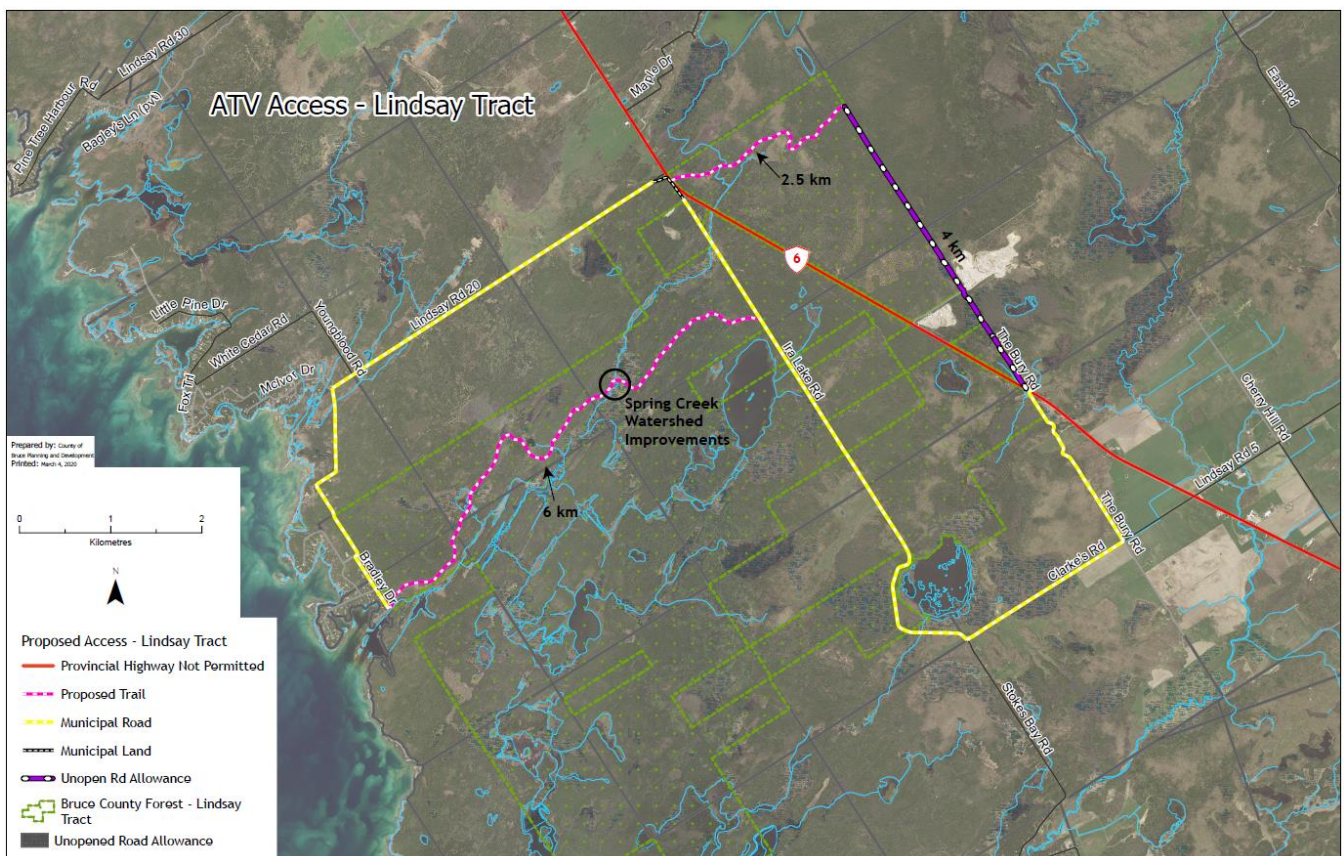
Staff reviewed the application guide and feel the Silver Creek Culvert replacement project would be ideal for this fund. It strongly addresses points #2, 3, 4 and 5.

The Silver Creek Culvert is located in the Lindsay Tract of the Bruce County Forest, in Northern Bruce Peninsula. It is in a section between Ira Lake Road and Bradley Drive that is an old fire road and in April 2020, Council supported staff in working with the South Bruce Peninsula ATV Club and Northern Bruce Peninsula to develop an ATV trail. This trail is well suited for multiple uses including hikers, ATVs, snowmobiles and mountain bikes. The forest tract is also a beautiful resources with many visitors using the existing Lindsay Tract trails. This new trail system would add approximately 30 km of trails for public use. A limiting factor to developing the trail for motorized use is the culvert over Silver Creek.

The project provides an opportunity to work with Saugeen Ojibway Nation as well with the improvement to Silver Creek and as a minimum will include consultation during the environmental studies and design concepts. The project will follow a 3-stage process that aligns with the Municipal Class EA Process. This includes pre-engineering studies such as

environmental investigations of Silver Creek for flora and fauna as phase 1. Phase 2 will be the detailed design of the trail for construction access, design of the new culvert crossing and naturalized creek bed. This will involve the ATV club, SON, Northern Bruce Peninsula for their input. Phase 3 will be construction of the culvert, staging area, construction road and trail enhancement.

The fund is for expenses between May 1, 2021 and March 31, 2024, therefore staff will be applying for funding of Phases 1 and 2 only. Fishery windows would restrict construction to July 2023-September 2023 which is not sufficient time to complete the environmental work and detailed design. The County of Bruce will be required to cover 20% of the costs based on the estimate provided and amount awarded by Infrastructure Canada. This value will be included in the 2023 Capital Budget. Construction would be dependent upon approval in future budgets and/or other funding opportunities.





Photos of the Existing Culvert looking west along the road, and north into Silver Creek

#### **Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no staffing or IT considerations associated with this report. Financing of the County's portion shall be proposed in the 2023 Capital Budget Agreements with the South Bruce Peninsula ATV Club, and with Northern Bruce Peninsula may be required for construction and maintenance of the ultimate result of this work.

#### **Interdepartmental Consultation:**

The Economic Development Division were consulted and are in support of the application. They will provide economic justification on the improvement to the trail to assist in the application. Both the Forestry and Trails Divisions of the Transportation Department are strongly in support of the project.

#### **Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:**

From the Strategic Values:

1. Safe, clean and healthy,
2. High quality of life for all residents
3. A dynamic center for economic development

#### **Approved for Submission:**

Derrick Thomson  
Chief Administrative Officer