



**The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa
Staff Report**

Office of the Director of Community Services and Tourism

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Cmte.	Report No.: AP 2023-13
Agenda Date: November 21, 2023	File No.: C11

Subject

This report concerns renaming the road system known as the High Falls Road / Dump Roads in the Municipality of Wawa.

Summary of the Recommendation


THAT the Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa rename portions of the High Falls Road to reflect their destinations.

Summary of the Issues

This report originates from many tourist complaints over the past few years regarding getting lost in search of Scenic High Falls. The Municipality has two very similar road names (Scenic High Falls Road and High Falls Road) both coming off of Highway 17 that often confuses travellers. Staff are recommending a name change and additional signage to fix these issues.

List of Stakeholders

- Municipal Council
- Ontario Ministry of Transportation
- Evolgen
- Ratepayers
- Tourists and Visitors
- Municipal Staff

Respectfully Submitted By: 	Prepared By: Alex Patterson, Director, Community Services and Tourism
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Purpose of Report

This report originates from a staff request; Tourist Information Centre staff have requested that management review the road names of Scenic High Falls Road and High Falls / Dump Road to ensure clarity for travellers when visiting Scenic High Falls in particular.

Analysis

Existing Road Naming

The first road in question are Scenic High Falls Road, leading to the cemetery and through the blueberry fields to Scenic High Falls. As this is a particularly descriptive name and the road name indicates to the traveller where the road leads, staff believe that this is a non-issue and this road name should remain.

The second set of roads in question are the High Falls / Dump Roads. The existing name of this road is officially High Falls Road – which is the cause of significant confusion as many travellers seek out this road in error as they are looking for Scenic High Falls Road. Locals also know this road as Dump Road – of which only a small section of road is currently named as such in our GIS system. **See Appendix A for a map of current road names.**

Proposed Road Naming

To simplify the directions for travellers, staff are proposing to rename High Falls Road to Scott Falls Road, reflecting the tourist destination that the road terminates in. There are three other sections of road along this section, which staff propose to rename Dump Road, Dunford Road, and McPhail Road, all corresponding to their terminus locations. Staff expect that this will significantly simplify navigation in the area and encourage tourists to visit Scott Falls as well as understand the difference between Scott and Scenic High Falls. **These changes are reflected in the map included in Appendix B**

Signage

As part of the 2023 capital budget, additional wayfinding signage is proposed at the intersections of 17 and Scenic High Falls / new Scott Falls Roads indicating the different locations and directions to both. This will keep within the style of our existing wayfinding signage and provide another indication to the locations for travellers.

Financial/Staffing Implications

Capital and Operating Budget

Signage for this change is within the capital budget allocations for 2024. Road sign changes are expected to cost \$1,500 for the production and installation of signage along the new Scott Falls Road indicating the Dump, Dunford, and McPhail Roads. This installation can be done by existing staff and is not expected to be an issue.

Policies Affecting Proposal

Municipal Strategic Plan / 5 Year tourism Plan

The Municipal Strategic Plan includes provisions for tourism improvements, and the 5-Year tourism plan includes a section on wayfinding improvements. This is a simple project to improve wayfinding in our community.

PR-004 Giving of Notice

Under this policy, and as per Section 48 of the Municipal Act, the Municipality is required to give notice to the public of its intention to pass a name change by-law. This must be done by a newspaper advertisement as well as a website posting 2 weeks in advance of the committee or council meeting where the name change bylaw is being considered. Therefore, should Council accept the recommendations contained in this report, staff would advertise for this period before bringing a bylaw back to council to finalize the name changes, allowing time for public comment. This would also include direct communication with the residential and business properties along the road.

Comments from Relevant Departments/Community and Corporate Partners

Evolugen

Bruce Welbourne, operations manager for Evolugen was contacted regarding the name changes and submitted the following comment:

"We suggest that the roads be broken up as noted to draw attention away from the McPhail and Dunford facilities, as those are active industrial sites. Additionally, we suggest that the focus should be on a naming convention that draws people immediately to the landing downstream of Scott Falls GS, as that's the greatest public fishing and river-tourism user-base that we experience and since this road crosses various third-party mining claims and private landowners' properties. This naming scheme also has the attraction of clearly defining the McPhail Road as a road beginning at the stop sign beside Centennial Lake, and since that road and its water crossings being 100% (historically, at

least) maintained by GLPLP/Evolugen and identified as such on our ongoing road-use agreements with the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club (OFSC).”

Department of Infrastructure Services

The Infrastructure Services department noted two of the following implications of changing the name of the current High Falls Road:

1. *The Municipality of Wawa’s waste disposal site address is currently listed as 161 High Falls Road. An amendment to the site’s Environmental Compliance Approval will need to be made, which is not difficult complete; and*
2. *There is a business located on High Falls Road which has “High Falls” referenced in its name. Although many other local businesses also refer to “High Falls” in their name and do not have an address on High Falls Road, the business located on High Falls Road could be considered as a stakeholder to ensure they are made aware of this change.*

Otherwise, the Infrastructure Services Department is supportive of renaming High Falls Road as a means to improve wayfinding for tourists.

Alternatives

Option 1: Do Nothing

This option would see the Municipality keep the existing naming of roadways, at no additional expense however this does not solve any of the issues as presented in this report. This option is **Not Recommended**.

Option 2: Alternative naming

This option would see the Municipality pursue an alternative naming approach to the roadways. As the proposed approach represents the most reasonable naming of each road by where they each lead, this option is **Not Recommended**.

Option 3: Rename roads as proposed

This option would see the Municipality rename roads as presented in this report. This would solve several of the current issues’ travellers face, and therefore this option is **Recommended**.

Conclusion

By approving this recommendation, Council is ensuring that travellers can find their way to two major river locations that represent tourism draws in an easy and safe manner. It will reduce instances of travellers getting lost and make it easier for TIC staff to direct visitors to attractions. This also works towards one of the 5-year Tourism Plan goals of improving wayfinding in our community.

Recommendation

THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa renames the following road sections:

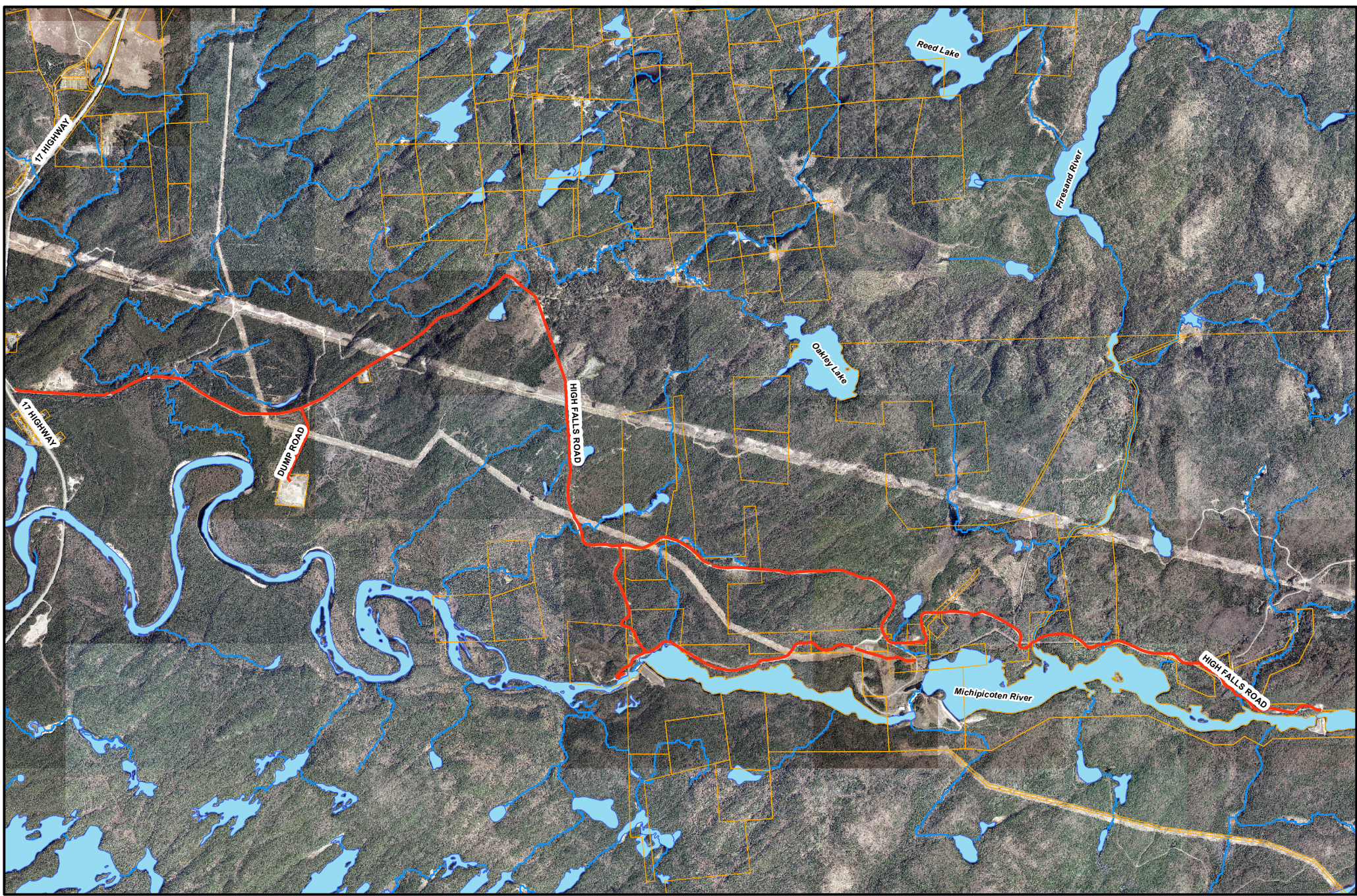
- High Falls Road be renamed to Scott Falls Road between the intersection of Highway 101 and the terminus at the Scott Falls Dam Portage;
- High Falls Road be renamed to McPhail Road between the intersection north of the Dunford GS and the terminus at the McPhail Dam
- High Falls Road be renamed to Dunford Road between the intersection north of the Dunford GS and the terminus at the Dunford Dam
- All according to the map as presented in **Appendix B**

Attachments

Appendix A: Existing Road Names

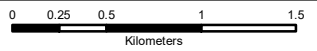
Appendix B: Proposed Road Names

End of Report.



Legend

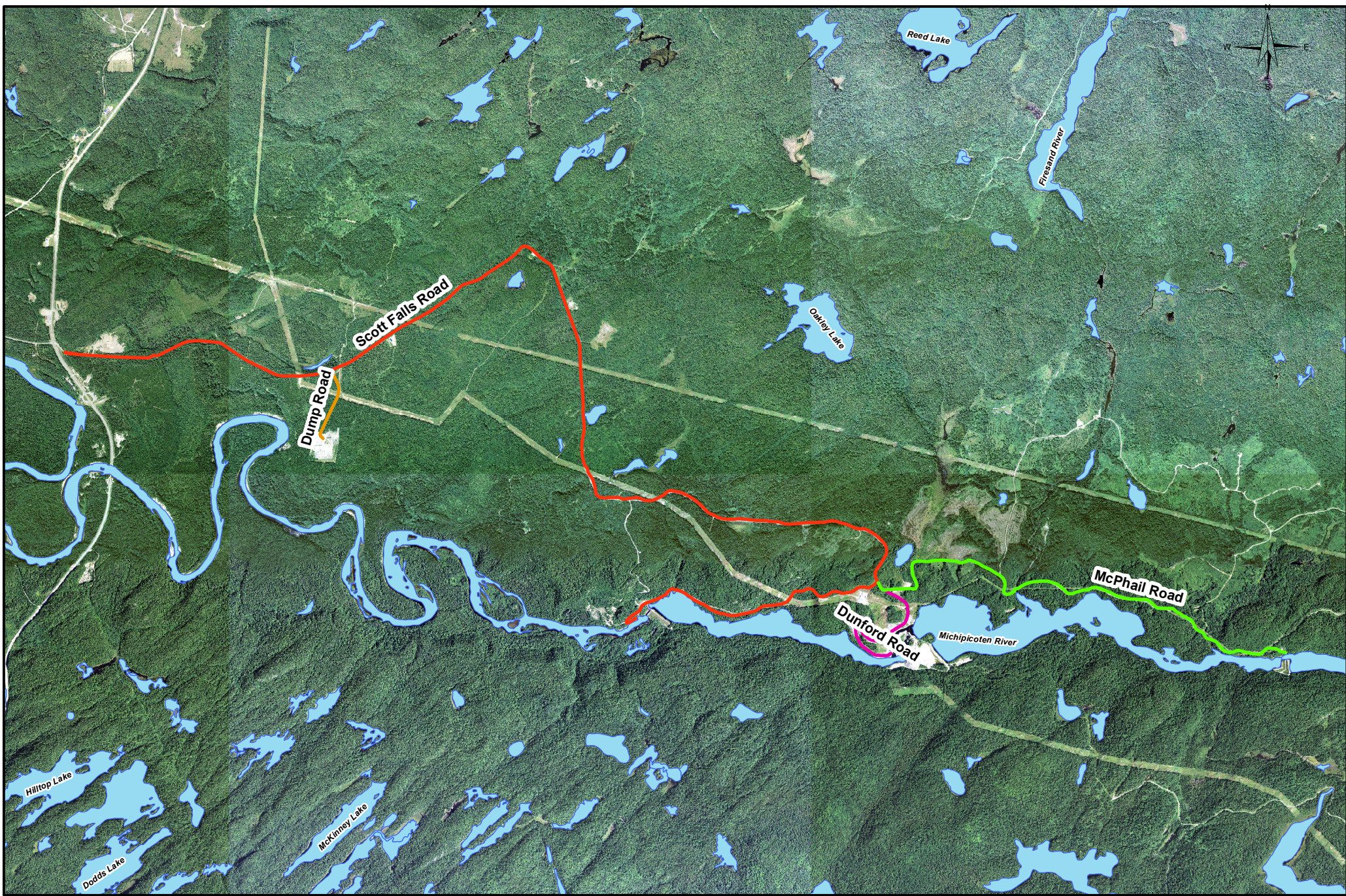
- Wawa Roads
- Municipality of Wawa
- Lakes
- Rivers and Creeks



High Falls Road

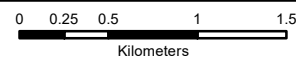
Wawa





- Legend**
- Dump Road
 - Dunford Road
 - McPhail Road
 - Scott Falls Road
 - Lakes

Lower Michipicoten Road System



Maps are provided as a courtesy only and the Municipality of Wawa makes no warranties as to the accuracy of this information. This map is not intended to be used for conveyance, authoritative definition of the legal boundary, or property title. This is not a survey product.