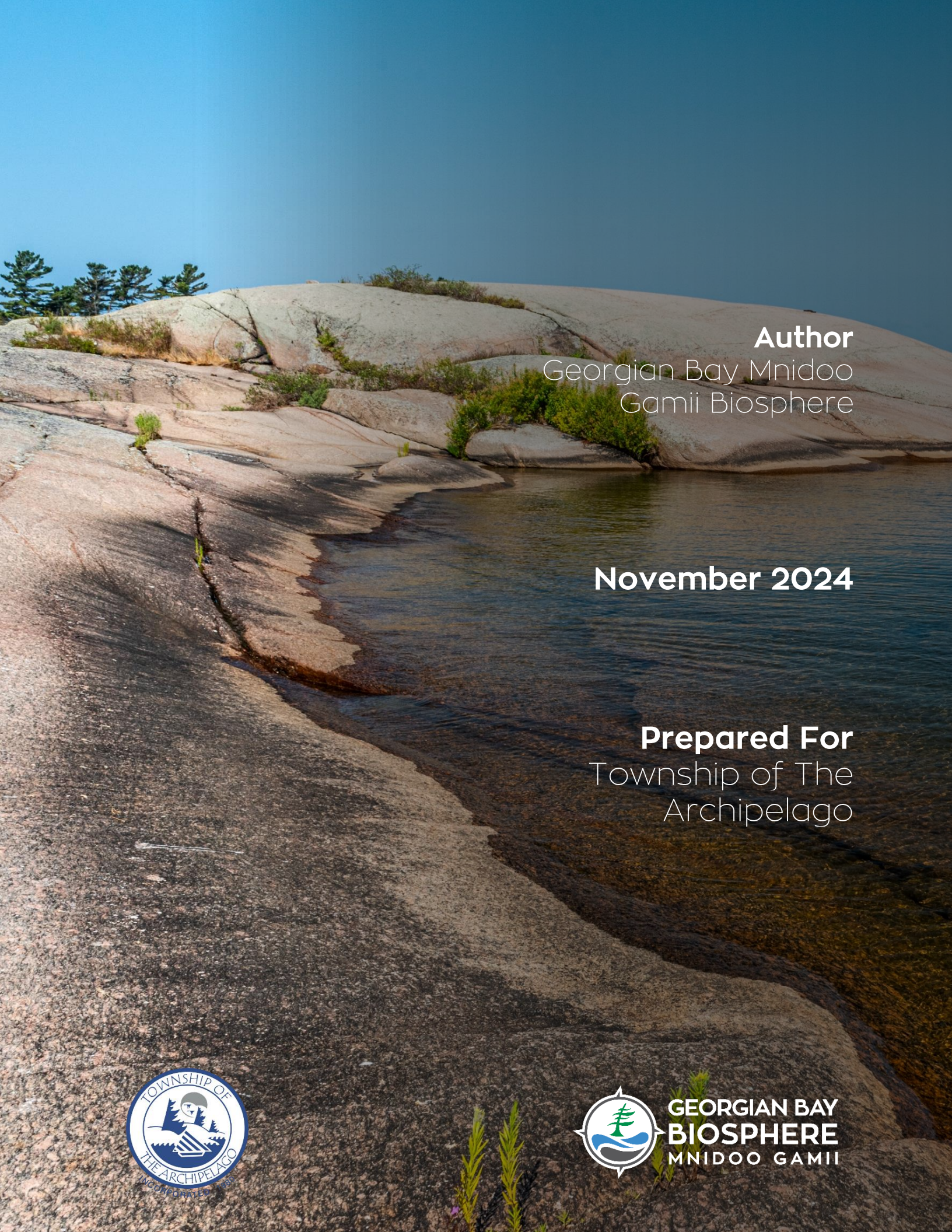




2024 Environment Program Report

Township of The Archipelago



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Prepared For

Township of The
Archipelago



**GEORGIAN BAY
BIOSPHERE
MNIDOO GAMII**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2014, the Georgian Bay Biosphere (GBB) and Township of The Archipelago (TOA) have partnered to provide environmental services and environmental programming to ratepayers. The goal of the partnership is to provide high quality, accessible environmental information and programming. This specifically means working to increase environmental literacy and awareness among ratepayers within the TOA and increasing the capacity to address/respond to environmental issues, challenges, and opportunities.

In our eleventh year of formal partnership, highlights included:

1. Enhanced monitoring took place on Healey Lake and Kapikog Lake (total phosphorus samples and temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles).
2. Developed an ArcGIS StoryMap version of the annual Environment Report.
3. Hosted a forest health webinar. The recording will be publicly available on [GBB's YouTube channel](#).
4. Over 175 kits were distributed to TOA families as part of the Kids in the Biosphere program.
5. Guided paddles were hosted by Blackstone Lake Cottagers' Association and Sans Souci & Copperhead Association, and a Bioblitz was held with Pointe au Baril Islanders' Association.
6. Two hands-on kids' programs were held with the Woods Bay Community Association (skulls workshop) and Sans Souci & Copperhead Association (animal tracks workshop).
7. Climate Action continued through the Integrated Community Energy and Climate Action Plans (ICECAP) partnership. Council adopted their Community Climate Action Plan, and have committed to reducing community emissions 6% below 2016 levels by 2030, and striving to achieve net-zero community emissions by 2050 or earlier.
8. Prepared a Corporate Energy & Emissions Report providing an update on the progress towards the Corporate Emissions Reduction Target established in the Corporate Climate Action Plan adopted by Council in 2023.
9. Three "Climate Action Groups" (CAGs) met regularly to advance actions contained in the Climate Action Plans. Other actions, both corporate and community in nature, continued.
10. Species at Risk, Best Management Practices, and Noxious & Invasive Plant training were delivered to Public Works staff.

All goals and deliverables identified in this report are taken directly from the 2024 Work Plan. Although many deliverables repeat each year, deliverable status is reported on for the current year.

2. AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

2.1 Four Year Goal: Understand, educate, and communicate the condition of aquatic ecosystem health in eastern Georgian Bay and inland lakes.

2.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Coordinate water quality monitoring program: compile and report on results; conduct benthic monitoring; recruit and train volunteers; and be the point of contact year-round.	Complete
II. Broaden the program when opportunities are available; differentiate bay/lake monitoring as needed, and integrate township approaches with provincial/federal/NGOs.	Complete
III. Conduct enhanced monitoring at existing and/or new locations as needed.	Complete
IV. Continue benthic monitoring on inland lakes (Healey, Kapikog, Blackstone, and Crane).	Complete
V. Continue with engagement and education. A. Engage ratepayers into the why/what and best practices. B. Educate through resource sharing at events and in communications. For example, the State of the Bay 2023 edition and accompanying education and outreach.	Complete
VI. Liaise with partners to address concerns.	Complete
VII. Review and update the TOA's Water Quality Monitoring Program Outline (previously updated December 2016).	Pending

2.3. Water Quality Notes

- Kapikog Lake and Healey Lake enhanced monitoring continued for a third and final year.
- Water quality and fish communities monitoring program results are being updated and will be available shortly in the 2024 Environment Report.
- A new ArcGIS StoryMap version of the annual Environment Report is under development and will be available shortly.
- Four benthic monitoring sites were sampled and data analysed (Blackstone, Crane, Healey, Kapikog).

3. TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

3.1 Four Year Goal: Understand, educate, and communicate the condition of terrestrial ecosystem health in eastern Georgian Bay and inland regions.

3.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Partner with Westwind Forest Stewardship on forest health to respond to ratepayer concerns.	Complete
II. Continue with engagement and education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Engage ratepayers into the why/what and best practices. B. Educate through resource sharing at events and in communications. For example, the State of the Bay 2023 edition and accompanying education and outreach. C. Host webinars and/or events on best management practices. 	Complete
III. Liaise with partners to address concerns.	Complete
IV. Collaborate on regional conservation projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. A regional species at risk (SAR) conservation project called <i>Maamwi Anjiakiziwin</i> - a federally designated 'Community Nominated Priority Place'. One of the key purposes of this project is to engage in cross-cultural learning and apply a 'Two Eyed Seeing' approach to our SAR work; when we improve our understanding, respect and relationships with each other, our understanding and relationships with the land will also benefit. B. GBB is coordinating a regional conservation project called Target 1, which supports the federal 'The Pathway to Canada Target 1' initiative to protect 17% of terrestrial areas and inland water. Among the objectives of the Pathway initiative is to recognize protected and other conserved areas beyond the federal, provincial, and territorial governmental systems. The identification of protected and other conserved areas owned and managed by local governments and private landowners is a key step in achieving the target and recognizing the contributions made by different sectors. GBB is coordinating a 	Complete

regional approach to review and screen potential protected and other conserved areas in the region.	
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3.3. Forest Health Notes

- Forest health updates will be provided in the 2024 Environment Report.
- A forest health webinar is taking place on November 12. The recording will be made available on [GBB's YouTube channel](#).
- GBB continues to be a point of contact for ratepayers. Several associations were in touch by phone and email over the past year with questions.

4. EDUCATION

4.1 Four Year Goal: Provide youth and general audiences with outdoor, environmental opportunities.

4.2. Deliverable Status

YOUTH Key Deliverables	Status
I. Facilitate a TOA-wide Kids in the Biosphere program.	Complete
II. Create 200 activity kits for registered families, first come first served.	Complete
III. Continue to explore opportunities to engage children and youth in face-to-face, hands-on activities. Two options being considered are bioblitzes and a “Traveling Naturalist” program.	Complete
IV. Continue to explore approaches for cost-sharing to expand the reach of these programs.	Ongoing
V. Engage volunteers in the program wherever possible.	Complete
VI. Update the webpage as needed, provide regular communication with families, and be available on an ad hoc basis.	Complete
VII. Update the distribution map to show reach.	Complete

4.3. Kids in the Biosphere Notes

- The Kids in the Biosphere program was successfully advertised through all TOA ratepayer associations, newsletters, and word of mouth.
 - **200 Activity Kits** were prepared.
 - **92 families** registered for Activity Kits online and in person. Kits were provided at the Biosphere office, TOA office, and through program volunteers.
 - **8 program volunteers** helped to distribute Activity Kits. Volunteers contacted the Biosphere to request more kits throughout the summer.
- The blog had bi-weekly posts and continues to see relatively good readership.
- All registered families were emailed a bi-weekly newsletter with upcoming events, activities, the blog, and photo sharing.
- As in past years, there were few responses/minimal communication online from families. One prize was given out to an engaged family.
- Two hands-on kids’ programs were held with the Woods Bay Community Association (skulls workshop) and Sans Souci & Copperhead Association (animal tracks workshop).

“We have recommended to cottages in San Souci as well as Pointe au Baril. It’s a wonderful program.”

“My grandchildren are very much fascinated by nature so you do a great job of providing activities for them. So so important for them to see how adults value and support their curiosity.”

- Direct quotes from Kids in the Biosphere participating families

4.3. Deliverable Status

GENERAL AUDIENCE Key Deliverables	Status
I. Host a hike/presentation/workshop with three targeted cottage associations.	Complete
II. Work with associations on volunteers, venues, etc.	Complete
III. Advertise through several communications channels.	Complete
IV. Include best management practices resources.	Complete
V. Seek partner organizations to present/speak when applicable or requested.	Complete
VI. Adapt to webinar-based programming as needed.	Complete

4.4. Notes

- Pointe au Baril Islanders’ Association (PaBIA), Blackstone Lake Cottagers’ Association (BLCA), and Sans Souci and Copperhead Association (SSCA) were contacted to host an event.
 - PaBIA hosted a Bioblitz (July 19).
 - BLCA hosted a Guided Paddle (July 21).
 - SSCA hosted a Guided Paddle (August 25).

Other outreach activities held or supported by GBB included:

Date	Event	# Attended
April 11	South Channel Association Turtle Workshop Webinar	18
May 4	Pointe au Baril Turtle Workshop	20

Date	Event	# Attended
June 28	PaBIA Directors' Lunch & Meeting	40
July 5	Iron City Fishing Club Guided Walk	20
July 6	Desmasdon's Family Day	50+
July 20	South Channel Association Fish Talk & Bioblitz	50
August 3	Woods Bay Skulls Workshop for Kids	37
August 7	Pointe au Baril Ladies Kayaking Guided Paddle	15
August 7	SSCA Animal Tracks Workshop for Kids	13
August 11	PaBIA Speaker Series	17

5. STEWARDSHIP

5.1 Four Year Goal: Engage people in hands-on stewardship activities.

5.2 Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Be a point of contact for questions and resources.	Complete
II. Promote stewardship when/where applicable and during events.	Complete
III. Promote monitoring and engagement as part of hands-on stewardship action.	Complete
IV. Promote Citizen Science engagement tools (i.e., Monarch tagging, Bumblebee Watch, Bioblitzes, and iNaturalist).	Complete
V. Support residents in protecting/enhancing shoreline and water quality.	Complete
VI. Investigate stewardship action planning with ratepayer associations.	Ongoing
VII. Facilitate shoreline stewardship workshops as requested (i.e., Life on the Bay).	Complete
VIII. Steward the PaB Monarch Garden as needed with Public Works Department.	Complete

6. CLIMATE CHANGE

6.1 Four Year Goal: Continue to work with partners on a collaborative regional approach; ICECAP (Integrated Community Energy and Climate Action Plans).

6.2 Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Use FCM’s Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) framework to work on milestone 4 implementing climate action plans and measure and record the results and impacts of actions.	Complete
II. Use FCM’s Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) framework to work on milestone 5 and build emission and energy trends to monitor progress towards targets.	Complete
III. Work with community partners to advance community climate action education through climate and energy related communications, workshops, and/or projects.	Complete
IV. Continue to work with GBB on Natural Assets Management Planning (NAMP) and climate adaptation funding and programming.	Complete

6.3 Notes

- TOA staff have and will continue to receive ICECAP program communications.
- TOA staff continue to participate in regional ICECAP working groups designed to share knowledge and reduce required staff capacity for implementing different actions in the Climate Action Plans.
- Community Climate Action Plan adopted by Council in 2024. This completes Community Milestones 2 and 3 of FCM’s PCP Program.
- Corporate Energy Emissions Report prepared and shared with staff and Council. Contributes to the ongoing progress of Corporate Milestones 4 and 5 of FCM’s PCP program.
- Regional Climate Action Plan launched that aligns TOA’s climate objectives with the objectives of neighbouring municipalities.
- Three “Climate Action Groups” are meeting regularly to advance actions contained in the Climate Action Plans.
- Funding discussions and opportunities ongoing with staff.

7. SEPTICS

7.1. Four Year Goal: Work to ensure that septic pollution is minimized.

7.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Continue to promote and disseminate communication tools for best practices.	Complete
II. Work with Township staff to track and report the status of septic systems as it relates to the risk that they do or do not pose.	Ongoing
III. Continue to scan research and monitoring options for impact assessment.	Complete
IV. Develop and support an initiative to engage members of ratepayer associations in voluntary septic health assessments.	In progress

7.3. Septic Notes

- 10 sludge samplers were acquired and planning and development of a voluntary septic health assessment program began.
- Several Septic Best Practice communications pieces were designed in 2021 (bathroom door hanger, kitchen fridge magnet, and file folder for storage). These continue to be disseminated and are available for free download on the [septics webpage](#).

8. PUBLIC WORKS

8.1. Four Year Goal: Support Public Works as needed pertaining to environmental topics and concerns (i.e. species at risk).

8.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Consult with PW on their needs for training and support.	Complete
II. Provide ad-hoc support and advice on environmental topics.	Complete
III. Identify opportunities to better utilize grants to complete PW projects.	Complete
IV. Train PW staff on safe movement and monitoring of species at risk.	Complete
V. Provide support to PW to interpret and meet obligations under ESA.	Complete
VI. Work together to implement best management practices for species at risk.	Complete
VII. Provide staff with training and information they can relay to the public.	Complete

8.3. Public Works Notes

- Species at Risk, Best Management Practices, and Noxious & Invasive Plant training were delivered to Public Works staff.

9. COMMUNICATION

9.1. Goal: Engage in regular and clear communication with TOA, residents, and other parties.

9.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Be present at events, advertise on social media, and through newsletters.	Complete
II. Explore environmental communications and review increased effectiveness.	Complete
III. Continue Environment Report.	Complete
IV. Develop ArcGIS StoryMap version of Environment Report (i.e. publicly available web-based version of the report).	In progress
V. Host an annual webinar specific to results of the Environment Report, include partner organizations and TOA council/staff.	Pending

9.3. Communication Notes

- TOA content was posted on GBB's social media accounts, on georgianbaybiosphere.com/events, and included in GBB's e-newsletter to 3,000 people.
- The Environment and Septics web pages continue to be updated as needed.
- Environment focused and Kids in the Biosphere content was shared with TOA staff to communicate to ratepayers.
- A webinar will be held to launch and preview the new ArcGIS StoryMap version of the Environment Report.

10. COORDINATION

10.1. Four Year Goal: Ensure that TOA is meeting its strategic plan goals with respect to the environment through planning, action, monitoring, and partnerships.

10.2. Deliverable Status

Key Deliverables:	Status
I. Engage the Environment Committee regularly.	Complete
II. Report results regularly.	Complete
III. Evaluate outcomes related to the TOA's environmental programs.	Complete
IV. Provide support and advice to staff and Council on an ad hoc basis.	Complete
V. Share coastal initiatives and opportunities for collaboration of interest.	Complete
VI. Prepare formal project proposals on additional opportunities as requested by council or staff or brought to GBB (ie. In field fish community monitoring & assessment; Water Quality Communications specific to Great Lakes Ecology work by the Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Branch; Invasive species staff training and/or public education programs).	Complete

11. NEXT STEPS

1. Present draft 2025 Work Plan to Council and receive feedback.
2. Prepare 2025 Budget and present to Council.
3. Finalize 2025 Work Plan and Budget.
4. Continue communications with the Environment Committee per the agreement.

Thank You Miigwech

The Georgian Bay Mnidoo Gamii Biosphere (GBB) is an inclusive and dynamic organization that builds capacity for regional sustainability in eastern Georgian Bay.

The GBB is a non-profit registered Canadian charity governed by a Board of Directors.

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