



**Grand River Conservation Authority  
Addendum - General Meeting**

Friday, December 13, 2024

9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting of the General Membership

GRCA Administration Centre

Zoom Virtual Meeting

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**Pages**

**10. Correspondence**

a. Susan Watson re: Freedom of Information Request regarding Niska Lands

1. *Attachment for Susan Watson re: Freedom of Information request* 1

b. *Gail Schenk re: GRCA's vision, mission and values, and environmental sustainability* 2

THAT Correspondence from Susan Watson regarding a Freedom of Information request related to property known as the Niska Lands, and the 1977 newspaper article submitted with said correspondence, and from Gail Schenk regarding the GRCA's vision, mission and values, and environmental sustainability be received as information.



## GRCA PURCHASING KORTRIGHT

# \$160,000 Gov't

**By WAYNE CAMPBELL**  
 Staff Writer  
 Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) will complete purchase of Kortright Waterfowl Park within a few days after receiving a \$160,000 grant from Ontario ministry of natural resources.

The grant covers province's 50 per cent share of a \$320,000 purchase-price for the 116-acre park and its buildings. City of Guelph pays 40 per cent (\$128,000) while the GRCA picks up the remaining 10 per cent (\$32,000) under a GRCA purchase formula. The park at Hanlon Creek and Speed River in the southwest corner of the city is owned by Ontario Waterfowl Research Foundation (OWRF).

**LONG STRUGGLE**  
 This week's transfer of ownership will bring to an end almost two years of struggling negotiations.

In 1975 OWRF announced it wanted to sell Kortright Park by the end of the year. Foundation trustees said they could no longer afford to operate the bird sanctuary.

City aldermen said they wanted the parkland kept in public use but didn't want to spend tax dollars attempting to run a waterfowl operation.

City council appealed to GRCA to buy the land last spring and GRCA formally approved purchase last September.

Meanwhile a citizens' group, Niska Wildlife Foundation, was formed to operate and maintain the waterfowl operation which OWRF was abandoning along with the lands.

Niska will continue as tenants of the GRCA.

For the GRCA the purchase increases the size of its Hanlon Creek conservation area to 547 acres.

Eventually it hopes to have 800 acres along the creek to protect wetlands from encroaching housing developments in Guelph's southwest corner, said Mac Coutts, GRCA general manager.

It will also provide parkland and open space for future residents of the area, he added.

For Niska workers struggling

through a severely cold winter of smashing ice and caring for sick birds, the purchase finalization is a ray of sunshine. "I'm very happy, I think it's going to be an amicable arrangement," said Eileen Hammill, the park's general manager, about the change of landlords.

Everyone concerned with the bird sanctuary, and the lands felt the GRCA ownership was the best solution for the community, she added.

Mayor Norm Jary said today he was "very pleased" to have the matter completed. He and city council support GRCA's plans to protect the Hanlon Creek watershed.

"And as I told them (GRCA officials) at a meeting last fall this (Kortright Park) was a key parcel of land for the protection of the Hanlon watershed, since it was at the junction of the river and creek," he said today.

He praised Dr. John Roff and Prof. Ted Heeg, Guelph's GRCA representatives, for their work on the Hanlon watershed matter.

## Another Storm

**By THE CANADIAN PRESS**  
 Relief and rescue operations continue in the wake of a winter storm earlier this week, but Environment Canada warns that another storm is expected to move into Ontario late today or early Thursday.

The storm is expected to dump another five to eight centimetres of snow on areas still digging out from the earlier storm. The snowfall will not be accompanied by the high winds and blowing snow which caused havoc in much of the province this week. Temperatures will be milder, approaching the normal for this time of year.

The weather office said the new storm is not expected to be as fierce as the earlier one that blocked roads, closed schools, stranded motorists and resulted in the death of a Ferguson man.

That storm ended Tuesday, although much of the province is still feeling the effects of drifted snow, sub-zero tempera-

tures and winds with gusts up to 65 km.p.h. Environment Canada predicted that clear skies across the southern part of the province today would aid work crews trying to clear parts of nine highways still closed Tuesday night.

A convoy of 12 to 14 oil tanker trucks and road-clearing equipment planned to push through snow-blocked Highway 4 from London today in an attempt to relieve fuel shortages in Lake Huron communities.

Escorted by provincial police, the convoy was to head for Exeter, Clinton, Goderich, Wingham and Kincardine with about \$1 million in supplies.

**SOME SCHOOLS REOPEN**  
 Many schools, closed Friday when the storm began, reopened Tuesday or today, although many in rural areas remain closed. Meanwhile, Premier William

Davis announced that the province is settling a settlement with the Ontario government over the storm, but the province is still in a state of emergency.

He said a study by the two provinces is needed to determine the need for more snow-clearing equipment in the province.

In Ottawa, the government announced that it would provide \$1 million in supplies for the provinces. The cost of the storm is estimated to be in the millions.

## Years Count For Pensions

**OTTAWA (CP)** — Legislation changing the eligibility rules for federal old-age pensions may be in force before the end of the year if it encounters no serious obstacles in Parliament, government officials say.

A bill introduced in the Commons this week by Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde proposes a system under which the amounts collected under the old-age security program would depend on the number of adult years spent in Canada.

Benefits for both native-born Canadians and immigrants would be based on total years of residence in Canada between the ages of 18 and 65.

No one now receiving benefits would be affected by the new regulations. Nor would any Canadian resident who was at least 25 years old when the law came into effect lose any potential benefits.

## No Order To Fingerprint Local Employees Of UIC

**By JOHN D'ALTON**  
 Staff Writer

Al Bidewell, Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) district manager said Tuesday he does not expect the 29 local employees to be fingerprinted for security reasons.

The background of employees is obtained when they join UIC. These files are kept in the regional office and are referred to each year when the employees are evaluated. These files are also combed when vacancies occur or a promotion is in the offing, he said.

DO YOU SAY PHIL?

## Acquitted on Driving Charge

When a Hamilton man was charged with driving while impaired, the judge acquitted him on the charge.

Estimates from defence witnesses pegged this quantity as being enough to last the defendant perhaps six months.

Four defence witnesses testified Tuesday morning. One was a close friend of Mr. Page, Ann Doyle, who said a group of people to which Mr. Page belonged frequently partied in Hamilton where the use of "bennies" was common.

She said the group would go on "runs", a colloquialism for a consecutive period of time when the pills were consumed. These runs lasted sometimes three days, she said, during which 10 to 15 pills a day were consumed. Mr. Page would take part in this type of activity three to four weekends a month, she said.

### NO RE-SALE

All witnesses who testified in Mr. Page's defence said they did not buy any drugs from him



DURING WINTERS LIKE THESE COSTS "BLOW" HIGHER

**From:** [Samantha Lawson](#)  
**To:** [Eowyn Spencer](#); [Karen Armstrong](#)  
**Subject:** FW: GRCA Vision, Mission and Values must be used to fight for environmental sustainability within our province.  
**Date:** December 10, 2024 9:55:13 AM

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**From:** Gail Schenk [REDACTED]  
**Date:** December 9, 2024 at 9:01:21 PM EST  
**To:** [Chris White](#)  
**Subject:** **GRCA Vision, Mission and Values must be used to fight for environmental sustainability within our province.**

To the Attention of the GRCA Chair person and all GRCA councillors:

I am a resident of Kitchener-Waterloo who strongly agrees with the GRCA Vision, Mission and Values. I have copied this document at the end of this email in case you would like to refamiliarize yourself with these strong, intelligent, highly researched values which are vital at this time in Ontario's history, and you may also use the link below.

<https://www.grandriver.ca/who-we-are/grca-vision-mission-and-values/>

Many Ontarians as well as delegations to the GRCA monthly meetings have recently brilliantly addressed current issues which are directly related to the GRCA's Vision, Mission, and Values. These articles and delegations include:

1. "The Gutting of Conservation" in Susan Watson's blog and her strong support for protection of the Kortright Waterfowl Park, as well several other land parcels for disposition which the GRCA has identified within the Grand River watershed.

<https://www.guelphtoday.com/letters-to-the-editor/letter-tell-the-grca-not-to-sell-niskakortright-conservation-lands-9566593>

2. Susan Koswan's article "Provincial Conservatives playing risky game with our conservation authorities",

[https://www.therecord.com/opinion/provincial-conservatives-playing-risky-game-with-our-conservation-authorities/article\\_19e08984-231e-5176-8d6b-466e17887111.html](https://www.therecord.com/opinion/provincial-conservatives-playing-risky-game-with-our-conservation-authorities/article_19e08984-231e-5176-8d6b-466e17887111.html)

3. many public comments submitted in the recent Grand River Conservation Area Strategic Plan

4. In the 2024 fall issue of "Ontario Nature", the editorial on page 5 and also the article "Keeping Ottawa Wet and Wild" on page 22 in the 2024 fall issue of "Ontario Nature" state:

page 5:

*"The Ontario government has gutted the once-robust Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, thereby increasing the difficulty of keeping critical habitats protected, let alone pursuing the essential task of identifying and design designating new ones. Anyone who cares about nature should take this threat seriously."*

page 22:

*"... recent changes in provincial policy are putting this all at risk. In a 12 month period of Ontario's revamped wetland evaluation system being in place, Ontario Nature has tracked the sudden removal of protected status for 55 hectares of wetlands in the Goulbourne Wetland Complex, some of them slated for a new quarry, along with losses in 16 other municipalities. Notably the new evaluation system jeopardizes the protection of complexes, such as Goulbourne that comprise a series of distinct but connected wetlands. "If we disallow recognition of the fundamental interdependence and interconnectivity of wetlands and pretend they are isolated and independent, then we can cut away at the margins until the entire edifice collapses", says Rebecca Rooney, an associate professor of biology and lead scientist at the University of Waterloo's Wetland Laboratory. It's death by a 1000 cuts."*

I ask each and every member of the Grand River Conservation Authority to support and fight for environmental sustainability within our province. The references above definitively conclude how we are dependent upon a healthy environment. Many, many Ontarians are eager to take responsibility for the sustainability of our environment and a healthy future for us all, above all during this critical period in which we must globally lower greenhouse gas emissions as we fight climate change.

I deeply hope members and staff of the GRCA feel confident of this public support for the GRCA Vision, Mission and Values.

Thank you for your work and time.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,  
Gail Schenk,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Ontario

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

## **GRCA Vision, Mission and Values**

### **Our Vision**

A healthy watershed where we live, work, play and prosper in balance with the natural environment.

### **Our Mission**

We will work with local communities to reduce flood damage, provide access to outdoor spaces, share information about the natural environment, and make the watershed more resilient to climate change.

### **Our Values**

#### **Resilience**

We provide effective leadership, and respond to change.

#### **Collaboration**

We listen and learn from others. We value a wide range of perspectives and recognize that progress requires flexibility, and a commitment to sharing ideas and working together.

## **Innovation**

We encourage and leverage advancements in technology, scientific methodologies and trends in education and communications, because these are integral to success.

## **Courage**

We carry out our obligation with conviction, and commitment to our beliefs and values.

## **Respect**

We strive for clear and respectful communication within our organization, with our partners, and with members of the public.

# **GRCA Environmental Policy**

We are committed to environmental protection through delivering services in a manner that will ensure the wellbeing of the environment and its inhabitants. The GRCA is committed to environmental protection through delivering services in a manner that will ensure the wellbeing of the environment and its inhabitants. To fulfill this goal, the GRCA will implement and maintain an environmental management system in order to:

\* Meet or exceed the requirements of all environmental laws and regulations;

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- Participate in exchange of environmental management techniques and, where feasible, adopt best available environmental technologies and best business practices;
- Promote ownership, responsibility and accountability for environmental protection and management;
- Increase environmental awareness of employees and the public through training, education, outreach and communication programs;
- Contribute to conservation of resources through minimization programs in energy, materials and water consumption;
- Minimize environmental impact of operations through environmental management programs to minimize waste generation, air emissions and effluent discharges; and

- Continually improve environmental performance through:
  - Setting and reviewing measurable environmental performance objectives and targets; and
  - Reporting on environmental performance.